

Quotes from Victor Wallis,  
*Red-Green Revolution: The Politics and Technology of Ecosocialism*  
(Toronto and Chicago: Political Animal Press, 2018)

[from **Preface**] The currently dominant forces, rather than join the fight against climate change, erect walls to block out its victims. By militarizing the problem, they not only draw resources away from any possible remedial steps; they also accelerate the spread of devastation.

What other path can be chosen? That is the subject of this book. The short answer is that a radical power-shift is needed. But it's one thing to recognize this and quite another to draw the indispensable majority into the struggle to achieve it.

[from **Preface**] The struggle to restore the soil and the struggle to create a just social order have up to now been carried on mostly as parallel political movements, without much mutual awareness, let alone collaboration, at the mass level. Such collaboration, however, or at least the striving to attain it, is the true centerpiece of Red–Green Revolution.

[from **Introduction**] The almost cult-like reverence for innovation that permeates US-American culture is a clear expression of capitalist interests, in their constant search for newly marketable commodities. But this is not the only possible goal for innovative thinking. An ecosocialist premise would stimulate innovation in quite different directions, notably toward a rethinking of assumptions about basic human needs and how they can be met.

[from **Chapter 3**] There are new reasons for thinking about [building socialism that] have nothing to do with the fate of certain past regimes. These “new reasons” reflect not only recent developments in capitalism—which include heightened devastation (war), polarization, and technological displacement, as well as vastly accelerated ecological breakdown—but also some insufficiently noted achievements that belong squarely in the socialist tradition. For socialism today, therefore, there are not just fresh challenges; there is also untapped potential.

[from **Chapter 4**] The struggle to survive is indeed a powerful motivator, but it depends in turn on confidence that survival is possible. Such confidence draws partly on the solidarity that can be inspired by a vast social movement. If a movement of this kind is to grow, however, it must have theoretical underpinnings. People need to understand the potential alternative as being already implicit in conditions we can now see. Regarding technology, it is not enough to advance a notion of "what might be." Any such vision must flow in a recognizable way from "what is," granting that this encompasses not just the physical and institutional reality but also people's subjective capacity to respond.

[from **Chapter 4**] While some devices may be more compatible than others with socialist principles, the devices required for life under socialism pre-exist any socialist formation. The distinctive contribution of socialism lies not in any particular inventions

that might emerge but rather in the reorganization of society in such a way that technological choices are no longer made on the basis of marketability and profit-potential, but rather on the basis of compatibility with the overall requirements of humanity and the natural world. The process of identifying those requirements will of course be a matter for debate, but the guiding principles for any decisions will be, on the one hand, the concern for long-term species-survival, and on the other, the assumption that no portion of the human race is entitled to deny any other portion of it, on any pretext, the conditions for a decent life.

[from **Chapter 5**] People arrive at a socialist position from many different starting points or initial concerns. The particular attribute of an ecological focus—whether it comes early or late in a person’s political awakening—is that it addresses basic survival-interests which affect everyone. More specifically in relation to socialism, the ecological theme points sharply to the need for structural changes that are both deep and wide-ranging.

[from **Chapter 6**] A disdain for the natural environment has characterized capitalism from the beginning. As Marx noted, capital abuses the soil as much as it exploits the worker. The makings of ecological breakdown are thus inherent in capitalism. No serious observer now denies the severity of the environmental crisis, but it is still not widely recognized as a *capitalist* crisis, that is, as a crisis arising from and perpetuated by the rule of capital and hence incapable of resolution within the capitalist framework.

[from **Chapter 7**] The emergency represented by the environmental crisis exists irrespective of our wishes. Any sense of complacency that might be created about environmental trends is therefore not only counterproductive, but also, simply, false. What is disturbing about the approach of the anti-catastrophists is that they ignore the scientific character of projections made by environmental experts (of such developments as desertification and species-extinction), lumping the resulting forecasts together with apocalyptic religious pronouncements.

[from **Chapter 7**] The most widely diffused demand in current US political campaigns is the demand for jobs. It remains unfulfilled, however, not only in the immediate sense of getting everyone “employed” (at however miserable a wage), but far more so in the more complete sense of assuring that everyone has economic security and, above all, a role in maintaining and—where necessary—restoring the means of life.

Capitalism’s failure to secure the immediate goal may open the gate, for many people, to consideration of the deeper goal.

[from **Chapter 9**] Despite the damage and extinctions that have already occurred, we should keep in mind that an ecologically sound agenda is not just a defensive reaction against threats to survival; it is also a proactive plan for recovery and restoration – of humanity as well as nature. To the extent that it can repair the destruction wrought by capital, it will open the possibility of a good life for everyone – a modest yet revolutionary improvement over the current condition and prospects faced by a majority of the world’s people.