



Bulletin of the
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THE BROWN PAPER BAG THEORY OF AFFINITY GROUPS

The poverty of present forms of organization consists in their limitations -- men work study & sometimes love & die together - - but they do not any longer know how to LIVE together - - to share the wholeness of their lives... But despite them, the forces which bring men together constantly assume new forms.

In the present struggle forms of organization must soon come into being that are appropriate to the changed conditions that are the real content of our times. Not least of all they must be forms that are tenacious enough to resist repression; forms which can grow secretly, learning to manifest themselves in a large variety of ways, lest their mode of operation be co-opted by the opposition, or they be simply smashed.

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The affinity group has qualities of both the pre-organized form & the post-organized form. & it is because of these qualities that it will fulfill our needs. In fact it is absolutely necessary that we transcend all bourgeois forms of organization -- including the so-called "revolutionary" party. The political revolution can only serve to change the form in which hierarchical power is distributed - - while our task must be to form a new cultural whole in which social control is returned to the people -- a social revolution that will charge the content of everyday life, as well as its structure.

For us socialism & its forms of hierarchical organization must be abolished along with bourgeois parliaments & democracies, so that no mere political form be allowed to impose itself on the content of a much more complex & multifarious life.

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The affinity group is the seed/ germ/ essence of organization. It is coming- together out of mutual Need or Desire. Cohesive historical groups united out the shared necessities of the struggle for survival, while dreaming of the possibility of love. For man's nature is not bounded by necessity alone -- Desire appears in all its forms & man desires to desire -- he seeks to fulfill himself on every level of his complex life. & it is in this psychological sense that the affinity group is a pre-organizational force, it represents the drive out of which organization is formed & in so far as it fulfills men's desires it becomes the post-revolutionary form, the organization of satisfaction.

But the immediate need is for mutual desire to manifest itself as the organization for revolutionary struggle, for a new technological organization of resources, a new distribution of wealth, re-establishment of ecological principles (to recreate harmony in a disrupted nature), to create a whole new complex of free relations between people, that can satisfy all our complex needs for change & our consuming desire to be new & to be whole.

* * *

What we have called the de-structuring of SDS¹ is not merely a proposal to create a particular structure for this period of pre-revolutionary activity, but is designed to show the relation of all organization to its base & to insure control at the bottom by forcing all structures back on the affinity groups that are at their core.

In the pre-revolutionary period affinity groups must assemble to project a revolutionary consciousness & to develop forms for particular struggles. In the revolutionary period itself, they will emerge as armed cadres at the centers of conflict. & in the post-revolutionary period they become models for the new everyday life.

In this way the organization transcends the historical problem of centralism vs. de-centralism, by making all structures a dynamic inter-relation of centralist & de-centralized elements: affinity groups coalesce to form large organizations/ simultaneously engaging in public struggles for consciousness & maintaining an active underground.

In so-called "primitive" unitary societies the affinity group attempts to balance a complexity so thorough that it approaches totality. But the division of labor that arises from the struggle for survival causes a fragmentation & unevenness in the distribution of material as well as psychological & cultural wealth. But now with the development of an automated-cybernated technology the material problem can be substantially solved - -freeing man from labor as well as scarcity -- liberating his time, his energy & his Desire, simultaneously, generating the possibility for an entirely new coherence, of becoming whole, Total.

up against the wall/motherfucker

1 SDS= Students for a Democratic Society

This leaflet dates from the late sixties and is a clear and cogent assessment of affinity groups- the model of organisation used by the FAI. For more material by up against the wall/motherfucker see "Black Mask and Up Against the Wall Motherfucker" Unpopular Books and Sabotage Editions, London, 1993.

ORGANISATION SPECIAL * PART ONE

Workers' Organizations

-Luigi Galleani

The anarchist movement and the labor movement follow two parallel lines, and it has been geometrically proven that parallel lines never meet.

And since our good burghers, even those who pretend philanthropy redeems usury, will never stop being exploiters or give back what they have unjustly taken; the anarchists, including those who abhor violence and bloodshed, are compelled to conclude that the expropriation of the ruling class will have to be accomplished by the violent social revolution. And they dedicate themselves to this, seeking to prepare the proletariat with every means of education, propaganda and action at their disposal.

Do not forget and do not delude yourselves! The proletariat is still a mass, not a class. If it were a class, if it had a clear, full consciousness of its rights, of its function, of its strength, the egalitarian revolution would be a thing of the past, freeing us of these melancholy and bitter musings.

The great mass is bourgeois *non natione sed moribus* (not by birth but by custom) --not by origin, for nothing was found in its cradle, but by habit, superstition, prejudice and by interest, too, because it feels its own interests are tied to and dependent upon the masters', who therefore, become providence itself, providing jobs, wages, bread, life for father and children. And for job, life and security, the great mass is grateful to the master who has always existed and will exist forever: blessed be he-- and blessed be the institutions, the laws, the policeman who defend and protect him.

In other words, while the anarchist makes a sharp, severe positive diagnosis, and sinks the scalpel deep to remove the main source of the malaise at its root... the great mass remains empirical. It does not contest property, let alone reject it; it wishes only that it were less greedy. It does not repudiate the master; it only desires that he be better. It does not reject the State, law, tribunals and the police, it only wants a fatherly State, just laws and honest courts, police that are more humane.

We do not argue about whether property is greedy or not, if masters are good or bad, if the State

is paternal or despotic, if laws are just or unjust, if courts are fair or unfair, if the police are merciful or brutal. When we talk about property, State, masters, government, laws, courts and police, we say only **we don't want any of them**. And we pursue with passion, patience and faith, a society incompatible with these monstrosities. And meanwhile, with all the means we can muster, we contest and oppose their arbitrary and atrocious functions, quite often sacrificing our freedom, our well being, even our loved ones for many long years, sometimes forever. As you can see we follow different roads, and it is unlikely we will ever meet.

However labor organizations are a fact, they exist. And even if their rusty and blind conservatism is an obstacle and oftentimes a danger, they deserve our consideration and our careful attention.

If we find ourselves, facing an ignorant child, a devout woman or a blockhead who doesn't see, or doesn't want to see, we do not react with derision or contempt to the immaturity of one, the ingenuousness of the other, nor to the blindness of most.

We treat them with the same kindness and assist them all with care, because we are proud to uncover the shining metal hidden beneath the rude and rash exterior, to transform a primitive being into a person who has value, individually and socially, because we know above all we have chosen is too important to neglect any energy that might contribute to the success of our ideal, and finally, because we know that our freedom, security and individual well being would be precarious and ephemeral --even in an egalitarian society-- if they did not find their basis and protection in the freedom and welfare of those around us. If freedom is knowledge, if well being is solidarity; then the educational work to be performed among proletarians, organized or not appears only as a pressing need, but one which cannot be delayed.

"Well then, would you be willing to join any organizations? To remain outside them prevents you from exerting any influence or action."

Certainly! We should enroll in labor organizations whenever we find it useful to our struggle and whenever it is possible to do so under **well defined pledges and reservations**.

Pledge number one! As we are anarchists outside the organization, so we shall remain anarchists inside it. First reservation! We shall never be a part of the leadership; we shall always be in the opposition and never assume any responsibility in running the union. This is for us an elementary position of coherence.

It has been firmly established that the labor organizations, those that are managed by somnolent

Galleani on unions

conservatives, as well as the red ones led by the so-called revolutionary syndicalists, recognize and consent to the existing economic system in all its manifestations and relations. They limit their demands to immediate and partial improvements, high salaries, shorter hours, old age pensions, unemployment benefits, social security, laws protecting women's and children's working conditions, factory inspections, etc., etc... They are the main purpose for which the organization was established, and it is clear that an anarchist cannot assume the responsibility for sponsoring aspirations of this kind. He knows that every conquest of such improvements is deceitful and inconsistent, since in the increased cost of food, rent and clothes, the worker as a consumer will pay more to live no matter how much he earns as a producer. No comrade of ours, therefore can assume the management of such an organization, nor any role implying any solidarity whatever with its programme or action, without denying all his anarchist and revolutionary convictions, without aligning himself with the reformist crowds whose spearhead he pretends to be.

Our place is in opposition, continually demonstrating with all possible vigilance and criticism the vanity of such aims, the futility of such efforts, the disappointing results; relentlessly pointing out, in contrast, the concrete and integral emancipation that could be achieved quickly and easily different ways and other means.

The outcome of every agitation, of every union struggle would confirm the foresight and the fairness of our criticism. Even if it is not easy to hope that an organization might soon follow our suggestions, it is nevertheless believable that the more intelligent and bold among its members would be inclined to favor our point of view. They would form a nucleus ready to fight with passion in the struggles of the future, attracting their fellow workers to shake the authority of their union leaders.

If you join an organization with ideas like this and mean to keep them, you'll be gagged and expelled as a provocateur at the first opportunity. That is something you've had occasion to see not long ago.

That is why those of our comrades who undertake this task must possess the qualities of seriousness, humility, coherence and great patience that are required to gain, first the liking, then the esteem and finally the trust of the best of their fellow workers. They must be in the front line where there is danger, last in line always, where there is ambition or personal gain; they must be bitter opponents when faced with deals and compromises that are

inconsistent with their faith and dignity as workers and revolutionists.

And if they fail, if they have to pack up and go, there will be no regrets. They will have sown the good seeds of independence, of consciousness and of courage. Their work will be remembered and invoked wherever leaders waver or manoeuvre, wherever the hard, fruitless struggle is followed by renewed pain and disillusionment, wherever the fortunes of battle end in disaster for want of boldness and self denial they always practised.

The sympathy and the trust that go beyond the personal, into the action and the ideal which inspired it; the sympathy and trust in revolutionary action and in the anarchist ideal, the sympathy and trust which will end by transforming themselves into passionate and persistent cooperation, isn't this all we can expect from our modest but earnest work of propaganda, education and renovation?

We have no dogmatic pretence whatsoever. Modestly, we have said what we think about a controversial question, conscious of the fact it has the consent of a considerable number of comrades --and we expressed it in all sincerity without hate or contempt.

Furthermore, hate and contempt would be misplaced, since action, either within or without a labor organization, should imply neither merit nor demerit. Everyone should choose the ways, means and field more suited to his ability and preference.¹

¹Nowadays, it is impossible for workers of any trade to remain independent from their union. In the United States, at least, those who remain separate are considered "scab", even if they are respected for their ability and are already paid above the union scale. But above all the employers claim that all their employees belong to a union, so they can discharge those who cannot show a union card.

Employers have learned from their experience that it is easier to bargain with the union committee, which is composed of intelligent workers, generally well-placed and jealous of their privileged positions, but after all, still pliant and corruptible, than it is to quarrel with a rough, variable and restless crowd of individuals who have no legal standing to establish a long term, comfortable agreement, and are more easily blinded by their delegates' stories than bought by a shinning coin. It would take too much money to deal with them, and the quarrel would have to be repeated every day.

Luigi Galleani, *The End of Anarchism?*, 1925

A Response to Malatesta on the Platform

The present epoch, when, by millions, workers engaged on the battlefield of social struggle, demanded direct and precise responses from the anarchists concerning this struggle and the communist construction which must follow it; it demanded of the same, the collective responsibility of the anarchists regarding these responses and anarchist propaganda in general. If they did not assume this responsibility the anarchists like anyone else in this case, do not have the right to propagandise in an inconsequent manner among the working masses, who struggled in agreeing to heavy sacrifices and lost numberless victims.

At this level, it is not a question of a game or the object of an experiment. That is how, if we do not have a General Union of Anarchists, we cannot furnish common responses on all those vital questions.

At the start of his article, comrade Malatesta appears to salute the idea of the creation of a vast anarchist organisation, however, in categorically repudiating collective responsibility, he renders impossible the realisation of such an organisation. For that will not only not be possible if there exists no theoretical and organisational agreement, constituting a common platform where numerous militants can meet. In the measure to which they accept this platform, that must be obligatory for all. Those who do not recognise these basic principles, cannot become, and besides would themselves not want to, become a member of the organisation.

In this fashion, this organisation will be the union of those who will have a common conception of a theoretical, tactical and political line to be realised.

Consequently, the practical activity of a member of the organisation will be naturally in full harmony with the general activity, and inversely the activity of all the organisation will not know how to be in contradiction with the conscience and activity of each of its members, if they accept the programme on which the organisation is founded.

It is this that characterises collective responsibility: the entire Union is responsible for the activity of each member, knowing that they will accomplish their political and revolutionary work in the political spirit of the Union. At the same time, each member is fully responsible for the entire Union, seeing that his activity will not be contrary to that

elaborated by all its members. This does not signify in the least any authoritarianism, as comrade Malatesta wrongly affirms, it is the expression of a conscientious and responsible understanding of militant work.

It is obvious that in calling on anarchists to organise on the basis of a definite programme, we are not taking away as such the right of anarchists of other tendencies to organise as they think fit. However, we are persuaded that, from the moment that anarchists create an important organisation, the hollowness and vanity of the traditional organisations will be revealed.

The principle of responsibility is understood by comrade Malatesta in the sense of a moral responsibility of individuals and of groups. This is why he only grants to conferences and their resolutions the role of a sort of conversation between friends, which in sum pronounce only platonic wishes.

This traditional manner of representing the role of conferences does not stand up to the test of life. In effect, what would be the value of a conference if it only had "opinions" and did not charge itself with realising them in life? None. In a vast movement, a uniquely moral and non-organisational responsibility loses all its value.

Let us come to the question concerning majority and minority. we think that all discussion on this subject is superfluous. In practice, it has been resolved a long time ago. Always and everywhere among us, practical problems have been resolved by a majority of votes. It is completely understandable, because there is no other way of resolving these problems inside an organisation that wants to act.

In all the objections raised against the Platform, there is lacking up to the moment the understanding of the most important thesis that it contains; the understanding of our approach to the organisational problem and to the method of its resolution. In effect, an understanding of these is extremely important and possesses a decisive significance with the idea of a precise appreciation of the Platform and all the organisational activity of the Dielo Trouda group.

The only way to move away from chaos and revive the anarchist movement is a theoretical and organisational clarification of our milieu, leading to a differentiation and to the selection of an active core of militants, on the basis of a homogeneous theoretical and practical programme. It is in this that resides one of the principle objectives of our text.

What does our clarification represent and what must it lead to? The absence of a homogeneous general programme has always been a very noticeable failing in the anarchist movement, and has contributed

The 'Organisational Platform' debate

to making it very often very vulnerable, its propaganda not ever having been coherent and consistent in relation to the ideas professed and the practical principles defended. Very much to the contrary, it often happens that what is propagated by one group is elsewhere denigrated by another group. And that not solely in tactical applications, but also in fundamental theses.

Certain people defend such a state of play in saying that in such a way is explained the variety of anarchist ideas. Well, let us admit it, but what interest can this variety represent to the workers?

They struggle and suffer today and now and immediately need a precise conception of the revolution, which can lead them to their emancipation right away; they don't need an abstract conception, but a living conception, real, elaborated and responding to their demands. Whilst the anarchists often proposed, in practice, numerous contradictory ideas, systems and programmes, where the most important was neighbour to the insignificant, or just as much again, contradicted each other. In such conditions, it is easily understandable that anarchism cannot and will not ever in the future, impregnate the masses and be one with them, so as to inspire its emancipatory movement.

For the masses sense the futility of contradictory notions and avoid them instinctively; in spite of this, in a revolutionary period, they act and live in a libertarian fashion.

To conclude, comrade Malatesta thinks that the success of the Bolsheviks in their country stops Russian anarchists who have edited the Platform from getting a good night's sleep. The error of Malatesta is that he does not take account of the extremely important circumstances of which the Organisational Platform is the product, not solely of the Russian revolution but equally of the anarchist movement in this revolution. Now, it is impossible not to take account of this circumstance so that one can resolve the problem of anarchist organisation, of its form and its theoretical basis. It is indispensable to look at the place occupied by anarchism in the great social upheaval in 1917. What was the attitude of the insurgent masses with regard to anarchism and the anarchists? What did they appreciate in them? Why, despite this, did anarchism receive a setback in this revolution? What lessons are to be drawn? All these questions, and many others still, must inevitably put themselves to those who tackle the questions raised by the Platform. Comrade Malatesta has not done this. He has taken up the current problem of organisation in dogmatic abstraction. It is pretty incomprehensible for us, who have got used to seeing in him, not an

ideologue but a practician of real and active anarchism. He is content to examine in what measure this or that thesis of the Platform is or is not in agreement with traditional points of view of anarchism, then he refutes them, in finding them opposed to those old' conceptions. He cannot bring himself to thinking that this might be the opposite, that it is precisely these that could be erroneous, and that this has necessitated the appearance of the Platform. It is thus that can be explained all the series of errors and contradictions raised above.

Let us note in him a grave neglect; he does not deal at all with the theoretical basis, nor with the constructive section of the Platform, but uniquely with the project of organisation. Our text has not solely refuted the idea of the Synthesis, as well as that of anarcho-syndicalism as inapplicable and bankrupt, it has also advanced the project of a grouping of active militants of anarchism on the basis of a more or less homogeneous programme. Comrade Malatesta should have dwelt with precision on this method; however, he has passed over it in silence, as well as the constructive section, although his conclusions apparently apply to the entirety of the Platform. This gives his article a contradictory and unstable character.

Libertarian communism cannot linger in the impasse of the past, it must go beyond it, in combatting and surmounting its faults. The original aspect of the Platform and of the Dielo Trouda group consists precisely in that they are strangers to out of date dogmas, to ready made ideas, and that, quite the contrary, they endeavour to carry on their activity starting from real and present facts. This approach constitutes the first attempt to fuse anarchism with real life and to create an anarchist activity on this basis. It is only thus that libertarian communism can tear itself free of a superannuated dogma and boost the living movement of the masses.

Dielo Trouda No.30 May 1928 pages 4-11.

Translated by Nick Heath (Anarchist Communist Federation)

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Comments welcome!

The Invisible Dictatorship

Revolutionary Organisation and Objectives

In Britain, something like 40% of the working class as a whole, and an estimated 60% of the unskilled and unemployed working class do not vote at all. In local elections the figures rise dramatically until frequently only a minority bother to vote in solid working class districts. This refusal to participate in the 'democratic' fraud is labelled 'apathetic' by middle class commentators of left and right rather than a positive rejection of false alternatives. And yet, despite the physical expressions of revolt by the most alienated sections of the working class in recent years, it remains unable to effectively challenge the dominant class.

Because of the lack of continuity in the revolutionary movement, each new generation of the working class repeats the errors of the old; where working class solidarity is continually reduced to defence of the unions and support for 'untainted' left-socialism - in the '30's, '40's and '60's significant (and on occasions, majority) sections of the working class placed their future in the hands of the Labour Party - which inevitably results in feelings of betrayal and disillusion when their 'socialist leaders' defend capitalism against the interests of the working class.

It is the failure of the revolutionary movement that the lessons of history have not been driven home and the *only* solution to bourgeois domination been understood or even properly explained: that the working class must organise - as a class, and not fragmented interest groups - in *total* opposition to bourgeois interests and organisations which exist only to perpetuate the capitalist system and their own class privileges.

For all the theoretical Anarchist writings of the last 100 years or so, except for specific periods of social upheaval (where necessity dictates the course of action) we have never been able to sustain an overall strategic campaign against capitalism and the state. We rush here and there, filling in gaps in the ideological dyke; reacting to each bourgeois attack rather than developing the critique of bourgeois society as a whole, and challenging it as a class!

The frequently perceived clash of interests between different groups of workers (skilled-unskilled, men-women, black-white) or single issue campaigns (nuclear weapons, ecology, etc.) become topically all-embracing as *the* forum of struggle for a year or

two, supported by the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie for whom any division within the ranks of the proletariat is wholeheartedly endorsed and encouraged.

To debate, and attempt to oppose, in isolation, the quite obvious fact that black workers are often in *worse* housing than white workers, or that women workers suffer a higher rate of exploitation than male workers is for revolutionaries a pointless exercise, for our object is to destroy capitalism and not reform the (perhaps) more glaring iniquities. This is not to deny that we should constantly struggle to improve our conditions, but not to construct an ideology around a specific example of capitalist oppression.

Historically, anarchist influence within the class has been strengthened by a recognition of its uncompromising class antagonism towards the bourgeoisie and their collaborators, coupled with courageous resistance to all oppression; it is time these qualities were re-kindled in the consciousness of the working class. It can be no coincidence that our influence has waned parallel to the upsurge of militant liberalism masquerading as anarchism. To many people, anarchism has become synonymous with a myriad of crank causes from 'pacifism' to 'animal liberation'. Our primary function as propagandists and resistance fighters has been obscured in the welter of self-righteous and patronising garbage epitomised by *Freedom* or the irrelevant self-indulgence of the various 'anarchist' punk papers and magazines.

Anarchists are not disciples of some obscure religious sect waiting for the second coming, nor are we a monastic order weeping amidst the philistines; our role is not to be a moral elite waiting for some reaction from the 'masses', but an active movement *within* the class providing the base for an autonomous working class organised along anarchist principles. "...*(the role/object)... must be not to create an artificial force outside the people, but to arouse, unite and organise spontaneous popular forces...*" (Bakunin: Letter to Nechaev, 1870). To achieve this goal of being an active and influential movement we must organise on a nation-wide and coherent basis or be reconciled to being an ineffectual collection of individuals and tiny groups. No organisational form can be *imposed* on the revolutionary anarchist movement, but it is becoming increasingly obvious that *some* kind of national organisation capable of instigating and co-ordinating resistance to capital's attacks on the working class is essential.

Previous attempts to organise nationally have foundered because of a lack of clarity of what constitutes a viable organising base and confusion about collective objectives. Attempts to reconcile

Organisation or Irrelevance!

revolutionary class struggle anarchism with groups and individuals whose analysis of capitalism is seriously flawed, and whose aims are *fundamentally* in opposition to our own, (despite their description of themselves as some variation of anarchist) have resulted in pointless dialogue with uncommitted and reformist elements, as well as the inevitable dilution within the organisation. It is time to reject the worse than useless alliances with pacifists, ecologists, feminists, and all the other variations of militant liberalism as the divisive mystifications that they are.

On the other hand, previous class-struggle organisations have failed because of a steady drift towards neo-Trotskyist centralism with a party line dressed up as 'aims and principles' (typified by the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists -O.R.A. and Anarchist Workers Association - A.W.A. in the 1970's).

A national anarchist organisation can declare no 'correct path' for social revolution, it cannot be a single group with a holy writ of 'aims and principles' etched in stone tablets, but a *federation* of fully autonomous groups and individuals freely grouped around the *single* aim of promoting unity of action and mutual aid in the struggle - an organisation capable of guiding and supporting *all* activities pursued by revolutionary anarchists thus federated. Composed of the most conscientious revolutionaries, its tasks will not be to seize power or assume a vanguard role, but to prevent others from doing so; whilst providing a *secure* forum for the exchange of ideas and experiences, not as an end in itself, but to translate these ideas and experiences into nation-wide action.

"...We are the most pronounced enemies of every sort of official power - even if it is an ultra-revolutionary power. We are the enemies of any sort of publicly declared dictatorship, we are social revolutionary Anarchist. But, you will ask, if we are anarchist, by what right do we want to influence the people, and what methods will we use? Disowning all power with what sort of power, or rather by what sort of force, shall we direct a peoples' revolution?"

By a force that is invisible, that admits and that is not on anyone, by the collective dictatorship of our organisation which will be all the greater the more it remains unseen and undeclared, the more it is deprived of all rights and significance... in the middle of this universal anarchy... a secret organisation, dispersing its members in small groups... but nevertheless firmly united and inspired with a single idea, a single aim, applicable everywhere in different ways according to the circumstances, of course, and acting along the same

lines... expressing the very essence of popular instincts, desires and demands in their clear and conscious aims among a crowd of people who would be struggling without any purpose or plan..." (Bakunin: Ibid).

The effectiveness of any national organisation will depend on various conditions:

- a) A common understanding of the nature of the enemy.
- b) Speedy and secure contact among federated groups.
- c) Mutual trust and solidarity.
- d) A recognition among federated groups and individuals that we are *never* hampered by considerations of bourgeois legality and that *all* effective action against the ruling class will sooner or later become illegal.
- e) Although the basis of federation will be the recognition that an autonomous working class is the only class capable, ultimately, with the will, to carry out the social revolution, resistance may take many forms, from industrial struggle, to rioting and armed resistance depending on the circumstances. Federated members must support the *validity* of all forms of resistance.

Liberal democracy is primarily an exercise in illusion. Repression is minimal because it is largely unnecessary, the capitalist class relies on convincing the exploited class that things are very much as 'nature' intended. Any radical deviation would of course be lunacy.

This ideology is largely successful during periods of capitalist booms while the alienation and powerlessness of the majority of the population is offset by increased financial security (although it is interesting to note, that the financially secure years of the '50's and '60's, saw the explosion of strikes and stoppages over, seemingly, trivial issues - the so-called 'bloody-mindedness' of the British workforce! - as an attempt to relieve the boredom and alienation of their labour and to effect *some* control over their lives.)

In periods of recession, although fear - of unemployment, sickness, etc., - appears to pacify the working class, the illusion fades and the reality of the conflict between exploiter and exploited becomes more difficult to disguise. Parliamentary democracy is discredited, while the so-called 'workers organisations', (the trade unions) are shown in their true corporate role as managers of the labour force.

Now, more than any other time since the war, the conditions exist to precipitate a loss of control by the bourgeoisie. If the anarchist movement is to

exploit these conditions and become an important influence on an insurgent working class, we must cease behaving like dilettantes, and playing at being revolutionaries. It is not enough to *campaign* (like some charitable pressure group) on abstract principles. The anarchist movement must be *involved* in every facet of the struggle of the working class; not as participants in events beyond our control, but as an organised nuclei of the working class. We must

demonstrate our ability and determination to win, to lead by example. Our actions and propaganda should be a co-ordinated attack on capitalism and its institutions. We cannot do this while we remain a haphazard collection of groups and individuals, united in name only.

Ozymandias

(Anarchy 38, 1984/5)

In 1931 Pierre Ramus dealt with issues that affect us now- the danger of sublimating anarchism into other movements and the need for anarchism to determine "the means and methods of revolutionary activity which deserve the name of social revolution". The need to have our own economic programme is particularly telling!

ANARCHISM: IT'S AIM IN THE PRESENT.

In the turmoil of broken-down ideas, theories and parties, only anarchism stands aloof. It has gained its great vindication in the fact that all its oppositional movements within the working class, based upon the "conquest of power," have failed to do anything for the workers except deteriorate their material conditions and smash their ideals. Social democracy, Bolshevism, and Fascism, have all had their chance to gain both power and the government, and show that they were able not only to better the conditions of labour, but transform social life by those means. That old and long cherished Marxian formula, "conquest of power," has been completely exploded as a means of labour emancipation when put to the test of experience and reality.

Thus the ideal of liberty, unfettered by, government, statute law, and the Church, has become by virtue of its logical consequence, the only common-sense ideal and aspiration in the minds of mankind. Being the very opposite of coercion, force and authority, it has until now withstood all its tests.

There are two problems which Anarchism must still fathom in order to penetrate the minds of humanity and become the leading star within social evolution and sociological science. These two problems are both a moral and material problem at the same time, and demand a positive solution within the theory and practice of Anarchism. The first one is unflinching endurance in the promotion of the uncompromised principle of Anarchism. Anarchists must not be misled, as many were before the War, into believing that other movements can perform their mission. Anarchism, by its complete solution of the individual and social problem, is entitled to utilise all other movements for its purpose which are coinciding with its aims. But it must never give itself up to those movements, since they are mainly means, never aims! This is the case with Syndicalism. Valuable as it undoubtedly can be when

submerged in Anarchism, it becomes dangerous when Anarchists think to promote the welfare of the working class by stooping down to those every-day demands of the big, but important, mass movements which they raise as slogans. Sixty years of striving for the eight-hour working day has been entirely superseded and become meaningless by capitalist industrial evolution. This must cause us to beware of lowering our flag to the present slogan of a seven-or even six-hour day, since already in America this is superseded by some capitalists introducing the five-hour working day. But this does not exclude either wage-slavery or the most dreadful exploitation. This has become more manifold, much more highly developed and keener as a result of recent rationalisation than was formerly the case with the ten-hour day. If Anarchists believe in economic reform within the present system they ought, and must, start in with original ideas of their own. They must combat government, financial monopoly, with its money-power, and at the same time the economic dependence of the worker in wage-slavery. There are today means and methods in this line which, to combine with Anarchist Communism, is in the tendency of the greatest evolution of this glorious principle. But this will only be achieved if Anarchists keep up their own idea of leading to a Social Revolution through a practical economic programme. They must aim solely at Anarchism without any Bolshevist authority, even if it is offered in the form of dictatorial workers councils, or any such-like busybodies, desirous of exercising a new power over their fellows.

In connection with this, there is the second problem to be solved. The realisation of Anarchist Communism is more than ever possible, after the utter bankruptcy of the Bolshevist revolutionary method. The great mission for mankind is to now develop a *new form and method* of the Social Revolution. It cannot be denied that many one-time Anarchists saw in the methods of Bolshevism aspects of Anarchism, and without realising its ultimate anti-social and authoritarian character, went over to it. The great lot of our generation is therefore to work out those means and methods of revolutionary activity which deserve the name of a Social Revolution, in contradistinction to the revolutions hitherto known. Thus alone will Anarchism become vital in its ideal as well as in its practical constructive capacity.

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