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Build and Fight: The Program and Strategy of Cooperation Jackson

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The fundamental program and strategy of Cooperation Jackson is anchored in the vision and macro-strategy of the Jackson-Kush Plan¹. The Jackson-Kush Plan, as you will read later in this book, was formulated by the New Afrikan People's Organization (NAPO) and the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement (MXGM) between 2004 and 2010, to advance the development of the New Afrikan Independence Movement and hasten the socialist transformation of the territories currently claimed by the United States settler-colonial state. And as noted in several articles throughout the book, Cooperation Jackson is a vehicle specifically created to advance a key component of the Jackson-Kush Plan, namely the development of the solidarity economy in Jackson, Mississippi, to advance the struggle for economic democracy as a prelude towards the democratic transition to eco-socialism.

Although Cooperation Jackson is rooted in an ideological framework, vision and macro-strategy, it is not a static organization. Like any dynamic organization we do our best to center our practice on addressing the concrete conditions of our space, time and conditions and to align our theory with our practice. As such, our program and strategy are constantly adapting and evolving to address new challenges and seize new opportunities. And it will continue to do so.

End pursuits

The fundamental program and strategy of Cooperation Jackson is intended to accomplish *four fundamental ends*:

1. To place the ownership and control over the primary means of production directly in the hands of the Black working class of Jackson;
2. To build and advance the development of the ecologically regenerative forces of production in Jackson, Mississippi;
3. To democratically transform the political economy of the city of

Jackson, the state of Mississippi, and the southeastern region; and

4. To advance the aims and objectives of the Jackson-Kush Plan, which are to attain self-determination for people of African descent and the radical, democratic transformation of the state of Mississippi (which we see as a prelude to the radical decolonization and transformation of the United States itself).

Controlling the means of production

We define the means of production as labor power as well as the physical, non-human inputs that enable humans to transform the natural world to provide sustenance for themselves. The inputs in question are arable land, access to water, natural resources (wood, metals, minerals, etc.), and the tools and facilities that enable the cultivation of food and the transformation of raw materials into consumable goods and services, and the production or capturing of energy to power the tools and facilities. We also add control over processes of material exchange and energy transfer to our definition to give it greater clarity and force of meaning in line with our commitment to sustainability and environmental justice. The processes we feel are therefore necessary to control are the processes of distribution, consumption, and recycling and/or reuse. Without assuming some responsibility for these processes, we merely perpetuate the dynamics of externalization, particularly the production of pollution and the stimulation of waste from overproduction, that are inherent in the capitalist mode of production.

A population or people that does not have access to and control over these means and processes cannot be said to possess or exercise self-determination. The Black working class majority in Jackson does not have control or unquestionable ownership over any of these means or processes. Our mission is to aid the Black working class in Jackson, and the working class overall, to attain them.



Building the productive forces

On the question of building the productive forces in Jackson, it should be noted that while Jackson is the largest city in the state of Mississippi, and arguably the most industrialized city in the state, it is not and never has been a major center or hub of industrial production. Like most of the Deep South, Mississippi's development as a settler-colonial state has fundamentally been contingent upon the extraction of natural resources, such as timber for colonial and antebellum era ship building, and cash crop agriculture, such as cotton, tobacco, sugarcane, and rice, which were primarily sold as international commodities (see "*Exploiting Contradictions*" section below). Mississippi, like most of the South (North Carolina, Florida, and Texas being unique exceptions each in their own right), has not been able to break out of its historic position within the U.S. and world capitalist system of being a site of resource extraction and the super-exploitation of labor.² One of our primary tasks is to break this structural relationship by playing a leading role in industrializing Jackson, first and foremost, then the Kush district, and eventually the whole of Mississippi.

In many respects, we are positioning ourselves to act as a "*developer*", which is normally a role that is exclusively played by the bourgeoisie, i.e. the capitalist class, or the state. We are aiming to upend this paradigm on many levels and in several strategic ways. One, we are seeking to negate the role of capital being the primary determinant of the social development of Jackson (see point below about exploiting the dynamic of uneven development within the capitalist system below), by situating this role in the hands of the working class through the agency of its own autonomous organizations and its control over the municipal state apparatus. But, we are not seeking to replicate the dynamics of "*development*" in the standard capitalist sense. The central dynamic in our quest is to upend the old aims, norms, processes and relationships of capitalist development, which have little to no regard for the preservation of the environment and ecology, and replace them with new norms that are fixed first and foremost on repairing the damage done to our environment and ecosystems, and creating new systems that will ultimately regenerate the bounty of life on our planet, in all its diversity. This will be possible by strategically incorporating, utilizing, and innovating upon the technologies of the third and (emerging) fourth waves of the industrial revolution, which will enable the elimination of scarcity, but within ecological limits (see more on this point below). What we aim to do is make Jackson a hub of community production, which is anchored by 3D-print manufacturing for community consumption, i.e. direct use-value consumption, and commodity production, to exchange value in consumer markets. How we plan to advance this initiative will be discussed in more detail below.

Democratically transforming the economy

In order to democratically transform the capitalist world-economy, we have to transform the agent central to this process, the working class, into a democratic subject. This transformation starts with the self-organization of the working class itself. Although not foreign to the working class historically by any means, particularly to the Black working class in the United States (which was often left solely to its own ends for self-defense and survival), worker self-organization is not a common feature of the class at present. This is a dynamic that we must change in Jackson (and beyond).

Now, to be clear on terms, self-organization means first and foremost workers directly organizing themselves through various participatory means (unions, assemblies, etc.) primarily at their places of work or points of production, but also where they live, play, pray, and study. The point of this self-organization is for workers to make collective, democratic decisions about how, when, and to what ends their labor serves, and about how to take action collectively to determine the course of their own lives and the animus of their own actions.

We will not and cannot accomplish any of the core ends described above without stimulating the self-organization of the Black working class in Jackson on a mass scale. While Cooperation Jackson, the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement and the broad forces aligned with the Jackson-Kush Plan have made some significant social and political advances and demonstrated our capacity to reach the masses, particularly in the electoral arena, we still haven't stimulated the self-organization of the Black working class on a mass scale. More work, profoundly more, must be done to accomplish the main tasks in this regard, which are to elevate and strengthen the class-consciousness of the community, foster and cultivate new relationships of social solidarity amongst the working class, and co-construct and advance new social norms and values rooted in radical ecological and humanitarian principles. In effect, what we are aiming to do is develop a new transformative culture.

In order to reinforce the development of this new culture within the present confines of Mississippi and the overall capitalist world-system, we have to harness the power of the Black working class and utilize it politically to eliminate the structural barriers blocking the "legal" development of the solidarity economy within the state. One of the main things we have to eliminate are the Mississippi legal statutes that presently restrict cooperatives to farming businesses, utilities, and credit unions. We have to create a new legal framework and paradigm that will enable any form of productive endeavor to become a cooperative or solidarity enterprise.

In the Jackson context, it is only through the mass self-organization of the working class, the construction of a new democratic culture, and the development of a movement from below to transform the social structures that

shape and define our relations, particularly the state (i.e. government), that we can conceive of serving as a counter-hegemonic force with the capacity to democratically transform the economy. Again, we have taken some baby steps in this direction with the Mayoral election of Chokwe Lumumba in 2013 and the founding of Cooperation Jackson in 2014. But, we have a long way to get where we desire and need to be.

Advancing the Jackson-Kush Plan

"Politics without economics is symbol without substance". This old Black Nationalist adage summarizes and defines Cooperation Jackson's relationship to the Jackson-Kush Plan and the political aims and objectives of the New Afrikan People's Organization and the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement in putting it forward. Without a sound economic program and foundation the Jackson-Kush Plan is nothing more than a decent exposition of revolutionary nationalist politics. Cooperation Jackson is the vehicle we have collectively created to insure that we do more than just espouse good rhetoric, but engage in a concrete struggle to create a democratic economy that will enable Black and other colonized, oppressed and exploited people to exercise self-determination in Mississippi (and beyond).

We have to be clear, crystal clear, that self-determination is unattainable without an economic base. And not just your standard economic base, meaning a capitalist oriented one, but a democratic one. Self-determination is not possible within the capitalist social framework, because the endless pursuit of profits that drives this system only empowers private ownership and the individual appropriation of wealth by design. The end result of this system is massive inequality and inequity. We know this from the brutality of our present experience and the nightmares of history demonstrated to us time and time again over the course of the last 500 years.

We strive to build a democratic economy because it is the surest route to equity, equality, and ecological balance. Reproducing capitalism, either in its market oriented or state-dictated forms, will only replicate the inequities and inequalities that have plagued humanity since the dawn of the agricultural revolution. We believe that the participatory, bottom-up democratic route to economic democracy and eco-socialist transformation will be best secured through the anchor of worker self-organization, the guiding structures of cooperatives and systems of mutual aid and communal solidarity, and the democratic ownership, control, and deployment of the ecologically friendly and labor liberating technologies of the forth industrial revolution.

As students of history, we have done our best to try and assimilate the hard lessons from the 19th and 20th century national liberation and socialist movements. We are clear that self-determination expressed as national sovereignty is a trap if the nation-state does not dislodge itself from the dictates

of the capitalist system. Remaining within the capitalist world-system means that you have to submit to the domination and rule of capital, which will only empower the national bourgeoisie against the rest of the population contained within the nation-state edifice. However, we are just as clear that trying to impose economic democracy or socialism from above is not only very problematic as an anti-democratic endeavor, but it doesn't dislodge capitalist social relations, it only shifts the issues of labor control and capital accumulation away from the bourgeoisie and places it in the hands of the state or party bureaucrats. We are clear that economic democracy and the transition to eco-socialism have to come from below, not from above. That workers and communities have to drive the social transformation process through their self-organization and self-management, not be subjected to it. This does not mean that individuals, organizations, and political forces shouldn't try to intervene or influence the development of the working class and our communities. We believe that we should openly and aggressively present our best ideas, programs, strategies, tactics and plans to the working class and to our communities in open forums, discussions, town halls, assemblies and other deliberative spaces, and debate them out in a principled democratic fashion to allow the working class and our communities to decide for themselves whether they make sense and are worth pursuing and implementing.

Confronting and defeating Black disposability

Above and beyond all of the lofty goals and ambitions mentioned above, there is one aim that we have above all others, and that is to counter the escalating threat of disposability confronting the Black working class.³ The U.S. economy no longer needs the labor power of the Black working class, and as a result the Black working class constitutes a growing problem for the economic and social order of the empire, a problem in need of a solution.

Once the driving force behind the U.S. economy, constituting (as chattel) and producing over half of the country's wealth during the antebellum period, the Black working class is now a surplus population, one confronting ever greater levels of exploitation, precariousness, and material desperation as a direct result of the processes and forces of globalization and automation.⁴ At the same time the agricultural sectors where the Black working class were concentrated until the early 20th century, have been largely mechanized or require even cheaper sources of super-exploited labor from migrant workers in order to ensure profits.⁵

To deal with the crisis of Black labor redundancy the U.S. ruling class has responded by creating a multipronged strategy of limited incorporation, counterinsurgency, and mass containment. The stratagem of limited incorporation sought to and has partially succeeded in dividing the Black community by class, as corporations and the state have been able to take in

and utilize the skills of sectors of the Black petit bourgeoisie and working class for their own benefit. The stratagem of counterinsurgency crushed, divided and severely weakened Black organizations, particularly Black revolutionary organizations. And the stratagem of containment resulted in millions of Black people effectively being re-enslaved and warehoused in prisons throughout the US empire.⁶

This three-pronged strategy exhausted itself by the mid-2000 as core dynamics of it (particularly the costs associated with mass incarceration and warehousing) became increasingly unprofitable and therefore unsustainable. Experiments with alternative forms of incarceration (like digitally monitored home detention) and the spatial isolation and externalization of the Black surplus population to the suburbs and exurbs currently abound, but no new comprehensive strategy has yet been devised by the ruling class to solve the problem of what to do and what politically can be done to address the Black surplus population problem. All that is clear from events like the catastrophe following Hurricane Katrina and the hundreds of Black people being daily, monthly, and yearly extra-judicially killed by various law enforcement agencies is that Black life is becoming increasingly more disposable. And it is becoming more disposable because in the context of the American capitalist socio-economic system, Black life is a commodity rapidly depreciating in value, but still must be corralled and controlled.

The capitalist system is demonstrating, day by day, that it no longer possesses the capacity to absorb dislocated and displaced populations into productive endeavors, and it is becoming harder and harder for the international ruling class to sustain the provision of material benefits that have traditionally been awarded to the most loyal subjects of capitalism's global empire, namely the "native" white working classes of Western Europe and the "whites" of the settler-colonial projects of the United States, Canada, and Australia.

When the capitalist system can't expand and absorb it must preserve itself by shifting towards "correction and contraction"—excluding and if necessary disposing of all the surpluses that cannot be absorbed or consumed at a profit.⁷ We are now clearly in an era of correction and contraction that will have genocidal consequences for the surplus populations of the world if left unaddressed. The Black working class is now confronting this genocidal threat.

So, at its heart, this program and strategy, by attaining the four ends stated above, will create a model that provides a means to counter the escalating threat of disposability confronting the Black working class and provides some practical know-how pertaining to how to build a solid base of anti-capitalist transformation.

Exploiting contradictions

In order to concretely attain our four stated ends, we are seeking to exploit *three critical contradictions* within the capitalist world-system as a whole and the political economy of Mississippi and the United States in particular.

One of the primary contradictions we are trying to exploit is the *dynamic of uneven development*. Uneven development speaks to the fact that capitalism as a global system transforms the world through the concentration of human labor and human ingenuity (i.e. the production tools, industrial manufacturing, carbon based energy manipulation, advanced communications) to alter the physical environment for the pursuit of profit. Capitalism tends to concentrate the development of the productive and social forces in limited areas, while simultaneously restricting and distorting development and growth in other areas as part of the same process. Like the various modes of production that have preceded it, capitalism does not, and cannot, develop or transform the physical environments that humanity operates within and depends upon, uniformly. Meaning, in simple terms, that you can't build factories, power plants, freeways, strip malls, and grocery stores everywhere. Any serious attempt to do so would eliminate the limited concentration of surpluses the system extracts from workers and the earth itself.⁸

How Cooperation Jackson plans on exploiting this particular contradiction is by capitalizing on Mississippi's position as a weak link in the chain of capitalist production within the United States. Mississippi, like most of the southeastern portion of the United States, is grossly underdeveloped in comparison to the northeastern seaboard, the mid-western region, and the west coast. Since its colonial occupation by European settlers, the southeastern region, and Mississippi in particular, have primarily functioned as a site of resource extraction (like timber for ship building during the antebellum period) on the one hand or cash crop production (like "king" cotton) for international manufacturing and consumer markets on the other. Since the dominance of hydrocarbon (oil) dependent industrial production within the capitalist system from the early 19th century onwards, regions that concentrated on resource extraction and mono-cash crop production got locked into a position of relative dependency within the system that restricted their development.⁹ As a site of dependent development, Mississippi has not been infused and developed by capital to possess advanced infrastructure outlays and networks (i.e. railways, highways, ports) or production clusters (factories, warehouses, logistic networks). As we note in "Casting Shadows",¹⁰ the weak and relatively sparse concentration of capital in Mississippi creates a degree of "breathing room" on the margins and within the cracks of the capitalist system that a project like ours can maneuver and experiment within in the quest to build a viable anti-capitalist alternative.

We harness this breathing room by exploiting the fact that there is minimal competition in the area to serve as a distraction or dilution of our focus, a tremendous degree of pent up social demand waiting to be fulfilled and a deep reservoir of unrealized human potential waiting to be tapped.

The second critical contradiction we are trying to exploit is the *ecological limits of the capitalist system*. The capitalist system is a system bent on self-destruction. You cannot have limitless growth on a planet with finite resources. Something has to give. As it now stands, the capitalist system is rapidly destroying all of the vital, life giving and sustaining systems on our planet. Hydrocarbon dependent industrial production has forever altered our atmosphere. There is now more carbon in our atmosphere than at any time over the last 3 million years!¹¹ CO₂, methane, and other climate altering gases induced by human production are beginning to cook the climate, with each year being progressively hotter than the previous one. The polar ice caps are disappearing right before our very eyes. The oceans are becoming more and more acidic, harboring ever-greater dead zones each year. And just as importantly, ocean currents, which regulate the flow of heat energy and weather patterns on the planet, are collapsing. And the constant resource extraction and drive to urbanize at the heart of the capitalist system are eliminating essential ecosystems and habitats that other complex life on this planet depend upon, resulting in the quickening of the 6th great extinction event, which might result in the loss of over 90% of the species currently living on the planet—including us.

As awkward and problematic as it may sound, we plan on exploiting this contradiction by getting out in front of the issue of climate change as much as we can politically and turning the economic strategies being proposed herein to address the climate crisis on their head. Our aim, as you will read in greater detail later, is NOT to foster and reinforce so-called "green capitalism".¹² Our aim is to help fashion and create a *regenerative economy*, one that not only restores and replenishes the resources its extracts from the earth, but aids in the actual restoration of our earth's ecosystems. We aim to do this by building a set of reinforcing institutions—such as green worker cooperatives, community land trusts, eco-villages, and centers of community production—that generate and redistribute both use values via mutual aid practices, and exchange values via the production of commodities, from the effort to recycle, reclaim, and reuse between 80 to 90% of essential resources and materials currently consumed and to introduce new zero-emission and zero-waste production methods on a large scale, starting with our municipality. We believe this regenerative orientation, coupled with sound solidarity economy practices, can and will be the basis for the development of economic democracy as an alternative to capitalism, and a prelude towards the democratic transition to eco-socialism.¹³

The third and final contradiction we are trying to exploit pivots on transcending the *productive limits of the capitalist system* that center on the conflict between the industrial, hydrocarbon dependent version of capitalist

accumulation versus the emerging productive methods and technologies of the third and fourth industrial revolutions. These new methods and technologies potentially enable the development of a new mode of production and a radically different society and defining set of social relationships than those we have known over the past five hundred years. These emerging technologies and new social relationships lean towards the development of what some are calling a “post-capitalist” society, which is or could be a potential equivalent of what we call economic democracy. One of the chief proponents of this view, Paul Mason, holds that “postcapitalism is possible because of three major changes information technology has brought about”.¹⁴ Mason outlines three key components central to this contradiction, which enable a tremendous amount of maneuverability. He summarizes them thus:

First, it has reduced the need for work, blurred the edges between work and free time and loosened the relationship between work and wages. The coming wave of automation, currently stalled because our social infrastructure cannot bear the consequences, will hugely diminish the amount of work needed—not just to subsist but to provide a decent life for all.

Second, information is corroding the market’s ability to form prices correctly. That is because markets are based on scarcity while information is abundant. The system’s defense mechanism is to form monopolies—the giant tech companies—on a scale not seen in the past 200 years, yet they cannot last. By building business models and share valuations based on the capture and privatization of all socially produced information, such firms are constructing a fragile corporate edifice at odds with the most basic need of humanity, which is to use ideas freely.

Third, we’re seeing the spontaneous rise of collaborative production: goods, services and organizations are appearing that no longer respond to the dictates of the market and the managerial hierarchy. The biggest information product in the world—Wikipedia—is made by volunteers for free, abolishing the encyclopedia business and depriving the advertising industry of an estimated \$3bn a year in revenue.

Almost unnoticed, in the niches and hollows of the market system, whole swaths of economic life are beginning to move to a different rhythm. Parallel currencies, time banks, cooperatives and self-managed spaces have proliferated, barely noticed by the economics profession, and often as a direct result of the shattering of the old structures in the post-2008 crisis.¹⁵

These remarkable technological and productive advances are the product of the Third and Fourth industrial revolutions.¹⁶ As noted, they are rapidly changing civilization, for better or worse depending on one’s position, and making a dramatic new orientation to work and labor possible.

The Third Industrial Revolution (3IR), also known as the Digital Revolution, started in the 1960s, but exploded in the late 1980s and 1990s, and

is still expanding today. This revolution refers to the advancement of technology from analog electronic and mechanical devices to the digital technologies we have now. The main technologies of this revolution include the personal computer, the internet, and advanced information and communications technologies, like our cell phones.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), also known as the Cyber-Physical Revolution, is marked by technological and knowledge breakthroughs that build on the Digital Revolution that are now fusing the physical, digital and biological worlds (including the human body). The main technologies of this revolution include advanced robotics, CNC (computer numeric control), automation, 3D printing, biotechnology, nanotechnology, big data processing, artificial intelligence, and autonomous vehicles.

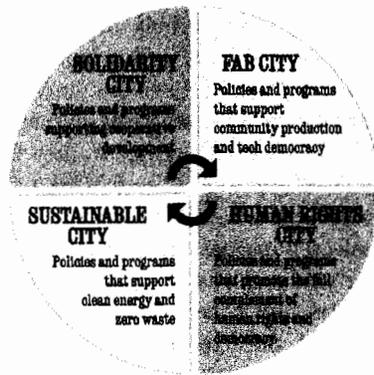
These new technologies are not only changing everything in the world around us, they are also changing our social relationships and culture(s). In and of themselves, these technologies are somewhat value neutral—meaning neither good or bad. Their value and intent will be determined by humanity. They will either aid humanity in our collective quest for liberation, or they will help further our species inhumanity towards itself and mother earth. One thing is painfully clear, and that is if these technologies remain the exclusive property of the capitalist class and the trans-national corporations they control, these technologies will not be used for the benefit of the majority of humanity, but to expand the methods of capital accumulation and further consolidate the power of the 1% that rule the world. Under their control, these technologies will lead to a crisis of global unemployment on a scale unseen in human history. The end result will be global dystopia, that is a social nightmare predicated on massive poverty, lawlessness, and state repression, rather than the potential utopia these technologies have always foreshadowed.¹⁷

The only way we are going to come anywhere close to attaining anything like the utopia these technologies promise is to democratize and subject them to social production for the benefit of all, rather than continuing to allow them to be controlled and appropriated by the few. The democratization of the technologies of the Third and Fourth Industrial Revolutions, which we denote as #TechDemocracy, is one of the primary demands and areas of focus of Cooperation Jackson. We struggle for #TechDemocracy first and foremost by educating our members and the general public about the promises and perils of the technology so that people can make informed decisions. Our next course of action is self-organization to acquire as much of this technology as we can, with the explicit purpose of controlling these means of production and utilizing them for the direct benefit of our organization and our community. We call this self-organization “Community Production”, and to this end, we are currently building our own Center for Community Production.¹⁸

Our third course of action is organizing our community for political and economic power to expand and reinforce our self-organization or Community Production efforts to gradually make them ubiquitous or ever present in our

community, with the explicit intent of gradually replacing the exploitative and environmentally destructive forms of old production. Our fourth general course of action is to utilize our self-organization and political power to make demands on the government, the capitalist class, and the transnational corporations to remove the controls they have on the technology, like exclusive patents, to free it, and for government to make massive investments in technology to make them public utilities and to ensure that the capitalists and corporations make restorative investments in these utilities for the public good.

These are the core elements of our transformative program to utilize and participate in the development of the Fourth Industrial Revolution for the benefit of our community, the liberation of the working class and all of humanity.



This is the basic outline of our Transition City Vision. These are the components we are organizing to get the City of Jackson to adopt.

exploiting the contradictions cited above, we believe our program will enable us to transform Jackson, Mississippi, the Deep South, and beyond.

Our Concrete Program

Despite the limited capacity, experience, and resources of our organization, we dream big and plan big. There are some, friend and foe alike, who maintain that our program and strategy constitute an extreme case of overreach. There is undoubtedly some truth in this statement. But, we make no apologies for our approach. We firmly believe that we must demand the impossible, both of the world and of ourselves, in order to change both subjects. With effective organizing and sound strategy that capitalizes on

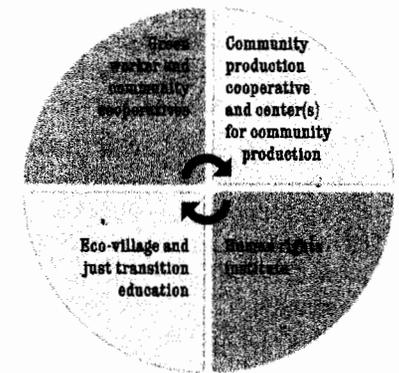
exploiting the contradictions cited above, we believe our program will enable us to transform Jackson, Mississippi, the Deep South, and beyond.

To reiterate the general public framing of our mission and program, we state that:

“Cooperation Jackson is an emerging network of cooperative enterprises and supporting social solidarity institutions based in Jackson, MS. Our aim is to transform Jackson’s economy and social order by building a vibrant local social and solidarity economy anchored by worker and community owned enterprises that are grounded in sustainable practices of production, distribution, consumption and recycling/reuse. Through these enterprises and institutions we aim to produce quality living wage jobs for our community; create sustainable and regenerative productive systems that affirm the life of our community; protect our community from the ravages of climate change; and to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights and human potential of all the residents in our community.”¹⁹

To fully grasp our program and strategy, it is critical to understand what Cooperation Jackson is, on a structural basis. Cooperation Jackson is the sum-total of four interconnected and interdependent institutions.

1. **A Federation of emerging local cooperatives and mutual aid networks.** The Federation is and will be composed of a number of interconnected and interdependent worker, consumer, and community cooperatives cooperating as one overall, coherent, but democratic body. This body is and will be supported by various mutual aid institutions and practices that reinforce the solidarity of the Federation and provide various means to exchange value, labor, and time to improve the quality of life of all of the members of the Federation and the community in general.
2. **A Cooperative Incubator.** The incubator is the start-up training and development center of Cooperation Jackson. The Incubator aids new cooperators with basic training, feasibility studies, business plan development, financing, training in democratic management, etc.
3. **A Cooperative School and Training Center.** The primary purpose of



The concrete programmatic activities Cooperation Jackson is currently working on to advance the Transition City vision.

our Economic Democracy School is to ensure that Cooperation Jackson serves as an instrument of social transformation by constantly broadening the social consciousness of all its cooperators and continually enhancing their skills, abilities, and overall capacities to act as conscious actors in improving their social context and environment.

4. A Cooperative Credit Union and Bank. The credit union and bank, and other financial institutions will be used to start and strengthen all of the operations of Cooperation Jackson and serve as a means of self-capitalization and democratic investment to expand the initiative. At present, our efforts in this arena are being conducted through the Southern Reparations Loan Fund (SRLF), which was formally established by the Southern Grassroots Economies Project (SGEP) in in 2016. Cooperation Jackson is a founding member of SRLF and a board member of SGEP.²⁰

All of Cooperation Jackson's programs and strategies are dependent upon and conducted through the aforementioned structures. However, our practical program and strategy is presently oriented around five intentionally, interlocked, interconnected, and interdependent focal points of execution. These focal points of execution include various campaign initiatives, projects and programs that you will read about in greater detail below. The five focal points are:

1. The development of green worker, self-managed cooperatives and an extensive network of mutual aid and social solidarity programs, organizations and institutions. This programmatic approach is translated into transformative policy as our effort to make Jackson a **Solidarity City**.
2. The development of an Eco-Village, community energy production, and sustainable methodologies and technologies of production and ecologically regenerative processes and institutions. This programmatic approach is translated into transformative policy as our effort to make Jackson a **Sustainable City**.
3. The development of a network of 3D print factories that anchor community production cooperatives and institutions. This programmatic approach is translated into transformative policy as our effort to make Jackson a **Fab City** (meaning Digital Fabrication Laboratory City).
4. The development of an all-embracing, class oriented Union-Cooperative to build genuine worker power from the ground up in Jackson. This programmatic approach is translated into transformative policy as our effort to make Jackson a **Workers City**.
5. The development of a Human Rights Institute to craft a human rights charter and commission for Jackson. This programmatic approach is translated into transformative policy as our effort to make Jackson a **Human Rights City**.

The transformative policy components attached to each of the focal points is a critical component, because none of the system(s) change processes we aim to make can or will be sustained in a non-revolutionary context without structural support and reinforcement from the state. The structural support and reinforcement in question entails legal justification, incentives, resource allocation, and monitoring and enforcement from operatives of the state and civil society, meaning civilian institutions that monitor the conduct and performance of government. These transformative policy components are fundamentally articulations of "*non-reformist reforms*". The notion of non-reformist reforms, although conceptually far older than its articulation, was first concretely formulated by Andre Gorz, a French socialist, who posed the formulation as a means to bridge our short-term engagements for social justice in everyday life to our longer terms vision for an anti-capitalist world.²¹ The formulation centers on waging struggle for demands and reforms that improve conditions in people's immediate lives, but which don't strengthen the capitalist system, but instead subvert its logic, up end its social relations, and dilutes its strength. These reforms seek to create new logics, new relations, and new imperatives that create a new equilibrium and balance of forces to weaken capitalism and enable the development of an anti-capitalist alternative. This is exactly what our transformative policy components seek to accomplish.

Green Worker Cooperatives, Mutual Aid Network, and Solidarity Economy Institutions

No one practice or form associated with the solidarity economy in and of itself is sufficient to transform the capitalist economy and build economic democracy as a transitional alternative. We subscribe to the theory that we have to develop and employ several complementary and reinforcing practices and forms of solidarity economics at once in mutual relationship with each other to subvert dynamics of the capitalist system, logic and imperative.²²

The complement of solidarity institutions and practices that we are either currently building, with varying degrees of present implementation, or aiming to build are as follows.

1. *Community Land Trust (CLT)*. A CLT is a democratic, non-profit corporation that stewards and develops land and other community assets on behalf of a community. Our primary objective in developing this institution is to acquire and decommify as much land as possible in Jackson to take it off the capitalist market (learn more about our CLT below in the *Sustainable Communities Initiative* section).
2. *Community Saving, Lending and Investing*. This practice includes a range of community-controlled financial institutions ranging from lending circles to credit unions. We are working to create and/or support existing

community financial institutions (as there are several grassroots funds in our community with which we are linked and related to) to create our own financing capacity, given that most of the “traditional” financial institutions will not lend to poor Black people with little, no, or bad credit. We have borrowed heavily from Mondragon²³ in this regard in prioritizing the work of creating a self-reinforcing financial institution to give us maximum control over capital and how we deploy it for our collective benefit.

3. *Price-based Mutual Credit.* Mutual Credit is a form of barter, where creditors and debtors constitute a network of people lending to each other through various forms of direct exchange and accounting for the goods and services exchanged. In the development of our model we are drawing heavily from the experiences of the Mutual Aid Network (MAN) in Madison, Wisconsin²⁴ in working to create a system that employs credit denominated by either the national currency (US dollar) or our local alternative currency (see below for more details). This will enable our Mutual Credit system to be transferable and practical to working class people in the community within standard capitalist oriented firms that willingly participate in the practice.

4. *Time Banking.* Time banking is a method for people to exchange services using time as currency instead of money. This practice allows everyone to contribute to the production of value in the community, enables skills and services that are not valued or are undervalued in the capitalist economy to be valued equally by valuing everyone’s time equally, no matter the task. We are working on building this practice primarily to revalue women’s work and to allow those presently excluded from the monetary economy to engage in the emerging solidarity economy on an equal footing in order to access the goods and services they need to improve their overall quality of life.

5. *Poshterity Budgeting.* Poshterity is individual and community budgeting that explores how to design and utilize the varieties of value exchange options available to replace monetary need. This practice helps people to improve their standard of living and quality of life by demonstrating where, when and how to utilize their limited resources to maximum effect. We are exploring the broad utilization of this practice to end the strangulation of impoverishment that afflicts the vast majority of city’s residents.

6. *Alternative Currency.* An alternative currency is any form of currency used as a substitute to the national currency, in our case the US dollar. In the United States private individuals, corporations, or non-profit community institutions create these types of currencies to serve as a counterbalance to the standard currency. Alternative currencies enable

greater market mobility and connection to those with limited access to standard currency for lack of jobs and other forms of income. We are pursuing this practice to buttress our cooperatives and various financial institutions and to aid our city with its critical budgetary crisis as a means to support the struggle to retain the Black majority and Black political power against the pressing threats of gentrification, displacement, and privatization (see Sustainable Communities Initiative section for more details on our fight against gentrification and displacement).

7. *Tool Lending and Resource Libraries.* Tool libraries allow community members to check out or borrow tools, equipment and “how-to” instructional materials, either free of charge (with community norms and conditions) or for a rental fee (also with norms and conditions). We are pursuing this practice to eliminate aspects of over consumption in our community and to enable more people to have access to critical tools to engage in critical work projects and improve their quality of life.

8. *Participatory Budgeting.* According to Mike Menser and Juscha Robinson: “Participatory budgeting consists of a process of democratic deliberation and decision-making in which ordinary city residents decide how to allocate part of a public budget through a series of local assemblies and meetings. It is characterized by several basic features: community members determine spending priorities and elect budget delegates to represent their neighborhoods, budget delegates transform community priorities into concrete project proposals, public employees facilitate and provide technical assistance, community members vote on which projects to fund, and the public authority implements the projects. Various studies have suggested that participatory budgeting can lead to more equitable public spending, higher quality of life, increased satisfaction of basic needs, greater government transparency and accountability, increased levels of public participation (especially by marginalized residents), and democratic and citizenship learning. Most of the well-known examples of participatory budgeting involve city administrations that have turned over decisions over municipal budgets, such as its overall priorities and choice of new investments, to citizen assemblies. Other examples involve school budgets, housing project budgets, and the budgets of cooperatives and non-profit organizations”.²⁵ We are developing this practice to humanize governance in Jackson and to institutionalize equity processes through governance.

9. *Community Energy Production.* Community Energy is the production and distribution of energy from renewable sources, i.e. solar, wind, geothermal and biophotovoltaics²⁶ (producing energy directly from plants) that is cooperatively owned and democratically managed. This energy can be utilized for direct consumption and production, or can be exchanged on the public energy utility grid for wider distribution for some form of

compensation or return to the community. We are developing this practice to reduce our community's carbon footprint, to make a concrete contribution towards the development of sustainable energy systems, and to create energy self-reliance and self-determination in our community.

All of the above mentioned solidarity institutions and practices are still emerging and in very rudimentary stages of development. As of this writing (April 2017), we are currently prioritizing the building of three interrelated and interconnected green cooperatives. These are: 1) Freedom Farms, an urban farming cooperative, 2) Nubia's Place Cafe and Catering Cooperative, and 3) the Green Team, a landscaping, organic waste gathering and composting cooperative.

Freedom Farms is an urban farming worker-owned cooperative, based in West Jackson. Freedom Farms currently produces on 2 acres of land in the emerging Fannie Lou Hamer Community Land Trust, held by Cooperation Jackson. Freedom Farms specializes in organic vegetables, and is in the process of expanding production into fruits and fish. Freedom Farm's produce is primarily being sold and consumed at Nubia's Place Café and Catering Cooperative.

Nubia's Place Café and Catering Cooperative is a healthy oriented café and catering worker-owned cooperative that operates out of the Lumumba Center. It is designed to fight the chronic obesity and diabetes related afflictions that threaten the lives of many of our community's residents. Organic waste from Nubia's Place is handled and processed by The Green Team.

The Green Team is a yard care and composting worker-owned cooperative. It focuses on gathering and processing organic yard waste into compost to keep it from the landfill and water drainage systems. It also gathers organic materials from grocery stores and restaurants and turns this organic waste into compost that is sold to gardeners, farmers and hardware and home supply stores.

We are very intentional about creating a cooperative eco-system that reinforces and builds upon itself. With these three cooperatives, we have created a reinforcing value chain wherein Freedom Farms produces food that is sold and consumed at Nubia's Place Café, the waste from which is utilized by The Green Team to create organic compost that nourishes the crops produced by Freedom Farms. This is an example of the types of sustainable and regenerative enterprises and productive systems that we are intentionally constructing. Some of the additional green cooperatives that we are working to develop are:

- A Housing Cooperative
- A Recycling Cooperative
- A Construction Cooperative
- A Childcare Cooperative
- A Solar Installation and Green Retrofitting Cooperative

However, these three green cooperatives are not enough to create a truly reinforcing and self-sustaining economy of scale that can transform our local economy. Given both the existing political economy in our region and the new economy we are trying to develop, we have to build our own supply and value chains.²⁷

Value chains are the decision making processes by which cooperatives, or any form of business, receive and process raw materials, add value to the raw materials through various labor and technical processes to create a finished product, and then sell and/or exchange the end product to customers and communities through effective distribution and marketing.

A supply chain is the entire network of entities (directly or indirectly) interlinked and interdependent in serving the same customer base or market. It comprises vendors who supply raw materials and natural resources, producers who convert these materials and resources into finished products, warehouses that store the products, distribution centers and networks that deliver the products to retailers, and retailers who present the products to communities and sell them to consumers. Supply chains underlie value chains because without them no producer has the ability to give customers what they want, when and where they want it, at prices that they want and/or can afford. In standard capitalist market dynamics, producers compete with each other only through their supply chains, reducing the degree of value increase from improvements on the producers end, which cannot make up for deficiencies in the supply chain that reduce the producer's ability to compete.²⁸

To foster the development of a non-capitalist alternative, we have to socialize every step of the productive process required to create, distribute, and recycle a product to collective ownership and democratic management to increase the effective scale and scope of the solidarity economy. It is only by creating solidarity oriented value chains and supply chains that we can and will effectively displace and replace the capitalist economy. Our emphasis on intentionally creating mutually interconnected and interdependent cooperatives and solidarity networks is fundamental to how we will ensure the attainment of our end pursuits locally, regionally and beyond.

Sustainable Communities Initiative

To improve the quality of life in our City and for the sake of our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren we can and must end the overlapping environmental, climatic and human rights crises confronting us. Cooperation Jackson believes that we can solve these crises by organizing our communities to execute a comprehensive program that will protect our environment, curb our carbon emissions, stimulate employment, and democratically transfer wealth and equity.

We call this comprehensive program a *Just Transition Program*²⁹ which is premised on ending our systemic dependence on the hydro-carbon industry

and the capitalist driven need for endless growth on a planet with limited resources, while creating a new, democratic economy that is centered around sustainable methods of production, distribution, consumption and recycling that are more localized and cooperatively owned and controlled. Cooperation Jackson's specific contribution to a Just Transition program is our *Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI)*. The Sustainable Communities Initiative has four primary components:

1. Green Worker Cooperatives (*see above*)
2. Building an Eco-Village
3. Developing Food Sovereignty
4. Just Transition Policy Reform

The *Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI)* was the first major initiative launched by Cooperation Jackson. At this stage in the organization's development and the execution of this initiative, our Sustainable Communities Initiative is primarily a neighborhood-based strategy that centers on transforming a key neighborhood in West Jackson by creating a live work "Eco-Village". The Eco-Village will be anchored by a *Community Land Trust (CLT)* and a network of interlocking and interdependent institutions that will help stabilize rents, provide affordable "green" housing, create quality high paying jobs, and lay a foundation for the sustainable transformation of Jackson's economy through cooperative enterprise and solidarity economics.

We are targeting West Jackson because it is the working class gateway to Downtown Jackson, which is the heart of the State Government of Mississippi and the economic engine of Jackson. And because it is critical to stopping the advance of gentrification and maintaining Jackson's Black working class majority, which is quintessential to the Jackson-Kush Plan as a comprehensive political project. Over the past 30 plus years, West Jackson has suffered from rapid capital flight and divestment, driven in large part by white flight. Since the late 1970s West Jackson has become a Black working class community, with high concentrations of poverty. Since the late 1980s, large parts of West Jackson have become dilapidated and abandoned. It is now estimated that there are over 1,832 vacant lots and 832 abandoned structures out of a total of 6,748 lots in the community (it is estimated that 41% of the parcels in the community are unused). The community has an estimated 13,890 people, the vast majority of whom are Black (an estimated 92%).³⁰

Four major real estate and so-called economic development initiatives adjacent to West Jackson are driving speculative pressures on the community, which is confronting it with the threat of gentrification and race and class based displacement. The four development initiatives are the mid-town based Medical Corridor initiative (being driven by the University of Mississippi and funded by the State government), the Downtown-One Lake Redevelopment initiative

(being driven by Greater Jackson Chamber of Commerce and proposed and planned out in "Plan 2022"), the development of a sports and entertainment complex in Downtown Jackson (being driven by the destruction of the old stadium in the Medical Corridor development area and Jackson State University's desire for a larger stadium), and the Capitol Complex Bill or Downtown Annexation Bill (being driven by some neo-colonial forces which aim to create an exclusive zone of political control and economic development controlled by the Governor and big developers within the very heart of the capitol city).³¹ Each initiative is at a different stage of development, but all have committed financial streams and widespread support amongst local and state elites.

The primary force driving the encroaching gentrification is the Medical Corridor. The Medical Corridor was approved after Hurricane Katrina, and capitalized primarily by the federal relief funds secured for the state of Mississippi by former Governor Haley Barbour, who was and is a very adept politician and a close friend of then President George H. W. Bush. The Corridor's secure capitalization provides the economic conditions that enable and drive the other developments. Over the course of the next decade, the Corridor's expansion will provide hundreds of short-term construction jobs, and thousands of long-term medical and medical support jobs. All of these new doctors, nurses, technicians, pharmacists and other support and spin off workers will need places to live, shop, dine, play, and worship. Many will want to avoid long suburban commutes and have easy access to various living amenities and various types of entertainment. Knowing these needs and anticipating the long-term profits that can be drawn from them, speculators and developers have literally consumed most of Fondren, Midtown, and Central City and are rapidly encroaching on the northern borders of West Jackson due to its strategic location, accessibility and cheap real estate values to fulfill these needs.

None of the aforementioned development initiatives are designed to incorporate the existing population living in West Jackson in their long-term plans. This is where Cooperation Jackson and the Sustainable Communities Initiative come into the picture. Our first task is to stop gentrification and displacement, which we are trying to contain at what we call the "Fortification Line". The Fortification Line is our line in the sand. It is the point we are declaring to the forces of gentrification "you cannot pass". Fortification Street defines the Line, which is one of the main horizontal east-west thoroughfares in West Jackson that separates the northern section of the community from the central heart of the community. As noted before, there are parts of the northern section of West Jackson, those directly adjacent to Mid-Town and Central City, that are already being bought up by real estate speculators. And there are parts of the community below the Fortification Line that are already in contest between our forces and the forces of gentrification.

One of the stated gentrification projects below the Fortification Line is the "Capitol Street Corridor" project. This project is being defined and pushed

by the Greater Jackson Chamber of Commerce and is aimed at developing West Capitol Street.³² Their aim is to acquire as much of the depressed value real estate on and around West Capitol Street to turn into market rate “middle income” housing, that will be catered to by a new commercial district that will be directly linked to the Jackson Zoo and retrofitting of the Golf Course adjacent to Hawkins Field airport.³³ We are working diligently to counter this gentrification move by purchasing as much of the available real estate as we can afford and holding it in our Community Land Trust. This blocks the capital forces pushing gentrification from getting a consolidated hold on the street, as we will never sell our property, nor will we consent to their plans, which will inevitably lead to the displacement of the Black working class community, either through higher real estate values, higher taxes, or higher rents for renters.

Holding the forces of gentrification and displacement at the Fortification Line is central to maintaining a Black working class majority in Jackson. As the Medical Corridor develops and expands, Mid-town, Central City and Fondren and adjacent neighborhoods are going to become majority non-Black areas. The forces behind the gentrification of Jackson are deliberately trying to dilute the numerical strength of the Black working class in Jackson in order to change the political character of the city. The Black working class is the social base for the radical politics that has been expressed in the city. Without this base, Chokwe Lumumba, a revolutionary New Afrikan nationalist, would never have been elected to office. Jackson is presently over 80% Black.³⁴ The political calculation of the reactionary forces pushing for displacement and seeking to profit from gentrification, is that in order break the bloc of radical political forces in Jackson, they have to reduce the Black population considerably. Based on deductions from the last two municipal elections, they have to get the Black numbers below 60% of the overall population.³⁵ If they can accomplish this, they will ensure that no one politically comparable to Chokwe Lumumba will get elected again. This is why we are trying to hold the Fortification Line, as we need to ensure that the city retains at least 70% of its present Black working class population in order to sustain the radical political orientation of the city.

That said, Cooperation Jackson is not adverse to “*economic development*”, which West Jackson, and many other Black working class communities throughout the city are in desperate need. However, we are for *sustainable, community driven and controlled development without displacement*. We firmly believe that the existing community must equitably benefit from the new developments that are being planned, and that the community must self-determine and execute its own community revitalization and wealth building initiatives. The Sustainable Communities Initiative is one of the few bottom-up development initiatives in Jackson. The project is being driven by the membership of Cooperation Jackson through extensive community outreach, but its foundations were laid by the long-standing organizing efforts of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement and the Jackson People’s Assembly. The Sustainable Communities Initiative’s success will neutralize the attempt to

displace the Black working class community of West Jackson and create an array of eco-friendly and worker- and community-owned cooperative businesses and institutions that will be accessible to the long standing and potentially new residents of West Jackson.

The anchor of our grand vision for a Sustainable City is the West Jackson Eco-Village. The Eco-village is being organized in the heart of the “Downtown Gateway” section of West Jackson. This community is situated in municipal Wards 3 and 5, and is primarily populated by Black working class residents.

The community is almost exclusively a bedroom community with few employment opportunities at present. The largest employers in the community are Jackson State University (JSU) and Jackson Public Schools (JPS). Vast tracts of this community, as previously noted, are either vacant or dilapidated and abandoned. The community is also in an extensive food desert. Residents of the community typically have to travel two to three miles to access quality produce, fruits, and meats.

The Eco-village seeks to radically alter the quality of life in West Jackson over the next several years by increasing and improving the housing stock, creating quality living wage jobs, and servicing essential energy, food, and entertainment needs. The base of the Eco-village is quality cooperative housing that is green, off the utility grids, and deeply affordable. In its broad dimensions, the Eco-village will contain a significant portion of the Freedom Farms Urban Farming Cooperative, which will provide a significant number of quality jobs through the green worker cooperatives listed earlier, in addition to a multi-stakeholder grocery cooperative and a comprehensive arts and culture entertainment complex owned and managed by our emerging Revolutionary Resonance Arts and Culture Cooperative.

The ecological component of the community is centered on creating a “living-systems” integrated community anchored by a solar-thermal, recycling, and composting network that will provide deeply affordable and sustainable energy and green jobs that will help fight ecological degradation and climate change. Per the terms of “cooperative living” that we are adopting, adapting and developing, all of the residents of the housing cooperative will participate in the village’s recycling and composting programs that will create a protected market for our Urban Farming Cooperative as well as our emerging Composting and Recycling Cooperatives. In addition, all of our houses will primarily operate off of solar energy and be connected to an internal community energy production grid that will foster energy efficiency and sustainability throughout the village. The exercise of collective land, home, and energy ownership and the provision of permanent affordability will enable us to fight the encroachment of gentrification and displacement threatening the predominantly Black working class community of West Jackson.

We are currently pursuing several strategies to acquire a significant number of vacant lots and abandoned homes in West Jackson. We currently possess over 40 properties in our target community, including the Lumumba Center

for Economic Democracy and Development, and have applied for several properties currently owned by the State of Mississippi, the City of Jackson and the Jackson Redevelopment Authority. We are also seeking to acquire several vacant lots and abandoned homes that are privately owned.

Following our land acquisition drive, the second major step in developing the Eco-Village is the Ewing Street Initiative. We currently own 90% of Ewing Street between Robinson and Central Streets, and are actively in the process of acquiring the remaining 10%. We are targeting this property because it is the most contiguous property we presently have, and it is zoned in a manner that will give us the greatest organizing and operational flexibility. The first step of the Ewing Street Initiative is cleaning and clearing the lots. Remediating the soils on the lot, which will lead the expansion of our agricultural production and provide a higher level of food security to our members and the West Jackson community. The next step is creating our first community energy production unit on the block, which will then be followed by the introduction of off the grid, digitally fabricated houses. We plan on this phase of the development coming into fruition over the course of the next 3 years. The successful implementation will provide us with a model to replicate on a broader scale throughout Jackson that will demonstrate the benefits of a new way of living to our community and effectively combat the gentrification and displacement threatening it.

The broader Just Transition component of our overall initiative focuses on instituting policies that curb ecological destruction and climate change and incentivize the creation of sustainable jobs and cooperative enterprises in our city. We are committed to helping the city realize the vision of the Lumumba administration of making Jackson the most "sustainable city" in the South (if not the country), by committing the city government to institute policies that will enable Jackson to become a *Zero-Emissions* and *Zero-Waste* city by 2025.³⁶

Our *Zero-Emissions* program calls for the following:

1. *Weatherization and Energy Efficiency Retrofitting.* We want to push the City of Jackson to retrofit and weatherize all of the buildings that it owns and operates, so that they conserve heat in the winter and naturally cool the facility in the summer. We also want the City to incentivize this type of retrofitting in the private and non-profit sectors of the economy with grants, low-interest loans, tax-credits, etc.

2. *Solar-Thermal Energy Production.* We want to encourage the City of Jackson to place solar panels on all of the buildings and facilities it possesses that have the capacity to host the equipment. We also want to encourage the City to install solar-thermal converters in all of the facilities it controls that have the capacity to regulate their energy use via this technology. We also want to encourage the City to incentivize private solar-thermal energy conversion and production and enable residents and businesses to supply excess energy to the main power grid to aid the energy company in eliminating its dependence on fossil fuels.

3. *Zero-Emissions Fleet.* We want to push the City of Jackson to gradually replace its entire operating fleet, including all police vehicles, with electric vehicles. We also want to encourage the City to incentivize the purchasing of electric cars and to create publicly owned and operated electric fueling stations throughout the city to accommodate this transition.

4. *Expanded and Sustainable Public Transportation.* We want to push the City of Jackson to gradually acquire a fully electric public transportation fleet and to expand its public transportation vehicles, routes and hours to accommodate more efficient and accessible transportation throughout the city and metro-region.

Our *Zero-Waste* program calls for the following:

1. *Comprehensive Recycling.* We want to encourage the City of Jackson to create a comprehensive recycling program, that includes mass public education, and a system of inducements and rewards for residents, businesses and civil institutions in the city to recycle all that can be recycled to reduce the burden on the city's landfill and to create more private and public sectors jobs in waste management and recycling.

2. *Comprehensive Composting.* We want to encourage the City of Jackson to create a comprehensive composting program that gathers all of the organic refuse produced by households, businesses and civil institutions and include the requisite public education necessary to encourage individuals, families, businesses and institutions to participate and to adhere to all of the necessary sanitary standards.

3. *Comprehensive Oil Reuse.* We want to encourage the City of Jackson to create a comprehensive cooking oil gathering program that calls for all restaurants and food service businesses and institutions producing mass amounts of used cooking oils for their food production such as schools, colleges, universities, and hospitals to recycle these materials so they can be reused for other energy and production needs and help eliminate the need for their extended production and disposal at public expense.

4. *Local Food Production.* We want to encourage the City of Jackson to create a Local Food and Production Charter, to encourage and incentivize local food production and distribution, to create more jobs and reduce carbon emissions by eliminating the need for extended transportation systems and refrigeration. The incentive program should focus exclusively on supporting producers who reside in Jackson and are drawn from historically discriminated and capital deprived communities.

A critical component of our Just Transition work is *Food Sovereignty*. Food Sovereignty is critical to our mission and the realization of our end goals.

Food sovereignty is defined as, “the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agricultural systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations.”³⁷

Despite the overabundance of food in the United States, which is largely produced by heavily subsidized transnational corporations utilizing the most extreme and unsustainable industrial agricultural methods, most Black working class communities are confronted with various types of food access deprivations, what many are calling food apartheid.³⁸ These deprivations range from food deserts, to little to no access to fresh and healthy foods, to super exploitative overpricing. All of these deprivations are the direct result of white supremacy and the exploitative efficiencies inherent to capitalism. In order to become self-determining subjects, we have to be able to securely provide our communities with the food and nutrients needed to sustain healthy and productive lives.

And we have to do it sustainably, because industrial agriculture is one of the leading contributors to climate change and a driving force of the sixth great extinction event through which we are living. Industrial agriculture is eviscerating our ecosystems and destroying our soils and the ability for humanity to provide sustenance sustainably. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UN FAO), humanity only has 60 years of top soil remaining (as of 2014). The Food and Agriculture Organization further states that, “unless new approaches are adopted, the global amount of arable and productive land per person in 2050 will be only a quarter of the level in 1960, ...due to growing populations and soil degradation”.³⁹

In order to attain a modicum of Food Sovereignty in Jackson over the course of the next five to ten years, we have to create our own comprehensive, interconnected and interdependent supply and value chains—that is, our own network of cooperative farms, processing centers, food hubs, compost and soil generators, food processors, canneries, shipping and trucking cooperatives, grocery stores, etc. Our first major initiative to actually realize food sovereignty in Jackson starts with our People’s Grocery Initiative. The People’s Grocery Initiative⁴⁰ is the effort to transform a previously owned Black grocery store in West Jackson into a multi-stakeholder community cooperative that will serve, in part, as a food bank, a farmers market, a community supported agricultural provider, a market aggregator, and an anchor of our first Eco-Village.

The proposed site of the People’s Grocery is within our Eco-Village zone, situated at the intersection of W. Capitol and Rose Streets, and is central to our effort to hold the Fortification Line discussed above. This initiative is being launched with the support of the Mississippi Association of Cooperatives (MAC) and a network of Black farmers throughout Mississippi. The first step is to work with this initial network to build a level of food security as a first

step towards attaining food sovereignty. We aim to create an interconnected and interdependent network of urban farms, with Freedom Farms being the anchor, that links with rural Black and organic farmers throughout the state and region, that are willing to strategically coordinate and practice sustainable zero-waste methods of production, distribution, pricing, and aggregate consumption and gathering for composting. Starting from here and collectively making a plan of gradual expansion based on statewide and regional integration of producers, workers, and consumers (see *Regional Considerations, Plans and Aspirations* below for more details) dedicated to the solidarity economy and the struggle for economic democracy, we can create value chain with enough significant scale and scope to attain food sovereignty for our community that will help us realize our Just Transition and self-determining goals.

As these points illustrate, there are viable and attainable solutions that we can implement now that will help our city work its way out of its health, human rights, environmental, and climate change contributing crisis. We want to encourage everyone in Jackson to support us in advancing this cause by becoming a member or supporter of Cooperation Jackson. This course of action would help us build and execute the Sustainable Communities Initiative to engender our collective power and advance a just transition to a new economy and social horizon.

Community Production Initiative

As noted earlier in this essay, Cooperation Jackson has launched a critical initiative to own and control the means of industrial production called the Community Production Initiative. Community Production is industrial manufacturing based on a combination of 3rd and 4th generation industrial technologies, namely the combination of digital technology and automated production with 3-D printing and quantum computing, that is collectively owned and democratically operated by members of geographically and/or intentionally defined communities. The Community Production Initiative is centered on building the Community Production Cooperative (CPC), and the Center for Community Production (CCP).

The Community Production Cooperative is an emerging multi-stakeholder cooperative specializing in 3D print/digital fabrication manufacturing. The stakeholders involved include Cooperation Jackson, our tech operators who operate as worker-owners and a class of community owners and investors.

The Center for Community Production will serve as a Fab Academy training center, a coding and digital programming innovation hub, a community maker space⁴¹, and a workforce development entry point. A Fab Lab is defined by “a technical prototyping platform for innovation and invention, providing stimulus for local entrepreneurship.”⁴²

Combined the Community Production Cooperative and the Center for Community Production have three fundamental divisions of production:

1. The Education Division
2. The Commercial Manufacturing Division, and
3. The Community Production Division.

The *Education Division* will primarily, but not exclusively, focus on training members and the community on how to use the 3D printing machines and other 4th Industrial Revolution technologies, in part through the Fab Lab network. It will also teach members, students, and the community how to code. And finally, this division will partner with various workforce development programs throughout Jackson and the region to aid workers create their own jobs or secure high paying jobs in the dog-eat-dog capitalist system.

The *Commercial Manufacturing Division* will primarily focus on providing build to order, high quality, high volume 3D printed products. It will also aid businesses with designing and prototyping new products. The commercial division will also produce its own specialty products, ranging from toys to medical aids and tools. In addition, the commercial division will also provide precision laser and water jet cutting services.

The *Community Production Division* will focus on providing a range of maker space services to the community, where members and customers can work individually or collaboratively to produce products for their own use or for the market. However, the primary aim of our community production division is to produce directly for community need. Utilizing this technology as a democratically governed “public good” or “public utility” will help us address several essential production needs in our community, like the need to create “sustainable” or “green” manufacturing businesses, and our need for quality, affordable “off the grid” green housing, which digital fabrication makes possible. But, that’s not all. 3D printing will also enable us to produce everything from recyclable consumer goods and services, advanced medical aids and tools, and the next generation(s) of 3D printing machines on the road to advancing the means of production to non-commodified forms as witnessed in futuristic sagas like Star Trek.

The Community Production Initiative is a critical investment in the liberation of our community, and its emancipation from the terrors of scarcity and the agonies of hard labor that Black people have been subjected to in the US empire. Democratizing the fourth generation of industrial innovation and technology from the bottom up is central to humanizing the new social relationships that will be fostered by the new “robot era” and defeating the rapid genocidal advance of capitalism’s disposable age.

The Jackson Union-Cooperative Initiative

The Union-Cooperative Initiative is a long-term initiative to organize the working class in its totality—meaning unionized and non-unionized workers,

cooperators, and the under and unemployed – throughout Jackson to address their common needs and interests, build genuine worker power from the ground up, and serve as the core transformative force to democratize the local economy and society. The objective is to create a class and community oriented syndicate,⁴³ one big union, with multiple autonomous divisions that would democratically introduce and enforce economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR)⁴⁴ norms and standards in Jackson via workers and people’s assemblies, and other democratic institutions and processes (see the connection to the Jackson Human Rights Institute below).

The primary objectives of this Initiative are to:

1. Train the future generation of working class militants in Jackson and throughout Mississippi.
2. Create a dynamic, new model of community unionism in Mississippi.
3. Build militant class-consciousness in Jackson and throughout Mississippi.
4. Change social relations between class forces in Jackson and throughout Mississippi.
5. Win collective bargaining rights and overturn the Taft-Hartley “right-to-work [for less] regime” in Mississippi.

The 5 aforementioned objectives will be accomplished by building the following institutions:

1. The Mississippi Organizing Institute

- 1.1. Will train workers in participating unions in the arts of union and community organizing.
- 1.2. Will train various sectors of the community in the arts of union and community organizing.

2. Mississippi Workers Union

- 2.1. Will serve as a class-based community union that will embrace all workers, regardless of trade and/or occupation.
- 2.2. Will engage in campaigns to protect workers in all trades and occupations.
- 2.3. Will engage in campaigns that challenge the various laws that exploit and/or limit the rights of workers and organized labor.

3. Union Cooperatives

- 3.1. Work to build democratic unions in the cooperatives that develop in Jackson and throughout Mississippi and help the worker-owners fortify their democratic practice and sustain ongoing relations with workers in non-cooperative enterprises.
- 3.2. Work to convert existing businesses into union-shop cooperatives.
- 3.3. Work at creating union initiated and supported worker cooperatives.

To help build its base and its transformative potential, the Jackson Union-Coop Initiative will support and advance the following initiatives which are aimed at building working class power and transforming social relationships in Mississippi to create economic democracy, a generative economy and the fulfillment of human rights. These core initiatives include:

1. *The Jackson Just Transition Plan.* The Just Transition Plan puts workers in the lead of a municipal process to create a regenerative local economy grounded in sustainable development and provides real, worker-owned green jobs. (For more details see the *Green Worker Cooperatives, Mutual Aid Network, and Solidarity Economy Institutions* section above)
2. *The Human Rights Charter Initiative.* The Charter Initiative aims to radically transform municipal governance by having Jackson adopt human rights norms, standards and procedures and adhere to them in its governing and administrative processes and activities. This initiative will enable many progressive things, but key amongst them are enabling policies that will protect workers, guarantee collective bargaining rights, support worker ownership and workplace democracy. (For more details see the section on the *Jackson Human Rights Institute* below).

The Jackson Human Rights Institute

The Jackson Human Rights Institute (JHRI) is a project of Cooperation Jackson. The Human Rights Institute is a human rights training and organizing institute that is focused on fulfilling one of the key policy planks of the Jackson-Kush Plan, which was and is making Jackson a “Human Rights City”. In December 2014, Cooperation Jackson and the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement initiated and led a progressive coalition that pressured the City Council to pass a resolution committing it to make Jackson a Human Rights City.⁴⁵

Making Jackson a Human Rights City entails creating a Human Rights Charter for the City of Jackson that is enforceable by law and based on the major covenants, conventions, and treaties of the United Nations (UN) that define international law. It also entails creating a Human Rights Commission, which will be governed by specially elected officials who will enforce the charter

and its statutes, and work to ensure that our municipal government respects, protects and fulfills the entire complement of our human rights, particularly the complement of positive rights so vehemently denied in the United States, like the right to water, food, housing, education, and health care, enshrined in Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ESCR).⁴⁶

The Commission will have several divisions that address areas of social concern beyond the standard measures of remediation addressed through the limited scope of law enshrined in the United States’ constitution or the constitution of the state of Mississippi, which are predominantly oriented around the protection of “negative rights”. Negative rights are fundamentally what we call “civil and political rights”, that require that the state or private entities abstain from coercing or interfering with an individuals activities. These types of rights constitute things such as “freedom of speech”, “freedom of religion”, the “right to a fair trial”, habeas corpus, etc.⁴⁷

One of the primary divisions of the Commission will center on protecting and enforcing the Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ESCR) of the people of Jackson. This division is necessary to help aid the people of Jackson relieve the grinding impoverishment they are subjected to by the capitalist system and the forces that control and wield it to serve their own narrow interests of capital accumulation. By enforcing and protecting economic, social, and cultural rights, we are helping the workers of Jackson overcome the racist limitations of the Taft-Hartley regime and the right to work laws, that is the “right to work for less”, which give licence to define the relations between capital and labor in Mississippi.⁴⁸ In striving to protect these rights, we are also reinforcing the imperatives of democracy, solidarity, equity and justice that underlie our work to build economic democracy in Jackson.

Regional Considerations, Plans and Aspirations

The vast majority of what you have read so far primarily focuses on our operations within Jackson and our aims to transform it. Jackson isn’t our only focus. We have a vision, program and strategy to transform Mississippi and our greater region. Our drive in this regard is driven by necessity. The supply chains and value chains that we need to create cannot be created exclusively in Jackson. While we have learned a lot from studying numerous efforts around the world that focus on the importance of going local and building “municipal socialism”.⁴⁹ We do not believe that socialism, or economic democracy, can be built in isolation on a local level, as it is neither economically viable or ecologically sustainable. You have to have wider relationships and links to other areas to access or acquire the resources you need to survive, and ultimately, thrive.

What is presented below is an outline of our Southern regional organizing vision, program, and strategy. Our mission is to create a more democratic and

equitable economy in the South through the fostering of sustainable solidarity economics and the development of a network of interconnected cooperative enterprises throughout the region.

Although the economy of the southeastern region is diversifying—including more manufacturing, technological research and development, biomedical expansion, and tourism—it is still largely dependent on agricultural production and the extraction of natural resources. The existing cooperative infrastructure in the region reflects this reality, as the vast majority of cooperatives are either agricultural or service the needs of agriculture or agricultural (rural) areas, such as the rural utility cooperatives or credit unions.

In order to build a more dynamic, democratic, sustainable, and transformative economy in the region, we will have to simultaneously build upon, strengthen, and expand the existing cooperative enterprises and infrastructure AND diversity and expand into new areas, economic niches, and markets. The new areas we will focus on are the expanding metropolitan areas in the region. The new niches will primarily be in the manufacturing, recycling, new energy, distribution, and service industries. And the new markets will of necessity be emerging markets, expanded local and regional markets, and greater entrée into national and international markets.

In order to execute this strategy, we will have to create a broad multiracial and multiclass alliance. This alliance will be rooted in cooperative principles, promote the self-determination of historically oppressed peoples and communities, and promote sustainability and a just transition to a new economy and society. This alliance will prioritize organizing working class communities in the south, in both urban and rural areas, to accomplish its mission. Organizing youth and students, particularly high school and college students, will also be a priority. In addition to organizing workers, youth and students to build cooperative enterprises, this alliance will also campaign to create a comprehensive policy regime that will support cooperative development and sustainable methods of production, distribution, and consumption throughout the south. It will also campaign for divestment from extractive industries, particularly hydrocarbon based industries, and for community reinvestments that will help democratize public and private finance on a regional, global, and international scale.

To reach our constituents and move the mission and agenda, these are some of the concrete steps and means we will undertake to accomplish our goals.

Core Cities

In order to diversify and transform the regional economy on a whole, the Southern cooperative movement will have to make some critical inroads in creating dynamic cooperative ecosystems in key metropolitan areas. These metropolitan based ecosystems should include a mix of worker, producer, and consumer cooperatives that mutually reinforce and support each other by

dedicating themselves to engaging in cooperative business planning, production, and purchasing to create our own protected markets, security and operating leverage in our local markets.

We also should seek to create 1 or 2 cooperatives of scale in each core city over the course of the next 10 years. We should use a number of strategies to get us to scale up in each locale, based on the opportunities present. One strategy is to engage in extensive community and worker led campaigns to move Anchor Institutions (i.e., placed based major institutions with considerable purchasing power) to “localize” their supply chains and procurement by serving the wealth building needs of oppressed and marginalized communities by partnering with cooperatives built by and based in these communities. This strategy may enable us to create a number of relatively large-scale cooperatives that employ 50 or more people, whom all receive living wage incomes. Large scale cooperatives that could potentially emerge via this strategy include health care workers (nurses and other direct health service providers), laundries, food management and distribution, transportation, alternative energy installation and servicers, urban farming, and waste management to name a few. Another likely strategy entails creating innovative cooperatives to address new market needs, particularly those pertaining to climate change and environmental sustainability. This strategy might entail creating comprehensive recycling cooperatives that not only gather and sort through recyclable materials, but also create new products out of recycled materials or reuses or repurposes recyclable items for other uses.

Rural/Urban Production Networks

The existing infrastructure that connects agricultural cooperatives with credit unions not only needs to be maintained, but expanded. We can effectively expand upon it by creating a series of interconnected Rural/Urban Production Networks that link our Core Cities with agricultural cooperatives that are adjacent (or relatively near) to these metropolitan areas. The production networks will be based on creating protected markets for the agricultural cooperatives through the collective purchasing of the urban cooperatives and by creating cooperative restaurants, food hubs, food processing centers, food manufacturing enterprises (producing canned goods, dried goods, fish and poultry cuts, etc.), and food distribution and transportation companies. We will work with the various credit unions that service these urban areas and the agricultural enterprises that are a part of this network, to create special investment funds and portfolios that support and reinforce these productive networks and link these directly to the regional and climate reinvestment funds.

New Energy Production and Transition

Per our commitment towards ending the extractive economy and creating sustainable methods of production, we have to strategically invest in the infrastructure that will enable this transition. We have to get the Rural Energy Utilities to transition to solar and wind energies and divest from coal, natural gas, and oil. We also have to encourage the urban utilities to make this transition, and in many states to allow for solar producers to resale back to the power grid. Both orientations will require popular campaigns to create the policy shifts needed.

While we are pushing for new policy regimes, we should start by developing incipient, small-scale infrastructure to lay the groundwork for the transition by creating new energy installation and production cooperatives that will create low-scale solar energy markets in our Rural/Urban Productive Networks. Converting all of our cooperative enterprises into solar power users and distributors, and by recruiting businesses, public and private institutions, and homeowners to also convert to being solar power users and distributors will create this new energy market. The objective is to slowly create and grow the new energy market infrastructure that over time, ideally a period of 5 to 10 years, will compel the utilities and the legislatures to make the necessary policy changes that will support a just transition.

By Way of Conclusion

So, here dear readers are snapshots of the comprehensive programmatic and strategic vision of Cooperation Jackson. Please note that we have taken great risk in presenting this information. Parts of what have been laid out in this essay will give fodder to our many enemies and detractors in the state of Mississippi and beyond. We know it can and will be used against us, and may in fact be a factor in aiding our enemies to get a few steps ahead of us. However, we are taking this risk because we think it is essential that other progressive forces understand what we are doing, why, and how we are thinking and planning on achieving it. We think this is critical because, even if we should fall short or utterly fail in our efforts, we hope that there is enough laid out here for others to be inspired by and learn from to be able to pick up the mantle and continue to run forward with it in the pursuit of liberation.

We also put this out to elicit the solidarity and mutual aid of you the reader. We can't accomplish all of this on our own. We need your help. We need non-extractive, patient capital to move on many fronts, like Community Production and the Community Land Trust initiatives and to defeat gentrification and displacement. We need cooperation and mutual aid between cooperatives and social enterprises to build the necessary value and supply chains needed to create and sustain a viable alternative. We need technical assistance in numerous

areas, particularly in how to develop anti-capitalist business plans and models. And we are going to need political support. We need forces throughout the US empire and the world to provide us with various forms of political support to keep the reactionary state and federal governments off our backs, and to help advance our efforts to enact the non-reformist reforms we are campaigning to enact.

As our actions in Jackson, Mississippi, over the past decade demonstrate, we can change the world for the better by working together in solidarity. We ask that you join us in this effort by offering whatever mutual aid and support you can provide and by organizing a Cooperation _____ wherever you live that is directly linked with grassroots efforts to build democratic people's power from the bottom-up and forming mutual bonds with us and formations like us throughout the US and the world. This is how we will give birth to the new world waiting to be born.

Notes

1. For more information see "The Jackson-Kush Plan and the Struggle for Black Self-Determination and Economic Democracy" by Kali Akuno at <http://navigatingthestorm.blogspot.com/2012/05/the-jackson-kush-plan-and-struggle-for.html>.
2. For more information see "Cotton in a Global Economy: Mississippi, 1800—1860", by Eugene R. Dattel at <http://www.mshistorynow.mdah.ms.gov/articles/161/cotton-in-a-global-economy-mississippi-1800-1860>, and "Antebellum Mississippi", by Max Griwno at <http://www.mshistorynow.mdah.ms.gov/articles/395/antebellum-mississippi>.
3. For more information on our "Disposability Thesis", see "Until We Win: Black Labor and Liberation in the Disposable Era", by Kali Akuno <http://www.counterpunch.org/2015/09/04/until-we-win-black-labor-and-liberation-in-the-disposable-era/>.
4. For more information see *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism*, by Edward E. Baptist, New York: Basic Books, 2014, and *Empire of Cotton: A Global History*, by Sven Beckert, New York, Vintage; reprint edition 2015.
5. For more information see *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans: From the Civil War to World War II*: Douglas A. Blackmon, New York: Anchor, 2009 and *Empire of Cotton: A Global History*, by Sven Beckert, New York, Vintage; reprint edition 2015.
6. For more information see *Lockdown America: Police and Prisons in the Age of Crisis*, by Christian Parenti, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis and Opposition in Globalizing California*, by Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Racialized Mass Imprisonment: Counterinsurgency and Genocide*, by Kevin "Rashid" Johnson, and *Incarcerating the*

- Crisis: Freedom Struggles and the Rise of the Neo-Liberal State*, by Jordan T. Camp.
7. For more information see *Global Capitalism and the Crisis of Humanity*, by William I. Robinson, *A Theory of Global Capitalism: Production, Class and State in the Transnational World*, by William I. Robinson, and *The Implosion of Contemporary Capitalism*, by Samir Amin.
 8. For more information see *Uneven Development*, by Neil Smith.
 9. For more information see *Uneven Development: An Essay on the Social Formations of Peripheral Capitalism*, by Samir Amin, and *Uneven Development and Local Inequality in the U.S. South: The Role of Outside Investment, Landed Elites, and Racial Dynamics*, by Donald Tomaskovi-Devey and Vincent J. Roscigno.
 10. For more information see "Casting Shadows: Chokwe Lumumba and the Struggle for Racial Justice and Economic Democracy in Jackson, MS", Kali Akuno <http://www.rosalux-nyc.org/casting-shadows/>.
 11. For more information see "There's more Carbon Dioxide in the air now than any time in 3 million years", by Phillip Bump <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/05/weve-got-new-carbon-dioxide-record-well-soon-rocket-past/315305/>.
 12. For more information see *Green Capitalism: Why it Can't Work*, by Daniel Tanuro.
 13. For more information see *The Ecological Rift: Capitalism's War on the Earth*, by John Bellamy Foster, Brett Clark, and Richard York, *Ecosocialism: A Radical Alternative to Capitalist Catastrophe*, by Michael Lowy, and *The Enemy of Nature: The End of Capitalism or the End of the World*, by Joel Kovel.
 14. For more information see "The End of Capitalism has begun", by Paul Mason <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/jul/17/postcapitalism-end-of-capitalism-begun>.
 15. For more information see, "The End of Capitalism has begun", by Paul Mason <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/jul/17/postcapitalism-end-of-capitalism-begun>.
 16. For more information see, *The Fourth Industrial Revolution*, by Klaus Schwab.
 17. For more information see, *Four Futures: Life After Capitalism*, by Peter Frase, and *Technology vs. Humanity: The Coming Clash between Man and Machine*, by Gerd Leonhard.
 18. We are establishing the Center of Community Production on W. Capitol Street, which is across the street from our Chokwe Lumumba Center for Economic Democracy and Regenerative Development. The official name of our Center for Community Production is the Imari Abubakari Obadele Center for Community Production, in honor of the late Imari A. Obadele, who was contemporary and partner of Malcolm X and a founder of several major Black Liberation organizations and institutions including the Group On Advanced Leadership (GOAL), the Republic of New Afrika (RNA), and the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (NCOBRA).
 19. For more information see www.cooperationjackson.org.
 20. For more information see <http://sgoproject.org/about/southern-reparations-loan-fund/>.
 21. For more information see, *Strategy for Labor: A Radical Proposal*, by Andre Gorz, and *Activism and Social Change: Lessons for Community Organizing*, by Eric Shragge.
 22. For more information see, *Envisioning Real Utopias*, by Erik Ollin Wright, and *Alternatives to Capitalism: Proposals for Democratic Economy*, by Robin Hanhnel and Erik Olin Wright.
 23. For more information see, Mondragon at <http://www.mondragon-corporation.com/eng/>, and *New Paths to Socialism: Essays on the Mondragon Cooperatives and Workplace Democracy, Green Manufacturing, Structural Reform and the Politics of Transition*, by Carl Davidson.
 24. For more information about the Mutual Aid Network see <http://www.mutualaidnetwork.org/gears/>.
 25. This definition was taken from, *Participatory Budgeting: from Puerto Alegre, Brazil to the US*, by Mike Menser and Juscha Robinson. The document can be found at <https://www.scribd.com/document/16362300/Participatory-Budgeting-and-the-Solidarity-Economy>.
 26. For more information on Biophotovoltaics see <https://biophotovoltaics.wordpress.com/> or <https://iteamsonline.org/bio-photovoltaics/>.
 27. For more information on value and supply chains see, "What is the difference between a value and a supply chain" at <http://www.investopedia.com/ask/answers/043015/what-difference-between-value-chain-and-supply-chain.asp>.
 28. This definition of supply chain was adapted from the definition provided at <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/supply-chain.html>.
 29. For more information the definition of Just Transition closest to ours see Movement Generations Just Transition Zine at <http://movementgen.electricmembers.net/justtransition/>.
 30. For more information about West Jackson see "West Jackson Master Plan" at <https://www.duvaldecker.com/west-jackson-master-plan/> and <http://www.city-data.com/city/Jackson-Mississippi.html>.
 31. For more information see, "Jackson Pushes Health Care Corridor" at <http://www.clarionledger.com/story/news/2015/09/28/jackson-pushes-health-care-corridor/73012020/>, "One Lake bill moves forward: fed money, approval pending" at <http://www.clarionledger.com/story/news/politics/2017/02/21/one-lake-bill/98214952/>, "Gov. Bryant unexpectedly revives talk of new Jackson State stadium" at <https://mississippitoday.org/2016/03/30/gov-bryant-unexpectedly-revives-talk-of-new-jackson-state-stadium-2/>, and "Capitol Complex would fund (parts of) Jackson" at <http://www.jacksonfreepress.com/news/2016/mar/09/capitol-complex-district-would-fund-parts-jackson/>.
 32. For more information see, "Hinds County helping to pave West Capitol Street", by Jimmie E. Gates at <http://www.clarionledger.com/story/news/2015/11/29/hinds-county-help-pave-west-capitol-st/76451412/>.
 33. For more information see, "Could Capitol Street Corridor transformation stabilize Zoo?" at <http://www.msnewsnow.com/story/29948444/could-capital-street-corridor-transformation-stabilize-zoo/>.

34. For more information see <https://suburbanstats.org/population/mississippi/how-many-people-live-in-jackson/>.
35. For more information see, "Jackson mayor election results by precinct" see <http://www.clarionledger.com/story/news/local/2014/04/23/jackson-mayor-election-results-by-precinct/8062809/>.
36. For more information see "Jackson Rising Statement" written by Kali Akuno at <https://www.scribd.com/document/226528780/Jackson-Rising-Policy-Statement-Mayor-Chokwe-Lumumba>.
37. Definition originally crafted from the "Declaration of Nyeleni, Mali", which was the first global forum on food sovereignty in 2007. For more information on the concept see <http://usfoodsovereigntyalliance.org/what-is-food-sovereignty/>.
38. For more information see, "Food Apartheid: The Silent Killer in the Black Community", by Tracy at <http://atlantablackstar.com/2015/06/16/food-apartheid-the-silent-killer-in-the-black-community/>, and "Covering Food Deserts: Tips to bringing context to a complex story", by Christopher Cook at <https://www.centerforhealthjournalism.org/resources/lessons/covering-food-deserts>.
39. For more information see "Only 60 years of farming left if soil degradation continues" at <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/only-60-years-of-farming-left-if-soil-degradation-continues/>.
40. The People's Grocery name is intentional. There is the obvious association of the people's with the working masses of Jackson, but the deeper meaning is historical. The deeper meaning is drawn from the People's Grocery Cooperative operated and managed by Thomas Moss in 1888 in Memphis, Tennessee that was burned to the ground and Thomas Moss, along with two others, were lynched in 1892. The lynching was documented and presented to the world by Ida B. Wells, who was a friend of Thomas Moss. Ms. Well's reporting on this case was the start of our critical anti-Lynching campaign and career. See <http://historic-memphis.com/biographies/peoples-grocery/peoples-grocery.html> and <http://www.commercialappeal.com/story/news/local/2017/03/09/125th-anniversary-peoples-grocery-lynching-remembered/98607052/> for more background and details.
41. A "maker space" is a physical location where people gather to share resources and knowledge, work on projects, network and build. Definition provided by ELI 7 things you should know about Makerspace's at <https://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/eli7095.pdf>.
42. For more information see, "What is a Fab Lab", from the Fab Foundation at <http://www.fablabconnect.com/fab-lab/>.
43. For more information on Syndicalism see, "Syndicalism", by Daniel De Leon at <https://chomsky.info/19760725/>, "Anarchosyndicalism: Theory and Practice", by Rudolf Rocker at <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/rudolf-rocker-anarchosyndicalism>, "The Relevance of Anarcho-Syndicalism: Noam Chomsky interviewed by Peter Jay" at <https://chomsky.info/19760725/>.
44. For more information on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights see <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx>.
45. For more information see, "Historic Human Rights City Resolution passed in Jackson, MS to create 1st Human Rights Charter and Commission in the South" at <http://www.cooperationjackson.org/announcementsblog/2015/1/10/historic-human-rights-city-resolution-passed-in-jackson-ms-to-create-1st-human-rights-charter-and-commission-in-the-south>.
46. For more information see, "Introduction to Economic, Social and Cultural Rights", by ESCR-Net at <https://www.escr-net.org/rights>.
47. For more information on the concept of "Negative Rights" see <http://www.globalization101.org/negative-vs-positive-rights/>.
48. For more information see, "Labor Unions and Taft-Hartley", by David Macaray at <http://www.counterpunch.org/2008/01/02/labor-unions-and-taft-hartley/>, and "Taft-Hartley: A Slave-Labor Law?", Nelson Lichtenstein at <http://scholarship.law.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1478&context=lawreview>.
49. For more information on the notion of "Municipal Socialism" see, *Social Ecology and Communalism*, by Murray Bookchin, and *Municipal Socialism Then and Now: Some lessons for the Global South*, by Ellen Leopold and David A. MacDonald at http://www.municipalservicesproject.org/sites/municipalservicesproject.org/files/publications/Leopold-McDonald_Municipal_Socialism_Lessons_Global_South_2012.pdf.