

THE THERMIDORAN REACTION

66. J.-L. Tallien on the Terror (AUGUST 28, 1794)

Jean-Lambert Tallien was a representative on mission during the Terror. Recalled to Paris because of corruption and unable to redeem himself politically with Robespierre, Tallien became one of the architects of 9 Thermidor and an unabashed reactionary thereafter. The following speech had a precise political intent—it was associated with another deputy's motion to denounce several members of the Committees of Public Safety and General Security—but Tallien makes a broader argument as well. He suggests that the Terror should not be treated as a simple succession of events or as the outcome of critical legislation, but as a specific way of exercising power. Note the associations he draws between Terror and Old Regime.



The organization of your committees has been completed. The government is functioning once more; all parts of the public administration, supervised in a more active way, will finally set sail to the ship of state which has so long been tossed about by factions.

But we must not, we cannot hide the fact that Robespierre's shadow still hangs over the Republic; minds so long divided, so violently troubled by the infernal genius of this tyrant of opinion, this declared enemy of his country's liberty, are not yet reconciled as all good citizens wish them to be. A few disagreements over the adoption of a few measures, over the practical application

Source: *Gazette Nationale, ou Le Moniteur universel*, August 30, 1794. Translated by Laura Mason.

of a few principles, allowed our common enemies a moment of hope. Therefore, we must now explain ourselves frankly; here in the arena where the lib-
erticidal projects of Capet and Robespierre were uncovered and punished, we
must foil the projects of aristocratic malevolence as well; with a loyal exposi-
tion of our sentiments, we must prove to France and all of Europe that we are
worthy of representing twenty-five million men and insuring their happiness
after having established and consolidated public liberty. . . .

The only government capable of completing and guaranteeing the Revo-
lution is one which knows how to make the Revolution loved, and how to in-
still fear in those who betray it. To make most people love a Revolution which
is their own work, one need only refrain from corrupting it, from changing its
fundamental principles, from thwarting its objective.

There are two means by which a government may make itself feared: it
may limit itself to keeping watch over improper *actions*, threatening and pun-
ishing them with appropriate penalties; or it may threaten *individuals*,
threaten them always and for everything, threaten them with the most cruel
punishments imaginable. These two methods have different effects: the for-
mer raises the possibility of fear, the latter produces unceasing torment; the
former is a promise of terror which follows upon crime, the latter is terror it-
self which settles over the soul despite a feeling of innocence; the former is a
reasonable fear of laws, the latter an unreasoning fear of individuals.

The characteristics of terror are worth considering; terror is a perpetual
and generalized trembling, an external trembling that affects the deepest fibers
of the being, degrading man and making him like a beast; it is the weakening
of all physical abilities, the disturbance of all moral faculties, the upheaval of
all ideas, the inversion of all affection; [terror] strips [the spirit] of all the
sweetness of hope and the resources of despair. An extreme emotion, terror
can be neither anything more nor anything less. Fear of laws can, on the con-
trary, be augmented according to need.

Which of these two fears can best support, complete, guarantee the Revo-
lution? That is the question I will consider.

Let us begin with terror; judge it by its means, its effects: a government
can only inspire terror by threatening capital punishment, by threatening it
endlessly, and by threatening everyone with it. . . .

To make everyone fearful, it is necessary not only to propose a torment
for every action, a threat for every word, a suspicion for every silence, but as
well to set a trap for each step, to place a spy in each house, a traitor in each
family, murderers in the court. In a word, it is necessary to know how to tor-
ture all citizens by tormenting a few, how to take the lives of the latter in such
a way as to shorten those of the former: this is the art of spreading terror; is
this the art of a steady, free, humane government, or is it one of tyranny?

But I hear the question: Cannot the system of terror be deployed against
suspect groups without touching others? I ask in turn how anyone can be se-
cure where there is not justice for all, where deeds are judged by who commits

them and persons are not judged by their actions; as for the rest, I add that terror must be everywhere or it is nowhere.

The Convention must not suffer the Republic to remain any longer divided between two classes: those who create fear and those who fear, those who persecute and those who are persecuted. Couthon and Robespierre can no longer prohibit the defense of the principles of equality and justice. I am asked once more, is it possible to instill terror in the hearts of evil-doers without disturbing the good citizens of no matter what class? Again, I say no; because if the government of terror pursues a few citizens for their presumed intentions, it will frighten all citizens; and if it limits itself to supervising deeds and their punishment, it does not inspire terror but that other kind of fear of which I spoke earlier, the healthy fear of punishments that follow crime. Therefore, one may truly say that the system of terror presupposes that those charged with spreading it will exercise arbitrary power. . . .

The system of terror presupposes two excesses which are always new and always increasing: one did nothing by striking off twenty heads yesterday unless one strikes off thirty today, and sixty tomorrow; and, no matter how rapid the progression, it will never outpace the progression of the resentments kindled daily.

Moreover, the more hateful one makes life, the more hateful must one make death so that it will be feared. At first, the idea of hemlock is enough to frighten the imagination; then, to strike the imagination the idea of death must be joined with that of bloodshed; next, the victim must be surrounded by other victims, who are made to fall one after the other; then their numbers must be extended, and a man must witness the deaths of fifty others before he is himself put to death; then vary the victims with cruel artfulness, putting to death a virtuous artisan with someone who sucked the blood of the people, a good man with the greatest wretch, finally extend the refinement to killing the father after his son, the husband after his wife, the brother after his sister. . . .

The system of terror presupposes power that is as concentrated as possible, as unitary as possible, and which tends necessarily to monarchy. Unity of action or will can exist in a council or a committee when it is concerned with a regular and suitable administration whose activity is guided by law or by reason; but in a bureau of terror, where there are no fixed rules, where each may accuse the other of doing or wanting to do too much or too little, unity can only emerge from the blind subjection of all to a single person, whose will takes the place of law: but that unity of action is especially necessary to villainies, speeding their movements, facilitating their undertakings, hiding their projects, preserving them against their enemies, against justice; just as all enslaved peoples have a king, all thieves have a leader.

Once more, what kind of system presupposes or entails this kind of political organization and these means of leading men? What other system than tyranny, and what system other than tyranny has an interest in terror? Legitimate authority, which has the consent of the majority, needs only that consent

to triumph, to avert particular opposition. Terror is only useful to a minority which wants to oppress the majority; it does not matter whether such tyranny is exercised by a king, [or] a triumvirate . . . ; it is tyranny in all of its foulness, and the fatherland calls the knife of Brutus or the sword of Virginius . . . down upon those who exercise it. And the security of French liberty should be placed under a shelter such as this! What! The Revolution can only be completed by Counter-Revolution! The triumph of the Republic can only be achieved by obliterating every trace of the Republic! The sovereignty of the people can only be guaranteed by taking sovereignty from them! [. . .] If this is how republics are founded, the infamous Nero deserved another fate.

And if it were possible to imagine a tyranny that was only temporary, a dictatorship which necessarily restored sovereignty after having guaranteed political liberty by means of terror, what reasonable mind would want it? There are two reasons to reject this: in the first place, the power of tyranny and terror, as violent as it is, is nonetheless too fragile to serve as a guarantee; in the second place, once tyranny was in a position to restore liberty to the nation, the nation might be in no state to receive it. . . .

[T]he bureau of terror . . . renders the people incapable of receiving liberty and enjoying its benefits. Terror, by repressing the mind, saps it of energy; by revealing danger in everything, it predisposes the mind always to see danger in something; by making existence uncertain, it makes the mind insensitive to liberty and ready to trade servitude against death. When terror is disseminated in the name of liberty, it does worse than create indifference to liberty, it makes it hated; and it makes this hatred not only an incurable, but a hereditary ill which fathers, in the name of prudence, cowardice, and servitude, transmit to their children. Terror, when it becomes a habitual state of mind, focuses man on himself and on the meanest part of himself, which is to say on his physical existence; it breaks all ties, destroys all affection; it destroys fraternity, sociability, morality; it reduces the spirit to pure egoism. . . .

[T]his system [of terror] was Robespierre's system; he was the one who put it into practice with the help of a few subordinates, some of whom perished with him and others of whom were buried beneath public contempt. The Convention was a victim of it, never an accomplice. The nation and Europe have charged Robespierre with crimes that were the result of this system, seeing that they now give Robespierre's name to this infernal system. Public and private sentiments were satisfied by the punishment of this monster and his accomplices.

Certainly, the Convention will not lend an ear to orators who dare to suggest that it take responsibility for some of Robespierre's crimes by calling it self his successor; that it call down upon itself some of the hostility it should not share with the wretch it punished; that it provoke a reaction for which there has been neither object nor pretext since the execution of the guilty; only those who shared in tyranny can still counsel resort to it; only those who require justice dread outraged justice; only those who have plunged themselves into the mire want to drag the Convention through it.

I come now to the kind of fear that must be employed to complete and consolidate the Revolution: it is the fear of laws for actions against the law.

1. Fear of laws can be heightened by creating a police force to supervise their observance.

2. This fear can be directed toward the interests of the Revolution, by making specific laws in its favor; therefore a revolutionary government can and must exist; but rather than being arbitrary, this government should, in a word, complement the essential order of political society; it should be a stern institution and yet one sufficiently just to lay the groundwork of a free constitution.

It is presumptuous to distinguish two kinds of liberty at the podium of the Convention; there is only one justice, citizens; that which does not recognize men but which weighs deeds; that kind of justice alone sits in judgment, all else murders. . . .

67. P. Gaveaux and J.-M. Souriguières, "The Alarm of the People" (JANUARY 1795)

"The Alarm of the People," first performed in January 1795, was quickly adopted by young men who called themselves "gilded youth." Arguing that the Convention was not acting quickly enough to dismantle the policies of the Terror, the "gilded youth" took it upon themselves to "purge" cafés and theaters of radical republican symbols and personnel; in other words, they often overturned busts of Marat, tore down café signs, and publicly humiliated Jacobin actors while singing "The Alarm of the People." The song went on to experience brief popularity as the tune of all French men and women who were opposed to the Terror, but it was later labeled counter-revolutionary and outlawed by the government.



French people, people of brothers,
Can you see without a shudder of horror,
Crime unfurling its banners
Of carnage and Terror?
You suffer that an abominable horde,
Of assassins and brigands,
Soils with its ferocious breath,
The lands of the living!

SIMEON (makes a motion): The clubs are not necessary to liberty. If you tolerate them, who guarantees that along with those who appear devoted to the Republic others will not be elevated who defend the anarchic regime of 1793 or the royal constitution of 1791? I fear the weakness of administrations. By what sign do they recognize which clubs are contrary to public order? . . .

The greater the liberty of the press, the less it is necessary to tolerate that of particular associations. . . . I propose to provisionally suspend all popular societies.

The Council, after having declared urgency, passed the following resolution:

Article I. Every particular society occupied with political questions is provisionally closed.

Article II. The individuals who meet in such societies will be brought before the tribunal of the correctional police to be punished for the crime of unlawful assembly.

Article III. Proprietors or principal tenants of locations where these societies assemble will be condemned by the same tribunal to a fine of one thousand francs and to three months' imprisonment.

Article IV: The present resolution will be printed and carried to the Council of Ancients by a state messenger.

74. Proclamation of the Directory to the French People (SEPTEMBER 14, 1797)

Convinced that plots, both royalist and Jacobin, were being hatched against the government, the reigning triumvirate in the Directory launched a military-backed coup d'état on September 4, 1797 (18 Fructidor). In its wake, two Directors were deported to Guiana, along with fifty-three deputies. Moreover, forty-nine departmental elections were nullified, forty-two newspapers were banned, and thirty-

two journalists were arrested. Provincial administrations were also purged. Here the newly formed Directory justifies its actions and urges patriotic citizens to respect the arts and adhere to familial values.



Citizens,

The French people have above all entrusted its Constitution to the fidelity of the Legislative Corps and the executive power.

The integrity of this trust has been threatened by a royalist plot, organized for a long time, fabricated with skill, pursued with dedication. The Executive Directory discovered the conspiracy; the guilty have been seized: on this matter, the Legislative Corps has taken measures which the circumstances command.

No blood has been spilled; wisdom has guided force; valor and discipline have regulated the mission. National justice has been consecrated to the tranquillity of the people. It was evident to everyone that [we] did not want to displace anything, but to return it to its place.

The Legislative Corps, the Executive Directory have fulfilled their duty.

But the French people have also entrusted its fundamental charge to the fidelity of administrators and judges, to the enlightened vigilance of fathers of the family, to wives and mothers, to the virtuous affection of young citizens, and finally to the courage which distinguishes all the French.

Administrators, judges, fathers, wives, mothers, young citizens, Frenchmen of any age and profession, have you fulfilled your oaths? Have you guarded the deposit that has been entrusted to you?

Frenchmen, open your eyes; it is time to acknowledge the snares in which the king's friends and the enemies of France want to entrap you.

To return you to the yoke you have broken, to lead you there by yourselves, in a manner, they have introduced into all the magistracies corrupt men, as clever as they are perverse, cunning at turning the power they have received for defending and strengthening the people's liberty against it.

They have dishonest judges in your tribunals [who] abuse the independence that the Constitution has given them, and [who] use their rights only to absolve or protect the country's enemies.

Above all they have omitted nothing to return France to monarchical principles, and despotic institutions, holidays, morals, and practices. They know well that man is a creature of habit and that in changing habits one changes man himself.

Without a doubt monarchical principles suit exactly the objective of the conspirators; it was important to them to fit the mass of the nation into a royal mold, but the indignant nation repelled them far from her. The Republic has triumphed and republican principles should manifest and consolidate this triumph; this should be signaled as the fruit of victory.

The republican spirit, republican morale and institutions, republican practices should prevail today: but to embrace them it is necessary to know them better, and to begin by forming the truest ideas of them.

The republican spirit gathers together all interests in the sacred foyer of public interest, composed of all that is just, fair, good, and amiable among men.

Among a people animated by this divine spirit, justice presides over social relations; none seeks to wound the interests of another; the equality of citizens inspires them to mutual aid. If contestation is born, the right to judge is never a lucrative practice which inspires the desire to self-perpetuate; republican justice is the sister of peace.

The sweetest and purest sentiments of nature, the respect for advanced age, the conjugal union, paternal tenderness and filial piety [are] honored in public [and] reign in the bosom of families, and forge all the blood ties of fraternal lineages, love, and happiness.

In homage to the public, the arts bring the treasure of their enjoyments and the pomp of their masterpieces. Eloquence, poetry, and music come together to excite love for country, and to exalt courage in all hearts. Valor and genius are liberty's children; the paintbrush, the chisel, and noble architecture elevate monuments to it. The stage echoes the oracles of morality, the sacred maxims of philosophy, the grand examples of virtue.

The fine arts triumph above all during the national holidays, popular and fraternal solemnities, and august and touching gatherings where a single sentiment unites and imposes silence on an immense people: imposing ceremonies, which would never take place in the palaces of kings and which are an object of horror for the proponents of despotism, but which have an invincible charm for republicans.

In a Republic, writers and men of letters are honored by liberty, profess its maxims, oppose instruction and Enlightenment to error, fanaticism, and lies, lend the support of their talents to the reign of law, [and] to its force the supplement of their genius. They search for the true principles of morals and liberty; it inspires them, propagates them. They teach citizens to love each other more, and to better love the country.

It is here where public instruction should flourish: this invigorating source flows like pure milk throughout all parts of society; all parents are urged to send their children there to drink and to be nourished. Individual instruction is always accorded there with public instruction; the one prepares for and leads to the other. The one and the other are surveyed by the magistrates; and these magistrates in their turn are also the teachers of the people, either by the public readings of government acts, or by their efforts to spread enlightenment, or their zeal to instigate the celebration of republican games and national holidays, above all by the living example of their conduct and their morals.

Finally it is here that reigns the most powerful resort, and the greatest motive for laudable actions and courageous traits, this holy emulation which

engages citizens to vie with one another for individual virtue and public utility. The universal right to the best state jobs is the first clause of the pact of equality; no distinction of birth or privilege: merit alone is honored, an imperious motive to elevate men to form great thoughts and undertake great deeds.

People of France, here is what you should be! You would already be this if you had imbibed the spirit of your constitutional act, if you had not listened to those who have defamed the republican spirit in order to reestablish the yoke of priests and kings.

Ah! Cease to believe them. Hasten to quit the path they have traced for you, and which can only lead you to shame and ruin. You should be the model and arbiter for all peoples; they want, on the contrary, to cover you in opprobrium. See how they have deceived you! See for yourselves if the Republic is the reign of terrorism. The Republic has triumphed and yet the blood of traitors has been spared. No, it is not blood which holds republics together. It is necessary to shed blood for an autocratic despotism, but only laws are necessary to build a republic.

The Constitution should be the rule of your morals and your life's compass. Therefore, make your children learn it and recite and practice the declaration of rights and duties yourself: eagerly relearn republican practices which well distinguish you among peoples, and render you forever the example among free nations.

Abjure servile abuses; honor your calendar, a division of time so clear, so convenient, and which, by an admirable trait of republican destinies, reminds you that the year begins anew the day the Republic was born.

For your days of rest unceasingly prefer those indicated by law; these days recall you home, not only for sweet repose, a consequence of and compensation for your work, but also for innocent pleasures, family reunions, the reading of the laws, holidays, and games.

Commercial meetings, fairs, and markets should hereafter be in accord with the republican era. All civic affairs should be regulated only by civil laws. Any usurpation of the domain of the law should cease in the Republic.

Wear the badge of citizen with legitimate pride: this fine title has sacred rights: under despotism, our fathers long desired it; they regretted and deplored the fact that they were not citizens. This name should be dear to you; never give it away, if this is out of scorn. Your speech, finally free, should never be soiled by feudal dispositions, or by shameful distinctions which formerly vilified you, the most modest of which should still wound you as it recalls slavery.

Hereafter the national spirit is formed among you and is raised to the level of your sublime destiny. Be the first free people, and let the distinction "French citizen" be the finest of your titles.

Let taste and propriety preside over your clothing; admirable simplicity should never be banished, let youth avoid ostentation and affectation; [youth] does not need to renounce rallying signs [in favor of] the revolting costumes

of the armed enemy; let gentle and modest beauty, adorned with decency, prefer for its ornaments those which have been woven by French hands.

Defend yourself against intemperance, because it is the vice of slaves; frugality is one of the virtues which distinguishes a free people.

Be humane and compassionate; humanity breathes easy among free people, [but is] trod underfoot by despots; the altar of mercy is in the heart of the free man.

Remember the principles that your immortal Montesquieu assigned to the three governments: he gave to despotism the basis for terror; honor is the phantom which kings pursue; but virtue is the basis, the essence, of republics.

People of France! see by this word that which the Constitution, your government, your country demands of you today; do not say to others or to yourself that you are not republican, because virtue is the basis of republics; do not calumniate yourself, and suppress calumny. French people! Be virtuous, love your Constitution, your government, your country, and you will be a republican and nothing will outshine your glory and happiness.

You should be attached to your government, as the two supreme powers, instituted by you, are now attached to one another.

Be awestruck by this grand example.

The royalist conspirators had disunited these two powers; and in breaking this bond, this key to the vault of the social edifice, they were nearly able to dissolve the Republic. Thanks to your destiny, the conspirators are no more, neither in the Directory, nor in the two Councils. The Councils and the Directory finally march onward together, and the Republic is saved!

Long live the Republic!

DISSENTERS AND OPPONENTS

75. Gracchus Babeuf, *The Plebeians' Manifesto* (NOVEMBER 30, 1795)

Gracchus Babeuf involved himself in the Revolution from its outset, becoming a self-appointed champion of peasants and urban working people. By the time that he published *The Plebeians' Manifesto*, Babeuf had begun to marry his attacks on the Directory's political and economic arrangements to an increasingly pointed critique of private property. He published this treatise in his newspaper, *The People's Tribune*, which had a subscription of about two thousand people and was quite probably still more widely read. Babeuf was arrested the following year and charged with conspiring against the government; he was executed in 1797.



... It is time to speak of democracy; to explain what we mean by it, and what we want it to bring us; finally, to make a plan with everyone to establish and maintain it.

Those who think that I act only to replace one constitution with another are mistaken. We have much greater need of institutions than of constitutions. The constitution of '93 only merited the praise of all good people because it made way for institutions. If that constitution had been unable to achieve that goal, I would have ceased to admire it. Any constitution that allows inhumane

Source: *Pages choisies de Babeuf*, collected and annotated by Maurice Dommanget (Paris: Armand Colin, 1935), pp. 250–262. Translated by Laura Mason.

and abusive institutions to persist, no longer excites my enthusiasm; any man called upon to revive his peers who only drags himself through the tired routines of old legislation that was given to the happy and unhappy alike by barbarians, will not be a legislator in my eyes; he will not win my respect.

First, let us work to found good institutions, plebeian institutions, and we will always be sure that a good constitution will follow.

Plebeian institutions must insure general happiness, equal affluence for all associates.

Let us recall a few of the fundamental principles developed in our last issue, in the article "Concerning the War of Rich and Poor." Repetitions of this sort do not tire as many as they interest.

We determined that *perfect equality* is a primitive right; that the social contract, far from undermining this natural right, should guarantee each individual that it will never be violated; that, consequently, there should never be institutions which favor inequality and greed, which allow the necessities of some to be diminished to increase the superfluous wealth of others. That, nevertheless, the reverse took place; ridiculous conventions were introduced into society which protected inequality and permitted the spoliation of the greater number by the few; there were eras when the final results of such murderous social rules were that the totality of everyone's wealth came to be grasped by the hands of a few; peace, which is natural when all are happy, inevitably became troubled; the masses, no longer able to exist, finding nothing within reach, meeting only pitiless hearts among the caste that monopolized everything, these outcomes caused the era of the great revolutions, established those memorable periods foretold in the book of Time and Destiny, when a general upheaval in the system of property becomes necessary, when the revolt of the poor against the rich becomes so necessary that nothing can stop it.

We demonstrated that we had reached this point by '89, and that is why the Revolution broke out then. We demonstrated that, since '89 and especially since '94 and '95, the accumulation of calamities and public oppression has made the majestic tumult of the people against its spoliators and oppressors evermore urgent. . . .

True equality is not a dream. The great tribune, Lycurgus, happily undertook the practical test of it. It is well-known how he came to institute this admirable system, in which the advantages and disadvantages of society were shared equally, in which abundance was the permanent share of all, in which none could acquire superfluous wealth.

All well-meaning moralists acknowledged this great principle, and sought to sanction it. Those who expressed it most clearly were, in my opinion, the most estimable men and the most distinguished tribunes. The Jew, Jesus Christ, earned the title but poorly for having expressed the idea too obscurely in a maxim: "Love your brother as you would love yourself," he said. The implication is there but the saying does not express clearly enough that the most important law of all is that no man may legitimately claim that any of his peers ought to be less fortunate than he.

Jean-Jacques expressed this very principle best when he wrote, "In a perfect society, each must have enough, and no one may have too much." This short passage is, in my opinion, the essence of the social contract. The author expressed it as clearly as he could at that time, and these few words suffice for those who know how to listen.

... The time has come for the thronging, abused people to express its will in a greater, more solemn, and more general way than ever before so that not only the signs and symbols, but the reality of poverty itself will be eliminated. For the people to proclaim its Manifesto. For them to define democracy as it should be, in accordance with flawless principles, and they want it. For them to prove that democracy is an obligation to be fulfilled, by those who have too much, those who lack, and those who do not have enough! and that all deficits in the wealth of the latter exist only because others have stolen from them. Stolen legitimately, if you like; in other words, stolen with the help of the laws of bandits who, under the last regimes as under the most ancient, authorized every theft; with the help of laws like those that exist at this very moment; with the help of laws that force me to live by stripping my household of furniture each day and carrying it to the homes of the thieves the laws protect, down to the very last rag off my back! Let the people announce that they mean to have restitution for all this theft, for these shameful confiscations of the poor by the rich. ...

We will explain clearly what we mean by *general happiness, the purpose of society*.

We will show that man's destiny should not deteriorate when he leaves the natural state for society. ...

We will prove that everything an individual monopolizes beyond his needs is theft from society. ...

We will prove that *heredity within families* is no less an abomination; that it cuts off all members of the association, transforming each household into a tiny republic that can only conspire against the great and sanction inequality.

We will prove that whatever a member of the social body lacks to meet his daily needs of any sort is the consequence of the spoliation of his natural, individual property by the monopolizers of common goods.

That, by the same reasoning, whatever a member of the social body possesses above his daily needs of any sort is the result of theft from his associates which necessarily deprives a greater or lesser number of their portion of common goods. ...

That superiority of talent and labor is only a dream and specious illusion that has always wrongfully served conspirators' plots against equality.

That the different values and merits attached to the products of men's labor is only based on the opinions of a few who knew how to make themselves heard.

That it is certainly wrong for such opinion to place a value twenty times greater on a watchmaker's day than on the day of the man who sows.

That, nevertheless, this false estimation helped the watchmaker earn enough to acquire the patrimony of the men of the plough who were, consequently, expropriated.

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That all proletarians did not become so except through the same combination of proportional relationships, which were founded on the different values placed on things by the authority of opinion alone.

That it is an absurd and unjust claim that earnings should be greater for those whose tasks require more intelligence, diligence, and concentration than those who listen only to their stomachs.

That there is no justification for earning more than what meets one's needs.

That the value of intelligence is only a matter of opinion, and that it is perhaps worth considering whether natural and physical strength do not also have the same value.

That it is intellectuals who have placed such a high price on the ideas from their brains and that if the strong regulated matters, they would undoubtedly value arms as highly as the head and would compensate fatigue of the whole body as generously as that of the thinking part alone.

That without this proposed equalization, the most intelligent and most industrious are given license to monopolize, entitling them to fleece the less intelligent and the less industrious with impunity.

That this is how the equilibrium of affluence is destroyed, overturned in society because nothing is more easily proved than our great maxim: *that some acquire too much only through others not having enough.*

That all of our civil institutions, our reciprocal transactions are nothing but acts of perpetual theft authorized by absurd and barbarous laws, in the shadows of which we busy ourselves with stealing from one another.

That our society of thieves brings about, as a consequence of its heinous, primordial agreements, all species of vice, crime, and unhappiness against which good men join together to fight in vain; that these men will never triumph because they do not attack the evil at its root but only apply palliatives drawn from the reservoir of false ideas concerning our innate depravity.

That the preceding makes clear that all possessions of those who have more than their individual share of society's goods are the results of theft and usurpation.

That, consequently, it is just to take such possessions back from them. . . .

That the products of ingenuity and genius also become the property of all, the property of the entire association from the very moment that inventors and workers bring them to light; because they are only compensation for previous inventions of genius and ingenuity that these new inventors and workers profited from in social life, and which helped them in their discoveries.

That because acquired knowledge is the property of all, it must therefore be shared equally among all. . . .

That education is monstrous when it is unequal, when it is the exclusive patrimony of a part of the association; because, in the hands of that part, education becomes a heap of instruments, a supply of weapons of all kinds with which they combat the others, who are unarmed, and so easily succeed in repressing them, fooling them, robbing them, enslaving them with the most shameful chains.

That no truth is more important than the one we have already cited and which a philosophe proclaimed in these terms: "Talk as much as you like about the best form of government, you will not accomplish anything until you destroy the seeds of greed and ambition." [Diderot]

That social institutions must therefore strive to take the hope from each individual of ever becoming richer, more powerful, or more distinguished for his abilities than his equals.

That, to be still more precise, it is necessary to succeed in *binding up fate*; in making each associate independent of all chance and circumstance, happy or unhappy; *in guaranteeing sufficiency, and only sufficiency to each person and his descendants, no matter how numerous*; in closing off all possible means for anyone to gain more than his individual share of the products of nature and of work.

That the only way to accomplish this is to establish *communal administration*; to suppress private property; to join each man to the talent or industry with which he is familiar; to require him to place the raw products of his labor in a common storehouse; and to establish a simple distributive administration, an administration of subsistence which, by registering all individuals and all things, will divide the latter with the most scrupulous equality and have them delivered to the homes of each citizen. . . .

People! arise to hope, do not any longer remain numb and plunged in despair. . . .

76. Marc-Antoine Jullien, *Some Advice to the Cisalpine Patriots* (1797?)

Discredited after 9 Thermidor, Jacobins began to revive and reorganize themselves under the Directory. Celebrating the democratic and egalitarian ideals of the year II, they nonetheless accepted the constitution of the year III, which they simultaneously . . . forces and reform through publi-