LEFTROOTS'

Liberatory Strategy Toolkit

written by steve williams *with decisive contributions from scores of LeftRoots members*

LEFTROOTS

strategy. protagonism. liberation.

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A leader's most important responsibility is identifying the biggest challenges to forward progress and devising a coherent approach to overcoming them... Yet we have become so accustomed to strategy as exhortation that we hardly blink an eye when a leader spouts slogans and announces high-sounding goals, calling the mixture a "strategy..."

A good strategy does more than urge us forward toward a goal or vision. **A good strategy honestly acknowledges the challenges being faced and provides an approach to overcoming them. And the greater the challenge, the more a good strategy focuses and coordinates efforts to achieve a powerful competitive punch or problem-solving effect.**

Unfortunately, good strategy is the exception, not the rule. And the problem is growing. More and more organizational leaders say they have a strategy, but they do not. Instead, they espouse what I call bad strategy. **Bad strategy tends to skip over pesky details such as problems. It ignores the power of choice and focus**, trying instead to accommodate a multitude of conflicting demands and interests. Like a quarterback whose only advice to teammates is "Let's win," **bad strategy covers up its failure to guide by embracing the language of broad goals, ambition, vision, and values.**

This passage comes from Richard Rumelt's ***Good Strategy/Bad Strategy****. Rumelt was a professor at the UCLA Business School, and he wrote this book to address what he saw as strategic shortcomings in the business world. Although the book was intended for a very different audience, LeftRoots found several of its insights to be very useful in the early stages of our process developing shared language around the need for strategy and naming some of the core components of any good strategy.*

PREFACE

PREFACE

"Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfill it, or betray it."

Frantz Fanon

As we stand at what could be a decisive moment in the 21st century, our mission is nothing less than winning liberation for all people and the planet. Whether we would have chosen this mission or not is irrelevant. The stakes are high. The reality produced by overlapping crises in the world means that we either win socialism— or we face extinction.

We're not deluded about what we're up against, and like so many of you, we intend to win. We know that fulfilling our Fanonian mission will require grit, skill, organization, support, accountability, principled struggle, protagonism, a little luck and a whole lot of liberatory strategy.

LeftRoots was founded in 2014 with an assessment that our movements do not have the kind of movement-wide strategy needed to win liberation. This assessment framed the organization's founding purpose to develop a strategy to win socialist liberation and to cadrefy a critical number of social movement leftists able to play a critical role in reigniting a Left that can innovate, evaluate and carry out that strategy.

The four organizers who launched LeftRoots found that the lack of liberatory strategy represented a debilitating weakness for the movement AND that this absence was the result of historical forces, not simply due to the personal shortcomings of today's organizers and activists. The full breakdown of those reasons is beyond the scope of this toolkit, but in short, it's our view that one of the many consequences of the savage and extra-legal assaults on the Left during the COINTELPRO program was that it wiped out most cadre organizations, an organizational form in the movement ecosystem uniquely positioned to develop and anchor liberatory strategy. Whatever the reasons, LeftRoots believed—

and still does— that creating liberatory strategy and a new generation of strategists is essential to our liberation. We believe it's a precondition for unleashing an unstoppable movement. And we believe that it's possible.

ORIGIN STORY

Although LeftRoots started to develop strategy and strategists, we came to see that the problem in the movement was even deeper than the mere the lack of strategy. Not only didn't we have liberatory strategy, the movement also had deep confusion about what we mean by 'strategy' and little consensus on what makes up strategy.

Over time, LeftRoots shifted much of our program to account for this updated assessment, and this toolkit is part of the result. We see it as an offering to help close a critical gap that LeftRoots has come to see in our movement ecosystem at the moment of this toolkit's publication.

From the beginning, LeftRoots launched multiple initiatives to sharpen our understanding of strategy. First, the entire membership read strategy documents that guided previous revolutionary movements. That didn't meet our goals because members mistakenly thought that the assignment was simply to take what had been written and to use it as a blueprint for our current work.

Our second effort played out in 2017 when the organization tasked a team of members took to craft a sample version of liberatory strategy rooted in an understanding of current conditions in the U.S. While that document was a step forward, it did not deepen our capacity to have principled and productive debates of strategy because members struggled to distinguish incomplete assessments from differences in assessment, differences in strategy from differences in theory of change.

Finally in 2019, LeftRoots tasked a couple of members to distill the common set of questions that all liberatory strategies attempt to answer. By the end of that year, LeftRoots had a working draft of this Liberatory Strategy Toolkit, and all members participated in a series of trainings. Afterwards, everyone used the toolkit to draft their own sketch of liberatory strategy.

In the months that followed, new teams of members used the toolkit to refine and expand on their original sketches. Through it all, the organization took note of what worked and what didn't with that early draft of the toolkit. This ongoing assessment has shaped this new-and-improved version of the Liberatory Strategy Toolkit.

While LeftRoots decided to put much of our time and energy into developing and rolling out this framework (even as many members continue to be on the frontlines of some of the movement's most crucial campaign and base-building efforts), it is important to acknowledge that we did not invent the toolkit. Rather, it is the result of our digging through archives to bring to light and weave together the innovations and insights of the generations of revolutionary organizers, activists and visionaries on whose shoulders we stand. There are wildly important examples and lessons that have been kept from us, that our enemies want us to believe never existed. The toolkit came into being

If you are interested, the original version of the toolkit is available for download. The link is in the appendix.

If you download it, you'll see that the original version was much longer. We found this made it harder to keep one's focus on each tool's essential questions. Additionally, some of the language was clunky, and the tools separated content and methodology in ways we addressed in this version.

In the end, we believe that this updated version is a more effective toolkit, but in case it's helpful to review some of the more granular questions of the previous version, we're making the original version available for download.

through a practice of listening to the whispered lessons of our revolutionary ancestors, and it aims to amplify the power of our future work.

We hope the toolkit is a contribution to revitalizing the strong and reflective, popular and audacious socialist Left grounded in liberatory strategy. That hope grows from our lived experience that a toolkit like this can democratize strategy and strategizing in ways that de-mystifies this work. In doing so, we believe more people, many of whom might have been left on the sidelines, will be in a position to substantively engage the development, revision and carrying out of liberatory strategy because we have a shared framework off of which to operate.

LeftRoots offers this toolkit with confidence and humility. The author and the organization have dedicated time and energy to crafting the framework and have developed some expertise. At the same time, we know that we are still learning to be the expert liberatory strategists that we want to be. We trust that through practice, comrades will sharpen and refine the framework; all of which will better prepare us to rise to the challenges confronting us. We just hope this offering accelerates cadrefication for all of us, ourselves included.

WHAT IS LIBERATORY STRATEGY?

The toolkit defines liberatory strategy as "a hypothesis of how political forces can build capacities and shift the balance of power on ever-changing terrain to defeat opposing forces so that they can carry out revolutionary change." There's more on the hypothesis methodology in the introduction to section 2, but for now, what's important about this framing is that, as a hypothesis, strategy should be tested in practice, evaluated, and updated through practice, rather than simply decreed. It's a way to ensure that strategy is grounded in the world it seeks to change.

Synonymous with "revolutionary strategy," the role of liberatory strategy is to guide the decisions and actions of movements of hundreds of thousands of people and organizations struggling in different sectors on shifting terrain for the purpose of coalescing their strengths to be more than the sum of the individual parts. Not every organizer or activist will do the same thing in a successful revolutionary movement, but liberatory strategy provides a shared logic for all of those organizers and activists to be pulling in the same direction.

Over time, LeftRoots has come to see that the toolkit is not only trying to advance a particular definition and approach to strategy-making and strategy-doing, but it is also pushing back on common misconceptions about what strategy is, who develops it and how it's evaluated. Here are some of those interventions:

COMMON MISCONCEPTION ON STRATEGY	LEFTROOTS' ASSERTION ON STRATEGY
Strategy is everything. 'Strategic' means 'important' rather than consistent with and contributing to a strategy.	**Strategy is a hypothesis of how political forces can build capacities and shift the balance of power on ever-changing terrain to defeat opposing forces so that they can carry out revolutionary change.**
Approach is passive, like a spectator sport that only an elite few can do.	**Approach demands protagonism and grounded, critical engagement.**
Any difference reveals strategic difference, and possibly political antagonism.	**Strategic unity equals the basis of shared experimentation for a shared purpose.**
Strategy can only be known after the fact.	**Strategy must be articulated in advance and tested in praxis *(theory and practice)*.**
Strategy is evaluated by whether actions prefigure the world we envision.	**Strategy is evaluated by whether actions resolve contradictions that produce improved conditions and in the terrain of struggle and allow the movement to expand its capacities and build power.**
Only "short-term" or sectoral strategy is useful and/or relevant given the urgency of the moment and the diversity of conditions.	**Liberatory strategy deepens the impact of and gives purpose to other forms of strategy– "situational strategy," campaign strategy, electoral strategy, etc.**
Strategy is merely a collection of deeply held beliefs, values, insights or leanings.	**Liberatory strategy builds on a materialist assessment and must have a clear and consistent strategic thru-line.**
*Strategy can **only** be crafted by experts.*	**Crafting strategy requires skill and training and people who develop those capacities will be able to contribute to the development and updating of strategy.**

LIBERATORY STRATEGY INSTEAD OF LONG-TERM STRATEGY

The last intervention the toolkit is making comes with our decision to use the term "liberatory strategy" instead of "long-term strategy." This decision reflects our hope of freeing strategy from the constraints of linear planning. This is not because we think we will win socialist liberation in a few weeks. But as history (both recent and more distant) shows us, there are moments in history when qualitative leaps happen. For example, in February 2020, no one could have predicted that in less than six months the slogan "Black lives matter" would find its way onto network TV shows and corporate commercials, and that the demand of defunding the police would become a talking point in the presidential campaign. This is not to say that moment permanently shifted politics. It is simply an observation that history does not unfold evenly. Occasionally, there are breaks and ruptures.

The task for revolutionary organizers and activists is to be attentive to when those breaks happen and to respond in a way that advances strategy for victory. An orientation that sees those advances as something that happens "in the long-term" has the potential of disorganizing us, tempting us to "put that off for later". For that reason, LeftRoots uses the phrase "liberatory strategy," to nudge us to look out for the inevitable breaks and ruptures. If and when there are opportunities to take a great leap forward, we want our strategy to guide us.

LIBERATORY STRATEGY IN THREE PARTS PLUS AN APPENDIX

The Liberatory Strategy Toolkit is divided into three main sections— Assessing, Strategizing, and Implementing. The toolkit closes with an appendix of resources.

The first section provides the foundation from which the strategy will grow. The three tools of the assessing section call on us to develop an assessment of what we need, what exists now and what's shifting. **There are three tools in the assessing section of the toolkit:**

1. **Structural vision that would make liberation possible,**
2. **Assessment of the dominant system in the world today and**
3. **Assessment of the current conjuncture.**

The second, the Strategizing section walks us through a process of articulating a strategic hypothesis of how movement forces can consolidate a bloc of class and social sectors and defeat the opposition, opening the opportunity to begin the process of constructing

another world. While rooted in the concrete assessment of the system and conditions we struggle in, liberatory strategy will be broad enough for the hypothesis to guide and align various struggles happening in different sectors and in different conditions. **There are two tools in this section:**

4. **Liberatory Strategy & Phases of Struggle, and**
5. **Situational Objective & Possible Scenarios**

The final section of the liberatory strategy toolkit helps us determine an action plan that aligns your day-to-day work to the liberatory strategy. Strong and clear liberatory strategy will demonstrate its value in this implementation phase. Just as important to laying out a basis for what work is to be done, effective strategy should provide a framework to determine what work is ***not*** to be done. Used effectively, liberatory strategy should push against the inertia of taking on activities (and exhausting resources) just because we've always done that, or because other people expect us to. This is especially critical when the movement is less strong and has fewer resources than our opposition. **There are two tools in the Implementing section:**

1. **Action Plan, and**
2. **Evaluation**

This three-part framework of liberatory strategy ultimately facilitates productive discussion, debate, work and evaluation— something essential in the context of a complex and rapidly shifting set of conditions that are increasingly globalized. We hope it makes it more possible for our movement to simultaneously achieve victories (even if they are only partial victories) while also holding firmly to a bold and inspiring vision of liberation for all people and the planet.

The toolkit's conclusion features a glossary of terms and an appendix of some useful resources, including the first draft of this toolkit.

As you'll see, each of the toolkit's sections have a dialectical relationship to one another. For example, your organization's assessment of the conjuncture might shift after radical breaks in the terrain of struggle. This could prompt the organization to alter its program and action plan. Or your organization might come to the conclusion that your original assessment of the collective material interests of the working class was inaccurate, which would then demand a re-evaluation of strategy. Or finally, your organization might have a massive influx of new members that allows your organization to carry out more work in the current situation that results in a modification of the organizational hypothesis and workplan.

LIBERATORY STRATEGY'S THRU-LINE

We recommend that you follow the sequence laid out in the toolkit, especially the first time you and your organization are developing liberatory strategy since each piece builds on the responses you develop in the earlier tools. Remember that following the steps will not only help you craft the "right" strategy, it will help you show your work. This work will provide the logical thru-line that connects your call for what is to be done with your assessment of what is. We call this logical thru-line the strategic thru-line.

The strategic thru-line represents the consistency in answers you're developing from one tool to another. It is important to develop and maintain a strong and consistent logic. For example, if in the assessment of the system, you determine that the dominant economic system is incapable of supporting the liberatory society you outline, then it would break the strategic thru-line to suggest that passing reforms alone to raise the minimum wage alone would be sufficient to win liberation. Having a clear and consistent strategic thru-line makes it easier to see if there are specific adjustments might be necessary, instead of throwing the whole thing out.

At each step in the process— from assessment to implementation— you have the responsibility of making sure that the thru-line is upheld. You will do this by revisiting your previous responses to make sure that everything is lining up.

STRATEGIZING FOR LIBERATION

While broader discussion of what needs to be in place for a movement for socialist liberation to win is beyond the scope of this toolkit, it is critical to note that liberatory strategy plays a critical role connecting various organizations and struggles in a larger movement ecosystem. A healthy movement ecosystem will feature various types of organizations, each playing distinct and, ideally, complimentary roles. Liberatory strategy is so potent because it opens the door for organizations that are working in different settings and on different issues to still amplify one another's work in a conscious way, helping the movement to be stronger than the sum of its parts.

Not every organization, alliance or front will be, or even should be, completely aligned around a single strategic orientation. There will be instances where activists who are committed to different strategies should work together, and some organizations need to provide experiences that allow activists to become clearer about what strategy they are most aligned with. For example, a base-building organization of housing tenants would undermine its larger role if it restricted membership only to those tenants who already self-identify as socialists. That organization will be stronger if it is able to recruit and organize tenants with very different politics and encourage members to get clarity about broader strategy. By waging campaigns and crafting intentional organizational experiences, this base-building organization help members over time to see themselves aligned with a movement for socialist liberation. This kind of strategic diversity is vital for multiple types of organizations, even beyond base-building organizations.

Conversely one of the characteristics that distinguishes cadre organizations from other organizational forms in the movement ecosystem is that they are expressly organized around a liberatory strategy. While there can be some diversity of strategic within cadre organizations, the amount depending on various factors, the members of cadre formations are uniquely committed to doing what is necessary to advance that strategy. Activists with sufficient strategic difference should be in separate cadre organizations. This does not mean they should strive to work together with integrity where that is appropriate, but it does mean that the cadre organization should maintain a sufficiently high level of unity that the organization can work to advance its strategy with movement allies and draw out lessons from those efforts. Within the cadre formation, the work might involve continuing to do the work that member has already been doing; other times, it might mean accepting a deployment to start work in a different sector; and other times, it might involve take on completely new tasks; but all of it is carried out with high levels of discipline and in coordination with others.

For this reason, the toolkit is primarily intended to be used by cadre organizations seeking to develop and evaluate liberatory strategy. We made this decision because LeftRoots sees cadre organizations as the organizational form in the larger movement ecosystem that is uniquely responsible for anchoring liberatory strategy. That is not to suggest that cadre organization is the most important organizational form, but it does play a critical role in the larger movement ecosystem. Revolutions cannot be successful without strong and vibrant revolutionary movements that protagonize the people. Other types of organizations play essential roles in movements for liberation, and ideally, other types of organizations will be aligned with the liberatory strategy, or at least parts of it. But cadre organizations play a unique role of advancing liberatory strategy. That's not a role that can be claimed by demanding it. It's a role that's earned.

The secondary audience for the toolkit are cadres in cadre organizations who need to understand their organization's strategy so that they can carry it out in alignment with other cadres working in different sectors in different conditions. This deeper level of understanding of the strategy, more than just the headlines, empowers those cadres to make critical contributions to ongoing evaluations and possible re-assessments of the strategy.

The final audience for the toolkit are the organizers and activists of other organizations and collectives looking to develop strategy that relates to the movement's liberatory strategy. A single organization's strategy cannot substitute for a movement's liberatory strategy so there will be some challenges for organizations seeking to use the toolkit for their own purposes. It's critical that no organization seek to take the place of the whole movement, but since the over-arching nature of liberatory strategy has to be carried out in specific contexts, there are massive benefits that organizations like base-building organizations, activist collectives, national people's organizations, etc. can draw from using the toolkit.

THREE POINTS ON USING THE LIBERATORY STRATEGY TOOLKIT

1. **Stay focused on each tool's essential and top-line questions.** Each tool has a main "essential question" that you are developing a response to. To help breakdown the essential question, each tool also has a set of top-line questions. Answering those should move you closer to developing a grounded response to the essential question. In some cases, the top-line questions have sub-questions to break those questions down.

   Don't get lost in the details. Some of the questions could be the basis of doctorate dissertations that take years to write. The point is not to articulate a complete analysis or a description of all the conditions happening all around the world. While we should answer the questions as correctly and completely as we can, **the point is to develop a summarizing response to the essential question that we can trace back how we came to that assessment.**

   If you start to lose focus, return to the essential question.

2. **Take time out to breathe when it gets hard.** The toolkit includes specific terms and language drawn from various revolutionary traditions. Some of it might be unfamiliar.

   We decided to use a lot of the terminology, even if it seems inaccessible because defeating capitalism, patriarchy and white supremacy will not be easy. Most of these are terms used in our revolutionary traditions. Becoming fluent in this jargon facilitates our learning lessons and drawing inspiration from our revolutionary ancestors.

   Becoming strategists to win twenty-first century will call on all of us to develop high level expertise, and we believe some of these terms help us to move through our tasks more efficiently. For example, doulas use terms that most people would not understand, but that's because doulas take on roles and responsibilities in the human experience that most people don't.

   There's a glossary at the end the toolkit. It offers definitions on some terms and explanations on the specific intent we had in using other terms. If the glossary doesn't quiet your doubts, feel free to ask comrades. Getting comfortable with jargon and crafting strategy are ultimately collective efforts.

   Even if you understand the words, some of the questions might seem beyond your capacity to answer. Don't worry. Follow the flow of the sub-questions. Do your best to answer them, but don't get hung up. Do what you can, and keep it movin'.

3. **Check your thru-line early and often.** ***Liberatory strategy is more than the compilation of answers to each of the tools.*** The thru-line represents the integrity of the whole. It is the logical thread that connects all of the pieces.

   One could develop an assessment on one tool and then develop an assessment in another tool that loses sight and contradicts earlier answers. Any strategy is only effective because it makes real a hypothesis of how to achieve a desired outcome in the context of actual conditions. To describe strategy, one must name the conditions it is responding to. That's why it's so important to pay attention to the thru-line, making sure that the way you answer the questions of one tool carry over to the next.

WRAPPING UP THE PREFACE

Finally, before we jump into the tools, it is important to acknowledge the toolkit is unique. Previous revolutionary movements (at least that we're aware of) have focused on carrying out the strategy developed by a small group of cadres. They have focused less attention on developing the strategic literacy of their cadres or of the movement. There were reasons that drove those decisions, and the successes of revolutionary movement around the globe are proof to some of the strengths of that model.

However, LeftRoots has developed this framework because we believe previous approaches to developing and carrying out strategy had their own shortcomings, and importantly will not work in our time. Obstacles like postmodernism, pessimism, and alienation coupled with the decades-long supremacy of the Right, its assault on the Left and the accelerating pace of social, economic and ecological change mean that a movement to win socialism for the 21st century must have an explicitly named framework for liberatory strategy if we hope to succeed.

Crafting liberatory strategy that will enable our movement to win the future and the planet we all deserve requires skill and expertise. In particular, we have come to see the dialectical materialist as an invaluable set of tools to developing strategy that seeks a way forward by identifying contradictions to unlock. Before we began this process, few of us had been trained in this method— and a bunch of us had never heard about it! But even as we stumbled in trying to use the method, we did not let that stop us, and we'd encourage you to do the same. The glossary at the end of this toolkit includes a link to some of the resources LeftRoots used to sharpen our individual and collective capacities as theoreticians and dialectical materialists focused on changing the world, so you too can include this method in your toolbox. As we continue to become stronger strategists, we also commit to deepening our ability to use the dialectical method in service of becoming more effective liberatory organizers and activists. And we hope to do that with you.

So, this toolkit is an innovation and an experiment. And as such, we are confident that there are pieces that will be strengthened and sharpened as more comrades engage with it.

But even though this represents a unique (as much as we know) effort, we are not reinventing the wheel. **We have done our best as the authors to draw from the wisdom and lessons of our revolutionary ancestors. We have read their documents. We have reverse-engineered the questions their strategy seems to have focused on answering.** We acknowledge (and give thanks for) a heavy influence drawn from the revolutionary traditions of Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe and Turtle Island, and still, the toolkit does not fit exclusively into any one revolutionary tradition.

As LeftRoots prepares for our sunsetting in 2023, we plan to train ourselves up to use it in cadre formations. We will dive into answering its questions. We will share it with comrades we work with, and we will refine it as we identify places it can be stronger. Our aim is to make liberatory strategy real so that we can build the power and capacities necessary to win the kind of world the planet and future we deserve.

We invite you to dive into this experiment with us.

In unity and in struggle,
STEVE WILLIAMS

on behalf of LeftRoots and all the members who contributed to this toolkit, including Woods Ervin, Lisa Owens, Hannah Sassaman, Christi Clark, Fahd Ahmed, Milena Velis, Sasha Wijeyeratne, James Lopez, NTanya Lee, Merle Ratner, Bryan Mercer and D Kim

PART 1

ASSESSING

TOOL 1:

STRUCTURAL VISION
THAT MAKES LIBERATION POSSIBLE

TOOL 2:

ASSESSMENT OF THE DOMINANT SYSTEM

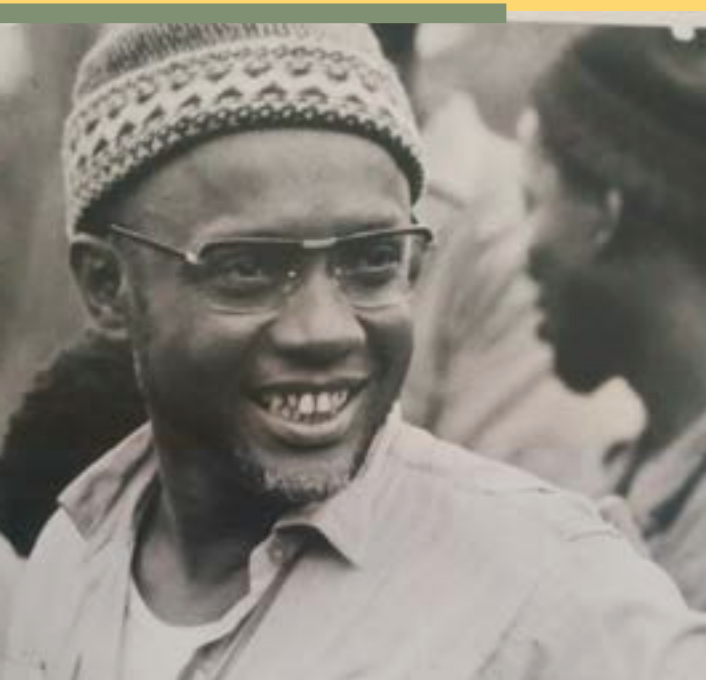
TOOL 3:

ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT CONJUNCTURE

INTRODUCTION TO PART 1

"Do not confuse the reality you live in with the ideas you have in your head."

– Amílcar Cabral



Effective liberatory strategy must be grounded in a vision of what's necessary for liberation to flourish, a structural assessment of the existing system and how it's reproduced as well as an assessment of the current conjuncture. The first three tools of the toolkit will help you do just that.

You might be tempted to skip this section since the objective is to develop strategy. Don't! Skipping would be a massive error. The work you will do in the three tools of section 1 gives you the opportunity to "show you work" for the strategy that will come. Being explicit about your assessment serves multiple purposes. It facilitates communicating the strategy to others in a way that is clear and makes it possible to carry it out collectively. It lays the basis for principled debate with others, making it easier to see where there's agreement and disagreement. And it allows you to be more precise in determining what/if any part(s) of the strategy need to be re-assessed..

Do not skip this part!

TOOL 1: STRUCTURAL VISION THAT MAKES LIBERATION POSSIBLE

The first tool (Structural Vision that Makes Liberation Possible) is not an exercise to detail the most radical utopia we can dream up. Revolutionary imagination is a basic skill our movements need to foster, but that is not the focus of tool 1. Instead, the focus is to outline the structural characteristics of the economic base and superstructure that will allow liberation to become a self-reproducing reality after we topple the existing system.

The power of our utopian visioning will get more precise over time, as our struggles unfold. The focus is on structural characteristics because having done this effectively, the results of your work in tool 1 will provide a basis for assessing which sectors of society are most likely to support revolutionary change (and which are most likely to oppose it) because of their shared material interests—assessments that will deeply inform the liberatory strategy.

This focus draws heavily from Karl Marx's base and superstructure framework which posits that a society's economic base— i.e., social relations of production, ownership of the tools and raw materials used to produce and reproduce society, etc.— has a formative relationship to that society's culture, politics, family, religion, law, art, and social organization. According to Marx, the base sets the parameters for what's possible in the superstructure. For example, a society whose economic base is defined by private ownership of the means of production, appropriation of the natural world and dependence on genocide, enslaved labor and labor exploitation (some of the essential features of racial monopoly capitalism) could never sustain a society with genuine democratic protagonism and the promotion of full human development.

This framework implores revolutionaries to transform the foundations that underlie the economic system as they maneuver to create new political and cultural systems. While there are limitations to this framework if taken too far to assume that it is not possible for the superstructure to influence the economic base, it is an extremely useful entry point for Leftists seeking to intervene in the chicken-and-egg dilemma of transforming society.

TOOL 2: ASSESSMENT OF THE DOMINANT SYSTEM

Where the first tool centered on sketching the structural characteristics of the economic and social necessities to make liberation possible, Tool 2 (Assessment of the Dominant System) walks us through developing an assessment of the dominant system in the world today.

Having an analysis of the economic base and superstructure of the dominant system is important because it frames what's going on, and we refer to this as a structural analysis. Although the underlying logic and structure are invisible most times, it is essential that revolutionaries understand them if we hope to make fundamental and lasting change in society.

Even though few movement organizers and activists will feel prepared to assess the system's economic base and superstructure, neither the fear of making errors nor the idea that "someone else should be doing this" should prevent us from getting started. Developing liberatory strategy does not require graduate degrees in economics, sociology and political science. This will be an iterative process that you can return to. Economic bases tend not to change frequently. Capitalism and imperialism have been around for centuries, so we can update our analysis without wasting the work we do in the first pass.

Keep your focus on tool 2's objective: develop an assessment of the system that provides grounds for your hypothesis about which groups of people are most aligned and best positioned to fight for revolution and what might be chokepoints in how the system functions.

Tool 2 introduces one of the ongoing concepts of the toolkit: shared material interests. This concept reflects the realities that different social groupings (classes and social sectors) have collective interests. Some of those interests are politically, culturally or socially constructed by the dominant hegemony. Others are material and trace back to the system's organization of the economic order. The ability to name and distinguish between different types of interests is essential for revolutionaries since effective organizing and movements can move sectors towards their shared material interests and sometimes away from other interests that might be in contradiction.

Shared interests is a concept that is linked to demographics, but it is not identical. The concept gives organizers, activists and strategists a framework through which to distinguish between the politics of an individual person and

the interests of a grouping. This might result in a particular sector being identified as key to the socialist bloc movement forces seek to construct even though the dominant politics of that sector currently is misaligned with the politics of the liberation movement. In that case, revolutionaries might take up work designed to help those sectors align more consciously with their shared material interests.

This concept of shared materials interests also features significantly in tool 3.

TOOL 3: ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT CONJUNCTURE

Having developed an assessment of the defining characteristics of the dominant system in tool 2, tool 3 (Assessment of the Current Conjuncture) calls on us to assess the current state and shifts happening within the system as well as the correlation of power between political forces and the shape of the terrain of struggle.

Conjunctural assessment is an uncommon practice in the U.S., but it is one that other movements know is vitally important. If you've ever had the opportunity to attend gatherings of social movements outside the United States (especially in the Global South), you've witnessed comrades going through discussions and debates to make sense of the conjuncture. And the resulting conjunctural assessment inevitably shapes the subsequent discussions about strategy and program.

Assessing the conjuncture is not simply cataloging all of the events and dynamics playing out around the world. A conjunctural assessment attempts to make sense of all of the things going on in the world at the moment, to assess which might be most meaningful as we carry out liberatory strategy. The focus is what's essential instead of what's everything.

Rooted in an analysis of society's structure, conjunctural assessment reveals how the crises and contradictions of capitalism are manifesting and unfolding in this moment. Rather than a static picture, a conjunctural analysis offers insights to what is shifting and how, and what those shifts mean for advancing revolutionary struggle. Since it's so much about understanding what's changing, analysis of a conjuncture draws heavily on our skill as practitioners of dialectical materialism.

SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO APPROACH PART 1

Here are couple of recommendations for using this tool (and really, to doing any conjunctural assessment)...

1. ***Be expansive.*** You are not trying to catalog everything, and at the same time, it is critical that you avoid letting your preconceptions tempt you to consider only issues, events and dynamics that you are already familiar with. Having an expansive orientation allows your organization to get into formation for uprisings, crises or challenges "that no one saw coming."
2. ***Be concrete.*** Ground your assessment in concrete diagnoses of our conditions. This will require doing research. Incorporating facts and data and the analyses that others have done, rather than hunches and estimates, makes it possible for us to see what is— which might reveal unexpected opportunities or challenges.
3. ***Be iterative.*** Like the work in tool 2, conjunctural assessments can be more or less conclusive. After completing the initial assessment of the conjuncture, your organization can, and should, periodically revisit your responses to assess if there have been significant shifts, but having finished a first pass, you will not have to restart from scratch.
4. ***Be open to the general* and *the specific.*** Throughout this tool, you will assess the key aspects of the conjuncture, including the state of the system, the correlation of forces and the shape of the terrain of struggle. It is important while doing that both to discern what is commonly true across the board and to take note of where that general condition is different whether that's in terms of its impact on different sectors (for example, on Black people) or geographically (both inside the United States and internationally).

Once you've completed the work in these first three tools, you will have solid grounds to begin the work of defining the strategy for socialist liberation.

Let's begin the assessment...

TOOL 1
STRUCTURAL VISION THAT MAKES LIBERATION POSSIBLE

TOOL 1's ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What are the defining structural mechanisms (base and superstructure) of society that make liberation possible?

TOOL 1's TOP-LINE QUESTIONS

1. What elements of a superstructure (social, political and cultural/ideological) would make liberation possible and self-reproducing, recognizing the limitations and restrictions of forward-looking visioning? *(page 24)*
2. What are essential elements of the economic base that would make that liberatory superstructure possible and self-reproducing? *(page 25)*
3. What name would you use to describe the economic base needed for liberation? *(page 26)*

top-line question 1: **Recognizing the limitations of utopian speculations given our own limited capacities, what are key aspects of a liberatory superstructure?**

A. What might a liberatory society look like?

1) What capacities do we image that society might engender in people that makes possible the sustenance and reproduction of liberatory society?
2) How might people relate to and with one another?
3) How will people relate to other species and the natural environment?

B. How might governance take place and decisions about society's priorities be made in liberated society?

1) What institutions might be needed and what role might they play?
2) How might these institutions be structured?
3) How might the people relate to and engage these institutions?
4) Do these institutions constitute a state?

C. What kind of social organization might be possible to cultivate those capacities?

1) What might be the nature of community?
2) How might liberation change the nature of family structure home-life, land use, urban planning and architecture?
3) Of race, gender, sexuality?
4) Of the nation state and international relations?
5) What kind of organizations might people participate in? What might be the role of those organizations?

D. What damage and harm will a liberated society inherit and need to repair?

1) How might liberation transform the realities of systemic oppression?
2) What interventions might become possible to address the legacies of colonialism, imperialism, white supremacy and hetero-patriarchy?

top-line question 2: **What are key aspects of an economic base that would make the liberatory superstructure you sketched both possible and self-reproducing?**

A. Will society's means of production and reproduction be owned individually or collectively?

1) What work might be necessary in society?
2) How might that work be organized?
3) Who will do the work?
4) What will motivate people to do work? How will they be compensated?

B. What are the key elements of the economic system's cycle?

1) What objective propels the logic of the economic base, including production, reproduction and distribution?
2) What tenets shape how the economic system functions? In *Capital*, Karl Marx crafted this formula (M – C – M') to describe capitalism cycle. Try to draw your own diagram or an equation that depicts how you would describe the system's cycle.
3) On what basis might the economic system relate to the needs of the natural world? To the needs of humanity?

C. In what ways does the economic base make possible the reproduction of the liberatory society you sketched earlier? And vice versa?

top-line question 3: **What name would you use to describe the economic base needed for liberation?**

A. What is the significance of that name?

B. Does this name have a particular connection to different historical and/or ideological traditions? If so, what's that connection?

C. Is this a term that is used commonly? If so, how is it used and/or perceived?

REVISITING TOOL 1's ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What are the defining structural mechanisms (base and superstructure) of society that make liberation possible?

TOOL 2
ASSESSMENT OF THE DOMINANT SYSTEM

TOOL 2's ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What are the defining characteristics in the base and the superstructure of the dominant system?

TOOL 2's TOP-LINE QUESTIONS

1. **What elements of the superstructure (social, political and cultural/ideological) shape and reinforce the dominant system?** *(page 29)*
2. **What are the essential characteristics of the system's economic base and its functioning?** *(page 30)*
3. **What name would you use to describe this economic system?** *(page 32)*

take note of differences in geography: For the questions of this tool, please make note of differences in geography (e.g., for the United States, this might include local, state and federal distinctions as well as individual states or regions). Additionally, make sure to assess international organization—individual nation-states as well as international regions (e.g., Asia, Africa, Latin America, Global South, Europe, etc.).

top-line question 1: **What elements of the superstructure (social, political and cultural/ideological) shape and reinforce the dominant system?**

A. **What's the nature of the superstructure's political system and apparatus?**

1) List the key aspects of the political system and infrastructure (including all levels of government, political parties, police, courts, military, international governance, etc.).

   i. *What are the defining characteristics of how those aspects function?*

   ii. *Are those aspects organized evenly throughout society or are there differences in the political system?*

2) What is the role of each aspect of the political system, and how is that determined?

3) What is the role of the political system in upholding the system?

   i. *In what ways does the political system support and/or reinforce the economic system?*

   ii. *And vice versa?*

4) What are decisive/key historical trends and events that led to the development and consolidation of the system?

B. **What social sectors make up 'the people' in society?**

1) What are the main social categories, demographics that people are classified into within society?

2) How did those social sectors emerge as coherent social groupings?

C. **What are key aspects of the dominant culture and/or ideology in society?**

1) What are the core components of the dominant culture and/or ideology?

2) What is its relationship between the economic base and the dominant culture and/or ideology? and vice versa? Which components of the dominant culture and ideology reinforce the economic system? Are there any components that challenge the logic of the economic system?

3) What are decisive/key historical trends and events that led to the development and consolidation of the dominant culture and/or ideology?

D. **What, if any, aspects of the current superstructure (political, social, and cultural/ideological) might align with our vision of what's needed for liberated society and which are fundamentally adverse?**

top-line question 2: **What are the essential characteristics of the system's economic base and how it functions?**

A. **How is control and ownership of the "means of production" handled in this economic system?**

1) How is reproductive labor accounted for in the system?

2) How is social reproduction organized?

B. **What are the key elements of the economic system's cycle?**

1) What objective propels the logic of the economic base, including production, reproduction and distribution?

2) How is surplus produced within the system?

3) What logic shapes how the economic system functions? In Capital, Karl Marx crafted this formula (M – C – M') to describe capitalism cycle. Try to draw your own diagram or an equation that depicts how you would describe the system's cycle.

4) On what basis does the economic system relate to the needs of the natural world? To the needs of humanity?

C. **Are there contradictions inherent in the system that might produce challenges and/or chokepoints that might inhibit the system's ability to reproduce itself?**

1) Assuming the most ideal functioning of this economic system, are there challenges that the system itself produces which undermine the system's ability to reproduce itself?

2) What are the conditions (e.g., environment, labor, means of distribution, consumption, realization of profit, etc.) that the economic system presumes in order for it to be able to reproduce itself?

3) What happens if those necessities are not present, realized?

D. **How have/do imperialism, colonialism, racialism, patriarchy and hetero-patriarchy shape the system's economic base?**

1) Accounting for the intersections with imperialism, colonialism, racialism, patriarchy and hetero-patriarchy, what are decisive/key historical trends and events that led to the development and consolidation of the system?

2) In what ways do the legacies of imperialism, colonialism, racialism, patriarchy and hetero-patriarchy manifest in the economic system?

3) Is the economic base separate and distinct from imperialism, colonialism, racialism, patriarchy and hetero-patriarchy?

top-line question 2: **What are the essential characteristics of the system's economic base and how it functions?**

E. **What is the class structure of this economic system?**

1) What is the class structure in this system?

i. What is the definition of class you're using to shape this assessment? Class is determined by the collective relationship to what?

ii. Name the distinct classes in society and what defines each. In tool 3, you will refine this assessment of the class structure by identifying different layers within each class.

2) What are the shared material interests of each class?

i. What conditions would this class need to successfully meet its needs for survival, for full human development and for connection?

ii. Does the dominant system succeed or fail in meeting the collective survival needs and needs for full human development for each class? Please explain how it does or doesn't.

iii. Has the system evolved so that each class has other interests than their material interests? If so, what are they?

F. **Assuming the most ideal functioning of this economic system, is the kind of liberation you sketched in tool 1 possible within the defining characteristics of this economic system?**

top-line question 3: **What name would you use to describe this economic system?**

A. What is the significance of that name?

B. Does this name have a particular connection to different historical and/or ideological traditions? If so, what's that connection?

C. Is this a term that is used commonly? If so, how is it used and/or perceived?

REVISITING TOOL 2's ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What are the defining characteristics in the base and the superstructure of the dominant system?

TOOL 3
ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT CONJUNCTURE

TOOL 3's ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What are the decisive characteristics of the moment locally, nationally and internationally— taking into account the status and shifts happening in the system, the correlation of forces and the terrain of struggle?

TOOL 3's TOP-LINE QUESTIONS

1. **What is the status of the key components of the conjuncture** *(page 35)*, including:
    - Climate, planetary and ecological conditions?
    - Economic conditions?
    - Social/living conditions?
    - The state (government, political institutions, police and military)?
    - Correlation of forces?
    - The hegemonic bloc?
    - Dominant culture, ideology and the battle of ideas?
2. **What shifts are taking place in the context of those key components of the conjuncture that could alter the status of the system, the correlation of forces and/or the terrain of struggle?** *(page 41)*
3. **Taking your answers to the earlier questions into account, what are the decisive characteristics of the current conjuncture?** *(page 43)*

GETTING SET UP

Much of your work in tool 3 will call on you to name general conditions as well as the particular conditions playing with different social sectors, industrial sectors, movement sectors and/or geographic regions. Before getting into part 1, please take time to answer these questions that will provide basis for all of your work in tool 3.

- ***What are the main different social sectors in society?*** *These might be based on race, gender, sexual orientation, nation origin, etc. You should have created this list in tool 2.*
- ***What are the main geographic regions in society?*** *These should include domestic regions within the country you are in (e.g., for the United States, these might include New England, South, Southwest, Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, etc.), as well as international regions (e.g., Asia, Africa, Latin America, Global South, Europe, etc.).*

top-line question 1: **What is the current state of the key components of the conjuncture?**

A. **What is the status of the climate and the planet's capacity to sustain human life?**

1) What is current level of greenhouse gas emissions and how does that relate to the science on the needed levels of reduction?
2) Are there currently natural disasters or extreme weather conditions taking place?
3) What is the state of water levels and glacier melt?
4) What is the status of temperature rise?
5) How is the climate crisis impacting different geographic regions? Which regions are most acutely on the frontlines of climate crisis? Which are more removed?

top-line question 1: **What is the current state of the key components of the conjuncture?**

B. What's the state of the economic system?

1) What is the state of the economic system?
   - i. Is the economy strong (generating profits for the capitalist class and enabling the people to meet their needs) or is it weak?
   - ii. Are there particular regions where the economy is stronger, weaker? If so, what are they?

2) Describe the circuit of capital accumulation for the dominant economic system's current orthodoxy (e.g., neoliberalism, Keynesian-ism, socialism, etc.).
   - i. How is production, consumption and distribution organized globally, nationally regionally, locally?
   - ii. What's the primary basis on which the system produces profit— through production, reproduction, distribution and/or finance and speculation?
   - iii. Do particular regions, nations and/or cities play unique roles in the process of production, reproduction, distribution, accumulation and consumption? If so, what are they?

3) What are the dominant sectors of the economy?
   - i. What are the top ten industries in economic activity?
   - ii. What are the five largest corporations in each of those industries?
   - iii. What role do those industries play in perpetuating the system?
   - iv. What alliances and tensions exist between different industrial sectors and between corporations in those sectors?

4) What are the different layers within each class you identified in tool 2?
   - i. Within each class identified, are there sub-groupings that experience conditions distinct enough to constitute a distinct layer within the class? If so, what are they?
   - ii. What distinguishes each class layer from the other layers within that class? (e.g.., different relationships to the mode of production, process of exploitation, etc.)?
   - iii. Are the members of these class layers concentrated in particular regions, locations, industries, etc.?

In tool 2, you identified basic classes within our current economic system. While these basic positions remain relatively constant within an economic system, the class layers shift from one conjuncture to another. This practice of identifying layers within each class builds on the assertion that while the members of a class do share some objective interests, they also might have some competing interests. These differences will be important to understand in the next tool as we identify which sectors are most likely to play different roles within the socialist bloc we aim to build.

5) Returning to the points of possible vulnerability in the economic system's ability to reproduce itself that you named in tool 2, where do those possible vulnerabilities appear in the real world?
   - i. What groupings (workers of a particular sector, geographic locations, points in the circuit of capital accumulation) are concentrated at those points?
   - ii. Are those aspects that might serve as chokepoints functioning smoothly or are they experiencing difficulties?

top-line question 1: **What is the current state of the key components of the conjuncture?**

C. What are the conditions for the people, including each class layer and social sector?

All of the questions in this section will draw on the list of different class layers that you named in tool 3 and the social sectors that you named in tool 2.

1) To what extent is society cohered as a collective whole (high, medium, low)?
   i. What are indications of that assessment?
   ii. Are there particular social conditions or responses to social conditions that impact society's level of cohesion? If so, what are they?
   iii. What's the impact on society as a whole?
   iv. Are there particular impacts on each class layer and social sector? If so, what are they?
   v. What impact(s) might this have on struggles for socialist liberation?

2) To what extent are different class layers and social sectors consolidated and connected to other social sectors?
   i. To what extent does each social sector see itself as a coherent social grouping? Is it solidly cohered, mostly cohered with important tension, loosely consolidated?
   ii. In general, what is the quality of relationship between each social sector?

3) How are conditions related to the climate crisis impacting the people?
   i. How is the climate crisis impacting the people as a whole?
   ii. How is the climate crisis impacting the different class layers and social sectors?

4) How are economic conditions impacting the people and how are the people connected to the economic system?
   i. To which industries are different class layers and social sectors connected to in largest numbers, either as employees or beneficiaries?
   ii. How is each class layer and social sector positioned around economic outcomes— rates of employment, unemployment, poverty, average wealth, debt, etc.?

5) What is each class layer's and social sector's relationship to the state, the political system and its apparatus?
   i. How does each social sector relate to the government (local, state and national)?
   ii. What is the character of the relationship between each social sector and society's political parties?
   iii. How does each social sector relate to the domestic prison industrial complex, including the police, courts, jails, prisons and detention centers?
   iv. How does each social sector relate to the military?

6) What organizations or institutions in civil society is each class layer and social sector most connected to? *These do NOT need to be movement organizations, although they might. Other answers might include different denominations of churches, fraternities and sororities, bowling leagues, gun clubs and more...*

7) What are the collective interests of each class layer and social sector?
   i. Recognizing that collective interests are not always actively acknowledged or evenly shared between members of a social sector, name at least 5 components of the collective interests of each social sector.
   ii. In what ways do the collective interests of each social sector align with our sketch of a liberatory economic base and superstructure?
   iii. In what ways are the collective interests of each social sector in tension with our sketch of a liberatory economic base and superstructure?
   iv. Which class layers and social sectors have interests that are most aligned with the structural vision from tool 1?
   v. Which class layers and social sectors have interests that are least aligned with the structural vision?

top-line question 1: **What is the current state of the key components of the conjuncture?**

D. What's the status of the state, its political apparatus and its armed forces?

1) What's the state's ability to advance its program (high, medium or low)? *(Signs of the government's low ability to advance its program might include inability to pass policy, changes in cabinet positions, use of repression such as restrictions on civil liberties or declaring states of emergency, inability to contain popular movements, etc.)*
    i. Drawing on the list of the system's political apparatus and infrastructure that you named in tool 2 (including all levels of government, political parties, police, courts, military, international governance, etc.), what's the ability of each to carry out its program and play its role (high, medium or low)?
    ii. What is the main method the state uses to advance its program (e.g., violence and repression, persuasion and coercion, collaboration, etc.)?
    iii. Describe how these components of the state collaborate with one another.
2) What's the state of the military and repressive apparatus of the state, including policing bodies?
3) Which level of government currently holds and exercises most power (i.e., local, state, federal, international)?
4) What alliances or treaties exist at the local, national and international levels in terms of politics, economics and/or military?
    i. What is the basis of those alliances?
    ii. What is the level of influence of that alliance or treaty (high, medium or low)?
    iii. What, if any, tensions exist between the parties of the alliance or treaty?
5) What is the correlation of power between political parties within the dominant and all other levels of government?

top-line question 1: **What is the current state of the key components of the conjuncture?**

E. What is the correlation of power between political forces and the state of the movement ecosystem?

1) What is the state of the Right's movement ecosystem?
   i. Using the "Organizational Forms of the Movement Ecosystem," list in the appendix at least five organizations or institutions in the Right's movement ecosystem.
   ii. What ideological, strategic and political tendencies and factions exist within the Right locally, nationally and internationally? What are the points of alignment and contestation between each?
   iii. To what extent do these factions on the Right act in coordination with each other locally, nationally and internationally?
   iv. What is the level of power and influence that the Right has in terms of political parties, popular organization, levels of government, media and broadcast, policy development and promotion of culture and ideas, etc.? Is that power and influence concentrated in any particular geographic region or social sector?

2) What is the state of the Left's movement ecosystem?
   i. Using the "Organizational Forms of the Movement Ecosystem" list in the appendix, list at least five organizations or institutions in the Left's movement ecosystem.
   ii. What ideological, strategic and political tendencies and factions exist within the Left locally, nationally and internationally? What are the points of alignment and contestation between each?
   iii. To what extent do these factions on the Left act in coordination with each other locally, nationally and internationally?
   iv. What is the level of power and influence that the Left has in terms of political parties, popular organization, levels of government, media and broadcast, policy development and promotion of culture and ideas, etc.? Is that power and influence concentrated in any particular geographic region or social sector?
   v. To what extent are the class layers and social sectors that have high alignment with our structural vision for liberation connected to organizations and institutions within the Left's movement ecosystem (e.g., minimally connected and largely unaware, familiar but not strongly connected, connected but not deeply engaged, or deeply engaged with a sense of belonging)?

3) What is the correlation of power between Left and Right political forces at this moment? If one has more power, what's the basis of the imbalance?

top-line question 1: **What is the current state of the key components of the conjuncture?**

F. What is the status of the hegemonic bloc and its leadership?

1) Around what platform or political agenda does the hegemonic bloc gravitate?
   i. What are the core ideological tenets of the hegemonic bloc's platform?
   ii. What policy positions are key to the hegemonic bloc's platform?
   iii. What fights or proposals happening now represent an attempt to advance of the bloc's hegemony?
   iv. What stories or claims does the hegemonic bloc make to assert that this platform is in the best interests of all society?
2) Which political forces lead the hegemonic bloc?
   i. Do those forces represent the same interests or different interests? What's the basis of unity and difference?
   ii. Are those forces united or is there contestation over leadership of the bloc? Describe the basis of that unity or contestation.
   iii. Do they operate exclusively within one political party or within multiple?
3) Which class layers and social sectors make-up the hegemonic bloc?
   i. Towards which social sectors and class layers do the hegemonic bloc's political leadership primarily direct its messaging and platform?
   ii. Which social sectors and class layers are secondary audiences?
   iii. How is the allegiance of those class layers and social sectors to the hegemonic bloc? Is it strong or weak? Stable or unstable? In what ways?
   iv. In which ways do the hegemonic bloc's leadership meet the interests of the social sectors that are core to the bloc?
4) Which social sectors and class layers are not strongly connected to the hegemonic bloc?
   i. How do they perceive the bloc and its platform?
   ii. How are they positioned in society?
   iii. Do they have interests that align with the structural vision from tool 1?
   iv. How are they organized?
5) Is the hegemonic bloc stable or unstable? In what ways?

G. What's the status of the dominant ideological and cultural tenets in society?

1) For each of the core components of the dominant culture and/or ideology that you identified in tool 2, how do they advance the "common sense" of the hegemonic bloc?
2) Is each component/tenet strong and widely held throughout society or weak and largely marginalized?
3) If a core component is held differently by different class layers and/or social sectors, what are those differences?
4) Are there challenges to any of the core components? If so, what are they?
5) How does each social sector relate to the "national identity"?

top-line question 2: What shifts are taking place in the context of those key components of the conjuncture that could alter the state of the system, the correlation of forces and/or the terrain of struggle?

The intention of this question is to help you to identify if there might be major shifts happening that might radically alter the conjuncture. Not all events or developments will have that impact. The point in this section is to identify those developments that could have the potential to alter the nature of the terrain.

In question 1 of this tool, you assessed the current state of the key components of the conjuncture. In this question, you will map what, if any, shifts are taking place within those components.

A. **What shifts are happening related to the climate and the planet's capacity to sustain human life?**

1) Is the climate crisis on a trajectory to be getting more acute or is it improving?
2) In what ways?

B. **What shifts are happening in the economic system?**

1) Are there shifts in the economic system's basic functioning, i.e., signs of an impending economic boom, recession or depression? If so, what are those signs and is there a particular industry that might anchor such a change?
2) Are there shifts happening in terms of dominant areas in the economy which might include shifting dominance from one industry to another, or from one region to another; or in terms of shifting means of extracting profit, etc.?

C. **What shifts are happening with the people, including each social sector and class layer?**

1) Are there shifts happening in terms of how people are being impacted by conditions in their neighborhood, workplace, country, the world?
2) Are there shifts happening in terms of how people are making sense of the changes happening in the world?
3) Are there shifts happening in terms of which organizations or institutions the people are moving towards and/or moving away from?

top-line question 2: **What shifts are taking place in the context of those key components of the conjuncture that could alter the state of the system, the correlation of forces and/or the terrain of struggle?**

D. **What's shifting in the conditions of the state, its political apparatus and its ability to govern?**

1) Are there shifts happening around the strength and/or stability of the government?
2) Are there shifts happening around the strength and/or stability of the military?
3) Are there shifts happening around the correlation of power between political parties?
4) Are there shifts happening around which level of government is more dominant?
5) Are there shifts happening around political alliances locally, nationally and/or internationally?

E. **What shifts are taking place in the correlation of power between political forces and the state of the movement ecosystem?**

1) Are there shifts happening in the Right's movement ecosystem?
2) Are there shifts happening in the Left's movement ecosystem?
3) Are there shifts happening in the correlation of power between the Left and the Right?

F. **What's shifting within the hegemonic bloc and its leadership?**

1) Are there shifts happening within the platform or agenda of the hegemonic bloc?
2) Are there shifts happening in terms of which political forces lead the hegemonic bloc?
3) Are there shifts happening regarding the social sectors and class layers that make up the hegemonic bloc?

G. **What shifting are happening within the dominant ideological and cultural tenets of society?**

1) Are there shifts happening within the society's culture and/or ideological norms?
2) Are there shifts happening in terms of how the people (including different social sectors and/or class layers) relate to the dominant ideological and cultural tenets of society?
3) Is there a particular battle of ideas in motion?

top-line question 3: **Taking your answers to the earlier questions into account, what are the decisive characteristics of the current conjuncture?**

A. **Using the dialectical method, what are the key contradictions are driving trends and/or developments within the conjuncture?**

1) What contradictions and trends are playing out in this period? Try to name at least ten.
2) How might those contradictions and trends manifest in the future?
3) Are there notable shifts happening in those contradictions and/or trends? If so, what are they?
4) What would you identify as the primary contradiction of the current conjuncture?

B. **Pick at least one event or trend from current events.**

1) What does that event or trend reveal about the terrain on which we conduct our struggles?
2) About the Left forces? And Right forces?
3) About the correlation of forces?
4) About the hegemonic bloc?

C. **What's at stake as a result of the struggles in this conjuncture?**

1) If Left forces are successful in the struggles over this conjuncture's key contradiction, what becomes possible?
2) If Right-wing forces are successful in their efforts during this conjuncture, what changes?

REVISITING TOOL 3's ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What are the decisive characteristics of the moment locally, nationally and internationally— taking into account the status and shifts happening in the system, the correlation of forces and the terrain of struggle?

PART 2

STRATEGIZING

TOOL 4

LIBERATORY STRATEGY *AND* PHASES OF STRUGGLE

TOOL 5

SITUATIONAL OBJECTIVE *AND* POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

"For the left, politics must be the art of making the impossible possible. *This is not some kind of voluntarist statement.* ***What I am talking about is understanding politics as the art of constructing social and political forces that are capable of changing the balance of forces to the benefit of the popular movements, so as to make possible in the future what today appears to be impossible."***

– Marta Harnecker
from *A World to Build*

INTRODUCTION TO PART 2

It's time to craft liberatory strategy!!!

Tools 1 – 3 of the Liberatory Strategy Toolkit focused on developing the assessment needed to ground your liberatory strategy in the actual conditions. In section 2 (tools 4 and 5), you will craft liberatory strategy and project how to advance that strategy beginning in the current situation.

To start, it'll be helpful to reground in the toolkit's definition of liberatory strategy.

> **Liberatory strategy is a hypothesis of how political forces can build capacities and shift the balance of power on ever-changing terrain to defeat opposing forces so that they can carry out revolutionary change.**

As we noted in the preface, this definition differs from other understandings of strategy, some of which reduce strategy to either a plan or an approach.

On one hand, "strategy as plan" portrays strategy as a cooking recipe and fails to account for the inevitability of conditions shifting as forces attempt to carry out the strategy thereby rendering the strategy out-of-date too quickly.

On the other hand, "Strategy as approach" blurs the distinction between strategy and tactics, elevating tactics to the level of principle. For example, referring to a set of work within electoral politics as an "electoral strategy" blurs the line between approach or a set of work in a particular sector (which might very well be a critical part of a liberatory strategy) and has the danger of isolating that work from other important work in the movement. That is not to say that there cannot be a strategy to win an electoral campaign or any other campaign. To be most effective, the campaign strategy must be understood as part of the larger liberatory strategy.

If that doesn't happen and the work, approach or sector represents itself as a substitute for liberatory strategy, it becomes more of a *strategic leaning* than an actual strategy.

Although word wars are rarely productive, it is important to recognize that these other understandings fail to prepare collectives of revolutionaries to carry out strategy in a coordinated way on geographically-specific and ever-changing conditions.

TOOL 4 (LIBERATORY STRATEGY)

Tool 4 of the toolkit (liberatory strategy) pushes us to articulate liberatory strategy, drawing directly from the responses you've developed in tools 1 – 3.

The liberatory strategy you craft is intended to be broad enough that it can remain consistent until we win socialist liberation. Of course, if our work reveals major flaws in the strategy, then it needs to be updated or replaced entirely. But liberatory strategy should not need to be updated and revised with every shift in the conjuncture. By providing general guidance to the whole movement, it should remain relatively consistent. On the other hand, the situational objective (tool 5) and the action plan (tool 6) are intended to be more responsive to the twists and turns of the conjuncture and should be updated and refined as needed.

The work in this tool draws on two methodological approaches: hypothesis and phases. These methodologies start in tool 4 and continue through the end of the

LeftRoots developed this concept of 'strategic leanings' to describe something we've observed in the movement. To us, ***a leaning is an incomplete strategic orientation that is used as a stand-in for a more comprehensive strategy.***

Leanings are not bad per se. They just aren't strategy. *It is our experience that they often emerge to address key gaps in the movement. The problem is that activists, who are in search of liberatory strategy, can overuse these insights and use them as a replacement for strategy.*

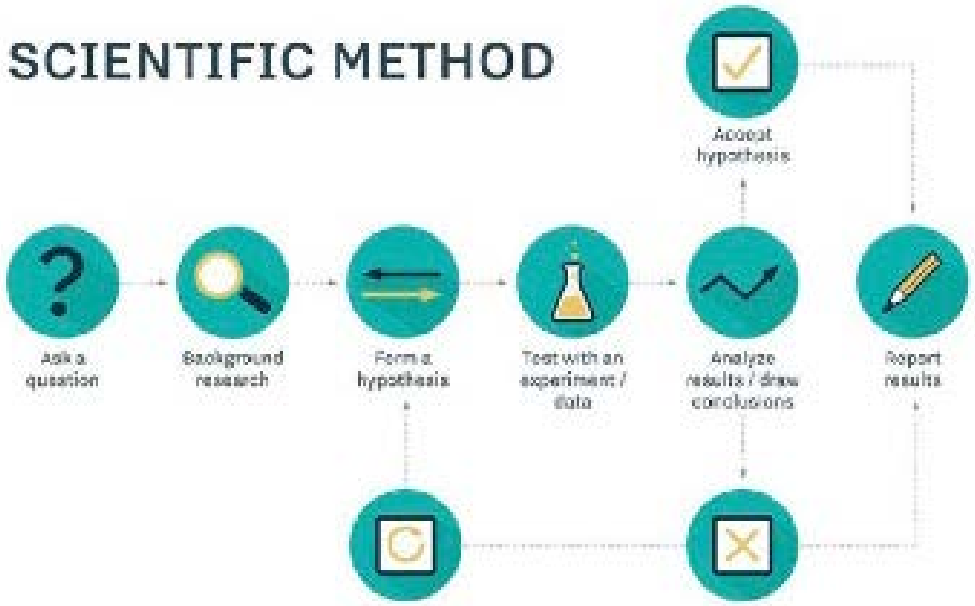
One example is a base-building leaning which suggests that the strategy for socialist liberation is more base-building. While many members of LeftRoots agree that the Left needs to radically deepen and expand its base-building work, we do not believe that more base-building answers all the strategic questions that our movement needs to answer.

We offer this caution since the dependence on leanings can stunt our individual and collective efforts to align our work with liberatory strategy.

toolkit, especially in tool 6 (Action Planning).

In the organization's points of unity, LeftRoots asserts that "strategy, not dogma must be our guide." This foundational statement declares that strategy will be an essential element of the movement to win socialism for the 21st century and that dogma is a poor substitute for strategy. The ability to test in the real world whether or not a strategy is valid, this is what helps us use strategy as a guide and avoid the pitfalls of dogma. This is where the hypothesis comes in...

A hypothesis is a specific, testable prediction that describes what you expect will happen in a certain circumstance if we carry out certain actions. In the context of movement work, we can use hypotheses (that's the plural that comes from the Greek) to test specific parts of the liberatory strategy. This method is informed by the materialist, scientific method represented here:



Although this scientific method is not an approach explicitly named in most movement work in the United States, the approach does echo some of the best practices in movement work, so it will be familiar to many organizers and activists. In our movement context, we often talk about this as praxis.

Translating a method used in the realm of science allows us to systematize our work and more quickly draw lessons that can refine and improve our future work. The hypothesis methodology helps us to explain the things we see in our work and share those results with comrades and other movement activists. That makes it possible for more rigorous debate and altering the strategy based on grounded assessments. But using hypotheses should do more than that. The practice of developing hypotheses sharpens our capacity to position ourselves around phenomenon that are still emerging.

Taking action without a clear hypothesis can lead to a lot of wasted energy doing things that don't actually move us effectively and powerfully toward socialist liberation. It also does not set us up to learn from failure (or success) in a way that contributes to our overall understanding of revolutionary strategy. For these reasons, a grounded hypothesis based on sound analysis should be the basis for every action we take.

Liberatory strategy itself is a large-scale hypothesis. It asserts that if certain things happen, then a particular outcome will come to pass given our understanding of the conditions (e.g., "If we organize these forces to take these actions in this set of conditions, then we will defeat our opposition, take control of the means of production and be in position to advance the socialist liberation of society.").

You will frame it like this...

> If a movement deeply connected to a bloc consisting of **these class layers and social sectors** *(name core and key sectors of the socialist bloc)* exerts **this power** *(name the basis of the movement's power)* in relation to **these chokepoints** *(name the chokepoints),* that movement will defeat **this opposition** *(name the oppositional forces)* and shift the correlation of power in society **in this way** *(name how the correlation of power will have shifted),* paving the way for the construction of socialist liberation.

Looking forward to tool 6, you will return to this hypothesis and begin to articulate a series of nested hypotheses that connect our day-to-day struggles to the liberatory strategy. But before doing that, tool 4 continues by having you name different phases the movement might pass through to carry out this liberatory strategy.

The 'phases of struggle' methodology is an opportunity to unleash your revolutionary imagination. Here, you will project the distinct phases of struggle the movement might pass through— from the current moment to the decisive moment of victory. Rooted in the idea that each phase of struggle will feature social, economic, political and ecological conditions; different levels of strength of the movement ecosystem; and different challenges for the opposition, the phases of struggle challenges us to name an objective that if the movement is able to achieve would allow the struggle for socialist liberation to advance to the next stage.

You will begin by constructing a plausible (no alien interventions!) narrative of how the movement advances from the current conjuncture to the decisive moment of victory when socialist forces shift the balance of power to proceed with the project of transforming the world. The finish line here is not our utopia; rather, this is the moment when the movement achieves the power necessary to advance our platform, what Gramsci might have referred to as winning the 'war of maneuver.' At this point, there will likely still be oppositional forces and threats of counter-revolution, but the decisive moment of victory marks a pivotal point where the correlation of power has fundamentally shifted and our tasks become qualitatively different, where we move to social construction and governance.

Having crafted a plausible story of how the struggle might unfold, you will name an objective that the movement needs to accomplish in that phase to advance to the next. This set of work gives you an opportunity to use the dialectical materialist method to identify an objective that allows the movement to resolve a contradiction that defines that phase of struggle.

Without liberatory strategy, even the most well-intentioned work has the danger of losing its revolutionary potential over time.

Of course, this naming phases of struggle is speculative. These projections might prove to be inaccurate, especially as we get further away from our present conjuncture, but this work plays a critical role helping us move away from thinking that "I won't see revolution in my lifetime." As Russian revolutionary Vladimir Lenin noted "there are decades where nothing happens, and there are weeks where decades happen." The racial uprisings of 2020-2022 are proof-positive of this observation. By doing the work to name possible future phases and objectives, we can position ourselves, our organizations and our movement to make great leaps forward and broaden the movement's strength and influence in ways that we might not have been able to imagine just weeks earlier.

Having named the phases of struggle from the current conjuncture to the decisive moment of victory, you are ready to move onto tool 5.

TOOL 5 (SITUATIONAL OBJECTIVE AND SCENARIOS)

Without liberatory strategy, even the most well-intentioned work has the danger of losing its revolutionary potential over time. Most campaigns, as an example, are waged to alter living and working conditions. While campaigns can achieve significant advances, they do not necessary alter the correlation of forces. There is always the danger that leftists' effort to wage isolated campaigns can develop their own logic and detach from what it takes to advance to the larger movement for socialist liberation. That's where this tool on the situational objective comes in...

The Situational Objective and Scenarios tool theorizes how we can fight to make change today while also advancing key aspects of the liberatory strategy. It places the liberatory strategy in the current conditions— even though they might not be ripe for revolution. It is a two-sided capacity that helps us keep sight on the revolutionary through-line of our day-to-day work. It's what helps us respond to Paolo Freire's query, "What can we do today, so that tomorrow we can achieve what seems impossible today?"

The situational objective tool calls on us to name the objective that, if fulfilled, would enable to the movement to resolve a contradiction in such a way that expands capacities, shifts the correlation of power and enables the movement to

advance to a new phase. Through this perspective, carrying out strategy is a process of building and exerting power to resolve contradictions.

Framing our work around situational objectives serves two key purposes.

First, it pushes against two outlooks that are common in the movement—prefiguration and absolutism. Prefiguration insists that strategy is having all of the behaviors of the movement, and of society, be a constant reflection of the liberated world we want. Absolutism demands that our movements never accept compromises, and that we demand nothing less than our absolute vision. Both of these outlooks disregard the centrality of resolving contradictions in order to shift the correlation of forces over time.

Second, contextualizing our work around the situational objective helps us be more opportunistic than the rigidity of long-term/short-term frameworks allows. By focusing on the objectives in the current phase of struggle, we avoid the complacency of "We'll get to that later..." Instead, it encourages us to consider how we might carry out our work (including the possibility of altering plans we'd previously made) so we can best achieve the situational objective and make unplanned leaps forward.

Tool 5 closes by having you take the situational objective and do scenario planning around scenarios that might emerge in the context of the struggle to achieve it.

Scenario planning is not a process of boundless fantasy-making. The scenarios we create should grow from the assessment of the contradictions and crises in the economic base, as well as our assessment of the dynamics playing out in the political system and the current conjuncture.

If the conjunctural assessment is a snapshot of what's going on and the dynamics in motion right now, scenario planning helps us prepare for how those contradictions and dynamics might play out in the near future—some of which might be in our control and some of which might not.

Scenario planning is also not fortune-telling. But done well, it can look like that. When the team of LeftRoots members first did this activity in April 2017, we projected an intensification of violence from white supremacist forces. Four months later, neo-Nazis and white supremacists invaded Charlottesville, VA and launched multiple attacks that results in multiple injuries and one death. This was not fortune-telling, especially given the long and ongoing history of racist attacks in the United States, but this projection did grow from a nuanced assessment of shifts and dynamics playing out in the conjuncture.

Growing from our materialist assessment of what's going on now, scenario planning helps consider how we might effectively respond to whatever threats and opportunities might emerge as the terrain shifts. In the best case, we can put ourselves in optimal positions. But even if what actually comes to pass surprises us, the act of having considered different possibilities should allow us to act and lead in ways that are more flexible and responsive to the reality that materializes.

That's why scenario planning is a tool that we use to assess what conditions might emerge as our struggles and history unfolds. We then use those scenarios to imagine how our movements could best advance the liberatory strategy in those conditions. By pushing us to consider in advance how changed conditions might alter the most effective ways of advancing the liberatory strategy, scenario planning helps us not get thrown by big changes; instead, preparing us to pivot more quickly and more on purpose.

Our opponents use scenario planning extensively. The capitalist world employs scenario planning in an attempt to anticipate possible outcomes in the future that will impact their bottom line, strategies for accumulating capital, their lobbying, their product development, and everything else.

Police and the U.S. military do extensive scenario planning to realize so many of their nefarious objectives. This is perhaps one of the many reasons it often feels like we are a few steps behind our opponents.

One of the most sinister examples is Shell Oil Company. In the early 2000s, when climate change denial-ism was still wide-spread, the world's largest oil company projected how they would be able to continue to extract profit in different scenarios. One scenario had the world leaders finally accepting that human activity is causing climate change (which, by the way, Shell Oil had already acknowledged to be true) and imposing strict regulations to curb carbon emissions. In that scenario, Shell planned to become a n industry-leader in producing renewable energy. The other scenario projected that world leaders would refuse to confront the reality of climate change. In that case, Shell would double-down on fracking and extracting oil from tar sands and the Arctic Circle. Interestingly, they wrongly projected that the first scenario was the most likely, but whichever scenario came to pass, they had developed plans on how Shell could fulfill its purpose: to extract huge profits— no matter the cost.

For more information on Shell's scenario planning, check out the company's public webpage on scenario planning where you can find documents like *Shell Energy Scenarios to 2050* and *Signposts*.

As despicable as that example is, the opposition does not have divinely-ordained monopoly over this methodology. Liberation forces too can plan different scenarios to better prepare for what comes at us. And arguably, Marxist tools of dialectical analysis provide a stronger foundation than even what our opponents have in anticipating what could be coming down the pike.

In the end, we do scenario planning because it can free our movements up to be more prepared, creative and innovative in our tactics and approaches. It can also help us prepare emotionally for what might be coming. Landing on a small set of compelling scenarios, we imagine how our movement and our organizations might best pivot to advance the liberatory strategy in both radically different and entirely plausible situations.

The process of scenario planning that we're building on is outlined in greater detail in a book called *Transformative Scenario Planning: Working Together to Change the Future* by Adam Kahane. We adapted that model to align with the other pieces of the liberatory strategy toolkit and with important insights from other models of scenario planning.

Let's craft some liberatory strategy...

TOOL 4
LIBERATORY STRATEGY *AND* PHASES OF STRUGGLE

TOOL 4's ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What is the liberatory strategy and what phases might the struggle for socialist liberation pass through?

TOOL 4's TOP-LINE QUESTIONS

1. What is the hypothesis of which class layers and social sectors might form a bloc to defeat the opposition and exert power at chokepoints to achieve a decisive victory? *(page 55)*
2. Building from your assessment of the current conjuncture to your projection of how decisive victory might take place, what distinct phases might the struggle for socialist liberation move through? *(page 58)*

top-line question 1: **What is the hypothesis of which class layers and social sectors might form a bloc to defeat the opposition and exert power at chokepoints to achieve a decisive victory?**

A. What class layers and social sectors might make-up the core and key sections of the historic bloc for socialism?

1) The interests of which social sectors and class layers will make up the core of the historic bloc for socialism?

   i. Of the class layers and social sectors that you analyzed in tool 3, which sectors have interests that are most aligned (and in least tension) with the sketch you named in tool 1?
   ii. If you identified more than one sector, is there one sector whose interests are more significantly aligned with the sketch you crafted in tool 1?
   iii. What did your conjunctural assessment of these class layers and social sectors reveal about their conditions, attitudes and positioning (i.e., to what extent are they organized and in which organizations? What's their level of collective consciousness? What's their level of social, economic and political power do they wield? What's their relationship to other sectors? How are they positioned relative to the system's chokepoints?, etc.)
   iv. Are there examples of other sectors following the leadership of the potentially core class layers and social sectors?
   v. Do these sectors that you named as the winning bloc's core sector(s) have the capacity to win socialist liberation alone? (If so, skip to question C.)

2) The interests of which social sectors and class layers will make up the key sections of the historic bloc?

   i. Which class layers and social sectors have interests that will make them inclined to align with the socialist historic bloc and yet also have interests that are in tension with the sketch of liberatory economic base and superstructure?
   ii. If you identified more than one sector, is there one sector whose interests are more significantly in tension with the sketch you crafted in tool 1? In what ways are these sectors' interests in tension with the vision?
   iii. How are these class layers and social sectors positioned differently in society than those you named in the question about the core sectors (regarding levels of organization; collective consciousness; social, economic and political power; positioning relative to chokepoints, etc.)?
   iv. Are there examples of those sectors following the leadership of the potentially core class layers and social sectors?

3) Which political forces in the left movement ecosystem are (or could be) positioned to help establish, cohere and offer leadership to this bloc for socialism?

top-line question 1: **What is the hypothesis of which class layers and social sectors might form a bloc to defeat the opposition and exert power at chokepoints to achieve a decisive victory?**

B. Which forces make up the opposition that the movement will need to defeat?

1) Using your earlier assessments, which class layers and social sectors are most likely to oppose the vision of liberatory society due to having interests which are largely misaligned with the structural vision? What's the basis of their misalignment?
2) Which political forces (both individuals and organizations/institutions) currently play active roles in organizing and consolidating opposition to left forces and the movement for socialist liberation?
3) Are there other sections of society that play key roles to actively undermine the movement's ability and efforts to build power?
    i. If so, what are they?
    ii. What is the basis of their power?

C. Against what chokepoints can the movement exert power in order to achieve decisive victory?

1) What are the system's chokepoints?
2) Which class layers and/or social sectors are located in proximity to those chokepoints?
3) What power might be exerted in relation to those chokepoints that would likely disrupt the system's ability to reproduce itself?
4) What capacities must the movement have internally in order for it to successfully exert its power?

D. What outside support might the movement for socialist liberation call upon?

1) Are there sectors outside the historic bloc that the movement should attempt to win over or neutralize? These are sometimes referred to as 'middle sectors' or 'middle forces.'
2) Is there support from external sources that the historic bloc for socialism might be able to call upon?
3) What form might that support take and where might it come from?
4) Might there be any strings with that support?
5) Is it possible to accept that support without undermining the movement's capacity to achieve the situational objective and without permanently diminishing the movement's capacity to advance?

top-line question 1: **What is the hypothesis of which class layers and social sectors might form a bloc to defeat the opposition and exert power at chokepoints to achieve a decisive victory?**

E. What is the hypothesis of how the movement can achieve socialist liberation?

1) You can use the following framework...

> If a movement deeply connected to a bloc consisting of **these class layers and social sectors** *(name core and key sectors of the socialist bloc)* exerts **this power** *(name the basis of the movement's power)* in relation to **these chokepoints** *(name the chokepoints),* that movement will defeat **this opposition** *(name the oppositional forces)* and shift the correlation of power in society **in this way** *(name how the correlation of power will have shifted),* paving the way for the construction of socialist liberation.

2) Name at least five (5) *assertions* that this theory for liberatory strategy relies on to be accurate.

These assertions are the basic building blocks of the liberatory strategy's hypothesis. An example of a strategic assertion might be that a particular class layer and social sector have interests that align with the sketch of a liberatory society and that under appropriate conditions, members of those sectors will take action as Left forces and struggle to advance the movement for socialist liberation.

Because organizations might not take on efforts to explicitly test the validity of these assertions, naming them explicitly during strategy development expands the number of activists who can engage in evaluation of the strategy, and offers political forces and organization stronger grounds on which to assess the continued viability of the strategy, especially amid possible shifts in the conjuncture.

top-line question 2: **Building from your assessment of the current conjuncture to your projection of how decisive victory might take place, what distinct phases might the struggle for socialist liberation move through?**

A. Starting from your assessment of the current conjuncture and projecting forward to the moment of victory that gives decisive power to the movement for socialist liberation, what phases might the movement's struggles pass through?

1) Craft a plausible and grounded story of how the movement might win decisive victory (or in Gramsci-an terms, "the war of maneuver") that would alter the correlation of power and allow for the construction of a socialist future. You can write this story down or record yourself telling the story. When you finish, read over the story or listen to the narrative you crafted.

2) Drawing from the story you've just crafted, name 2 - 7 phases of struggle to frame the revolutionary road. Each phase should be distinct from previous ones in that each resolves a key contradiction of that phase and fulfills a particular objective which allows the struggle to move on to different contradiction and objective.

3) What are some of the capacities the movement will have and what the movement ecosystem will look like in order to be successful in the war of maneuver?

B. Given the current conditions, name the strategic objective connected to each phase of struggle.

1) What distinguishes each phase of struggle from the next?

2) In each phase of struggle, what contradiction or challenge will the movement need to resolve in order to move on to the next phase?

3) What are the strategic objectives that the movement will need to meet at each phase of struggle?

REVISITING TOOL 4's ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What is the liberatory strategy and what phases might the struggle for socialist liberation pass through?

TOOL 5
SITUATIONAL OBJECTIVE *AND* POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

TOOL 5's ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What is the situational objective for the current phase of struggle and how might changing conditions impact the movement's efforts to achieve it?

TOOL 5's TOP-LINE QUESTIONS

1. **What is the situational objective that must be accomplished in the current phase of struggle for the movement to advance the liberatory strategy and move towards decisive victory?** *(page 61)*

   NOTE: The movement may or may not currently have the capacities to achieve this situational objective of the current situation. While assessing that is essential, whether or not it is immediately achievable is not the defining characteristic of the objective. What's essential is identifying a situational objective that, if achieved, will radically transform the terrain of struggle in such a way that the movement can now take on campaigns and/or projects that previously would have been impossible.

2. **Building from the assessment of the system** *(tool 2)*, **the conjuncture and the dynamics playing out** *(tool 3)* **in the world and in the United States, what are possible scenarios that might unfold in the context of the efforts to achieve the situational objective of this situation, phase of struggle?** *(page 62)*

top-line question 1: **What is the situational objective that must be accomplished in the current phase of struggle for the movement to advance the liberatory strategy and move towards decisive victory?**

A. **What contradiction shapes the current situation or period within the conjuncture?**

1) What contradictions are playing out in this situation of the conjuncture? Try to name at least seven (7).

2) By your assessment, which of those contradictions is principle (or primary) for the current situation of the conjuncture meaning that its resolution would allow us to advance to the next phase?

B. **What task or objective could the movement accomplish in the current phase that would radically transform the terrain of struggle and allow the struggle to advance to the next projected phase on the revolutionary road?**

1) What new capacities, opportunities or shifts in the correlation of power would emerge by accomplishing that objective?

2) Describe how achieving this objective helps to shift conditions and allow the struggle to advance to one of the more advanced phases of struggle you projected earlier.

3) Is there a possibility that the movement could achieve this task and yet fail to create the conditions to progress to the next phase of the revolutionary road?

C. **How might the situational objective of the current phase of struggle be framed as a hypothesis and what are its assertions?**

1) Write a hypothesis about the Situational objective using the following framework:...

> If the movement achieves **this objective** *(name the situational objective)*, then the correlation of power and terrain of struggle **in these ways** *(name how conditions would be made more favorable for left struggle)* which should offer the movement new capacity to do **the following** *(name the new capacities the movement would have and what would become possible)*.

2) Name at least three (3) assertions that this hypothesis assumes to be true.

top-line question 2: **Building from the assessment of the system (tool 2), the conjuncture and the dynamics playing out (tool 3) in the world and in the United States, what are possible scenarios that might unfold in the context of the efforts to achieve the situational objective of this situation, phase of struggle?**

A. **What are we certain about for the near future?**

1) What events (like elections, treaties expiring, rising labor militancy, etc.) or trends (increased frequency and ferocity of climate disasters, increased state repression, rising inflation, etc.) are scheduled and/or projected to happen in the near future?

2) Are those events likely to alter conditions politically, economically, technologically and/or socially? If so, how?

B. **What are we uncertain about for the near future?** *Certainties will, by definition, be present in all scenarios, while the uncertainties will be the primary differentiators between scenarios.*

1) Given our structural and conjunctural analysis, what are the most important uncertainties about the future (generally within the next 5 years)? *Some examples might include... How the climate crisis will manifest next, or how fast it will advance; The outcome of the next election; When the next recession will hit; or Where mass mobilizations might arise, either on the Left or the Right.* Name at least five (5) uncertainties.

2) Of those uncertainties, identify two (2) as "key uncertainties" that hold the potential to have the most significant impact on the project of building 21st century socialism.

top-line question 2: **Building from the assessment of the system** *(tool 2)*, **the conjuncture and the dynamics playing out** *(tool 3)* **in the world and in the United States, what are possible scenarios that might unfold in the context of the efforts to achieve the situational objective of this situation, phase of struggle?**

C. **For each uncertainty you named, what are four (4) scenarios that could emerge based on what's known and what's unknown?** *Recognizing that there is a temptation to imagine only "worst-case scenarios," make an effort also consider possible scenarios from worst-case to best-case, based on your assessment of the actual conjuncture.*

1) What events might play out in each scenario?
2) How might those events impact conditions, the people and society?
3) How might it impact movement ecosystems?
4) What would be at stake in this scenario?
5) How might different forces respond to events and conditions in the scenario? And what would those forces be trying to achieve with those actions?
6) In terms of advancing liberatory strategy, what threats and opportunities might emerge or be sharpened in this scenario?
    i. How might we act in response to this scenario?
    ii. What might be outcomes of those actions? How might our opponents react to our actions?
    iii. How might we then respond to our opponents, again, in a way that moves us forward?
    iv. What other threats might there be to Left movements in this scenario? And how might we address them?

D. **Which of these scenarios do you think is most likely? On what grounds would you make that assessment?**

E. **Referring back to the strategic assertions named in tool 4** *(top-line question 1, question E)*, **what "watch-factors"— those things that might signal profound shifts in the terrain of struggle and/or confirm the original assertions— should Left forces pay ongoing attention to?**

1) Name at least three watch-factors related to each of the strategic assertions named.
2) For each of what you see as the top three watch-factors, what would be three (3) indicators that you could pay attention to that might indicate a shift?

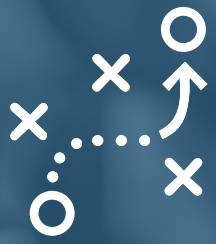
REVISITING TOOL 5's ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What is the situational objective for the current phase of struggle and how might changing conditions impact the movement's efforts to achieve it?

PART 3

IMPLEMENTING

TOOL 6



ACTION PLAN

TOOL 7

EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION TO PART 3

Successful strategy is proven in practice, in its ability to guide action that can produce revolutionary change.

We still have to do the work.

Strategy is necessary to achieve socialist liberation, but strategy alone does not change the world.

Liberation is won by effecting revolutionary shifts in the actual conditions in the world. Successful strategy is proven in practice, in its ability to guide action that can produce revolutionary change. We still have to do the work.

The tools in section 3 give us the opportunity to define an action plan that intentionally advances the strategy for socialist liberation.

Our actions should be consistent with the strategy we've done so much work to develop. If we do this, that consistency means that our actions have the best possible chance to advance the strategy in our particular time, place and conditions. But even in the worst case that our actions don't achieve what we thought, taking action that is aligned with the strategy means that our work will produce new insights and important lessons that could reshape our assessment, strategy and/or practice in the future. That's why one of the skills revolutionaries should bring to struggle is the ability to develop and carry out a tactical plan that is actually aligned with all of the components of liberatory strategy—

hypothesis, situational objectives, etc.

This need for consistency and alignment might seem obvious, but sadly, it is something that is too often missing from the practice of many movement forces. Too often, we become one-dimensional and predictable, calling on only a narrow set of tactics. We just take certain actions because those tactics are viewed as radical, but we lose sight of how those actions might (or might not) advance a strategy or we just react. This section of the toolkit rests in the idea that no action is inherently revolutionary; tactics become revolutionary in the context of a revolutionary vision and strategy.

No action is inherently revolutionary; tactics become revolutionary in the context of a revolutionary vision and strategy.

This kind of intentionality and creativity around tactics can also make more possible the kind of movement ecosystem we need. Movement forces need the ability to skillfully take on a diverse set of activities in coordination to wage a winning struggle for liberation. We will be more open to building unexpected alliances if we are less prone to equate tactics to how radical one is. By choosing actions that are closely linked to the materialist hypotheses we've crafted, movement forces will expand the range of tactics available to us in a way that can make us less predictable and ultimately more effective in advancing liberatory strategy.

There are a lot of very useful tools out there for creating tactical plans, campaign plans, etc. This tool is meant to be a compliment to those other tools, helping you make sure that your action is strategically aligned with the previous tools in the strategy toolkit.

TOOL 6 (ACTION PLAN)

The Action Plan tool brings you back to the hypothesis methodology.

Because liberatory strategy is in itself a broad and wide-ranging hypothesis, it can be difficult to develop a single hypothesis that advances all aspects of the liberatory strategy; or more accurately, revolutionary movements are tests of liberatory strategy. That's why we break down liberatory strategy into smaller parts that nest within one another, so that we can take on work that matches our actual capacity while allowing us to consciously advance parts of the liberatory strategy.

The nesting hypotheses (from largest to smallest) should link to one another. If the work we actually do produces in outcomes that validate the basic assertions of the larger hypothesis, then it increases our confidence that the liberatory strategy is accurate; however, if the outcomes contradict basic assertions, then that should prompt us to evaluate more rigorously which might reveal important lessons and help us to deploy our resources in more effective ways in the future.

Enter movement, organizational and tactical hypotheses...

The movement hypothesis is a high-level hypothesis one step back from the liberatory strategy. It poses what the movement could do and what would be the results that would reflect that the liberatory strategy is valid. It assumes a sufficiently cohered movement that has the capacity to do a certain thing. It looks like this:

> If the movement achieves **this outcome** *(describe the outcome)*, then **this** *(describe the anticipated development or shift in the conjuncture)* will happen.
>
> If this happens, it will validate **this** *(describe the component or condition of the liberatory strategy)* about the liberatory strategy. If this doesn't happen, we will raise questions about **this** *(aspect of the liberatory strategy)*.
>
> The movement could test this by **doing these things** *(describe the tactics/methods/activities)* over **this time period** *(describe the timeline)*.

The organizational hypothesis drills down from the movement hypothesis and asserts something that needs to be true for the movement hypothesis to be true. It looks like this:

> If our organization/coalition/alliance does **this** *(describe the tactics),* then **this outcome** *(describe the outcome)* will happen.
>
> If we do this, we will learn **this** *(describe the contributions to revolutionary strategy).* If this doesn't happen, we will learn this (describe the learning) which will deepen our assessment of the liberatory strategy **in this way** *(describe the contributions to revolutionary strategy)*.
>
> We will test this by doing **this** *(describe the proposed tactics/methods/activities)* **over this time period** *(timeline)*.

There can be multiple layers of organizational and tactical hypotheses. You should craft however many hypotheses as you need to establish a solid link.

Finally, the tactical hypothesis drills down from the last organizational hypothesis and frames the specific tactic or work activity that you are taking on. The important thing is that the lowest level of the hypothesis is framed at a scale where we can mobilize the resources (i.e., people, time, money, connections, etc.) to effectively carry out the actual test. It looks like this:

> If we do **this** *(describe the tactics/activities)* in our project, then **this** *(describe the outcome)* will happen.
>
> If we do this, we will learn **this** *(contributions to revolutionary strategy)*. If this doesn't happen, we will learn this *(describe the contributions to revolutionary strategy)*.
>
> We will test this by doing **these activities** *(describe the tactics/methods)* **over this time period** *(timeline)*.

Each hypothesis— the movement, organizational and tactical— attempts to advance an assertion, and those assertions could be about sectors of society, about capacities to be developed, about how the organization should carry out the work or about any other assertion built into the hypothesis.

This practice of naming and testing hypotheses will likely be new for many of us. As we get better at it, we will accelerate the pace of learning lessons and strengthening the movement to win socialist liberation.

TOOL 7 (EVALUATION)

The Evaluation tool is where we assess the results of testing our hypothesis and explore why those results happened. This evaluation should also happen throughout the process to inform whether we should adjust our work in order to increase the effectiveness of our future work.

Tool 7 diverges from a standard "what went well and what didn't" model of evaluation. Evaluations using that approach often focus how someone or a group experienced the work, detached from an assessment of the effectiveness of that effort to advance our strategy. The toolkit advocates for evaluating the results of your project/campaign/experiment based on your hypothesis and strategy, and incorporating those learnings into your strategy moving forward.

Evaluating based on a hypothesis offers the potential benefit of being more concretely rooted in at least a part of the strategy. It also sets us up to ask questions about our work in relation to our liberatory strategy. Evaluation based on a hypothesis focuses on questions like, "What did we learn from this about how we win? about building our forces? shifting the correlation of forces? What do we need to change about our work and strategy moving forward in order to more effectively wage the fight for liberation?"

When doing evaluation, it is vital to be rigorous and sober in our assessment of our work. The only way we will learn from our praxis is by grounding in a clear assessment of what we have learned from both successes and failures, and everything in between. The practice of criticism/self-criticism is an effective tool that many organizations, including LeftRoots, have used to deepen our individual and collective capacity to make and face our successes and shortcomings. We'd encourage you to check out LeftRoots' Organizational Culture Toolkit *(link in the appendix)* that can help our organizations adopt the practices necessary for this level of sober and honest evaluation.

TOOL 6
ACTION PLAN

TOOL 6's ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What is the plan of action to achieve the situational objective and progress towards future phases of struggle in the liberatory strategy?

TOOL 6's TOP-LINE QUESTIONS

1. Given the assessment of the conjuncture, what benchmarks will the movement (and forces within the movement) need to realize to accomplish the situational objective? *(page 72)*
2. How could our efforts contribute to meeting the situational objective and/or prepare the movement for future phases of struggle? *(page 73)*

GETTING SET UP

The work in tool 6 centers on the situational objective you developed in tool 5. Before into tool 6, gather your responses from tool 5, part 1.

top-line question 1: **Given the assessment of the conjuncture, what benchmarks will the movement (and forces within the movement) need to realize to accomplish the situational objective?**

A. **Building from a grounded assessment of the Left's movement ecosystem, how might the movement achieve the situational objective you named in tool 5? What is to be done given the current correlation of power, terrain of struggle and possible scenarios?**

   1) What might it look like if the strategic objective is achieved?
   2) What power, capacities and conditions might be required for the movement to accomplish this strategic objective?
   3) Does the movement currently have the capacity to realize this objective?
   4) If not, what external conditions might need to shift in order to make this possible?
   5) What internal capacities might the movement need to develop and/or expand?
   6) Is there a single activity, effort that might develop needed capacities and shift needed conditions? Or will developing those capacities and shifting those conditions require a series of activities, efforts?
   7) What are the benchmarks for the movement?

B. **Is there a current issue or struggle that gives the movement the best chance to achieve the situational objective? If so, what is it and what is an action or a set of actions that movement forces might carry out to achieve the situational objective?**

C. **Name at least five (5) benchmarks that the movement would need to achieve (that it has not yet achieved) in order to successfully accomplish the strategic objective for the current phase of struggle.**

D. **Thinking ahead to the next projected phase of struggle, what are three capacities the movement and the movement ecosystem will need to develop to accomplish the strategic objective of the phase that follows this one?**

top-line question 2: **How could our efforts contribute to meeting the situational objective and/or prepare the movement for future phases of struggle?**

A. How do the efforts of the movement ecosystem relate to the strategic objective?

1) To what extent does movement ecosystem recognize and unite around this as the strategic objective for the current phase of struggle? (High, medium, low)
    i. Are there aspects of the movement ecosystem that are more clear and aligned with this strategic objective? If so, what are those?
    ii. Are there aspects of the movement ecosystem that are less clear and aligned with this strategic objective? If so, what are those and what's the basis of the lack of alignment?
2) What efforts are in motion within the movement ecosystem that might contribute to achieving the strategic objective?
    i. What political forces (organizations and/or individuals) are offering leadership to those efforts?
    ii. Are those efforts coordinated?
    iii. What is the level and type of opposition those efforts are facing?
3) Are there gaps in the movement's efforts to accomplish the strategic objective? If so, what are they?

top-line question 2: **How could our efforts contribute to meeting the situational objective and/or prepare the movement for future phases of struggle?**

B. What role might your organization play in advancing liberatory strategy?

1) What's a grounded assessment of your organization?
   i. Using the list of organizational forms in the movement ecosystem list in the appendix, what type of organization is yours?
   ii. What is its mission or purpose?
   iii. What are its current strengths (leadership, membership, program work, analysis, organizational culture, etc.)?
   iv. What are its current weaknesses (leadership, membership, program work, analysis, organizational culture, etc.)?

2) How is your organization positioned within the larger movement ecosystem?
   i. Sectors? (Strong, neutral, unfamiliar, strained)
   ii. Other forces? (Strong, neutral, unfamiliar, strained)

3) Draft a hypothesis about how your organization might contribute to the movement's efforts to carry out liberatory strategy.

   If our organization achieves **these outcomes** *(describe the outcomes)*, then we will strengthen the movement's ability to carry out liberatory strategy in **these ways** *(describe those ways)*. For these efforts to be successful, we assume that **other forces** *(name those individual and organizational forces)* are making **these contributions** *(describe the accomplishments the movement needs other forces to be engaging)* which our efforts will compliment to building the capacity of the larger movement for socialist liberation.

4) How is the organization and its base currently impacted by and responding to conditions of the conjuncture?
   i. What issue(s) is your organization primarily focused on?
   i. What aspects of the system and the conjuncture are impacting your organization's membership and/or base (if relevant)?
   i. What aspects of the system and the conjuncture are impacting your organization most directly?
   i. Is your organization carrying out work or starting new work? If you are currently doing work, what is it? If you are considering starting new work, what conditions are you responding to?

top-line question 2: **How could our efforts contribute to meeting the situational objective and/or prepare the movement for future phases of struggle?**

C. What's a hypothesis on how your organization or effort might contribute to the strategic objective?

1) Draft a hypothesis about how all of your organization's work might contribute to the movement's efforts to achieve the strategic objective.

> If our organization does **this** *(describe the work)* over **this period of time** *(name the time period)*, then we will achieve **this outcome** *(describe the outcome)*– which will contribute to the movement achieving the strategic objective **in these ways** *(describe how the outcome contributes to achieving the strategic objective)*.

2) Name at least five (5) conditions or complimentary efforts that this hypothesis assumes to be true and in motion in order for the hypothesis to be accurate.

3) What might it look like if this hypothesis is correct?

4) What developments or challenges might emerge if this hypothesis is incorrect?

   i. Using the list of organizational forms in the movement ecosystem list in the appendix, what type of organization is yours?
   ii. What is its mission or purpose?
   iii. What are its current strengths (leadership, membership, program work, analysis, organizational culture, etc.)?
   iv. What are its current weaknesses (leadership, membership, program work, analysis, organizational culture, etc.)?

top-line question 2: **How could our efforts contribute to meeting the situational objective and/or prepare the movement for future phases of struggle?**

D. What is the best set of work or activities to carry out this hypothesis? *Note: Questions D & E can— and depending on the scale of your responses probably should— be repeated to nest smaller sets of work (like a single direct action or the decision of whether or not to send a delegation to a convergence, etc.) within larger sets of work (like a campaign or a annual plans for an alliance or coalition, etc.).*

1) Brainstorm a list of possible work or tactics. Be creative. You will evaluate and choose later in the process.
2) To what extent would each tactic allow you to carry out the hypothesis?
3) What might be the limitations of each tactic?
4) Are there other tactics that you might use to test the hypothesis?
5) What tactics does our organization typically employ?
6) Does your organization have the capacity to carry out the proposed tactics?
    i. If so, what roles will be needed and who will play those roles?
    i. If not, what are the gaps? Is there an alternate set of tactics that your organization can carry out that is within your capacities and can also advance the hypothesis? Or is there a set of work that is within your capacities and will build your organization's capacities to take on the proposed tactics in the future?

E. What hypothesis frames your organization's work, efforts?

1) Draft a hypothesis about how a specific set work might contribute to the fulfilling the organization's hypothesis about its contribution to achieving the movement-level strategic objective.

> If our organization does **this** *(describe the activity)* over **this period of time** *(name the time period)*, then we will achieve **this outcome** *(describe the outcome)*— which will contribute to the organization carrying out its hypothesis about strengthening the larger movement **in these ways** *(describe how the outcome contributes to achieving the strategic objective).*

2) As your organization carries out this work, what outcomes might indicate along the way that the hypothesis is correct?
3) As your organization carries out this work, what outcomes might indicate along the way that the hypothesis is incorrect?

top-line question 2: **How could our efforts contribute to meeting the situational objective and/or prepare the movement for future phases of struggle?**

F. What do you predict will be the result of your actions carrying out the hypothesis?

1) What outcomes do you anticipate?
2) What successes do you foresee? What challenges?
3) When in your timeline will you pause for evaluation, assessment and re-assessment?

REVISITING TOOL 6's ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What is the plan of action to achieve the situational objective and progress towards future phases of struggle in the liberatory strategy?

TOOL 7
EVALUATION

TOOL 7's ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What lessons can we draw from the work we did and what do those lessons tell us about the liberatory strategy and our ability to carry it out?

TOOL 7's TOP-LINE QUESTIONS

1. Was the hypothesis correct? *(page 80)*
2. Did our test of the hypothesis produce additional learning? *(page 80)*
3. Moving forward, is this hypothesis resolved or should it be adjusted, expanded, overhauled or tested again? *(page 80)*

GETTING SET UP

The work in tool 7 centers around the hypothesis you developed in tool 6. Make sure to have that hypothesis on-hand before you begin.

top-line question 1: **Was the hypothesis correct?**

- A. **What was the hypothesis you set out to run?**
- B. **What did you assert would happen?**
- C. **What actually happened?**
    1) Were we able to successfully carry out the test of our hypothesis?
    2) What were the outcomes of the work, both objectively? And subjectively?
    3) What outcomes validated the hypothesis?
    4) Were there outcomes that challenged the hypothesis?
    5) What was surprising?
    6) Was our hypothesis correct given your earlier assessments? Why or why not?

top-line question 2: **Did our test of the hypothesis produce additional learning?**

- A. **What does this test imply about the liberatory strategy?**
- B. **What does this test imply about building the socialist historic bloc?**
- C. **What does this test imply about building the capacities of core and key sectors?**
- D. **What does this test imply about the movement ecosystem?**
- E. **What did we learn about ourselves, about the moment?**

top-line question 3: **Moving forward, is this hypothesis resolved (have you determined it to be correct or incorrect) or should it be adjusted, expanded, overhauled or tested again?**

- A. **What factors might have impacted our work?**
- B. **Might those factors have impacted the results of our test? In what ways?**
- C. **Are there additional questions or watch-factors that we should explore? For what reasons?**

EVALUATION CHECK-IN TOOL

A. Are we still on track to carry out our hypothesis?

1) Is there anything we need to shift in order to stay on track?
2) Do we need additional resources?
3) Does our timeline still make sense?

B. Have there been any significant shifts in the conjuncture since we launched our project/ campaign/experiment that we need to account for?

C. What have learned regarding our hypothesis so far?

1) What's the basis of these learnings?
2) What observations have we made?
3) What are we learning about the conjuncture?
4) What are we noticing regarding the watch-factors we named earlier?

D. Are new questions or hypotheses coming up?

Based on your assessments coming out of this check-in, you may want to shift elements of your project, try new methods, etc. to make sure you get useful insights and results regarding your hypothesis and revolutionary strategy. Be sure, however, to give enough time and patience to an experiment to see it through without jumping to conclusions without sufficient grounds and reflection.

REVISITING TOOL 7's ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What lessons can we draw from the work we did and what do those lessons tell us about the liberatory strategy and our ability to carry it out?

APPENDIX

STRATEGIC THRU-LINE CHECK

GLOSSARY AND EXPLANATION OF TERMS

ORGANIZATIONAL FORMS OF THE LIBERATORY MOVEMENT ECOSYSTEM

MARTA HARNECKER'S CONJUNCTURE ASSESSMENT CATEGORIES

LINKS TO OTHER LEFTROOTS RESOURCES

STRATEGIC THRU-LINE CHECK

Review your responses in this summary to assess the consistency and strength of your strategic thru-line.

tool 1: **STRUCTURAL VISION MAKING LIBERATION POSSIBLE**

essential question: What are the defining structural mechanisms (base and superstructure) of society that make liberation possible?

top-line questions

1. What elements of a superstructure (social, political and cultural/ideological) would make liberation possible and self-reproducing, recognizing the limitations and restrictions of forward-looking visioning?
2. What are essential elements of the economic base that would make that liberatory superstructure possible and self-reproducing?
3. What name would you use to describe the economic base needed for liberation?

tool 2: **ASSESSMENT OF THE DOMINANT SYSTEM**

essential question: What are the defining characteristics in the base and the superstructure of the dominant system?

top-line questions

1. What elements of the superstructure (social, political and cultural/ideological) shape and reinforce the dominant system?
2. What are the essential characteristics of the system's economic base and its functioning?
3. What name would you use to describe this economic system?

tool 3: **ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT CONJUNCTURE**

essential question: What are the decisive characteristics of the moment locally, nationally and internationally– taking into account the status and shifts happening in the system, the correlation of forces and the terrain of struggle?

top-line questions

1. What is the status of the key components of the conjuncture, including:
    A. Climate, planet and ecological conditions?
    B. Economic conditions?
    C. Social/living conditions?
    D. The state (government, political institutions, police and military)?
    E. Correlation of forces?
    F. The hegemonic bloc?
    G. Dominant culture, ideology and the battle of ideas?
2. What shifts are taking place in the context of those key components of the conjuncture that could alter the status of the system, the correlation of forces and/or the terrain of struggle?
3. Taking your answers to the earlier questions into account, what are the decisive characteristics of the current conjuncture?

tool 4: **LIBERATORY STRATEGY & PHASES OF STRUGGLE**
essential question: What is the liberatory strategy and what phases might the struggle for socialist liberation pass through?

top-line questions

1. What is the hypothesis of which class layers and social sectors might form a bloc to defeat the opposition and exert power at chokepoints to achieve a decisive victory?
2. Building from your assessment of the current conjuncture to your projection of how decisive victory might take place, what distinct phases might the struggle for socialist liberation move through?

tool 5: **SITUATIONAL OBJECTIVE & POSSIBLE SCENARIOS**
essential question: What is the situational objective for the current phase of struggle and how might changing conditions impact the movement's efforts to achieve it?

top-line questions

1. What is the situational objective that must be accomplished in the current phase of struggle for the movement to advance the liberatory strategy and move towards decisive victory?
2. Building from the assessment of the system *(tool 2)*, the conjuncture and the dynamics playing out *(tool 3)* in the world and in the United States, what are possible scenarios that might unfold in the context of the efforts to achieve the situational objective of this situation, phase of struggle?

tool 6: **ACTION PLAN**
essential question: What is the plan of action to achieve the situational objective and progress towards future phases of struggle in the liberatory strategy?

top-line questions

1. Given the assessment of the conjuncture, what benchmarks will the movement (and forces within the movement) need to realize to accomplish the situational objective?
2. How could our efforts contribute to meeting the situational objective and/or prepare the movement for future phases of struggle?

tool 7: **EVALUATION**
essential question: What lessons can we draw from the work we did and what do those lessons tell us about the liberatory strategy and our ability to carry it out?

top-line questions

1. Was the hypothesis correct?
2. Did our test of the hypothesis produce additional learning?
3. Moving forward, is this hypothesis resolved or should it be adjusted, expanded, overhauled or tested again?

GLOSSARY
AND EXPLANATIONS OF TERMS

CLASS
A group of people connected to each other by a common relationship to society's process of production and/ or exploitation. A group's class (sometimes called class position) is based on an objective relationship to the means of production, distribution, commodification, and reproduction in that society. Different classes, then, are distinguished from one another by their distinct relationship to the process of exploitation.

CLASS LAYER
Just because the members of a class share a set of interests does not mean that it's a homogeneous grouping. Different groupings within a given class can also have distinct and competing interests. These differences are the basis of what we call different class layers. Understanding the competing interests held by different layers allows us to recognize difference without succumbing to fragmentation.

CONJUNCTURE
Rooted in an analysis of society's structure, conjunctural analysis reveals how the crises and contradictions of capitalism are manifesting and unfolding in this period. Rather than a static picture, a conjunctural analysis offers insights to what is shifting and how, and what those shifts mean for advancing revolutionary struggle. Since it's so much about understanding what's changing, analysis of a conjuncture draws heavily on our skill in using dialectical materialism. Rather than a snapshot of the exact moment, a conjuncture can unfold over years or decades.

CHOKEPOINTS
Inputs and/or conditions within the capitalist circuit that are needed for the system to reproduce itself. If those inputs are denied, the system can become more susceptible to falling into crisis. Movements can exploit these chokepoints as part of a strategy to seize power.

DIALECTICAL MATERIALIST METHOD

"Dialectical materialism enables us to understand the world as it really is — and how to change it.

And there are in fact two inter-related elements involved here: firstly the need to understand the world as it really is— which is, broadly speaking, a materialist approach, an approach which treats the world as a material force in its own right that exists independently of what we may think it or like it to be; and secondly the need to understand this material world, either in nature or society, as a world of interconnected change and development, a world of universal conflict and contradiction between what is old and dying and what is new and struggling to be born — an approach we call dialectical.

Fused together into a single philosophy, dialectics and materialism enable us to increasingly change the world once we have understood the laws of motion which are at work in its development. Dialectics alerts us to the need for change, materialism to the importance of bringing this change into line with the objective circumstances which actually prevail." *(taken from the South African Communist Party pamphlet, "Why Revolutionaries Need Marxism" by Dialego)*

DOGMA

A principle or set of principles laid down by an authority as incontrovertibly true.

ECONOMIC BASE & SUPERSTRUCTURE

A framework used in the Marxist tradition to describe the dynamic relationship between a society's dominant economic mode of production (base) and the social institutions (ex. states; governmental and non-governmental organizations; religious and cultural institutions and trends; labor organizations; the press; etc.) (superstructure) that are determined or fundamentally effected by the mode of production.

HEGEMONY

Hegemony is a method of class leadership that was best explored by Gramsci. In contrast to a method of class rule that primarily relies on force (or state violence) and domination, hegemony is an expanded approach which utilizes material concessions and ideological and cultural efforts to encourage the consent and active participation of oppressed people. The work of hegemony is done in both the formal "state" and in the institutions of civil society. Hegemony cannot just be understood as the "domination" of one class by another; instead it is an approach in which one class provides "leadership" to other classes. *(drawn from Harmony Goldeberg's* ***Hegemony, War of Position & Historic Bloc: A Brief Introduction to Antonio Gramsci's Strategic Concepts****)*.

HEGEMONIC BLOC

A hegemonic bloc is a loose "coalition" of class and social sectors linked together by their support of and engagement in that society's hegemony. While the social sectors that make up the hegemonic bloc may or may not be aware of their participation, the bloc is organized and constructed by political forces seeking to win the consent of various class and social sectors to lead all of society.

HISTORIC BLOC

A "historic bloc" is a term developed by Antonio Gramsci to describe the kind of multi-class, multi-sectoral alliance that would be necessary to win lasting, fundamental social transformation. A historic bloc is not a flat alliance; it is anchored in the interests of key sectors and is led by a specific political forces which is able to understand and represent the interests of the other constituent classes. The "historic bloc" approach is one in which, rather than "dominating" other classes, the principal class "leads" them by incorporating their interests and by providing a unifying "national-popular" vision that helps them to develop a shared identity. *(drawn from Harmony Goldeberg's* ***Hegemony, War of Position & Historic Bloc: A Brief Introduction to Antonio Gramsci's Strategic Concepts****).*

IDEOLOGICAL TRADITION

For our purposes, a set of ideas or theories by which one can organize social, economic, political and cultural life. Ideological traditions exist from the reactionary right to the revolutionary left. Anarchism, Marxism, Trotskyism and Maoism are examples of left ideological traditions.

LIBERATORY STRATEGY

A hypothesis of how political forces can build capacities and shift the balance of power on ever-changing terrain to defeat opposing forces so that they can carry out revolutionary change. We also use the term "strategic orientation" to describe a single, comprehensive strategy because it helps us to avoid varied, and often non-specific, uses of the word "strategy."

MEANS OF PRODUCTION

The tools or instruments (buildings, machines) and the raw materials used to create something are the means of production. *(taken from Marxists.org)*

MODE OF PRODUCTION

The Mode of Production is the unity of the productive forces (definition below) and the relations of production (definition below). Capitalism, socialism, feudalism are all examples of different modes of production.

POLITICAL FORCES

Forces are individual and/or groups of people who act to express and advance political objectives. Forces are usually rooted in particular class and social sectors, but they usually do not necessarily represent or act in coordination with all members of that class or social sector. Analyzing both political forces (or sometimes just 'forces') and social sectors (definition below) allows us to precisely name what forces are currently assembled, and what sectors could potentially be mobilized or cohered to support a political project.

PRODUCTIVE FORCES

The productive forces are the combination of means of production (buildings, machines plus raw materials) and human labor.

PROTAGONISM

This is a term that LeftRoots first came across in the work of Marta Harnecker who noted its usage amongst social movement activists throughout Latin America. We have adopted the use of the term even though there is no direct translation in English because, like no other term we've come across, 'protagonism' names an approach that has the potential to strengthen social movements inside the United States. The concept builds from the literary term 'protagonist' which refers to a character who takes ownership over her destiny and drives the narrative forward by taking action. In a similar vein, we understand protagonism to be the democratic engagement which builds our individual and collective capacities for transformative change and, in doing so, combats our fundamental alienation from the means of production, from the products of our labor, from each other, and from ourselves.

RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION

The objective material relations that exist in any society independently of human consciousness, formed between all people in the process of social production, exchange, and distribution of material wealth.

Production is not possible without relations of production – humans cannot produce outside of a social structure, whether a nation or a family – relations of production exist for all producers. The basis of the relations of production is ownership of the means of production (definition above). When the means of production become public property, then all people are able to exercise their freedom in relation to the productive forces through the social and political structures of society. To the extent that people enjoy equal rights they are thus able exercise these rights freely in the real development of society, unhindered by the barriers of private property. With the existence of private property, competition and exploitation hinder the real freedom of humans, where only a handful have ownership of the means of production. *(taken from Marxists.org)*

SOCIAL REPRODUCTION AND REPRODUCTIVE LABOR

Social reproduction and reproductive labor are two connected but different elements of capital's ability to reproduce itself. Social reproduction focuses on the way that society reproduces itself for the needs of capital (i.e., education, culture, etc.). Reproductive labor, a large part of social reproduction, serves the purpose of reproducing workers and humanity (i.e., childcare, domestic work, healthcare, etc.). In capitalist societies, this socially-necessary reproductive labor is low paid or unpaid and is largely done by women/femmes.

As Marxist intellectual Nancy Fraser writes, "Under capitalism, non-waged social-reproductive activity is necessary to the existence of waged work, the accumulation of surplus value and the functioning of capitalism as such. None of those things could exist in the absence of housework, child-rearing, schooling, affective care and a host of other activities which serve to produce new generations of workers and replenish existing ones, as well as to maintain social bonds and shared understandings. Social reproduction is an indispensable background condition for the possibility of economic production in a capitalist society." *(Nancy Fraser, "Contradictions of Capital and Care," NLR 100, p. 102)*

SOCIAL SECTORS

A group linked together by some shared characteristic (e.g., race, gender, but also geographic region, etc.). These characteristics are socially-constructed but, over time, can be viewed as inherent. Although there may be overlap, social sectors are not necessarily organized or ideologically homogeneous. Nevertheless, members of a social sector do share interests that are shaped by the conjuncture and can inform (but don't necessarily determine) how people understand themselves and their relationship to the world and to other social sectors. As history changes, social sectors can evolve over time.

SOCIALIST BLOC

Related to the term 'historic bloc' (definition above). In LeftRoots usage, this is "our bloc," the bloc we want to construct and move into a hegemonic position that will speak for and lead through the consensus of most of society. Not all sectors in the bloc will think of themselves as adherents of socialism, but their interests and support will be aligned with a program articulated by socialists. *(Note that "historic bloc" was used by Gramsci in a more generic sense, as the bloc that anchors hegemony in a given historic period, for example "the post WW II historic bloc").*

STRATEGIC LEANING

An incomplete strategic orientation that centers a particular and important approach or tactic but makes less comprehensive extrapolations about how that approach might lead to revolutionary change.

STRATEGIC TENDENCY

A group of strategic orientations that are largely aligned around common ideas about what the logic of a liberated society would be, the class layers and social sectors that, if united, could defeat the opposition, the makeup of the opposition and the core contradictions that drive it, the chokepoints in how the opposition stays cohered and maintains its power, and the current situational objective that, if achieved, would enable the movement to resolve a core contradiction in such a way that expands capacities, shifts the correlation of power, and enables us to advance to a new phase of struggle.

Some individuals or organizations may be highly conscious of their strategic tendency, while others may be carrying out the tendency's approach in practice due to their positioning in the movement ecosystem. A strategic tendency can also include organizations that are not affiliated with each other, or that are advancing slightly different immediate objectives.

SURPLUS VALUE

The value, most apparent in the form of profit, extracted from the worker by the capitalist (in the capitalist mode of production) over and above the wage paid to a worker for their labor.

ORGANIZATIONAL FORMS
OF THE MOVEMENT ECOSYSTEM

Movement ecosystems include organizations and institutions that fall broadly into the following categories. We offer this list as a tool to develop commonly structured assessments of movements, organizations based on their role which should ground any hypothesis of what is to be done.

These categories are very generalized. It is true that some organizations might evolve, taking on various roles described. This list does not cover every characteristic that should be analyzed, like size, influence, etc. Importantly, this list does not address the organization's politics. Each of these organizational forms might appear on either the Left or the Right, and can impact the organization's form.

1. **BASE-BUILDING ORGANIZATIONS–** Groups that recruit members of a specific sector or class to fight collectively in their own interests. These organizations can take different forms; in our context, they are most often nonprofit base-building groups & labor unions.
2. **PEOPLE'S (OR POPULAR) ORGANIZATIONS–** Formations that bring together individuals from a broader cross-section of society for concerted action. May include organizational members, but the formation acts as its own organization rather than a coalition in which decisions are made only by organizational members.
3. **ACTIVIST COLLECTIVES–** Groups that unite activists to take collective action. Their geographic can go from local to national to even international.
4. **ALTERNATIVE INSTITUTIONS–** Institutions that demonstrate our capacity to meet the people's material needs– at their best, outside the logic of capitalism while promoting self-governance.
5. **POLITICAL PARTIES–** Formations focused on impacting governance, including electoral campaigns and policy.
6. **TRAINING & CAPACITY-BUILDING INSTITUTIONS–** Groups whose aim is to increase the capacity of movement actors and organizations. These include training and support groups; research centers; policy think tanks; and organizing schools.
7. **LEFT MEDIA & CULTURE INSTITUTIONS–** Groups that chronicle and report on world events and/or promote cultural activity.
8. **CADRE ORGANIZATIONS–** Formations whose members are united around liberatory vision and assessment; and work to carry out shared strategy for liberation.
9. **CADREFYING ORGANIZATIONS–** Formations whose members are united around liberatory vision and an assessment that the conditions for a cadre organization are premature; and work to develop individual and collective capacities of cadre.
10. **ALLIANCES & COALITIONS–** Vehicles that channel and align the activity of different organizations.

OUTLINE TO ANALYZE A CONJUNCTURE

Marta Harnecker & Isabel Rauber, Aug 1991. Revised by Marta Harnecker, Nov 2010.
Translation & Adaptation for Left Roots, María Poblet, 2017

Introduction

This work was prepared by MEPLA ("Memoria Popular Latinoamericana", Latin American People's Memory) and published in the book Oral History and Popular Education (Methodological Reflections) by the Center for the study and documentation of Latin America (CENDAL), Bogotá, Colombia, April 1996, pp.59-60.

It attempts to create order among the elements that must be present for a concrete analysis of a concrete situation, which is to say, to analyze a political conjuncture. We think it is important to have clearly determined parameters for analysis to attempt to reduce as much as possible the margin of error in this analysis. It is common in the analysis of the left for subjective impressions to color the evaluation of the socio-political moment that is being navigated. These different evaluations of the concrete situation block the possibility of developing a political line that unites all of the left.

The elements that we offer here still require collective enrichment and theoretical deepening, and for that reason we offer them for your consideration as a guide to discussion in hope that with the contributions from all of you, this effort will be enriched.

Of course, conjuncture also includes a background of structural analysis, which is to say a deeper characterization of society in terms of its economic, political, social and ideological features, and the way it fits into the global situation. In this work we emphasize the criteria that must be considered as part of a conjunctural analysis because those have been much less developed that the criteria for structural analysis.

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PART 1: DOMINANT BLOC

I. **Economic Conditions of the classes or groups in the dominant bloc**
   a. Characteristics
      i. Increase in investments
      ii. Inflation – Prices increase, value of money decreases
      iii. Speculation – Risky investments seeking high return i.e. venture capital
      iv. Reduction in investments
      v. Recession – temporary economic decline
      vi. Unemployment
      vii. Capital flight
      viii. Fiscal deficit – government spending exceeds revenue
      ix. Instability in the political economy – burst of speculation bubble, currency change.
      x. Etc.
   b. Effects on the population (examine each social sector)
      i. Salaries
      ii. Unemployment
      iii. Quality of life
      iv. Expectations of consumption
      v. Expectations of upward social mobility
      vi. Precariousness of work
      vii. Temporary work
      viii. Lack of labor protections

II. **Political Conditions of the Parties of the Right**
   a. Strong programmatic and organizational cohesion
   b. Charismatic leadership
   c. Factions
   d. Strengthening of the conservative wing
   e. Strengthening of the progressive wing
   f. Forces shifting to the left
   g. Forces shifting to the right
   h. Division
   i. Capacity to respond to popular demands
   j. Loss of legitimacy of institutional system and political class

III. **Level of Unity, Cohesion among classes or groups that are dominant in relationship to the government**
   a. Complete
   b. Small differences
   c. Important contradictions
   d. Some sectors moving into opposition

IV. **How Governance happens**
   a. Consensus and legality
   b. Social contract
   c. Emergency measures
   d. Repression

V. **Presence of criteria that reflect the weaknesses of the government**
   a. Inability to implement economic policies
      i. For lack of ways to control the situation
      ii. Because of corruption and speculation
      iii. Because of popular movement opposition
   b. Changes in cabinet
   c. Uses of violent means
      i. Restrictions of civil liberties
      ii. State of emergency (security measures)
      iii. State of siege
   d. Use of repression
      i. Selective
      ii. Massive
      iii. Dirty war (paramilitary groups)
   e. Strong external pressures
      i. From international bodies
      ii. From countries or groups of countries that postpone economic commitments, making those condition on certain internal changes
   f. Incapacity to contain popular movement
   g. Military Revolt

VI. **Level of control by the dominant bloc over the means of communication**
   a. Information about the left and social movements
      i. None
      ii. Little
      iii. A lot
      iv. Objective
      v. Distorted
   b. Existence of alternative media
      i. Radio
      ii. Newspaper
      iii. TV channels
      iv. Space in the media
      v. Graffiti
      vi. Flyering
      vii. Influence
      viii. Local
      ix. Regional
      x. National

VII. **Attitude of Forces towards the Government**

a. Middle Forces
   i. Total support
   ii. Critical support
   iii. Vacillating
   iv. Rejection

b. Intellectuals
   i. Majoritarian support for the government
   ii. Indifference
   iii. Move towards the left
   iv. Move towards the right

c. Popular Forces
   Sectors to Assess: Unions, Working Class Organizations – Worker centers, Renters, etc., Oppressed Nationalities – Asian, Indigenous, Black. Latinx/o, Women & Gender Oppressed, Youth & Students, Seniors & Retirees, Churches, Etc.
   i. Level of support
      1. Total
      2. Partial
      3. Rejection
   ii. Type of opposition
      1. Open
      2. Passive
   iii. Level of opposition
      1. Active
      2. Weak
      3. Strong but without an alternative project
      4. Strong with an alternative project
      5. Unity or fragmentation of resistance forces
   iv. Confrontation
      1. Level of organization
         a. Organized
         b. Disorganized
         c. Dispersed
   v. Presence or lack of leadership
      1. Spontaneous
      2. Social leadership
      3. Political leadership

VIII. **Attitude of Forces towards the Dominant Bloc**

a. Middle Forces
   i. Total support
   ii. Critical support
   iii. Vacillating
   iv. Rejection

b. Intellectuals
   i. Majoritarian support for the government
   ii. Indifference
   iii. Move towards the left
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c. Popular Forces
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         b. Disorganized
         c. Dispersed
   v. Presence or lack of leadership
      1. Spontaneous
      2. Social leadership
      3. Political leadership

IX. **International Situation of the US Government**

a. Primary relationships of cooperation
   i. Economic
   ii. Political
b. Primary rivalries
   i. Economic
   ii. Political
c. US Interventions
   i. War
   ii. Occupation
   iii. Military Aid & Training
   iv. Bases & Military Presence
   v. Economic destabilization
   vi. Economic support for right wing political sectors
   vii. Military support to right wing political sectors
   viii. Ideological warfare
d. Attitude of world powers towards the United States
   i. Cooperation (note both nature of cooperation and degree of mutuality in the alliances)
      1. Financial
      2. Military
      3. Political
      4. Media
      5. Via international bodies
   ii. Rivalry (note both nature of rivalry and level of challenge the rivalry represents for elites of the U.S.)
      1. Financial
      2. Military
      3. Political
      4. Media
      5. Via international bodies

X. **Military Situation**

a. Internal Situation
   i. Homogeneity
      1. Inter-branch contradictions
      2. Intra-branch contradictions
      3. Division
   ii. Loss of Prestige
      1. Fear of being in public in uniform
      2. Refusal of military service
      3. Disorganization internally
      4. Corruption
   iii. Prestige among the people
      1. Pride in wearing the uniform
      2. Young people's interest in a military career
      3. Accepting military service requirement
   iv. Attitude in relationship to the government
      1. Predisposition towards a coup
      2. Support
      3. Criticism
      4. Racketeering
      5. Rejection of measures that interfere with their group morale
      6. As a consequence of the above: troop morale, high command, officials
         a. High
         b. Normal
         c. Low

XI. **Level of Internal Cohesion of the Dominant Bloc (this is built on a synthesis of the previously analyzed aspects)**

a. Strong coherence around one project
b. Stability reached via agreements with other forces that do not share the project but that support the immediate actions the government has taken
c. Important contradictions in the dominant bloc
d. Break down of alliances
e. Sharp crisis
f. Disintegration

XII. **Opposition to U.S. hegemony**

a. From first world
   i. Financial
   ii. Military
   iii. Political
   iv. Media
   v. Via international bodies
b. From global south
   i. Financial
   ii. Military
   iii. Political
   iv. Media
   v. Via international bodies
c. From social sectors inside the United States: favorable, unfavorable or indifferent attitude (verbal opposition, active opposition, active opposition with international coordination)
   i. Republican Party
   ii. Liberal democrat sectors
   iii. Social movements
   iv. Churches
   v. Famous people
   vi. Black community
   vii. Latinamerican community
   viii. Asian community
   ix. Indigenous
   x. Intellectuals
   xi. Etc.

PART 2: POPULAR MOVEMENT

I. **Situation of the Popular Movement**
   a. Increase in unionization
   b. Growth of popular organization
   c. Decrease or increase in strikes
   d. Type of strikes
      i. Legal
      ii. Illegal
      iii. With blockades
      iv. With hostages
      v. With occupation of sites
   e. Coordination with other sectors
   f. Peasant marches
   g. Occupation of Land

II. **Existence of our own political alternative**
   a. No or Yes
   b. Unified project
   c. Each forces has its own project
   d. Strength of the project (sectors that feel identification with it)

III. Political leadership
   a. Level of leadership
      i. Non-existent
      ii. Direct
      iii. Indirect
      iv. Partial
      v. Total
      vi. Dispersed
      vii. Unifying
   b. Forces that participate in leadership
      i. Churches
      ii. Parties of the right
      iii. Parties of the left
      iv. Natural leaders without a party

IV. Axes that convene social movements (a social movement is characterized by spontaneous mobilization expressed at a mass scale i.e. defense of black lives, women's mobilizations, occupy wall street)
   a. Political
      i. Anti-dictatorship
      ii. Electoral
      iii. Democracy
      iv. Peace
      v. Human rights
      vi. Other (name what)
   b. Economic
      i. Unemployment
      ii. Salaries
      iii. Housing
      iv. Social Safety Net
      v. Healthcare
      vi. Education
      vii. Other (name what)
   c. Cultural & Ethnic
      i. Race & Nation
      ii. Inclusion & Diversity
      iii. Other (name what)
   d. Other

V. State of morale among different social movements
   a. Labor movement
      i. Attitude towards different government plans
         1. Support
         2. Indifference
         3. Passive resistance
         4. Slowdown
         5. Non militant strike
         6. Active rejection
         7. Partial work stoppages
         8. Work stoppages in strategic sectors
         9. National work stoppages
         10. Strikes by industry
         11. Strikes by sectors of industry
      ii. Possibilities for carrying out strikes
         1. Strike funds (exist or don't, are big or small)
         2. Danger of being fired (recession period or economic growth)
         3. Solidarity from other sectors with the labor movement
         4. Solidarity from other social sectors
      iii. Social and political weight of worker mobilizations
         1. Paralyze one branch
         2. Paralyze a region
         3. Paralyze the country
         4. What kind of reaction do they provoke among the population (sympathy, indifference, rejection)

b. Rural movement
    i. Legal struggle demanding better salaries
    ii. Legal struggle for rights to land
    iii. Takeover of land
    iv. Road blockage
    v. Takeover of rural estates with administrators taken hostage
    vi. Marches to cities
    vii. Social and political weight of rural mobilizations
        1. Paralyze one branch of agricultural production
        2. Paralyze a region
        3. Paralyze the country
        4. Type of reaction their actions provoke among the population (sympathy, indifference, rejection)
c. Characteristics of student activism
    i. Struggle for academic objectives
    ii. Struggle for political objectives
    iii. Takeovers of buildings
    iv. Marches
    v. Strikes
    vi. Etc
d. Characteristics of Popular Activism
    i. Capacity to overcome spontaneous struggle
        1. No
        2. Yes
    ii. Construction of base building organizations
    iii. Construction of forms of people's power

VI. Conclusions about the state of morale of the people
a. Passivity
b. Indifference
c. Rising
d. Retreat
e. Fear
f. Reconstruction of forces
g. Effervescence
h. Insurrectionary

VII. Forces in Leadership
a. Governing parties
b. Bourgeois opposition
c. Popular Bloc
d. Left
e. Workers
f. Rural Communities
g. Students
h. Working class neighborhoods
i. Sectors of middle forces

VIII. Orientation of Organic Leaders
a. Collaboration with the government
b. Neutrality
c. Opposition to the political economy
d. Political opposition

IX. Capacity for maneuvers by governing party
a. Scarce
b. Few
c. Sufficient
d. Around which axes
    i. Possibility to resolve some popular demands
    ii. Lack of alternative
    iii. Inexistence of organized opposition

X. Levels reached by the class struggle (synthesis of the above)
a. Protests
b. Strikes
    i. Legal
    ii. Illegal
c. Civic work stoppages
    i. Regional
    ii. National
d. Confrontations with police
    i. Demobilization when police appear
    ii. Sustaining the mobilization and verbally confronting the police
    iii. Confrontation of mass groups with police
    iv. Massive confrontation with police
e. Armed actions
    i. Without mass support
    ii. With mass support
f. Insurrectionary actions
    i. Spontaneous
    ii. Organized
    iii. Local insurrection
    iv. General
g. In each case examine:
    i. Volume of participation
    ii. Goals

PART 3: CONCLUSION

What is the character of the analyzed conjuncture, for the left?

LINKS
TO OTHER LEFTROOTS RESOURCES

1. Link to LeftRoots' Organizational Culture Toolkit
   https://leftroots.net/organizational-culture-toolkit/

2. Link to resources from LeftRoots' Little Red School
   https://leftroots.net/little-red-school/

3. Link to the original draft of the Liberatory Strategy Toolkit
   https://leftroots.net/strategy-toolkit-first-draft/

LEFTROOTS

strategy. protagonism. liberation.