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A Wise Move

On Anarchist Organization

Lucy E. Parsons

November 6, 1907

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The Demonstrator
Letter to the Editor

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The recent Congress of Anarchists, held at Amsterdam, Holland, seems to me to be a wise move and a step in the right direction.

The Anarchistic cause (there has been no movement in recent years) has lacked a plan of procedure or organization. To be sure, there have somehow, here and there, drifted together a few persons who, in a loose way, formed a sort of group, calling themselves Anarchists, but these groups were composed, for the most part, of young, inexperienced people who had about as many conceptions of the real aims of Anarchism as there were members composing the group; consequently, the result has been as might reasonably have been expected. The anarchistic cause has lacked concentration of effort, and a vivifying force to lend energy and direction toward a common aim.

The result is that the realization of the anarchistic ideal, grand as it is, is not in the least encouraging when we take a retrospective view of the last twenty years. Really, what evidence have we of a genuine growth of Anarchism in the last twenty years? There has not been in that time a single work produced by an original writer. A few pamphlets only have been written. All the weekly

and monthly publications have had short leases of life, with struggling, starving existences—that is, in the English language. London *Freedom* is the single exception.

I, personally, have always held to the idea of organization, together with an assumption of responsibility by the members, such as paying monthly dues and collecting funds for propaganda purposes. For holding these views, I have been called an “old-school” Anarchist, etc.

Turning from the past to the future, I most sincerely hope that the recent congress is the beginning of a new era for Anarchism. I trust that this country and the world will resound with the grand truths of Anarchism—the right of every man and woman upon this Earth, who contributes to the marvelous and diversified products, to their share in the same; and that to be really free is to allow each one to live their lives in their own way so long as each allows all to do the same.

Anarchism teaches that no one is made better by the enactment of laws, but many crimes and unsocial acts are purely the result of official meddling to make people “good” by law.

Anarchism, as taught in recent years, is too far away from the mental level of the masses; hence, they have not been attracted to us. Our enemies have put their own interpretation upon our ideas, and we are in no condition to defend ourselves because we have no press. I trust this condition will soon change and we will have a movement in fact instead of one only in name.

Yours for the social revolution,
Lucy E. Parsons