

USA

REPORTE DE

# LA OCUPACION



NEW YORK

No. 8

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## OUR PRACTICE AT THE OCCUPATION

We are a group of individuals in search of love and adventure. We pool our money and resources together into One Purse so as to deal with our survival problems collectively and to set up a material base for our project. What we want is a society without classes, through our self-organization in Worker's Councils, the base assemblies in the factories and residences. This direct democratic organization is our means and end.

We participated in the Occupation on 111th and 112th Streets and Amsterdam Ave. since the fall of 1972. It was the biggest, longest-standing occupation we knew of in New York City. We came thinking that the squatters were seriously looking for freedom from the bourgeois organization of life and that we could build our lives together in direct democracy. Some people shared the best of our dreams. Some others didn't allow themselves anything more than survival and were jealous and suspicious of our dreams. When we said what we wanted and started to put it into practice they would say, "Declare yourselves" ... "What party are you from?" always thinking that this desire of ours for what is most natural and simple is just covering up something sinister. They are the ones who hide from their real desires.

All that we didn't say was the full extent of the possibilities. If the other squatters had been willing to risk a little, to experiment, we could have made much more than a laundry center--the occupation could have been a real experiment in self-directed production, with our self-run workshops set up in the buildings to provide for survival. We could have played with a radio station to start communication directly with other squatters around the world. And we could have experimented in the authentic love relationships that come with sharing our dream. But every time some one of us started to fall in love with another squatter, there was great horror and gossip--all those impotent ones like Nicolas shouting about immorality, all those who only let themselves know sex as objectification, who hide from the partners they are tied to by marriage and church vows. They are the ones who stop themselves from really knowing love at all. They all yelled, jealous of those of us who were trying to be free.

But there will be other chances for any individual who wants to play, for any individual who has seen the growth and destruction of the Workshop, the projects in the basement of 503 (503 W. 111th St.), the democratic organization in 503 making decisions in building assemblies and carrying them out. In spite of all the mistakes that anyone made, it was clear where the fun was and who was destroying it. The would-be leaders did what can always be expected from them, what they have done historically from before the time Lenin and Trotsky ordered the massacre of the revolutionary workers and sailors at Kronstadt (1921). They will go on repressing the radical practice until those who were sitting at home watching the novels on TV get up and stop the show. When those who hovered in their apartments afraid, come out and knock on their neighbors' doors and take a



stand together, then the passivity that tolerates leaders and the false pleasure that dominates the world will be ended. Then we will play with the Fransiscos, Rauls, Pichas, Fatimas, Necos, and Carlos' again in a new world.

#### One Purse

On May 4, 1974 the direct democratic practice was destroyed by a united front of leftists whose only aim is to crush all beginnings of direct democracy and to replace the dominant hierarchy with their own. As always, they showed themselves to be an integral part of the spectacle.

#### NUESTRA PRACTICA EN LA OCUPACION

Somos un grupo de individuos en busca de amor y aventura. Juntamos nuestro dinero y nuestros recursos en una bolsa común para así bregar colectivamente con los problemas de sobrevivencia y para establecer una base material para nuestro proyecto. Lo que queremos es una sociedad sin clases establecida a través de nuestra organización propia en Consejos de Obreros, las asambleas de base en las fábricas y las residencias. Esta organización democrática directa es nuestro medio y nuestro fin.

Participamos en la Ocupación de las calles 111 y 112 con Amsterdam desde el otoño de 1972. Es la ocupación mas grande y mas duradera que conocíamos en la ciudad de Nueva York. Vinimos creyendo que los squatters buscaban en serio la manera de liberarse de la organización burguesa de vida y que podríamos construir nuestras vidas juntos en democracia directa. Algunas personas compartieron lo mejor de nuestros sueños. Algunos otros no se permitieron nada mas que la sobrevivencia y estaban envidiosos y sospechosos de nuestros sueños. Cuando decíamos lo que queríamos y empezábamos a ponerlo en práctica decían, "¡Declárense!" ... "¿De que partido vienen ustedes?" siempre pensando que este deseo de nosotros para lo que es mas natural y sensillo es solo para ocultar algo siniestro. Ellos son los que se esconden de sus verdaderos deseos.

Todo lo que no dijimos fue el extento de las posibilidades. Si los otros squatters se hubieran atrevido a arriesgarse un poco, a experimentar, hubiéramos podido haber hecho mucho mas que una lavandería -- la ocupación podría haber sido un verdadero experimento en la producción auto-dirigida con talleres manejados por nosotros mismos para proveer para la sobrevivencia en los edificios. Podríamos haber jugado con una estación de radio para comenzar una comunicación directa con otros squatters alrededor del mundo. Y podríamos haber experimentado con las relaciones de amor auténticas que vienen cuando compartimos estos sueños. Pero cada vez que alguno de nosotros empezaba a enamorarse de otro squatter, había gran horror y chisme -- todos los



impotentes como Nicolás gritando sobre la inmoralidad, todos aquellos que solo se permiten conocer el sexo como objetivización, que se esconden del compañero o compañera a quien están atados por matrimonio o votos religiosos. Ellos son los que nunca se permiten conocer el verdadero amor. Ellos gritaron, celosos de los que queríamos ser libres.

Pero habrán otras oportunidades para cualquier individuo que quiera jugar, para cualquier individuo que ha visto el desarrollo y la destrucción del Taller, de los proyectos en el sótano del 503 (503 W. 111 St.), de la organización democrática en el 503 haciendo las decisiones en asambleas del edificio y llevándolas a cabo. A pesar de todos los errores que cualquiera hizo, fue claro donde estaba el placer y quienes lo estaban destruyendo. Los aspirantes líderes hicieron lo que siempre se puede esperar de ellos, lo que han hecho históricamente desde antes del tiempo en que Lenin y Trotsky ordenaron la masacre de los trabajadores y marineros revolucionarios de Kronstadt (1921): Ellos seguirán reprimiendo la práctica radical hasta que aquellos que están sentados en sus casas viendo novelas en televisión se levanten y paren el espectáculo. Cuando aquellos que se aguantan miedosamente en sus apartamentos salgan y le toquen las puertas a sus vecinos, tomando su posición juntos, entonces la pasividad que tolera líderes y el placer falso que domina el mundo terminarán. Entonces jugaremos con los Fransiscos, los Rauls, las Pichas, las Fatimas, los Necos y los Carlos otra vez en un mundo nuevo.

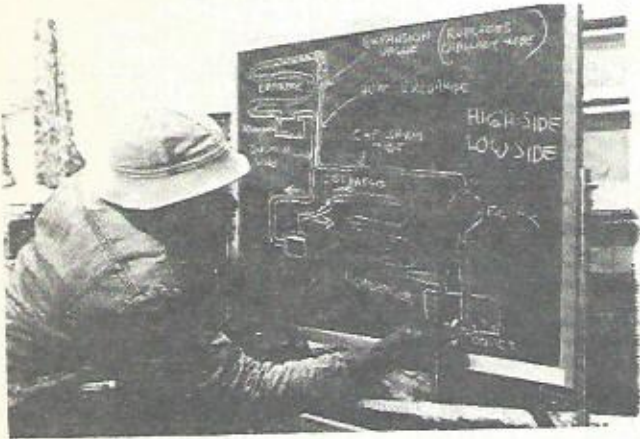
#### One Purse

El 4 de mayo, 1974, la práctica democrática directa fue destruida por un frente unido de izquierdistas quienes tienen como su meta única aplastar todo comienzo de la democracia directa y reemplazar la jerarquía dominante con la de ellos. Como siempre, mostraron que son una parte íntegra del espectáculo.





LA OPORTUNIDAD  
THE OPPORTUNITY



Y QUIEN LA DESTRUYO  
AND WHO DESTROYED IT



MARIE RUNYON

WHEN YOU COME HOME AFTER A LONG DAY AT WORK YOU DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO MAKE DECISIONS. LET US DO THAT FOR YOU. THAT'S WHAT WE'RE HERE FOR.



NIÑO DE LA CRUZ



ALBERTO



LEN LERNER



SYLVIA

MARIA PERALTA



ED COCHANSKI



MARIA SANCHEZ



PHILIP ST. GEORGE



OSVALDO

THERE'S DUKH... DIRECT DEMOCRACY AND THERE'S DUKH... REPRESENTATIVE POLITICS.



RUDY SUAREZ

MISSING: Nicolas, Marieta, Dean Morton, Teresa, Ana

ORGANIZATIONS: El Comite, The Columbia Tenants Union, El Centro Dominicano de Orientacion & Asistencia Social, Puerto Rican Socialist Party, The Cathedral St. John the Divine.



THE TRUTH IS STILL THE TRUTH EVEN IF IT IS A MINORITY OPINION

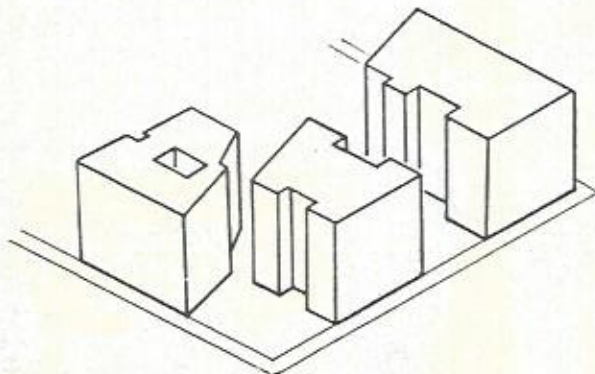
Everyone knows we are being threatened with eviction by the Church and its instrument, Morningside House. But not everyone knows that what is being threatened is not just a place to live but a way of doing things. And the threat comes not just from outside but also from inside.

We want to let everyone know that there is a movement within the Occupation toward direct democracy, toward the kind of organization where everyone has a say in the decisions that are made.

This movement is growing in spite of appearances to the contrary, and in spite of considerable resistance from some persons within the Occupation. To those who are its partisans, direct democracy is the means and the end of our struggle. It is the kind of organization where people meet together to make the decisions that concern them. When necessary, individuals are mandated for specific purposes but not to take the power of making decisions away from the building assemblies. There is a natural tendency here in the buildings toward direct democracy, but many do not understand it well enough to defend it in the midst of deliberate confusion.

This kind of organization is the opposite of one in which leaders decide among themselves what to do and then give orders to the rest of the people.

We feel that the movement toward direct democracy is the essence of the Occupation. The struggle to achieve it in the buildings has been going on for a long time. A lot has happened in the last weeks. We think that what is happening concerns not only us but everyone.



This leaflet was written by partisans of direct democracy living in 503 W. 111 on April 30, 1974.

LONG: LIVE THE INTERNATIONAL OCCUPATION



LA VERDAD ES LA VERDAD AUNQUE SEA LA OPINION DE LA MINORIA

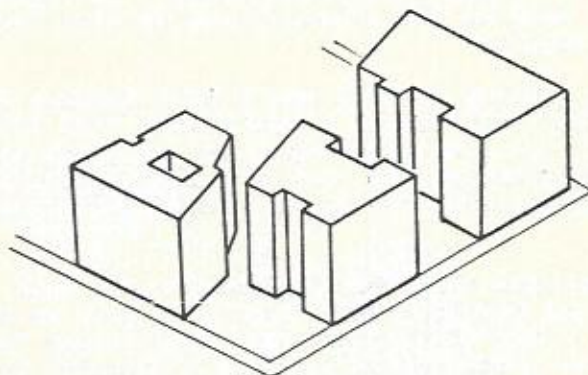
Todos saben que estamos siendo amenazados por la iglesia y su instrumento, Morningside House. Pero todos no saben que lo que se amenaza no es solo un sitio para vivir pero una manera de hacer las cosas. Y la amenaza viene no solo de afuera si no también de adentro.

Queremos decirle a todos que hay un movimiento dentro de la Ocupación hacia la democracia directa, hacia la clase de organización donde todos participan en las decisiones que se hacen.

Este movimiento está creciendo aunque aparezca lo contrario, y a pesar de la considerable resistencia de algunas personas dentro de la Ocupación. A aquellos que son sus partisanos, la democracia directa es el medio y el fin de nuestra lucha. Esta es la clase de organización donde las personas se reúnen juntos para hacer las decisiones que les conciernen. Cuando es necesario, se da un mandato a un individuo para un propósito específico, pero nunca se permite quitarles el poder de hacer decisiones a las asambleas de los edificios. Hay una tendencia natural aquí en los edificios hacia la democracia directa, pero muchos no la entienden suficientemente bien para defenderla en medio de la confusión deliberada.

Este tipo de organización es lo opuesto a tener líderes quienes deciden entre ellos lo que se va a hacer y entonces dan órdenes a las demás personas.

Nosotros creemos que la democracia directa es la esencia de la ocupación. La lucha para lograrla en los edificios se ha estado llevando a cabo por mucho tiempo. Mucho ha pasado en las últimas semanas y creemos que lo que está pasando nos importa no solamente a nosotros pero a todo el mundo.



Este volante fue escrito por partisanos de la democracia directa viviendo en 503 W. 111, el 30 de abril de 1974.

VIVA LA OCUPACIÓN INTERNACIONAL



May 7, 1974

To my friends in the Plumbing and Electricity Class:

The last three classes have been at 503 W. 111 Street, the Occupation where I've been living.

As you know we had a demonstration the 30th which you all were invited to. Cathy came and you've probably heard from her that there has been a conflict within the occupation. A conflict between direct democracy (people making decisions about their lives) and unelected leaders.

If the fight had been resolved internally, the forces of direct democracy would have won. But what happened was that the leaders got outside support from various liberal political organizations. Foremost among these was the Columbia Tenant Union. The leaders of the Tenant Union (Marie Runyon, Ed Cochanski and others) have had it out for me and my friends ever since the union began because after we helped found the organization on the principles of direct democracy we opposed their effort to turn the organization into a body controlled by a clique. All this is well documented in letters and leaflets that were issued at the time.

I've lived in the occupation for over a year. My apartment didn't have plumbing when I moved in; the ceilings and walls had fallen in, and the building itself had serious plumbing problems. All these I have worked to fix -- with others in the building -- so that direct democracy could be experienced and so that I'd have a home to bear a child in. My dreams were that the children of the occupation would grow without the oppression of the dominant society always directly over their heads. You yourselves worked on the laundry room we had planned, and we also had plans for a nursery and a school.

Cathy was with my friends and I last Tuesday after the demonstration. We had just issued a statement: "The Truth is Still the Truth Even if it is a Minority Opinion" in which we said that what was being threatened was not just a place to live but a new way of doing things "where everyone has a say in the decisions that are made."

The leaders and their outside supporters came over in mass to bang our door and threaten us. They said that we had to stop publishing. Just a few days before they had issued two leaflets full of lies about us. They tried to drum up support in our own building against us, but they failed. That night, Tuesday, the mob dwindled and left.

Last Saturday these same people, including the Columbia Tenant Union people, held a secret meeting and organized another goon squad. They came down the fire escape and broke the windows of our apartments, and broke in the doors. Everyone in the building was isolated in their apartments and afraid to come out. We were caught



off guard. My friends and I, and others in the building didn't expect the attack because a delegation from the building had gone around and spoken to everyone and found out that the people who lived in our building wanted to continue to work with us. We didn't think that these self-appointed leaders would have the gall to move against the will of the whole building.

We defended ourselves as best we could with the tools we had in our apartment. But there were too many in the mob, and for myself and my friend Rae, we didn't want to risk losing our children (She is 4 and I am 5 months pregnant). During the fight my friend Peter was hit in the face and was hurt in the eye. We were thrown out onto the street.

I don't really understand why you people didn't respond and support the squatters. I think to myself that you don't give a damn about direct democracy -- but everyone who has any urge to be free, to really live, must want it even if you don't know it, or do anything about it.

You must have some interest in controlling your own life or why would you be in this class?

So many dreams are destroyed because we just sit around and watch while others are pushed around.

I'm not interested in teaching plumbing just to be teaching plumbing. I said that when we started. I'm very disappointed in what's happened and I doubt even that you'll bother to respond to this letter. I wish you would.

Susan





## The Minimum Definition of Revolutionary Organizations\*

Since the only purpose of a revolutionary organization is the abolition of all existing classes in a way that does not bring about a new division of society, we consider an organization revolutionary which pursues *with consequence* the international realization of the absolute power of the Workers Councils. That power has been outlined in the experience of the proletarian revolutions of this century – St. Petersburg 1905, Turin 1920, Kronstadt 1921, Asturias 1934, Catalonia 1936, Budapest 1956. It is power without mediators.

Such an organization makes a unitary critique of the world, or is nothing. By unitary critique we understand a total critique of all geographic areas where various forms of separate socio-economic power exist, as well as a total critique of all aspects of life.

Such an organization recognizes the beginning and end of its own program in the complete decolonization, the complete liberation of daily life. It aims not at the self-management (autogestion) by the masses of the *existing world* but at its uninterrupted transformation. It embodies the radical critique of *political economy*, the supercession of commodity and wage-labor.

Such an organization refuses to reproduce within itself any of the hierarchical conditions of the dominant world. The only limit to participating in its total democracy is that each member recognize and appropriate for himself *the coherence of its critique*: this coherence has to be in the critical theory as such and in the relationship between this theory and practical activity. A revolutionary organization radically criticizes every *ideology as separate power* of ideas and as *ideas of separate power*. It is at the same time the negation of any leftovers from religion and of the prevailing social *spectacle* which, from mass information (news-media) to mass culture, monopolizes communication between men around a unilateral reception of the images of their alienated activity. The organization dissolves any "revolutionary ideology" by revealing it to be the sign of the failure of the revolutionary project, as the private property of new specialists of power, as the imposture of a new *representation* which erects itself above the real proletarianized life.

The category of totality is the *last judgement* of the modern revolutionary organization, so the organization is, in the end, a critique of politics: it must aim explicitly through its victory at the dissolution of itself as a separate organization.

### WHAT DEFINES THE POWER OF THE WORKERS COUNCILS?

the dissolution of all external (separate) power;  
 direct and total democracy;  
 the practical unification of decision and execution;  
 the delegate, strictly mandated, subject to immediate recall;  
 the abolition of all hierarchies and independent specializations;  
 the management and conscious transformation of all aspects of liberated life;  
 the creative, permanent participation of all individuals;  
 international extension and coordination.

\*The Minimum Definition of Revolutionary Organizations was adopted by the 7th Conference of the Situationist International, July 1966; and reissued by the Comites Enrages-Internationale Situationniste during May 1968. In June, it was translated and distributed by the S.I. in the United States.



## LA MINIMA DEFINICION DE ORGANIZACIONES REVOLUCIONARIAS

Considerando que el único objeto de una organización revolucionaria es la abolición de las clases existentes de manera que no se efectue una nueva división de la sociedad, calificamos de revolucionaria a toda organización que persigue *con consecuencia* la realización internacional del poder absoluto de los Concilios de Obreros. Este poder ha sido esbozado en la experiencia de las revoluciones proletarias de este siglo — Rusia 1905, Kronstadt 1921, Asturias 1934, la revolución española de 1936. El poder sin mediadores.

Tal organización presenta una crítica unitaria del mundo, ó no es nada. Por crítica unitaria entendemos una crítica pronunciada globalmente en contra de todas las zonas geográficas donde se hallan instaladas diversas formas de poderes socio-económicos separados, así como también, una crítica global de todos los aspectos de la vida.

Tal organización reconoce el comienzo y fin de su programa en la descolonización total de la vida diaria; no se dirige pues al gobierno por las masas (autogestión) *del mundo existente* tal como es, sino a su transformación ininterrumpida. La organización revolucionaria lleva en sí la crítica radical *de la economía política*, la superación de la mercancía y del trabajo asalariado.

Tal organización rehusa a toda reproducción en sí misma de las condiciones de jerarquía del mundo dominante. El único límite para participar en su democracia total, es el reconocimiento y la autoapropiación por

todos los miembros *de la coherencia de su crítica*: esa coherencia tiene que ser en la teoría crítica propiamente dicha, y en la relación entre esa teoría y la actividad práctica. La organización revolucionaria crítica radicalmente toda *ideología como poder separado de ideas e ideas de poder separado*. Es así, al mismo tiempo, la negación de toda supervivencia de religión, y del actual *espectáculo social* que, por medio de la información a la cultura en masa, monopoliza toda la comunicación del hombre en torno a una recepción unilateral de las imágenes de su actividad alienada. La organización revolucionaria disuelve toda "ideología revolucionaria" desenmascarándola como signo del fracaso del proyecto revolucionario, como propiedad privada de los nuevos especialistas del poder, como impostura de una nueva *representación* que se erige por encima de la vida real proletarizada.

Ya que la categoría de totalidad es el *último juicio* de la organización revolucionaria moderna, ésta es finalmente una crítica de la política: La organización revolucionaria debe dirigirse explícitamente, en su victoria, a su propio fin como organización separada.

\* La Mínima Definición de Organizaciones Revolucionarias fué adoptada por la Séptima Conferencia de los Situacionistas Internacionales en julio 1966 y reimpresso por el Comité Enrages Internationales Situationniste en Mayo 1968. En junio fué traducida y distribuida por los situacionistas en América.



## LA NOVELA DEL DIA



CUANDO EL PROLETARIADO SE DE CUENTA QUE PUEDEN CONTROLAR SUS PROPIAS VIDAS VAN A BREGAR CON ESOS QUE DICEN SER SUS **LIDERES**.

LO QUE NOS HA FALTADO ES LA **CONCIENCIA** DE LO QUE YA HEMOS HECHO Y DE LO QUE ES **POSIBLE**.



EL REPORTE DE **LA OCUPACION** ES LA VERDAD PARA QUE TODOS LA VEAN.

Y ESA NOCHE, NO HUBO MURO QUE LOS SEPARARA. VIVIAN EL UNO PARA EL OTRO PORQUE CADA UNO SE VEIA EN EL OTRO.



EL AMOR QUE NOS TENEMOS SERÁ RECONOCIDO.

ESTÁ TEMPORALMENTE CONFUNDIDO POR LAS MENTIRAS DE AQUELLOS QUE YA NO SON CAPAZ DE AMAR.