

COMMUNISM IS THE HORIZON



THE RED NATION



QUEER
INDIGENOUS FEMINISM
IS THE WAY

“I firmly believe that the philosophy of my ancestors lines up quite tidily with the philosophy of communism. I make no apology for my principles.”

— Lee Maracle

Introduction

What the ruling classes call chaos is the inevitable cycle of a world able to survive only on violence against the people of the earth and the earth itself. The Red Nation (TRN) stands with and moves with the people as we move together with the earth. Where have the masses gone these past months? We are living with a pandemic. Our relatives have died, their proximity to premature death made ever more visible. It is no coincidence that within the United States the workers, the dispossessed, and the Black, Brown and Indigenous masses, have suffered the greatest losses. Our relatives, from these same communities, are on the streets carrying the torch as the revolutionary moment flares. We have seen the domestic imperial forces burn. It is a time of extreme clarification. We are changed. This statement reflects this change.

At the 2019 Native Liberation Conference, we discussed, debated, and ratified the following position: the primary political ideology of The Red Nation is revolutionary socialism. As waves of mass insurrection rose across Turtle Island, a small group of us gathered to consider further one of the central tensions that we hold as an Indigenous socialist organization: does socialism and the method we use to arrive there, Marxism, align or conflict with Indigenous histories of resistance? What is the relevance of Marxism to Indigenous practices of communalism and philosophies of land as relation?

We present the following as a natural extension of the work we began in the previous position paper. We stand by that position and we stretch it here to meet the demands and analysis of our members as we come into greater understanding of our past, present, and future. Continuing to develop and clarify the principles that guide TRN is of central importance to us. As we rise to meet the people, we continue to center queer Indigenous feminism, which must be articulated as strongly as, and simultaneous with, revolutionary socialism. Beyond this banner of revolutionary socialism, we see ourselves walking toward communism. How does queer Indigenous feminism shape and reshape communism? In the end, we find little sense in speaking of them separately. As feminists, we reclaim these methods and steward them to serve the people. This is a continuation of Third World struggle.

We write with urgency but also from within history. We desperately need to orient ourselves and our people to make it through this world to another, but we cannot act out of desperation. We turn to socialism to undertake a well-coordinated, massive redistribution of resources, and the end of US settler colonial occupation that uproots lives for the sake of ravaging the earth's resources for capitalist accumulation.

We practice resurgent and insurgent forms of communalism as we work to become more-human human beings capable of practicing reciprocity with the land and its form of love.

Like everything TRN does, what we undertake here will continue to change because our material conditions are always changing.

1. Communism is Indigenous

- *On Socialism* -

Though the language of socialism and communism is largely attributed to Marx, our ancestors were born free and practiced systems of caretaking that provided for the people without profit or accumulation in the capitalist sense. It is only because of capitalism that we are forced to employ revolutionary socialism as a vehicle to reclaim and name these caretaking systems.

Socialism is not the same as communism.

Socialism is the first step in reclaiming a sense of humanity as well as a love for humanity. Grace Lee Boggs, echoing Frantz Fanon, wrote that revolution is the process of becoming more-human human beings. Through socialism, we begin the process of reclaiming our humanity.

Socialism is a program for survival. If we want to live to see communism, we must build something that can weather the already-present ecological crisis. We know that capitalism and its handy machinery of militarized colonialism has destroyed the land, water, and skies, and torn up the bodies and spirits of Indigenous, Brown and Black people around the world. We

need socialism to usher in the sweeping changes for liberation and to defend ourselves from the inevitable brutal reaction of the capitalist class. Once the survival of colonized peoples is secured through the mass redistribution of resources and decimation of violent state capabilities, we can build up our liberated territories towards communism.

Socialism is the path to the full development of the creative potential of all. It is the chiseling away of oppressive social relations that have chained humanity to the rule of the few. It is breaking down the walls of oppression that keep the humble people of the Earth hemmed-in under the jackboot of the rich. Torrents of creative power locked in the hearts of billions of people around the world await to burst out and destroy capitalist social relations based on greed and the search for profits. This creative power comes from many sources, some human, some other-than-human:

Millions of Indigenous people seizing their own destiny as protectors and defenders of Mother Earth.

Billions of workers strengthening communal relations through sharing the wealth created by their labor via voluntary mutual aid.

Millions of living artists and scientists, creators and spiritual beings, giving full reign to their potentialities, making it possible to elevate one another, their other-than-human relations, the Earth, and life itself.

For Indigenous people, socialism is the process of being able to live as Indigenous again in full collective determination of our present and future. Communism fulfills all that begets life on Mother Earth through the overturning of all forms of private property.

- *On Communism* -

Communism is our past and our horizon. Indigenous people have always been communists. We call for communism in our prayers because communism is our rightful relation with the earth. When we hear “from the bottom up,” we think of liberation achieved from reflecting on the experiences of life from the grassroots to the next world—literally that which emerges from below the earth and grows upward to greet the sun. When we bless ourselves, we start from our feet and work our way up to the top of our heads. We emerged into new worlds from the ground up, bringing with us what we loved from past worlds and discarding practices that caused violence and chaos. This is an Indigenous theory of history. It is also the theory of communism. Courage, love, and change comes from the bottom up. This is how we want to emerge into the world of communism.

Left abolitionist Ruth Wilson Gilmore has said, “we don’t want to create something today that we will have to destroy tomorrow.” The same holds true for Indigenous communism. While we draw from many traditions of socialism and communism, we are intentional in learning from history and not simply replicating that which has come before. While we draw from Indigenous political traditions, we do not claim that our ancestors lived in a perfect world. We have a right to study the dynamic and complex history of socialism and communism—with all its faults and glories—and choose which aspects of this history to bring with us (and which to discard) as we create a new world. The same applies to Indigenous history and Indigenous traditions of resistance. Marxism, for example, is a science and tool for liberation and class analysis. Indigenous struggles around the world have studied and utilized Marxism for this precise reason. To dismiss Marxism as only belonging to Europe erases these Indigenous struggles that have embraced and weaponized Marxism for their own

liberation. These struggles teach us that the choice between such traditions —communist, socialist, Indigenous, feminist, or otherwise— is our right as oppressed nations seeking liberation. We have been systematically denied by colonialism the freedom to choose our own destiny. To study, debate, and choose our path towards liberation is an act of defiant self-determination and Indigenous autonomy in the face of self-doubt and dependency, the only political currency made available to us by paternalistic systems of colonial guardianship. We break this cycle today.

Communism will be relevant to Indigenous liberation so long as we value kinship. Communism is kinship; kinship is communism. Marx knew this. Marx saw in Indigenous kinship the fulcrum of the commons, which he understood as the basis of communism. He understood the original form of capitalist violence was the enclosure of the commons. The caging and commodification of communal lands through the erection of fences and borders created the conditions for primitive accumulation. It also alienated people from their kinship bonds, literally forged through communal relationship with the land. While Marx was observing this in England, Indigenous people were resisting and mourning the enclosure of our commons here in Turtle Island: the theft and transfer of our beloved kin—the land, mountains, and rivers—into private property and eminent domain. Capitalism requires all forms of relationality to become selfish (as in to own property) and individualist (as in to own wealth). Communism is based on the opposite: generosity and collectivity, what we as Indigenous peoples simply call ‘kinship’ (the term is different in each of our languages, so the English term is a shorthand).

Today, The Red Nation reclaims communism for Indigenous people.

The redistribution of abundance through and after the

revolution must be premised on a different conception of wealth and value, particularly as they apply to land. Land is not a gift freely given, but a relation. Indigenous peoples have long struggled against the abstraction and commodification of land into property. Communism means the resurgence of social relations premised on understanding land as a relative. There can be no ownership of our relative; our collective use is reciprocal with the land and its systems. Communism is the end of a class society premised on private property and systems of life that require the caging of land and all existing on it with borders. It is the restoration of a way of life premised on kinship, free of borders and notions of ownership. Communism allows the land to be sacred. In our dreams, we see Mother Earth liberated, no longer scarred with the borders of enclosure and private property. We see humanity returning to a life based on kinship.

We love communism because we love ourselves. When we speak of Indigenous communism, we speak of caretaking and liberation. We speak of a world based on social wellbeing and abundance where all relatives have their needs met and live with dignity and joy. Where social relations are based on cooperation, reciprocity, consent, mutual respect, support, and care, and other-than-human relatives have equal standing with human beings. This is a world of self-determination, autonomy, and the agency of all life to live free from violence and coercion, specifically carcerality. A world where equality abounds and class disappears. A world filled with creativity and happiness.

The Red Nation operates on the basis of revolutionary love for all oppressed peoples. We recognize the special place that Black liberation holds for the future of any socialist revolution in these lands. The mass insurrection we are witnessing in this historic moment proves this to be true. Black liberation is the spear along with Indigenous liberation towards building communism on Turtle Island. If Black and Indigenous liberation are the spear of

socialist revolution, then Black and Indigenous left feminism is the tip of that spear. Indigenous and Black left feminists are the special beacons for our collective struggle. We look to these feminists to lead the revolutionary struggle because it is from within these traditions that caretaking and ethical relationality have emerged as the path towards abolition and decolonization. However, bourgeois feminism serves only the upwardly mobile and elite classes such as those populating the ranks of the academy. Bourgeois academic culture in general is rife with anticommunism, particularly in the feminist and queer theories that dictate academically-produced politics in the Global North. These traditions of queer feminism often mistake critique for politics and divorce ideas from praxis, reinforcing the very abstraction of materiality that Marx so detested. Critique constitutes only part of politics; liberation requires praxis and a deep, unwavering commitment to building revolutionary movements with other human beings. This sets left queer feminists apart from radical bourgeoisie feminists. Black and Indigenous left feminists steer us towards the development of movements based on kinship, solidarity, and hope. These traditions guide Indigenous nations into just and reciprocal relations with other nations based on kinship and solidarity so that we may live free of violence and stop harming the earth.

Communists are caricatured by social and political conservatives, including many on the left, as rabid authoritarians, power-hungry state despots, enforcers of labor camps, and silencers of dissent. These anticommunist myths roll off the tongues of those who seek to destroy true communism found in Indigenous movements to decolonize the earth. To be anticommunist on stolen land is to be anti-Indian. And yes, Indigenous people who are anticommunist can be anti-Indian. It goes without saying that all subjects of the US empire—including our fellow Indigenous people—have been taught from birth that communism is evil. Or that

it's just a "dead white man" philosophy. Many in TRN harbored anticommunism in the past. We encourage everyone to question what you have been taught about communism, especially if you live in the United States. Anticommunism simply justifies and emboldens settler claims to stolen land, premised as they are on enclosure, entitlement, and individualism. As we fan the flames of the cleansing fire raging across Turtle Island, toppling colonizers, righting history, and setting the stage for mass land return, Indigenous people will be facing increased repression from a settler order that desperately clings to property as its final vestige of power in a dying society.

Do not put the struggle for Indigenous liberation at greater risk simply because you refuse to question your prejudice against communism. We love communism because we love our people and the lands that claim us. Join us in building a communist world of abundance, creativity, and joy.

- *Special Clause for Settler Socialists and Communists* -

If your socialism or communism in North America does not center Indigenous liberation and decolonization (i.e. land return), then you need to better understand your self-proclaimed political tradition and get with the program. Communism is, and always has been, Indigenous.

2. On Feminism

- *Queer Indigenous Feminism* -

Our thinking about queer Indigenous feminism has changed since we adopted our first position in September 2019. In this follow up, we wish to clarify the specific relationship between queer Indigenous feminism, socialism, and communism.

It has become clear to us through praxis that the egalitarianism and emphasis on relations of care that lie at the heart of Indigenous traditions of kinship are, in fact, the very same as those that communism names. To be socialist revolutionaries facilitating the transition from capitalism to communism in the present means to be good relatives, caretakers, protectors, and fierce defenders of all living beings. The discrimination, exclusion, and domination at the heart of capitalist and settler heteronormativity have no place in the next world.

The communist world we build will come not only from street revolts and guerilla actions against the settler state, but the previously obscured work that women, queers, and trans people of all genders have done in the realms of care. This is the labor of sustaining us, our basic needs whether these be for food, shelter, or pleasure. Care encompasses a set of practices for recreating the world and reimagining our relationship to all our relatives. We have already seen and experienced this under global pandemic with the rise of widespread mutual aid networks that have the potential to become caretaking infrastructures. The economies of our capitalist present are premised on abuse. The economies of our socialist transition and communist future will be premised on care.

Queer Indigenous feminism emphasizes kinship and relationality based in reciprocity. Queer Indigenous feminists remind us that Indigenous traditions of kinship do not discriminate against gender and sexual diversity amongst our relatives. Prior to settler colonialism many Indigenous peoples recognized and respected their relatives who did not fit gender binaries. Indigenous stories and kinship practices show the presence of female, male, intersex, and multiple genders.

Gender roles within families and societies included non-binary relatives. Those who did not fall into binary gender roles were valued members of Indigenous societies and even crucial to the survival of people and communities. Marriage as an expression of kinship was fluid, divorce was uncomplicated, and plural partnerships were common. Childrearing was not the sole responsibility of biological mothers but, rather, often spread across multiple caretakers within a kinship network. We seek a return to these practices of self-determination in regards to gender and sexuality and communal distribution of social reproduction.

In addition to these fluid relationships with gender and sexuality, Indigenous peoples also embraced the earth and land as a relative. As queer Indigenous feminists have long argued, the gender binary is the source, in settler societies, of perspectives on how the earth and land should be treated. The binary dictates that land is feminine and should be conquered, subjugated, and dominated by men. This is also the basis for converting land into property that can be “possessed” and “owned.” Early accounts from colonizers displayed horror about Indigenous societies that did not regard the land as an object to be dominated. Alarmed by Indigenous peoples’ reverence for the earth as a relative with which humans could—and did—have relationships (sometimes sexual), settlers used the violence of heteronormativity to destroy these relationships.

Settler heteronormativity has fundamentally disrupted Indigenous traditions of kinship that embrace multiple genders, fluid sexualities, and other-than-human relationships. In order to stop the many-headed monster of settler normativity, we must harness the power of Indigenous kinship to survive

and gather our collective forces toward the care of all because, fundamentally, kinship is about care. And care, as our first position on queer Indigenous feminism notes, does not discriminate. For Indigenous peoples, care is the basis of social reproduction. When we caretake our relations, we agree to caretake all our relations with the same openness and acceptance of difference and multiplicity that our ancestors practiced. We must embrace queer Indigenous feminism as the deepest expressions of this kinship.

As we discuss above, communism describes a political and economic system derived from Indigenous traditions of kinship. In the context of Indigenous liberation struggles, queer Indigenous feminism names the social relations that make the larger political project of communism possible. Communism also creates a system in which a person's "worth" is not determined by the proximity to the self-possessed and possessive male but rather allows for the flourishing of genders and sexualities. This is a system that honors the roles of diverse genders and plural sexualities in caretaking and kinship.

- *Marxist Feminism* -

Our stance on queer Indigenous feminism relates directly to our position on Marxist feminism, which explores and uncovers the hidden labor that women perform for the reproduction of capitalist social relations. Labeled as "caretaking," and, for the most part, unpaid, women's labor has historically been erased as a form of labor. Sylvia Federici points out that, despite this erasure, caretaking is an essential form of labor in capitalist societies that keeps entire economies afloat. While Marxist feminists have mostly focused on the sexism

inherent to the gendered division of labor in capitalist societies, we have also noticed in the course of our work with TRN that socialists and communists tend to reproduce this sexism within movement labor by silencing and marginalizing women's labor and leadership, despite purportedly being "anti-capitalist." Even more concerning is the habit of certain left tendencies to dismiss feminism (and Indigenous liberation struggles) as "identity politics" and therefore not purely Marxist. We're not interested in being pure Marxists, nor in being pure Indigenous or pure feminists, for that matter. We simply see an ongoing need to address rote sexism in left culture because it continues to destroy revolutionary momentum.

It is for this reason that the interventions of Marxist feminists are as relevant today as they were forty years ago. Cismen continue to dominate left spaces in the Global North. Men are the talking heads of our organizations, Twitter accounts, books, and podcasts. Most of these men are white. They consume much of our time and energy, leaving little space for women, queers, and gender non-conforming relatives to participate, let alone lead. Cismen, whether white, Brown, Black, or Indigenous, posture and spar with one another online about who has the correct line or the most radical take. The rest of us are expected to sit on the sidelines of this pissing contest, liking their witty retorts and investing our political energies into defending (or canceling) them.

We need to be honest about the fact, too, that socialist and communist organizations and parties in the Global North have a serious problem with normalizing sexual harassment and sexual assault. When confronted by their own membership with demands for accountability, the leadership in these

organizations have often covered up and excused abusers instead of simply removing these men from leftist spaces and undertaking restorative justice in a transparent and accountable manner. This isn't rocket science. It's inexcusable for leftists to be trailing corporate HR departments when it comes to ethically handling gender and sexual violence. How are we ever going to overturn capitalism if we can't even muster semi-decent politics about the gendered division of labor that upholds our very existence?

Given the ongoing need for feminist analysis, intervention, and politics within the left, we proclaim The Red Nation to be a Marxist feminist organization. We refuse to normalize sexism within the left. We acknowledge that heteropatriarchy is one of the most entrenched and destructive reactionary and counterrevolutionary influences in our work. However, we will not be reduced to feminist watchdogs for the left that join so-called political debate only to remind our male comrades that sexism, rape, or misogyny is bad, and then recede onto the sidelines while the "real" leftists-- men—duke it out in the public sphere to produce the winning political line for the rest of us. Women, queer relatives, and gender nonconforming folks are the vanguard of the present, and TRN will support their leadership without hesitation.

3. The Question of the State

“The working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made State machinery, and wield it for its own purposes.”

Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, Preface to the 1872 German Edition of the Communist Manifesto.

Indigenous people know from direct experience that every moment of our existence is mediated by the state. Our communities face state violence daily, a violence that holds us hostage, forcing us to engage with it. We are the group most likely to be murdered and harassed by the police and to experience high rates of incarceration. The for-profit state-prison industrial complex disproportionately targets Black and Indigenous people, exploiting our labor and time to put money into the pockets of the elite.

The state harasses us at every turn. We face state violence when we protect our lands and waters from the fossil fuel industry. Or when we protect our sacred sites from desecration by settler politicians for propaganda purposes.

The US built its ruling capitalist class through the genocide and theft of land stolen from the Indigenous inhabitants of this continent, and by exploiting the enslaved labor of African people. This country was founded on the class war of the rich upon the basis of racism, conducted, enabled and safeguarded by the state apparatus. The US created white supremacy to uphold this class war, constructing an empire of capitalist domination through westward expansion and colonization in the 1800s, and US imperialist subjugation of Black and Brown peoples across the Global South in the twentieth and twenty-

first centuries.

The police forces, which have been militarized over the last several decades, serve as an occupying army in Black and Brown neighborhoods and Indigenous bordertowns. The wanton killing of Black and Indigenous people at the hands of the police in the United States is the product of racial capitalism, aimed at subjugating people through terror.

Domestic repression in the United States reflects its colonial and imperial practices abroad. Trillions of dollars are spent by the US government to maintain its political and military hegemony throughout the world and to crush every attempt of the oppressed masses in the Global South to throw off the yoke of US imperial domination. It is our sacred internationalist duty, as revolutionaries in the belly of the imperialist beast, to join forces with these oppressed masses in the fight for liberation. We are a contingent of the world revolution against capitalism and US imperialism.

In order to bring about the liberation of Indigenous peoples and all oppressed peoples in this country, and to free the world from the scourge of US imperialism, the capitalist state apparatus and its systems of control must be dismantled, and Turtle Island must be decolonized. This means dismantling the police forces and prison-industrial complex, state surveillance and repressive apparatus, and the US military. It entails the mass return of all land stolen from Indigenous peoples and the right to self-determination for Indigenous nations. This means, as well, self-determination for Black relatives and their right to live on the land. TRN looks forward to further collaborative study with Black-led organizations and Black communities to clarify our positions on land use and how to return the land to a decolonized commons. Our nationalism is not exclusive

but calls for a world where many worlds fit—whether these be expressed as Indigenous nations or not. Moreover, socialism means the self-transformation of the masses of people to free themselves from the ideological social control system that perpetuates capitalist and settler-colonial rule, what we consider imperialism on a so-called domestic front.

Building socialism entails the weakening and eventual dismantling of the capitalist state and all its organs of control, and the organization of oppressed people as the ruling class. This requires the seizure of political power by working and oppressed people in order to be able to repel and neutralize any and all attempts at political restoration of capitalist rule. The political rule of the oppressed masses and the working poor and its defense mechanisms constitute the socialist state. This process requires the development and growth of the political consciousness of the oppressed masses and their understanding of the class character of US settler society.

The socialist state is an instrument wielded to exercise the rule of the working poor and the oppressed masses of Black, Brown and Indigenous peoples. It uses the power and democracy of the masses to undo the privileges and wealth of the ruling classes and the colonial elite—this includes Indigenous, Black, and Brown people who have joined the capitalist and colonial elites. The socialist state will enact decolonization in the form of land restoration to Indigenous nations. Land restoration includes treaty lands like the Black Hills and all federally held parks and lands, such as Chaco Canyon and the Grand Canyon. Cities like Manhattan, Minneapolis, Oakland, and Seattle will also be reclaimed such that the original peoples can return and govern alongside the colonized and dispossessed who now call these places home. Any socialist state that seeks to dismantle capitalism in a settler society must prioritize and develop

mechanisms for mass land return to Indigenous nations as one of its fundamental characteristics.

A socialist state is an organ of class rule, the rule of the working class and the oppressed masses to protect themselves from a restoration of capitalist rule and to enact the return of land and private property to the commons. However, it seeks to destroy itself by allowing the working and oppressed masses to exercise their democracy in order to eliminate the oppressive social relations that have kept people chained to the rule of the capitalist class. Once these oppressive social relations are torn asunder, and communal relations through the sharing of wealth created by labor have become customary among society as a whole, once the creative power of the masses in their millions, as living artists and scientists, creators and spiritual beings, have been given full reign, then the state, as a protective entity against capitalist restoration, becomes one and the same with the whole of society. It will have destroyed itself; the state, made obsolete through the sustained efforts at kinship and communal production on a mass scale, withers away.

4. Abolition

Building socialism entails weakening and eventually dismantling the mechanisms of state violence that were created to serve the interests of capitalism. Marxists have long argued that capitalism requires a large underclass populated by workers who can be exploited for the benefit of the ruling class. This underclass is always racialized. Racialization names the myriad ways that capitalism classifies people according to a hierarchy of value; those at the bottom are deemed disposable (the underclass), whereas those at the top are deemed worthy of life (the ruling class). Because capitalism has global reach,

this classification system orders and ranks humanity at a global level.

However, as Black revolutionaries and intellectuals like W.E.B. DuBois and members of the Combahee River Collective remind us, while racial capitalism as a larger structuring force of global capitalism assigns social and economic value to human life in the interests of capital across the board, racial capitalism in the United States is explicitly and foundationally anti-black because the rise of US capitalism depended so profoundly on the enslavement and commodification of African people. In other words, class-based oppression in the United States is tied specifically to the larger structure of anti-blackness.

As we note in the previous section, the liberal state was founded to facilitate the expansion of capitalism, and in the United States, the state fulfills this function through enforcing anti-blackness. The primary expression of this enforcement today is the carceral state: the prison industrial complex, the police, and the military (we, add, too, that institutions like child protective services and vigilante militias are part of the carceral state). The COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the stunning uprisings we have witnessed during the summer of 2020, have only clarified what we already know about the US carceral state and its relationship to racial capitalism: namely, that the US perpetuates anti-blackness through total abandonment of Black communities (demonstrated by high infection, disease, and death rates), or through outright terrorism and murder (demonstrated by endless police killings and high rates of incarceration). While different technologies of racial capitalism, abandonment and terrorism are equally violent.

It is no secret that the US (and Canadian) state terrorizes, murders, abandons, and incarcerates Indigenous people at a

rate similar to that of our Black kin. While Indigenous people may not be subjected to the logic of anti-blackness that drives racial capitalism in the United States, we are subjected to the logic of anti-Indianism that drives settler colonialism, which dictates that we are cleared from our ancestral lands to make way for settlers to accumulate capital from the conversion of Indigenous lands into private property and the commodification of our other-than-human relatives. For us, the carceral state functions to enforce our elimination through anti-Indianism at all turns.

Given the shared suffering that Black and Indigenous people experience at the hands of the US carceral state, we have a shared dream for freedom. Any socialist revolution that seeks to abolish racial capitalism in these lands must also abolish anti-blackness wherever it rears its disgusting head. So, too, must any socialist revolution that seeks to abolish settler colonialism in these lands abolish anti-Indianism wherever it has taken root. We will never free life on this planet from the death grips of capitalism or colonialism if we do not abolish carcerality, nor will we ever wage a successful socialist revolution in these lands if we do not center the peoples and traditions who have resisted carcerality since capitalism and colonialism touched down: Black and Indigenous people.

The first and most important step we must take as socialists is abolishing the carceral state, thereby cutting capitalism and colonialism down at their knees. In turn, the abolition of carcerality frees us all because it weakens a system that wages violence against all racialized communities across the globe. The liberation of Black and Indigenous relatives raises everyone to a higher level of democracy and fulfills, once and for all, the dreams and hopes of all who have been consigned to the global underclass to live free from this violence.

- *On Private Property* -

The uprisings this summer following George Floyd's murder on May 27th have made it clear that the abolition of carcerality is a project that Black and Indigenous liberation struggles share. Racial capitalism, as a hierarchical system of class and value, works through settler colonialism to devalue, exploit, and commodify other-than-human life—land, rivers, animals, birds, mountains, and oceans—in the interests of capitalism.

Indigenous liberation struggles have taught us that our other-than-human relatives are subjected to the same class logic as human relatives, and are policed by the carceral state to uphold the sanctity of private property over the sanctity of life. Under racial capitalism, our other-than-human relations are constantly degraded, exploited, maimed, and killed. Borders and dams scar our landscapes, disrupt human and other-than-human migration patterns, separate and displace our human and other-than-human relatives, prevent humans from having relationships with the land, and turn other-than-human relatives into commodities and objects of exploitation. We thus understand that the abolition of racial capitalism must also include the abolition of the carceral regimes of private property that oppress and cage our other-than-human relatives. We cannot secure a future where all life is free if we do not advance a struggle for the abolition of private property and the carceral regimes that keep property relations intact.

In this way, abolition pertains to land and other-than-human relatives as much as it pertains to humans. Private property is, after all, a form of carcerality that cages land through the imposition of false borders. Borders, in turn, legitimize state power through justifying mechanisms of policing racialized

communities (and other-than-human species) to keep borders intact. As we note above, the abolition of private property is a communist project. Abolition in this sense is therefore a socialist project to get us to a communist future where all life can live in abundance, joy, and equality. We build communism by liberating the land from borders, by liberating animal relatives from cages and property, and by restoring our relationship with each other and the land through inclusive caretaking relations, economies, and forms of justice.

If we work towards abolition, we are restoring the self-determination, autonomy, and dignity of all life. As Indigenous socialists, we are therefore also abolitionists actively building alternatives that honor all life while dismantling capitalist and colonial systems. Ensuring that all human and other-than-human life have what they need to thrive is the goal of Indigenous socialism and abolition, which seeks to divest from the carceral state (eventually destroying it) and use the resources we gain from divestment to invest in life-affirming education, housing, food security/sovereignty, healthcare, and land and water restoration.

- *On Justice* -

Any communist project, including Indigenous communism, must center and actively build vibrant Black futures for abundance, joy, thriving, and care. This means we must not only dismantle racial capitalism and anti-blackness specifically, but we must also create spaces and conditions for Black thriving now and in the future. Part of this work consists in pursuing justice by finding and cultivating alternatives to carcerality. Indigenous traditions of restorative justice provide a pathway for articulating forms of accountability that don't require putting humans (or other-than-humans) in cages. Rather,

restorative justice is based on kinship and caretaking; it is, necessarily, a communal process. Although restorative justice is often conflated with individual healing and accountability, we see it as a collectivized process. After all, harm between individuals is harm between everybody, and restoration thus needs to occur on a community level. For us, this is a communist (as well as Indigenous) practice because it goes beyond the individual level; it communalizes both harm and repair, and may offer a template for justice and accountability that can replace the carceral state as we achieve communism.

Without justice, healing cannot take place. We refuse to fall into liberal notions of healing that are positioned as individualistic and materialistic gratification. Because the state, systems, and structures brutalizing our peoples exist, we cannot simply ask for people to engage in practices of healing that ignore the need for collective liberation. When the state violence that creates the trauma in the first place is allowed to continue, healing and justice are inextricably bound to one another. Abolition, like any truly transformative healing process, is the annihilation of carcerality and all destructive forces living within us and in the world. Abolitionist work means remembrance of the sacred; that all human and other-than-human life is worthy of care, and that value is not determined by class, but by how we love, caretake, and respect one another's dignity; in other words, how we act as relatives. Black and Indigenous liberation traditions already practice this form of kinship; kinship is the bedrock of our movements that no white supremacist nor settler can kill; that which we have carried through all of time and have never relinquished. Like our ancestors, we have the right to live freely and with dignity, and we will organize, fight, and love—by any means necessary—until we are free.

Conclusion

A summary of our positions:

1. Cishetero patriarchy is counterrevolutionary. Radical feminism—whether Indigenous, Black, or Marxist—is our path towards revolution.
2. Land back happens through socialism and is not a form of exclusionary nationalism, but resurgence of Indigenous governance in solidarity with colonized and working class peoples. We make and steward the world together.
3. Communism is our horizon. Kinship is the path.
4. Indigenous and Black liberation are the spear for socialist revolution in Turtle Island and the forging of internationalist solidarity with global revolution. Indigenous and Black left feminism is the tip of that spear.
5. Black and Indigenous liberation struggles are abolitionist and, when attached to socialist projects toward full communism, seek the end of all logics of carcerality, including private property that warehouse people, cage animals, and enclose lands within borders.

“Certainly, we do not wish that Socialism in America be a tracing and a copy. It must be a heroic creation. We must, with our own reality, in our own language, bring Indoamerican socialism to life.”

— José Carlos Mariátegui

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