Of Tea-Parties and Patriots:

PLEASE

DON'T TREAD ON ME

Liberty for who?

Comments? Questions? Concerns? Hate mail? Wishes to collaborate? johnbrown@riseup.net
When people bring the term “class,” they are referring to the economic divide of who is rich, who is poor, who is middle class. This divide is often referred to as the “class war.” The working class people naturally view the world in terms of class, whereas the middle and upper classes do not. This is because the working class people have a more direct experience of class differences and economic inequality.

In class, the working class people are often seen as being “down and out,” whereas the middle and upper classes are seen as being “up and about.” This is because the working class people are more likely to experience economic hardship and poverty, whereas the middle and upper classes are more likely to experience economic stability and prosperity.

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of other races does buy us relative privileges and even some luxuries. In the end, however, we're still poor, we're still being used to make other people money. And those people aren't non-white working people.

We have a stake in creating a new social paradigm and movement that goes beyond the idea of liberty being a protection for property ownership. We have a direct interest in fighting white supremacy, the state, and capitalism. Our freedom is intimately woven into the freedom of all working people. Until we are free as a working class, we will never be free as individuals, no matter what skin color we are.

I don't want to end on an abstract note. I want to end with a couple concrete steps that white working class people can take to work a movement for real liberty.

1) Actively work against groups like the Minutemen, the Klan, the Christian Identity Movement, and others that seek to divide us as working class people from other working class people based on their race, gender, sexuality, nationality or religion. These people are class traitors and ensure that we will never see freedom for ourselves or our families, as they keep us fighting other working class people and not the real enemy: the rich. Disrupt their attempts to organize and to recruit. Make it known they are not welcome at gun shows or other events where you are present. Not joining their organizations isn’t enough, we must actively stop them from organizing at all.

2) Actively work against leaders of the New Liberty movement that organize against nonwhite working class people. Alex Jones, Ron Paul, David Duke, and others are trying to ensure that we will turn on migrants and other people of color rather than turn on rich people, most of whom happen to be white.

3) Organize debtor’s unions and tenants unions in your neighborhood. We must come together with our neighbors to defend each other from foreclosures and evictions. Create networks of people in your neighborhood that can show up and help defend each other and prevent evictions.

4) Refuse to pay any debts you have and organize rent strikes. Don’t pay your hospital bills, your credit card bills, or any other debts you have. Don’t give these people that have been exploiting us any more of your money.

5) Support GI resistance to war and occupation. Many working class people are refusing orders to deploy, and resisting the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan in other ways. Lend them your support at courageoresist.org

6) Don’t join the military, help prevent your family members from joining the military. This institution has robbed too many working people of their lives by convincing them it’s their patriotic duty. We must stop falling for this line, and fight for our class, not for the political elites.

7) Follow the examples of other working class people and occupy your workplace if threatened with layoffs or terminations. There have been occupations of workplaces in the U.S. and across other countries as the economic crisis has broadened. These reclamation of workplaces have ended with workers receiving back and severance pay, and sometimes even preventing their workplaces from

Our realities are shaped by where we stand socially, economically, and politically. The vast majority of whites, like people of all other races, live in precarious social, political, and economic realities. We live paycheck to paycheck. We live off over-extended credit. We live in debt. We don’t own much, if at all, in real estate. We live in stressful situations, where if one part of the chain breaks, we lose everything. Our very existence is one of insecurity and economic disaster.

Most people in the middle and upper classes of white society try to stifle this talk amongst us in the working or lower classes. Political, social, and church leaders try to erase the class line. But for those of us going home at night to trailers, slumlord owned apartments, or dilapidated houses, we tend to not forget the large suburban homes and mansions that these leaders sleep in.

Class exists. Just like race, we can’t make it go away by ignoring it. But why would we even want to ignore it? Our situation as working whites boils down directly to the idea of class.

**Our class interests...**

I start with the idea that most white working class people want similar things. We, as most people do, want security, freedom, prosperity, comfort, and safety. We don’t want to have to worry about where our next meal is coming from, how we’re going to be able to afford school supplies for our children, or whether or not we will fall victims to a “terrorist” attack. We don’t want to constantly fear losing our jobs or living the rest of our lives in precarious economic situations.

We now live in a country with a huge division between rich and poor. We live with a failed economy. We live in a nearly failed state. The government of the United States has systemically become a monstrous giant of bureaucrats and neo-tyrants. The whole government, every single politician, is part of this corrupt system.

Back home, in our communities, both rural and urban, we are losing our jobs. We are watching our sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, dying in deserts and mountains halfway across the world. Our police forces are growing larger, just as our prison populations. We, as working people, are losing everything.

But, there may still be hope for us. White working class people are starting to organize on a national level for what we believe are our interests as a class, as physically manifested with the wave of “Tea Parties” and protests against what many feel to be an impending socialist nightmare in Washington, D.C.

Thousands have mobilized in past months to send clear messages to the politicians in charge of this mess that we won’t take it anymore. And now, we’re mobilizing to shut down what many see as a socialist attempt to take away our health care options and build even more government power.

But what do these mobilizations really mean? And what have we gained by disruptively protesting these town hall meetings on health care reform? Are we gaining ground? Or are we merely paving the way for further future losses?
In some areas, the answer may be "yes." Working for the development of the world's needs at the cost of personal health and happiness is not an option for most people. However, the need for education is also a major concern. The problem of providing education to all children is a global one, and it is one of the greatest challenges facing society today. We need to work for the education of our children, our own, our colleagues, and our communities. This requires a commitment to provide education to all children, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Moving Forward...

Any plan that offers a chance for education and direction...

...is a plan that offers a chance for education and direction...
50 million jobs will have been lost to outsourcing by 2015 since NAFTA came into effect in 1994. Well, let’s ask ourselves, who’s really stealing our jobs? Poor Mexicans? Or Rich White CEOs?

Leaders of the new Liberty Movement feed us ridiculous ideas of the “invading” brown hordes, and the rich whites that make up the upper echelons of organizations like the Minutemen and other similar groups salivate over our reactions. If we’re busy fighting the Mexicans at the border, and busy trying to round up all the “illegals” then we’re too busy to fight that real enemy, that one that keeps eluding us, the rich and political elite.

Most of us that keep falling for these lines initially might mean well. Heck, we only want to defend our families and our communities... but in reality, we’re weakening them even more, by fighting our real potential allies and diverting our attention from the real enemy.

And why are all these brown skinned immigrants coming here in the first place? Why is there this sudden rush in the last thirteen years to get into this country? 80% of all illegal immigrants have entered since 1994. Why is that? What happened in 1994 that affected working people in Mexico just as it affected us? The passage of NAFTA, a free trade program that benefits nobody but the rich people on both sides of the border!

The new Liberty Movement defends the liberty of rich people to own property, while attacking the liberty of movement of brown working class people. The new Liberty Movement doesn’t protect liberty, it actively attacks it and defends a system that makes liberty for all people impossible.

In the name of freedom and liberty, we protect the right of 5% of the residents of this country to maintain ownership over 90% of the property and means of survival in this country. Modern liberty has become the freedom to starve, the freedom to lose our jobs without notice, and the freedom to have a bank take back its property from underneath us.

While the rich in this country pillage our paychecks, destroy our retirement funds, and take away our livelihoods, we gladly hand our resources to them. After all, liberty doesn’t exist without the protection of these rich people to own that property. They have the right to even own us, in fact.

By its very nature, the concept of private property has destroyed us and allowed the rich to ride all over us.

And it’s this thinking that has created and shaped our current “Liberty” Movement.

The Liberty Movement

The Liberty Movement, this new manifestation of centuries old U.S. patriotism, has spread across the country like a wild fire. Tea Parties, large mobilizations denouncing a rising “socialism” in this country, were held in cities across the U.S. in the Spring and early Summer.

New organizations on college campuses and within communities have sprung up to continue the organizing efforts. The main enemy is President Barack Obama. His policies resemble a socialist attack on the American way of life, and they must be stopped.

Led mostly by rich politically ambitious organizers these rallies have brought together thousands of mostly white working class participants to start to fight back against this onslaught from the left. However, many contradictions appear within this framework. Thousands of white working people, people who rely on food stamps, unemployment payments, and even welfare checks, fill the ranks at demonstrations calling for an end to social services. White working people, full of fear about socialism and an attack on “liberty” (in this case, an attack on the property rights of the rich) turn against their own interests and sell out their own needs to fight the new socialism.

The unpleasant reality for working class and poor people who have participated and still participate in this new movement, is that we’re being used by these rich leaders within the movement to protect their interests, not ours. But that’s nothing new.

A history of playing for the wrong team

The history of the white working class has been a history of being an exploited people. However, we’ve been an exploited people that further exploits other exploited people. While we’ve been living in tenements and slums for centuries, we’ve also been used by the rich to attack our neighbors, co-workers, and friends of different colors, religions, and nationalities.
Since the colonization of the Americas in the late 1400's, white working people have been the footsoldiers of political and economic elites seeking to dominate and control land, resources, and wealth, all at our own expense.

We have enlisted in armies to slaughter indigenous peoples. We've been slave catchers to trap and enslave Africans. We've been police officers to terrorize communities of color. We've been prison guards to keep other working people locked up. We've been settlers, occupiers, colonizers, and conquerors. These roles have done very little to benefit us, on the whole. We've been used to benefit a small minority of politicians, bosses, and aristocrats.

The blunt reality is that for the last five hundred years on this continent, white working class people have been used by mostly white rich people to colonize for, kill for, work for, and then better the living standards of those same white rich people, all the while sacrificing our own needs, wants, aspirations, and even lives. It really is as simple as that. No one denies the history of what has happened at working people's expenses. Wars, poverty, homelessness, wage slavery... these are all ills created by someone, and perpetuated by us... the same workers who suffer these ills.

For some five centuries we've been used by the rich among our own race to promote their agenda and suffered because of it. Yet, somehow, we've still been convinced that it is in our interests to protect the rights of the rich to own as much property as they can, to protect the right of the rich to even exist, to protect these same rich people who would just as soon see us die for their benefit.

The heart of the matter is that for these five centuries, we've been too busy fighting the people who should naturally be our allies against these injustices. The rich whites have used our skin color against us, have used our human nature of fearing living beings different than us against us... they've used us against us. They've blinded us with these racist ideas of "white supremacy" and "white pride" and "white nationalism" into fighting other working people of other races, while they sit on the sidelines and laugh.

The New Liberty Movement plays directly into this situation, and turns us, as white working class people, against our natural interests as working class people, and against our natural allies. We're still being used by rich whites to advance their causes, and lose everything that we desire and need.

**Of socialism and healthcare**

Let's be plain. Obama is not a socialist. His reforms and the reforms of other politicians are not socialist. They're not even radical. They're truly reformist. And they're truly state-capitalist.

Obama's policies have not threatened the power structures of this country in anyway. The rich will stay rich. The poor will stay poor. Property will still be just as protected as it is now. Wars will still be waged on multiple continents. The systemic inequities that have created a mess for all working people will still exist.

But while these reforms, like public option healthcare, are not radical and do not fundamentally change any power relationships in this country, they still remain important bread and butter survival policies for poor and working people.

Just like people of all races and backgrounds, most white working and poor people have no healthcare. We've seen it disappear. We don't have access to medical care when we need it. While national healthcare is not the answer to all of our problems, and shouldn't be our ultimate end goal, it is a short term fix that we, as working class people, could probably use.

However, the red flag of socialism has been waved in front of our faces. We can't see anything but the closet communist Obama taunting us and attacking our very way of life with these reforms.

And it's this mentality that divides us from nonwhite working people even more. The vast majority of nonwhite working people are in support of this healthcare reform. They are in support of social service spending. They are in support of legislation that affects their survival as working class people.

We're divided in a way that is fairly predictable. White working class people, people who have been bought off by the rich, would rather protect property rights that are used against us and our interests than work for healthcare and social services that we don't like to admit that we utilize and need.

In our class based, capitalist society, white working class people protect property, while nonwhite working people struggle for social services necessary for survival. And thus, we as white working people play for the wrong team. And in the end, everyone besides the rich and the politicians ends up losing.

Let's be honest. I don't want the government to control healthcare. But I also don't want to live in a property based society where I'm denied healthcare because I don't make enough money. Until we get rid of that property based economic relationship, then I'll gladly take social services from the state, just to level the playing field a bit between me and the rich boss that steals money from my paycheck, or the rich politician who gets money from our schools to fund occupations of other countries that benefit corporations he owns stock in.

**Migrants and other scapegoats**

Perhaps the most glaring example of how white working people are playing for the wrong team, and how the new Liberty Movement actively works against the liberty of all people, especially nonwhite people, is the role that the movement plays within the debate on immigration.

One of the attacks leveled at the government by the Liberty Movement is the government's failure to secure the border. The white populist logic of the movement becomes quite clear at these times.

We have bought into the ridiculous notion that mostly brown skinned immigrants from Mexico or other countries are our enemy, that they are somehow stealing our jobs, that they somehow really threaten us. Let's get real. Who's really stealing our jobs?

Even with a generous estimate of the number of illegal immigrants working in the U.S. at 6 million (notice I said working, not living), this stands in stark contrast to the conservative estimate that nearly