



WELCOME TO
SPLITSVILLE.
POPULATION:
EVERY LEFTIST
ORGANIZATION OF
THE LAST DECADE

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BY THE

KITES EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

A CALL FOR SUMMATIONS,
NOT SUBTWEET RECRIMINATIONS

The past decade has seen a rapid growth in new and a few previously existing Leftist organizations across North America, matched almost tit for tat by splits within and the dissolution of said Leftist organizations. A number of the larger, crusty old Leftist organizations have fallen apart after decades of doing the same thing over and over again expecting different results. In other and overlapping cases, their ideological rot was exposed after their leadership tried to cover up rape within their organizations. To them, we say good riddance to your organizations and to the rancid revisionist ideology behind them. To the handful of crusty old Leftist organizations who managed to rebrand themselves and garner new recruits by appealing to postmodernism and dogmatic internet “communism,” we say your days are numbered. Sooner or later your new membership will by and large burn out from the same old routine or realize that they have joined opPortuniSt manipuLators who don’t tell new recruits that they’re Trotskyists.

Most of the new Leftist organizations that sprung up in the last decade were small and local (fine as a starting point), perhaps had a few months of internet fame, and then fell apart. Few managed to sink any solid roots among the masses, lead substantial class struggle (or even campus-based political struggles), or contribute some meaningful theory and analysis. The inflated social media proclamations of these organizations sooner or later collapse around a dearth of revolutionary practice. The failure of this or that organization or struggle is not in itself a problem, as failures are part of the revolutionary process. What is a failure is the inability of the more advanced elements to come out of their experiences with a keener grasp of revolutionary theory, methods of practice that can result in revolutionary advances, and a deeper appreciation for building strong collective organizations based on democratic centralism. Frankly, anarchists 20 years ago had greater collective discipline, more hierarchical organization, and better cadre development than the vast majority of those who call themselves communists today in North America.

Cynical as all this sounds, we intend for this to be an ideologi-

cal intervention to assist comrades coming out of the demoralizing experience of organizations collapsing or splitting. We hope this intervention transforms people to regard Splitsville as a transitional community on the road to real revolutionary organization rather than some Floridian swamp for retirees and others to get stuck in. Moving forward from these debacles, however, requires the work of summation: examining the ideology and political lines that guided these organizations' practice and why those politics proved incapable of meeting challenges, as well as pulling out the positive achievements and synthesizing them so that they can become part of our collective knowledge. To date, few (no?) summations of this kind have come forward. Either organizations disappear without a word of explanation or what "summation" exists consists of, at best, criticisms of bad behavior by opportunist individuals rather than their ideology and politics or, at worst, gossip and rumor. It doesn't help that splits often take place on social media, and "summations" are often in the form of a Facebook post.

The aversion to democratic centralism among virtually all radicals in North America—including those who call themselves communists—is a big part of the reason for this failure to sum up and move forward from splits and organizational collapse. For democratic centralist organizational practice—assuming it's done right—insists that we be ruthlessly critical of our practice, be collectively accountable to one another and to the masses, raise differences to the level of political line, and not allow our enemies to take advantage of those internal differences. Paradoxical as it may sound if you're steeped in anarchism or other bourgeois-democratic ways of thinking, the more we practice democratic centralism, the more critical and self-critical our thinking will be.

So if your organization collapsed, split, reached challenges it couldn't overcome, or if it had some positive experiences, we encourage you to write a serious summation that focuses on questions of political line rather than personality. Having such summations will help others to avoid paths that have proven unproductive, and also pull out the positive lessons to emulate (though, to be honest,

this is by and large the secondary aspect of the last decade). The act of writing a summation will force you to sharpen your grasp of political line and come to terms with the reasons for failures.

The *kites* Editorial Committee is happy to work with comrades on writing their summations, whether that's by asking questions that might help you think through the issues or by helping polish a good draft into something that can be published in our journal. More than anything, we're determined to not let young comrades get demoralized by negative experiences and the emotional roller coaster of being part of an organization that seemed to have a lot going for it and then collapsed, with people you thought were your comrades becoming fucked up. We get it; we've been there. It's our dedication to the masses and to overthrowing imperialism, our critical summation and study of theory, and the assistance of other comrades—including internationally—that helped us get through those experiences and emerge as better communists. God knows we need all the cadre possible if we're going to make revolution, so let's figure out what went wrong, pick ourselves up from it, and move forward.