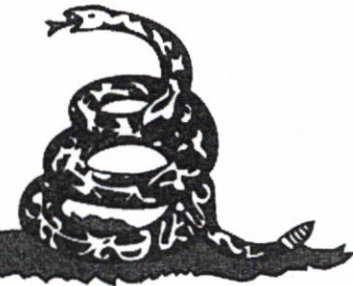


**Of Tea-Parties
and Patriots:**



**~~PLEASE~~
DON'T TREAD ON ME**

Liberty for who?

Comments? Questions? Concerns? Hate mail? Wishes to collaborate?
johnbrown@riseup.net

As town hall meetings on health care become the targets for disruptive protest and a growing "pro-liberty" movement gains traction and headlines, a full analysis of the situations we are facing as white working class people and an analysis of the strategies of the new "pro-liberty" movement is necessary.

I am authoring this piece as a white working class male that comes from a military family background, and identifies to some extent as being a libertarian. This description of myself is important as it helps color the perspective I am writing from, as any differences in my background, race, or socio-economic status would ultimately change the entire nature of this essay.

This piece is also mainly directed at white working class people that are active within this new movement. The reasons for this are many, as will become obvious as this piece progresses.

On race...

The Liberty Movement resembles the broader Libertarian Movement in a myriad of ways. One of these ways is in racial composition. To be plain and up front, the U.S. Right is mostly comprised of white people. These giant Tea Parties, our demonstrations and meetings are seas of white faces, with small sprinklings of nonwhite faces.

Whiteness is defined in many different ways by many different people. To many, Jews are not white. Up until the mid 1900's, white skinned people of Irish and Italian descent were not considered white. Some folks still think this way.

I identify, for the benefit of this essay, a white person as any person with pale skin pigmentation that would commonly pass as white in this society. We don't need to break this down any further. We know whether we're white or not.

Most whites immediately become defensive when the word race is even brought up. We don't want to admit we think in these terms. We don't want to admit that race has anything to do with our lives or what's going on in this country. We'd rather pretend it doesn't exist and not talk about it.

We can act like Ostriches all we want. It doesn't change that our movement is nearly completely white. Let's admit that, understand that, and move on to understanding what that means for us.

On class...

When people bring up the term "class", many white working people start to snicker. The calls of "leftist" or "socialist" or "pinko" come to the lips of many at the mere indication that someone may be conscious of class in America. Despite this tendency, especially within the ranks of poor and working whites, most white working people naturally view the world in terms of class, whether they'd admit it or not.

closing

8) Organize with your neighbors to grow food for your communities. Don't rely on the economic elites for your food any longer. Starting a personal garden is a good first step, but community gardens can provide more food for more people, and create important community ties and working relationships.

9) Be ready to actively defend your neighborhoods, workplaces, and communities from the police and state forces. Take whatever measures you deem necessary to do so.

10) Don't get a job as a cop or prison guard. These jobs also reinforce racial divisions within our class, as well as create domestic armies to use against us when we do work toward our own power. Cops are not our friends. The police systemically exist to protect the rich and their property. Prison guards are not any better. Especially with the expansion of the war on drugs to include a war against Meth, many white working class people are finding themselves in prison and on the other side of the bars from their neighbors in guard's uniforms.

11) Do anything you can to take back resources from the rich. We'll keep this suggestion intentionally vague. The rich have all the food, all the money, all the wealth, and all the power. Let's take it back. Any way we can.

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 to build 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 couragetoresist.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 reclamations 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?