

# MUTUAL AID MONTHLY

A Production of Des Moines Mutual Aid

October 2023



## AI Supercomputer Drank All The Water

*But at least we got a nice park out it.*

Comrade Jake

The OpenAI Supercomputer used for developing chatGPT lives in West Des Moines. Last summer, Microsoft pumped about 11.5 million gallons of water (or 6% of all the water used in the district) to cool it down while it was learning how to mimic human writing.

You might be thinking, “Damn this sounds pretty dystopian, the little water we have left is being sucked dry to advance AI while we’re already in a terrible drought and it’s only going to get worse because of the climate crisis?”

Well now, if we want to have nice things, we need to be willing to sacrifice everything for corporate profit. As the West Des Moines mayor said, Microsoft has provided a “staggering” sum of money through tax payments to support public infrastructure.

Ok ok, I get it, nice parks and money may not matter if we don’t have any water left. But did you hear about what the astronauts do? They recycle all their excrement in space and turn it into drinking water. Maybe we could do that while we ride on one of them Elon Musk rockets to the new Mall of America on Mars!

Alright, I guess if you’re old-fashioned like me and this news is concerning to you, I got something to tell you. This OpenAI Supercomputer ain’t that tough like in the Terminator movies. Any time you ask it between say, 5 to 50 questions, it needs to drink a whole bottle of water to provide an answer. So I say, when push comes to shove, I think we can kick this Supercomputer’s ass and take the water back before it’s too late.

## This World Is Not For Learning

*I understand education less than ever.*

Victor Ilyich

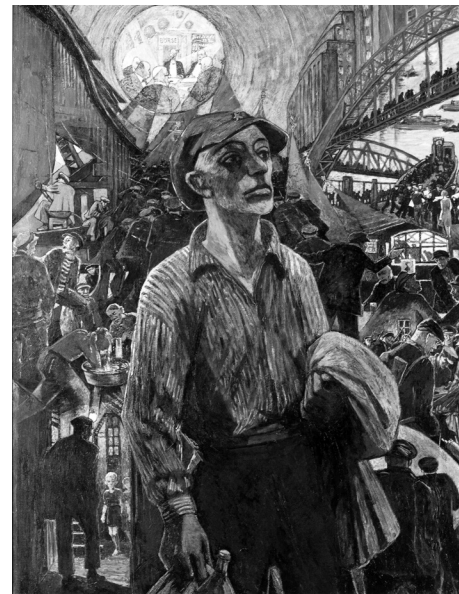
I understand education less than ever. When I was younger, I only saw teaching happen at a state school, which filtered out large numbers of students in classes designed to eject the under-performing.

Autonomy is a form of freedom that has as a precondition the *ability* to decide for oneself. Indoctrination issues aside, there is merit in training people deeply and well, to having high expectations in order to give them the tools to think and reason deeply - to make them freer human beings. Anyone who lacks knowledge about some domain (science, sociology, cooking, music, living) lacks the corresponding form of freedom. But every request to ‘buckle down and learn’ imposes a will on students who have other priorities.

Welcome to dialectics: the energy required to initiate a process (like learning) may be at odds with the process itself (having learned), but sometimes the demand of a teacher is the only reason why learning happens at all.

Distraction deprives us of the focus needed to become free. I don’t know anymore if a student is just a person ‘forced’ to become free.

Education competes with endless distractions, misery and turmoil in one’s personal life, inability to sustain one’s life (financially and otherwise) while learning. Human beings learn best when their basic needs are met, but also when their attention is not pulled in every direction: when they have the genuine autonomy to choose their own life projects, and pour themselves into a vessel of their choosing - fully. Where should they get it?



Human beings deserve a simpler world where one can be free (a serious and committed learner).



## To Forget or Fetishize the Past is to Lose the Future

*If we are to survive and win, we must develop new relationships with the history of struggle.*

Mapache Malatesta

For our survival, we will need to have a heavy critique of the theories and practices that have worked or failed and *why*. Without this we repeat the same failed strategies and tactics that the pigs understand better than we do. They enjoy watching us lose playing at some sort of romanticized imitation of the past. We must reacquaint ourselves with the theories and traditions that allowed our ancestors to survive and rid ourselves of the fetishization of “the great man of history”. Yes, us in the struggle stand on the shoulders of giants, but they are only giants in that they were an organized mass much bigger than the theorist or leader whose name is used to represent (or minimize) them.

When we create new strategies born from careful and honest study and experimentation, we will develop better understandings of what fronts are most vulnerable and where we can expand our power outside of the oppressive structures that are murdering us.

The periods in between insurrections in what is currently known as america have grown shorter exposing vividly the cracks in capitalism, creating a revolutionary potential we must take full advantage of. In between explosive flares of activity in Ferguson and Minneapolis, Oka and Standing Rock, we must learn everything we can to understand what created those moments and how to sustain and nurture that energy into unstoppable strategies, into our victory.

This flyer is a production of Des Moines Mutual Aid, which is a local network of anarchists, communists, and socialists building community autonomy from capitalism and the state. Below are our points of unity - basically, the political and social outlook which binds us together.

**o. We believe in working shoulder to shoulder and standing in solidarity with all oppressed communities.** We ourselves are oppressed, and our mutual aid work is a fight for our collective liberation. We do not believe in a top-down model of charity. Instead, we contrast our efforts at horizontal mutual aid, the fostering of mutually beneficial relationships and communities, to dehumanizing and colonizing charity.

**1. We believe in community autonomy.** We believe that the communities we live and organize in have been largely excluded from state social services, but intensely surveilled and policed by the state repressive apparatus. Capitalism is fundamentally unable to meet people’s needs. We want to build self-sustaining communities that are independent of the capitalist state, both materially and ideologically, and can resist its repression.

**2. We are police and prison abolitionists.** Abolition and the mutual aid that we practice are inextricably linked. We don’t rely on capitalist institutions or the police to do our work. We believe in building strong and resilient communities which make police obsolete, including community systems of accountability and crisis intervention.

**3. We work to raise the political consciousness of our communities.** Part of political education is connecting people’s lived experiences to a broader political perspective. Another component is working to ensure that people can meet their basic needs. It is difficult to organize for future liberation when someone is entrenched in day-to-day struggle.

**4. We have open disagreements with each other about ideas and practices.** We believe there is no formula for resolving our ideological differences other than working towards our common aims, engaging with each other in a comradely manner, and respecting one another, whether or not we can hash out disagreements in the process.

If you want to get involved, let a volunteer know. For more information, including how to donate, visit <https://iowamutualaid.org/>.