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Plan for an Anarchist Individualist International

Émile Armand

1927

In the first place, *anarchy for the anarchists* and not for the syndicalists, the free thinkers or others, who are big enough boys to manage their own affairs. In the second place, concrete realization, logical consequence of the fact that, if we are asocial, we are eminently sociable: Formation of an *Anarchist Individualist International* based, to begin with, on the following relations:

A) Of the intellectual order: Groups for anarchist education based on free enquiry and the free discussion of the methods and systems addressed to the intellect. Consolidation and selection of minds resistant to all unilateral, dogmatic or class-based education.

Creation of schools (Thursday schools, vacation schools and night schools, if we cannot do better) whose aim is to make a clean break in the child with preconceived notions and hereditary prejudices, and to prepare them to acquire a mentality capable of resisting the attacks and encroachments of spiritualism, doctrinal ideology, bourgeois morality or class morals, as well as the seductions of those who preach of paradise or the future society —

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the mentality of a demolisher-reconstructor, the temperament of an unresigned experimenter.

Just as we can wish to dedicate ourselves solely to individualist propaganda of the intellectual or educational order — we can only be led to anarchist individualism through its educational methods, its teaching processes.

B) Of the recreational order: Art, literature and play, conceived and desired apart from classical conceptions and received texts — otherwise than for a social aim or in the interest of one class, etc.

Just as we may wish to confine ourselves solely to individualist propaganda in the literary and artistic domain, in the sphere of play — we can be drawn toward anarchist individualism by its a-dogmatic, non-sectarian manner, independent of the spirit of class, of thinking of art, literature and play.

C) Of the sexological order: Sentimental and sexual emancipation of the individual-unity. Theory of the abolition of cohabitation and the family, or theory of life in common without considering or taking seriously the family and cohabitation. Theory of maternity as a purely individual function, the exclusive business of the mother. Various theories in response to the problems raised by the sentimental-sexual question: sexual liberty, free love, erotico-sentimental associationism, amorous camaraderie, campaign against jealousy. Theory of exclusivity and unicity in love as an obstacle to the practice of effective camaraderie, of a broader reciprocity, etc. theory of the interchangeability of the elements of the associations of cohabitation. Theory of the child belonging to itself and being put in a position, as soon as possible, to choose its familial environment, its educators or instructors, etc.

Just as we can limit ourselves exclusively to a propaganda aiming solely at the destruction sentimental-sexual prejudices,—jealousy, exclusivity in love, prudishness, the *archist* conception of the family or cohabitation, etc.,—we can be led to anarchist individualism

by the manner in which it treats these questions freely, through the audacious solutions that it brings to them.

D) Of the economic order: Every attempt to ensure, in this domain as in others, that the individual-unit receives, whether associated or not, according to their effort and specifically from the economic point of view – that the producer-unit receives the full product of its labor. The slimmer the margin that separates the producer-unit the conquest of the full product of their labor, the closer we come to the realization of the anarchist individualist idea. One of the first conditions is the elimination of intermediaries.

Hence the creation of associations of agricultural, industrial or intellectual artisans, exchanging their products among themselves. (We defend here the theory that, just as much as overpopulation, production “in herds” is contrary to the individualist spirit. Herd labor gives rise to a spirit that is ovine, uniformist, conformist, majoritarian and militarist.)

Funds or associations for insurance against the hazards of life in anarchy, whatever they may be: sickness, unemployment, old age, imprisonment for any reason whatsoever, exile, temporary or permanent disabilities.

Funds or associations of credit, intended to make advances to comrades—artisans, agricultural and industrial workers, or intellectuals—hoping to escape the bosses, under certain conditions of guarantee and without the deduction of any interest other than that necessary to the functioning of those associations. Issues of checks or bills of exchange (having international circulating power), among all the members of this international.

It remains, of course, to establish the ways and means, and to draft the statutes or contracts permitting such associations to function in the capitalist or statist regime. The intended aim is the creation of centers, cells or laboratories where, without awaiting “the great day” or “the morrow of the revolution,” the anarchist individualists could make themselves aware of the practical and technical value of their theories and aspirations.

E) But this International of accomplishments is the consequence of a general mindset of camaraderie absolutely different from the petit-bourgeois, petit-rentier, pompous and small-minded mentality that characterizes so many anarchists and revolutionaries, so many men and women who proclaim themselves avant-garde in order to make jaws drop. If the company of anarchists exposes us to finding among them the mentality of the merchant across the street, of the believer next door, of the voter on the corner, we might as well stay home. If we are to encounter in the anarchist milieus the hypocrisy and lies of petit-bourgeois circles — we might as well not frequent them. If we are to stoop to all the restraints and restrictions in usage among the little *rentiers*, a plague on *camarades* and camaraderie!

Time spent in the company of *camarades* is explained by the search for individual happiness, because we expect to find a mentality and manners other than those of the pompous little men we find in society; so keeping company among *camarades* presupposes that each draws a personal profit — provided they will return the favor — from that mentality and those manners.

What we call the “milieu of anarchist individualist camaraderie” is a milieu based on affinity where, apart from all interference or intrusion external to its constituents, each accomplishes a sustained and resolute effort so that this milieu prospers and grows and so that they draw from it, through the play of reciprocity, the satisfaction of their desires or of their particular determinism. A milieu of *camarades* is not one where we can have the feeling that we have given more than we received or received more than we have given, that we have been “conned”, from one point of view or from the other.

To spend time with anarchists, just to find oneself as miserable as among the archists—the game is not worth the candle...

To spend time with anarchists, just to be smothered in an atmosphere of intellectual mutilation or a crippling of the life of the senses—that is truly not worth the trouble.

And an *Anarchist Individualist International* is only possible if those who form it possess first of all have a mentality and habits of their own, very much of their own, released from concerns about experimentation, freed from the fear of living.