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104 Steps To Recovery of the Social Vector

Center for Especifismo Studies

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egy. Progressing with strategy makes the anarchist organization a coherent and effective organization; an organization dedicated to serious, committed militancy in which the militants do that which they have established as priority and work on the tasks that contribute in the most effective way possible to the consolidation of their strategic objectives. We must emphasize that the freedom to join an organization is equal to the freedom to disconnect from one, and in the case of an individual or minority often feeling neglected by the decisions of the majority, they have the freedom to split. It is important to emphasize that the strategic decisions, even if taken by means of a vote, are collective decisions and not individual disputes within the organization.

103. THE STRATEGIC LINE

For the strategic line to be established and formalized into the program, contact with practice, which enables theory with knowledge, is essential. This contact will also enable the correct tactical unfolding of the strategy. Through the program the specific anarchist organization makes known its strategic proposal for social transformation. At the same time as it serves to guide the action of the militants of the organization, it serves to mark the organization's positions for other people who are not part of it, making public this set of analyses and proposals. If the objectives change, for example in a post-revolutionary situation, the strategy can be modified. Hence importance both of the comprehension of the actual situation in which we live, and also of the establishment of clear and precise objectives, essential components in the development of strategy.

104. COLLECTIVE DECISIONS, NOT INDIVIDUAL DISPUTES

In relation to ideology, strategy is much more flexible since it varies according to the social context, the current situation. It is natural that in each context and conjuncture you apply different tactics to the political practice of anarchism. The organization decides, by consensus or by vote, the answers to the three questions of strategy. It formulates the tactical-strategic line, and everyone goes in the same direction. The relatively common practice of many anarchist groups and organizations performing different actions, to the left and to the right, while understanding that they are contributing to a common whole is not accepted. The model of the specific anarchist organization implies that the militants have to do things that they do not like very much or stop doing some of the things they like. This is to ensure that the organization progresses with strat-

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socialism. Finally, reflecting on the third question and proposing a social transformation that takes place through social movements constituted into the popular organization and in constant interaction with the specific anarchist organization.

102. DEVELOPMENT AND ASSESSMENT

The specific anarchist organization should seek to perform a diagnosis of the reality within which it operates, set the final long-term objectives and, most importantly, determine the different periods and cycles of struggle, each one with their respective objectives. This “macro” line (of diagnostics, medium- and long-term objectives) is called strategy, and the grand objectives (are called) the strategic objectives. Strategy, then, is detailed in a more “micro” line, or tactics, which determines the short-term objectives and the actions that are put into practice by militants or groups of militants that aim to achieve the short-term tactical objectives. Every militant has a well-defined function and clear objectives to be achieved. Obviously, the achievement of tactical objectives should contribute to the approximation, or even to the achievement, of the strategic objectives. Assessments are done by evaluations of how the activities are proceeding, whether they are heading towards where we had imagined, if we were wrong about something. In sum: we see if we are moving towards the established objectives, or if we are distancing ourselves from them. In the former case, we correct the errors, make adjustments, and proceed in the same way. In the latter, we change tactical actions and eventually the strategy, carrying out the same process again within a certain timeframe. It is this process of moving, evaluating, pursuing, reevaluating, etc. that causes the organization to advance with strategy and to proceed correctly in the struggle.

strategy from the moment that it has contact with practice at the social level. This does not mean that we advocate a certain type of “grassroots-ism”, which understands everything that the social movements advocate to be right. We know that the majority of the time these movements possess characteristics different to those we desire, and what’s worse: from time to time make shifts to the right, and defend capitalist or even dictatorial positions, as was the case of fascism. If on the one hand we do not believe that we should be in front of the social movements, we also do not believe that we should be behind them, following all their wishes.

101. 3 QUESTIONS OF STRATEGY

We can define strategy from the formulation of answers to three questions:

- 1.) Where are we?
- 2.) Where do we want to go?
- 3.) How do we think we can leave where we are and arrive at where we want to be?

Strategy is, then, the theoretical formulation of a diagnosis of the present situation, the conception of the situation one wants to reach and a set of actions that will aim to transform the present situation, causing it to reach the desired situation. In short everything in the organization, from the most complex to the simplest, can and should be done strategically. Any action that the specific anarchist organization, or even its militants, aims to carry out can be strategically conceived. Behind the conception of all this theoretical material is a strategic rationale. Devising our strategy of social transformation is what we are trying to accomplish in this text. Firstly, reflecting on the first question and mapping capitalism and the state, which give body to the society of domination and exploitation. Then, reflecting on the second question, trying to conceive our final objectives of social revolution and libertarian

While these words originally come from *Social Anarchism and Organisation* by the FARJ, this edited and abridged version represents our organizational understanding of this text which has been essential to the development of the Center for Especifismo Studies and the continuation of Militant Kindergarten. We have composed, numbered, and subtitled the following paragraphs by adapting our “Reading Guide” without page numbers or ellipsis to make for a smoother reading:

1. TWO AXES OF ESPECIFISMO

By especifismo, we refer to a conception of anarchist organization that has two fundamental axes: organization and social work/insertion. These two axes are based on the classical concepts of differentiated actuation of anarchism in the social and political levels (Bakuninist concept) and specific anarchist organization (Malatestan concept).

2. ESPECIFISMO IDEOLOGY

Synthesis advocates a model of anarchist organization in which are all the anarchists (anarcho-communists, anarchosyndicalists, anarcho-individualists etc.). So, it presents many of the characteristics that we criticize. We recognize that within synthesist organizations there are also serious militants committed to social anarchism, so we do not want the criticisms to seem generalized. Although we never question whether these organizations are anarchist (for us, they all are), they do not, in most cases, converge with our way of conceiving anarchist organization. There are diverse anarchist organizations that do not come out of the especifismo current. So, especifismo implies much more than to advocate anarchist organization. We understand anarchism as an ideology, that is, a “set of ideas, motivations, aspirations, values, a structure or system

of concepts that have a direct connection with action – that which we call political practice”. Especifismo advocates an anarchism that, as an ideology, seeks to conceive a model of performance that transforms the society of today into libertarian socialism by means of the social revolution. In this case we seek to differentiate this understanding of anarchism from another, purely abstract and theoretical, which only encourages free thinking, without necessarily conceiving a model of social transformation. Anarchism, thought of only from this model of critical observation of life, offers an aesthetic freedom and endless possibilities. However, if so conceived, it does not offer real possibilities of social transformation, since it is not put into practice, into action. It does not have the political practice that seeks the final objectives.

3. ORGANIZATION IS ESSENTIAL

In the especificismo model there is necessarily this differentiation between the political and social levels of activity. So, the specific anarchist organization is an organization of anarchists that group themselves together at the political and ideological level and that carry out their main activity at the social level, which is broader, aiming to be the ferment of struggle. When we conceive this separation between the social and political level we do not mean to say by this that we wish to be in front of the social movements, nor that the political level has any hierarchy or domination in relation to the social level. In anarchism, broadly speaking, this division between the social and political levels is not accepted by all the currents, which understand the anarchist organization in a diffuse manner, it being able to be a social movement, an organization, an affinity group, a study group, a community, a co-operative etc. There are anarchist currents that support “anti-organizational” or even spontaneist positions and believe that any form of organization is authoritarian or averse to anarchism. Some anarchist individuals that

understand the reproduction of consciousness, which works with hierarchy and domination within the political level, and that in their understanding must be brought from the political level to the social level, from the “conscious” to the “unconscious”. The relationship is not two-way, from the political to the social and vice versa, but rather a one-way relationship, only from the political to the social – that ends up being a transmission belt of the ideas of the political.

99. THE QUESTION OF ETHICS

It is through ethics, and only through these, that the anarchist organization does not act as an authoritarian (even if revolutionary) party. Unlike the vanguard organization, the political level organized as active minority that acts with ethics doesn’t have a relationship of hierarchy nor of domination in relation to the social level. The objective of the active minority is, with ethics, to stimulate, to be shoulder-to-shoulder, giving solidarity when it is needed and requested. When in contact with the social level the specific anarchist organization acts with ethics and does not seek positions of privilege, it does not impose its will, does not dominate, does not deceive, does not alienate, it does not judge itself superior, it does not fight for social movements or in front of them. The specific anarchist organization struggles with social movements, not advancing even one step beyond what they intend to.

100. GRASSROOTS-ISM

Contrary to the authoritarians, for us the social level does influence and must always influence the political level. That is, by comparing its ideology with the practice of the social level, the political level will also have very important contributions that should be added to the anarchist organization. We only believe it to be possible for the political level to conceive a consistent revolutionary

this, it organizes as active minority, coordinating the ideological militant activities that work as yeast for the struggles of the social level. The main activity undertaken by this political level is the social work that occurs when the political level interacts with the social level. In this context the political level seeks to influence the social level as much as possible, causing it to function in the most libertarian and egalitarian way possible. We have seen that this can happen directly between the anarchist organization and the social movements or through groupings of tendency. From the moment that the political level obtains this – even partially – we say that it has social insertion. The social level is characterized by strong ebbs and flows as it varies more than the political level in relation to the conjuncture. In times of the flow of social movements, the role of the specific anarchist organization is to propel them. In times of ebbs, its role is “to keep the flame alight”, or to wait and prepare for new opportunities to act. So, an important political level function is to ensure the continuity of ideology and the accumulation of struggles in times of ebbs (or even of flows) of the social level.

98. THE VANGUARD AS A BEAM OF LIGHT

When we define the political level as the specific anarchist organization of active minority, we are seeking a meaning opposed to that of the authoritarian vanguard organization. So, the process of the political level influencing the social level seeks to ensure that it possesses the desired characteristics. If they already exist, then the political level only accompanies; if they do not exist, it struggles to make them exist. Authoritarians, while also proposing a distinction between the social and political levels, believe that the political level has a relationship of hierarchy and domination in relation to the social level. So, the hierarchy and domination from within the political level (of the authoritarian parties) is reproduced in its relations with the social level. Similarly do the authoritarians un-

defend these points of view and who are willing to do social work cannot deal with the authoritarian forces and, without the proper organization, end up being laborers and “sleeves” for authoritarian projects or they leave frustrated because they cannot obtain spaces in social movements. These and other attempts to ideologize social movements, in our understanding, weaken both the social movements – which no longer operate around concrete issues like land, housing, employment etc. – as well as anarchism itself, since it does not allow for the deepening of ideological struggles, which occur in the midst of the social movement. It also weakens, since the goal of these anarchists to turn all the militants of the social movements into anarchists is impossible, unless they significantly reduce and weaken the movements. In this way, or even on seeing that it is natural to find people of different ideologies in social movements that will never be anarchists, these anarchists get frustrated, and often shy away from struggles. As a consequence, this anarchism is often confined to itself.

4. CLASS STRUGGLE

For us, anarchism was born among the people and that’s where it should be, taking a clear position in favor of the exploited classes that are in permanent conflict in the class struggle. So, when we talk about “where to sow the seeds of anarchism”, for us it is clear that it has to be within the class struggle; in the spaces in which the contradictions of capitalism are most evident. There are anarchists that do not support this class struggle bias of anarchism and, what is worse, there are those that accuse it of acting like trying to be a savior or of wanting “to apologize for the poor”. Denying the class struggle, most of these anarchists believe that as the classic definition of bourgeois and proletarian classes does not take today’s society into account, then one could say that classes no longer exist; or that this would be an anachronistic concept. We fundamentally

disagree with these positions and believe that, regardless of how we define classes – whether we put more or less emphasis on the economic character etc. – it is undeniable that there are contexts and circumstances in which some people suffer more than others from the effects of capitalism. And it is in these contexts and these circumstances that we want to prioritize our work. When we seek to apply anarchism to the class struggle, we assert what we call social work, and which we defined earlier as “the activity that the anarchist organization performs in the midst of the class struggle, causing anarchism to interact with the exploited classes”. As we also said, for us, social work should be the main activity of the specific anarchist organization. We argue that, through social work, the anarchist organization should seek social insertion, “the process of influencing social movements through anarchist practice”.

5. SECTARIAN ANARCHISM

Some say that as members of society they already have social insertion. Often, they become sectarian. For anarchists who think that social work/ insertion is not a priority, it seems that other activities would be more effective in the development of anarchism – however it is often not stated. Besides, at least apparently, not having a strategic formulation, what happens in practice is that these anarchists seek to work with propaganda, very restricted to publications, events, and culture. Propaganda is also central for us, but it is not enough if done without the backing of social work and insertion. With this support propaganda is much more effective. So, propaganda, in *especifismo*, should be performed with these two biases: educational/ cultural and struggle with social movements.

ments → popular organization → social revolution → libertarian socialism). There are organizations that seek to ideologize the movements, causing them to be weak; there are organizations that try to harness them, causing them to function for their own purposes (that are different to the purposes of the movements); there are movements that do not seek the involvement of the exploited classes and end up becoming a “vanguard” detached from the grassroots; there are movements that function only with the help of governments and capitalists; there are movements completely tied to politicians, parties, and other authoritarian groupings; there are movements that want to elect candidates and only participate politically through representative democracy; there are movements that support hierarchical relations in which the leadership decides and the grassroots only obeys; there are reformist movements; there are isolated movements that do not want to connect with others; there are movements that do not produce theory and situational analysis, among many others.

97. THE POLITICAL LEVEL IS IDEOLOGICAL

Unlike the social level, the political level is an ideological level, an anarchist level. This political level must necessarily interact with the social level since we understand that without the social level, the political level is incapable of realizing the desired social transformation. It is only through this social insertion that we understand it to be possible to build the popular organization and, increasing its social force, reach the final objectives. We understand that this transformation will be the result of an addition to this social level, made by the political level. The specific anarchist organization aims to put into practice a revolutionary politics that conceives the means of reaching the final objectives (social revolution and libertarian socialism) with action always based on strategy. For

and manage funds for the realization of our activities. These funds are important: for the realization of social works (transport of militants, etc.); for the purchase of books; for the printing of propaganda material (pamphlets, newspapers, books, videos, etc.); for structures for the organization (maintenance of spaces, etc.); for travel and other activities.

95. PROTAGONIST OF TRANSFORMATION

At this level, when we deal with social movements, we emphasize that they should not fit within an ideology but should be formed around need, a common and concrete cause. We understand that it is only with the convergence of the various social movements in the construction of the popular organization that we will be able to overcome capitalism and the state and build libertarian socialism through the social revolution. The social level is the main protagonist in the process of social transformation. Social movements must be organized around concrete and pragmatic questions that seek, in case of victories, to improve the living conditions of the exploited classes. Within these movements must be all those interested in the struggle around these issues and who would benefit if the struggle was victorious.

96. SOCIAL MOVEMENT LIMITATIONS

Social movements are still subject to variations in situation, and they are sometimes responsible for demobilization. These processes of ebb are also often responsible for them to lose the accumulation and learning in struggles. Many social movements become reformist movements – that is, movements whose aim is an adjustment or achievement within the capitalist system. Certain characteristics are inherent to the social level and end up complicating this process of social transformation (social move-

6. BOURGEOIS ANARCHISTS

Either they abandon the proposal for social transformation or form a group that fights for the people, not with the people – assuming the position of vanguard and not of active minority. They end up making of their anarchism a “movement in itself”, which is characterized by being essentially of the middle class and intellectuals, by not seeking contact with social and popular struggles, by not being in contact with people of different ideology. In most cases they advocate spontaneity since “to come from outside”, “to put anarchism within social movements” is authoritarian. According to them ideas should arise spontaneously. They denounce discussion, persuasion, convincing, exchange, influence as external to social movements and, therefore, authoritarian.

7. PRACTICE TO INFORM THEORY

As we explained, for us anarchism should not be confined to itself, nor shy away from social movements and people of different ideologies. Since we understand that class is not defined by origin but by the position that you advocate in the struggle, we believe that to support social movements, to assist mobilisations and organizations different to the reality in which you are included is an ethical obligation for any militant committed to the end of class society. Finally, we believe that social work brings necessary practice to anarchism, which has an immense contribution in the development of the theoretical and ideological line of the organization. Groups and organizations that do not have social work tend to radicalize a discourse that does not have support in practice.

8. UNITY OF THEORY AND IDEOLOGY

For us, there is no way to have an effective practice or even constitute an organization without agreeing on some “initial questions”. We must extract an ideological and theoretical line to be advocated and developed by the organization. This political line is collectively constructed and everyone in the organization is obliged to follow it. For anarchists that do not advocate this unity the anarchist organization could work with different ideological and theoretical lines. Each anarchist or group of anarchists may have their interpretation of anarchism and their own theory. This is motive for various conflicts and splits in organizations with this conception.

9. UNITY OF STRATEGY

We believe that lack of strategy disperses efforts, causing many of them to be lost. Acting with strategy, as we have seen, implies taking into account a plan of all the practical actions performed by the organization, seeking to verify where you are, where you want to go and how. How do you conceive an organization in which you seek to reconcile a group that believes it should act as a specific organization in a social movement with a group that thinks that the priority should be social interaction among friends, group therapy or even the exaltation of the individual, considering work with social movements as authoritarian (or even Marxist or a progressive form of charity)? There are two ways of managing these differences: either you discuss the issues and live between fights and stress which consume a large part of the time; or you simply do not touch on the issues. Most organizations of this type opt for the second form. An *especifismo* model implies that we have to do things that we don't like very much or to cease doing some things that we like a lot. This is to ensure that the organization proceeds

is promoted in various ways: by courses and training books for militants, by education seminars, by the self-education that militants do by themselves, among others. Education gives support to new militants so that the differences in the level of education between the less and more educated should be as small as possible, and so that the high level of discussion within the organization is not adversely affected by these differences. For the supporter militants of the specific anarchist organization, political education provides the theoretical and ideological basis for its political line to be understood.

93. SOCIAL-LEVEL EDUCATION

Political education seeks to develop the militants that act in the grouping of tendency and, having ideological affinities, integrate them into the anarchist organization. For the social movements to have the desired characteristics and for them to point to the construction of the popular organization, it is fundamental that the militants are politicized as much as possible, and in this, political education plays a significant role. This political education at the social level is fundamental to politicizing militants.

94. RELATIONS AND FUNDS

Relations may be more or less organic, more or less formal. At the political level, the anarchist organization seeks to relate to organizations, groups, and individuals from all locations, such that this can contribute to its practice. At the social level, the anarchist organization seeks to know and relate to social movements, linking itself more or less to them, or even to have contact with other organisms such as universities, councils, foundations, NGOs, human rights, ecological organizations, etc. Although being against the logic of capitalism, while we live within it, we will have to raise

situation in which everyone is conscious, we would still continue to be exploited and dominated.

91. PROPAGANDA BY EXAMPLE

This reflection on “where and for whom to perform propaganda” must always be made. We hold that, besides the propaganda that takes place in the theoretical, educational, and/or cultural sphere we must also maintain, principally, propaganda that takes place in struggle and organization, that is, propaganda in social work, aimed at social insertion. We understand the entire process of social work and insertion that we dealt with earlier as the main propaganda work that the anarchist organization should develop. By taking place in the ambit of the class struggle and of social movements, the work of anarchist propaganda aims to mobilize, organize, and influence social movements with anarchist practice. The influence of movements by anarchism means seeking for them to have the characteristics that we stand for: force, class struggle perspective, combativeness, autonomy, direct action, direct democracy, and revolutionary perspective. In struggle, as active minority, the anarchists create social movements, join already existing movements, and seek to influence them as much as possible – always by example – to function in the most libertarian and egalitarian way possible. In this way, anarchist propaganda serves the whole work process of the anarchists as active minority within social movements and in the actual creation of the popular organization.

92. POLITICAL-LEVEL EDUCATION

The political education of the political level deepens historical, current, and future questions in the same way that knowledge about other ideological currents and social movements does. It

with strategy, with everyone rowing the boat in the same direction. The priorities and responsibilities mean that everyone is not going to be able to do what passes through their head, whenever they want. Each one will have an obligation to the organization to accomplish that which they undertook and that which was defined as a priority.

10. DECISION-MAKING

We have in mind that the decision-making process is a means and not an end in itself. Seeking consensus at any cost, and afraid of splitting, some organizations allow one or another person to have a disproportionate weight in decisions, only in order to achieve consensus. Other times, they spend hours on discussions of little importance only to seek consensus. Ideological and theoretical unity and strategic and tactical unity are attained through the collective decision-making process adopted by specific organizations, which is an attempt at consensus and, if this is not possible, the vote – the majority winning. As we have also emphasized, in this case the whole organization adopts the winning decision. The obligation of everyone to follow the same path – which is a rule in *especifismo* – is a commitment that the organization has to its strategy, because, if every time a decision taken does not please some of the militants, and this party refuses to perform the work, it will be impossible for the organization to move forward.

11. MILITANT COMMITMENT

Lack of commitment, responsibility and self-discipline constitutes a major problem in many anarchist groups and organizations. As militancy, for us, is something necessary in the struggle for a free and egalitarian society we do not believe that it will always be “cool”. If we had to choose between a more effective model of

militancy and another more “cool”, we would have to opt for effectiveness. In the *especifismo* model, there is a high level of this militant commitment. Militant commitment imprints a link between militant and organization, which is a mutual relationship in which the organization is responsible for the militant, as well as the militant being responsible for the organization. To put it another way: in addition to the organization owing satisfaction to the militant, the militant owes satisfaction to the organization. Only militants with ideological affinity with the organization are inside the specific anarchist organization. So, both at the political level as well as the social level there are well-defined entrance criteria, from the instances of supporter or groupings of tendency to the specific anarchist organization. The more they want to commit themselves, the more inside the organization they will be, and the greater will be their deliberating power.

12. UMBRELLA ORGANIZING

We do not want to be this great “umbrella” that covers all types of anarchists. These broad (in)definitions apparently group more anarchists in the organization. However, we believe that we should not opt for the criterion of quantity but the quality of militants. Contrary to the *especifismo* model, there are other organizations whose only criteria for the entrance of militants is their definition as anarchists, regardless of what conception of anarchism they have. Some people participate a bit in the organization, others are more committed; some assume more responsibilities than others and all have the same power of deliberation. So, many deliberate on activities that they are not going to perform, that is, they determine what others will do. When an organization allows for someone to deliberate something and not assume responsibilities, or that they assume responsibilities and do not meet them it allows for an au-

zation and not the only activity. It should be performed constantly and in an organized manner.

89. STIMULATING CONSCIOUSNESS

We understand that any process of social transformation with final objectives like those that we propose will depend on acceptance, or at least on “non-rejection” of large sectors of the population. And propaganda, in this sense theoretical, educational, and/or cultural will contribute significantly to this. This massive propaganda work slowly turns the people’s consciousness and causes the ideology of capitalism, which is already transmitted in the form of culture, to be more questioned and less reproduced. We argue that the specific anarchist organization utilizes any means that are at its disposal for the realization of this constant and organized propaganda. Firstly, with respect to the theoretical, educational and/or cultural sphere with the realization of courses, talks, debates, conferences, study groups, websites, e-mail, theatre, bulletins, newspapers, magazines, books, videos, music, libraries, public events, radio programs, television programs, libertarian schools, etc. This type of propaganda, when performed on a large scale is fundamental since it functions as a social “lubricant” that slowly changes the culture in which we live and makes the introduction of anarchist ideas and practices into society easier.

90. LIMITS OF PROPAGANDA

Propaganda aims to transform people’s ideas. And this is the reason why we see serious limits in this model of propaganda. This gain in consciousness does not mean in any way that the exploitation and domination of capitalist society will tend to decrease. It also does not necessarily mean that people will go on to organize themselves in order to struggle. We could say that, in a hypothetical

theory also serves to answer the second and third questions of strategy, that is, “where we want to reach”; and “how do we think we can leave where we are and arrive at where we want to be”.

87. UNITY

This unity occurs through the decision-making process of the anarchist organization and has as an objective to determine a clear political line (theoretical and ideological) that must, necessarily, guide all the activities and actions of the organization which, both as a whole as well as in the details, should be in exact and constant agreement with the line defined by the organization. With this well-defined political line everyone knows how to act and, in case of having practical problems, it is well known that the line should be revised. When the theoretical and ideological line is not well defined and there is a problem, there are difficulties in knowing what needs to be revised. So, it is the clarity of this line that allows the organization to develop theoretically. The absence of this theoretical and ideological political line leads to a lack of articulation or even to conflicting articulation in the set of concepts, the result of which is incorrect, confusing, and/or inefficient practice.

88. CONSISTENTLY IN AN ORGANIZED WAY

As we have seen, organization – understood as the coordination of forces for the realization of an objective – multiplies the results of individual work, and this also applies to propaganda. We understand propaganda as the dissemination of the ideas of anarchism and as a fundamental activity of the anarchist organization. Its objective is to make anarchism known and to attract people to our cause. Propaganda is one of the activities of the anarchist organi-

thoritarianism of those who deliberate and put work on the backs of other comrades.

13. INDIVIDUALISM

For individualists, in most cases, to be an anarchist means to be an artist, a bohemian, to promote the sexual freedom of having open relationships or with more than one partner, to wear different clothes, to have a radical haircut, to behave extravagantly, to eat different foods, to define yourself personally, to fulfill yourself personally, to be against revolution (!), to be against socialism (!), to have a discourse without rhyme or reason – enjoying the freedom of aesthetics – in short, becoming apolitical. Especifismo means a complete and absolute rejection of anarchist individualism. One type, which was more common in the past, of people that prefer to work alone, but that have in mind the same project as us. In these people we only have to criticize the fact that, being disorganized, they cannot potentialize the results of their work. Another type, more in evidence today, renounces the socialist project. Based on the anarchist critique of the state they have little critique of capitalism, and no activity in the direction of socially transforming the reality in which we live. Putting themselves in the condition of simple critical observers of society, they construct an anarchism from secondary thinkers and references, simply around criticism. They don't have any societal project, much less coherent action that points towards this new society. If we advocate especificismo, which is a form of anarchist organization, it is because we believe that it is today more suitable for the work we intend to perform. We understand that there are anarchists who do not agree with especificismo, and we do not think that they are less anarchist because of it. We only demand respect for our choice, such as we respect those who have made other choices.

14. INFLUENCES

As we have seen the term *especifismo* was developed by the FAU and only arrived in Brazil in the late twentieth century. *Especifismo* more than creating a new conception of anarchist organization sought to group a series of already existing anarchist organizational conceptions, which took shape starting from the nineteenth century. The *especifismo* of the FAU asserts the influence of Bakunin and Malatesta, of the class struggle of anarcho-sindicalism, of expropriator anarchism; all this within a Latin American context.

15. BAKUNIN

Especifismo's first historic reference is Bakunin, from the organizational conceptions that constituted the activity of the libertarians within the International Workers' Association (IWA), and which gave body to anarchism. Two tendencies developed within the IWA: one centralist and one federalist. The Alliance was an organization of active minority composed of the "most secure, most dedicated, most intelligent and most energetic members, in a word, by the closest". It was formed to act secretly in order to address the issues that one could not publicly address and to act as a catalyst in the labor movement. The Alliance defined the relation between the social and political levels.

16. MALATESTA

For Malatesta, the future would not be necessarily determined and could only be modified by will, by a voluntarist intervention in events in order to provide the desired social transformation. Following the collectivist tradition of the anarchism of Bakunin's time – which advocated, in the future society, distribution to each ac-

promoted by intellectuals removed from struggle or with little social work – intellectuals who think they have understood theory more than anyone else and have found definitive answers to the theoretical questions – is of little use, since it is in practice that we verify whether the theory serves for anything; practice that necessarily contributes to the theory. Besides this, we do not believe that in order to act the anarchist organization needs, before anything else, to have a deep and developed theory. For us, although we defend with emphasis that theory is very important for an efficient practice, we do not believe that theory produced without concrete and prolonged contact with practice can bear any promising fruit. For this reason, social work and insertion enables one to perform all the theoretical production of the anarchist organization with better precision. Practice puts anarchist ideology to the test, allowing the anarchist organization to better think of its possibilities and horizons, to be much more programmatic, to act with its feet on the ground, and to get on with life as it is, and not how we would like it to be. From this relation of theory and practice we understand the theoretical way of the specific anarchist organization as a constant way to theorize, practice, evaluate the theory, and if necessary reformulate it, theorize, practice, and so on.

86. THEORY AND IDEOLOGY

Theory necessarily carries ideological aspects, and ideology necessarily carries theoretical aspects. So, there is a direct link between one another. Many anarchist organizations define theory only as comprehension of the reality in which they are acting. In this way, they separate theory from ideology, the first being this "set of concepts coherently articulated between themselves" that would serve only for the elaboration of answers to what we call "the first question of strategy", that is, "where we are". However,

ganda is very important in the sense of promoting anarchist ideas. In seeking to understand the reality in which one operates, theory arranges information and data. It formalizes the understanding of the historical moment in which we operate and the definition of the social, political, and economic characteristics. It also performs a complete diagnosis of the reality in which the specific anarchist organization operates. Theory is important in order to think regionally where one acts, since if this is not done, you run the risk of applying methodology that is incorrect for the process of social transformation (the “importing” of ready-made theories from other times and other contexts).

84. THEORY IN PROPAGANDA

It is also important that the production of theory aims to update obsolete ideological aspects or seeks to adapt ideology to specific and particular realities. Theory is also very important in the process of propaganda since it is necessary to articulate concepts coherently in order to promote anarchist ideas. The more theory is produced and distributed, the easier will be the penetration of anarchism throughout society. When theory is used for propaganda, it formalizes the past with the study and reproduction of anarchist theories, which have as an objective to deepen the ideological level and make anarchist ideology more known. It can also take place in relation to the present and the future with the theoretical spread of materials that explain our critiques of the present society, as well as our conception of the future society and of the process of social transformation.

85. THEORY AND PRACTICE

Not everything that was produced or is produced theoretically within anarchism serves the practice we want. The theory

cording to their work – was born the anarchist communist current – which has since then advocated distribution to each according to their needs. At the political level, Malatesta developed his conception of the specific anarchist organization, which he called the anarchist party. This organization should act in the so-called “mass movements” of the time and influence them as much as possible, and the unions were the preferred terrain chosen for anarchist activity. Today, we believe that the specific anarchist organization should act within the class struggle, in the midst of the social movements and, with them, reach the social revolution and libertarian socialism.

17. MAGÓN

An important historical experience for *especifismo*, in our conception, was also that of Ricardo Flores Magón. Magonismo was part of the radical phase of the Mexican Liberal Party (PLM). During the Mexican Revolution, the PLM became clandestine and organized more than 40 armed resistance groups throughout Mexico and also had indigenous members, known for their struggle for community rights and against capitalist property. They were united in an anti-re-electionist front, which gave each group a relative degree of autonomy and independence.

18. RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Another important historic reference to *especifismo* is the anarchist participation in the Russian Revolution. In the field, in southern Ukraine the peasants of Guliai Polie, a village that since the 1905 revolution had had strong anarchist organization, founded the Peasants Union, which decided to fight for the social revolution independent of the government, seeking self-management of the means of production. Then came a divide between the authori-

tarian and libertarian revolutionary elements. The former were for seizing the state apparatus and moving towards the dictatorship of the (Bolshevik) Party, directed by an all-powerful central committee, the latter for libertarian and self-managed communism in the form of councils of soviets of workers, peasants, and the people in arms. Progressively, the Bolsheviks began to deny, suppress, impede and, finally, prohibit the spread of libertarian ideas and practices. They militarized labor, expelled elected leaders from the soviets, forced the soviets to submit to the central power of the party and prohibited strikes. It was the end of the process of self-managed socialization in the Ukraine, repressively reversed by the Bolsheviks in favor of statist and totalitarian forms of organization and social control under a new ruling class.

19. THE PLATFORM

This document brought forward key insights about the importance of the involvement of anarchists in the class struggle, the need for a violent social revolution that overthrows capitalism and the state and that establishes libertarian communism. There is also an important contribution on the question of the transition from capitalism to libertarian communism and on the defense of the revolution. The Platform advocates an anarchist organization, at the political level, that acts in the midst of social movements, a social level, and emphasizes the role of active minority of the anarchist organization. Moreover, it makes important contributions to the model of organization of the political level of the anarchists. During the Russian Revolutions the anarchists sinned by omission on the matter of organization. For us, the Platform both draws from these authors Bakunin and Malatesta and brings new contributions. So, it should be considered as a contribution to *especifismo* but not the most important contribution. It is more a contribution to the

leaders and those who hold the power structures of social movements, but the rank-and file activists, who are generally oppressed by the leadership and form the periphery and not the centre of the movements. It is also important to identify people in the neighborhoods, communities, movements, trade unions, etc. that have influence over others (local leaders oriented to the grassroots and legitimized by them) and focus efforts on them. These people are very important to assist in grassroots mobilization, to give potential to anarchist influence, or even to integrate into the groupings of tendency. Done in this way, the mobilization ends up functioning as a kind of “conversion”. We can say, then, that the function of the specific anarchist organization in its social work and insertion is to be the “engine of social struggle, an engine that neither replaces nor represents them”. We think it possible to construct this motor “participating militantly in the day-to-day of the struggles of popular movements in activity, at first, in Brazil, in Latin America and especially in Rio de Janeiro”.

83. THEORY ORGANIZES AND DEFINES

The conception of libertarian socialism and the revolutionary process of transformation can only be thought of, today, from a theoretical perspective since, in practice, we are not living in a revolutionary time. So, theory organizes the concepts that define the transformation to the future society as well as that society itself, which are the final objectives of the specific anarchist organization. Theory also defines how the anarchist organization should act within the reality in which it finds itself in order to reach its final objectives. Other steps are reserved for the future and, today, can also only be thought of in a theoretical way. Theory is fundamental both for the conception of strategy as well as for the propaganda that the organization performs. Strategy seeks to increase the efficiency of work of the anarchist organization while propa-

which all the militants decide effectively, in an egalitarian way. To influence, for us, means to cause changes in a person or a group of people through persuasion, advice, examples, guidelines, insights, and practices. We believe that in society itself there are, at any given time, a multiplicity of influences between the different agents who influence and are influenced. Even from an anti-authoritarian perspective, this influence is inevitable and healthy.

82. MOBILIZATION

It is very relevant for us to consider that the process of mobilization and influence passes, beyond the objective aspects of the struggle, through the subjective aspects. In this process of mobilization, the specific anarchist organization should always, no matter what, act ethically, trying not to want to establish relations of hierarchy or domination with the social movements; to tell the truth and never deceive the people, and always support solidarity and mutual aid in relation to other militants. Much more than talking, we must teach by doing, by example. The militants of the specific anarchist organization must be very familiar with the environment in which they are working. Even when the positions of the anarchist organization are not the majority, they must be shown, making clear the views it advocates. Likewise, it should have a pro/positive posture, seeking to build movements and cause them to march forward and not just be presenting critical positions. Inciting and encouraging the people, we must seek social insertion and ensure that the social movements work in the most libertarian and egalitarian ways possible. Constant presence is important in order for the anarchist militants to be fully integrated with other activists from the social movements, such that they have recognition, legitimacy, are listened to, are wanted, are welcome people. So, for any type of work, the organization should always approach not the

discussion of anarchist military action than a document to discuss anarchist organization in all different contexts.

20. SPANISH REVOLUTION

As with the Russian Revolution, we also consider the Spanish Revolution of 1936 a reference. During those years a social revolution was effectively carried out. A revolution under fire that wanted to reach all sectors, from unjust economic structures to the daily life of the population, from the decrepit notions of hierarchy to the historic inequalities between men and women. And all this was the work of the anarchists. In the first phase (July 1936 to early 1937) the anarchists are among the most prominent groups. The action of militants in areas such as Catalonia was exemplary. The republican structures turned into popular organizations in an intense and successful process of collectivization. Factories were occupied and immediate social measures put into practice, such as: equal pay between men and women, free medical service, permanent salary in case of sickness, reduced working hours and increased pay. Metallurgical, timber industry, transport, food, health, media and entertainment services and rural properties were collectivized. In order to combat the fascist forces, they set up militias that advanced on some fronts, especially the column headed by Buenaventura Durruti. In the second phase (1937 to 1939) the progress of the counter-revolution was devastating. The advances made by the CNT/FAI were destroyed by those who sought to re-establish the foundations of the state (moderate sectors of the Republic, Communists and Socialists). The Communists began to gain key positions in the government. The anarchists had to give in once more to unfavorable circumstances: some members of the CNT ended up participating in the government.

21. BRAZIL

We understand that from the earliest years of the twentieth century anarchists in Brazil linked to “organizationalism”, in particular followers of Malatesta, struggled to organize comrades to forming an organization with common strategies and tactics, based on tactical agreements and clear group understanding. These anarchists prepared the conditions that allowed for the full insertion of anarchists in the unions and in social life, with the formation of schools and theatre groups, in addition to a significant written production.

22. FAU

A Latin influence on *especifismo* that we advocate is the Uruguayan Anarchist Federation (Federación Anarquista Uruguaya — FAU), formed in 1956 of class struggle and anarcho-syndicalist influences, of the organizational models of Bakunin and Malatesta, and of the expropriator anarchism from the Prata River region. At the end of the 1960s, parallel to the mass organization, the FAU developed the organization of its “armed wing”, the People’s Revolutionary Organization — 33 (Organización Popular Revolucionaria — 33, OPR-33), which realized a series of sabotage actions, economic expropriations, kidnappings of politicians and/ or bosses particularly hated by the people, armed support for strikes and workplace occupations etc. The FAU rejected focalism as a paradigm of armed struggle, avoiding militarization while possessing social insertion in the population. The FAU re-articulated itself and developed its work on the *especifismo* model which we advocate today, with three fronts of insertion: union, student, and community.

that they can proceed towards the construction and development of the popular organization and point towards the social revolution and libertarian socialism. It seeks to make social movements go as far as possible. When we talk about social insertion, we are dealing with the influence of anarchism within social movements. In this respect, despite sustaining a separation between the political (the anarchist organization) and social (social movements) levels, we do not believe that there should be hierarchy or domination of the political level over the social level. We also do not believe that the political level struggles for the social level or in front of it, but with it — this being an ethical relationship. In its activity as an active minority the specific anarchist organization struggles with the exploited classes and not for or in front of them. This complementary and dialectic relationship causes anarchism to influence social movements, and social movements to influence anarchism.

81. INFLUENCING

We will point out, once more and briefly, what the characteristics that we must sustain in the social movements are. They are: force, class struggle, combativeness, autonomy, direct action, direct democracy, and revolutionary perspective. Social Movements should be class struggle in orientation and have a class line, which means to seek broad participation of the exploited classes and support the class struggle. They should be combative, establishing their conquests through the imposition of their social force. They should be autonomous in relation to the state, political parties, bureaucratic trade unions, the church, among other bureaucratic and/or authoritarian bodies, taking their decisions and acting on their own. In addition, they must use direct action as a form of political action, in opposition to representative democracy. Social movements must also use direct democracy as a method of decision-making, which takes place in horizontal assemblies in

role of anarchist organization is to explain necessities and to mobilize around them. Be it in the creation of social movements or working with existing movements, the central idea is always to mobilize around necessity.

79. MOVEMENTS CAUSE PRACTICE

Social movements are the instances in which mobilization of the exploited classes takes place. It is these movements that cause them to have a political practice. Political practice seeks to put the people in combat against the forces of the system that oppresses them, inciting the facing-off of these forces. As they feel it necessary, the people themselves must demand, enforce, and realize all the improvements, conquests, and freedoms they want. This is done by means of organization and will. These demands must be permanent and increase progressively, each time demanding more and seeking the full emancipation of the exploited classes.

80. IDEOLOGY AND POLITICS OF MOVEMENTS

The political practice of social movements translated into the struggle for short-term gains brings the pedagogical sense of increased consciousness to the militants, in the event of victories or even defeats. We call the process of influencing social movements through anarchist practice social insertion. So, the anarchist organization has social work when it creates or develops work with social movements, and social insertion when it manages to influence movements with anarchist practices. It is ideology that should be within social movements, and not social movements that should be within ideology. Social insertion is not intended to “ideologize” social movements, turning them into anarchist social movements. By contrast, it seeks to give them certain determined characteristics so

23. HISTORICAL CONCLUSIONS

This whole set of conceptions and experiences contributes today to our conception of *especifismo*. Currently, *especifismo* is advocated by various Latin American organizations and developed in practice, even if not by this name, in other parts of the world. In short, our conception of the historical references of *especifismo* is not dogmatic. We have broad ideas that start with the ideas of Bakunin and the *alliancists* in the IWA, go through the conceptions of Malatesta and his practical experiences at the social and political levels, as well as the experiences of Magón and the PLM in the Mexican Revolution. We are also influenced by the experiences of the anarchists in the Russian Revolution, with emphasis on the *Makhnovists* in the Ukraine and the organizational reflections made by the Russians in exile, as well as the experiences of the anarchists in the Spanish Revolution around the CNT-FAI. In Brazil, we have influences from anarchist “organizationalism”, highlighting the experiences of the 1918 Anarchist Alliance of Rio de Janeiro and the 1919 (libertarian) Communist Party. Finally, the influences of the FAU, both in their struggle against the dictatorship, as in their activity in fronts with unions, community, and student movements.

24. THE DEBATE ABOUT ORGANIZATION

We wanted to reach more conclusive positions. It was becoming increasingly necessary to further the debate and to formalize it, spreading this knowledge both internally and externally. Our actions sought to give each militant of our organization the structure, space, and necessary support so that this debate would be able to take place in the most desirable way possible. We desired to develop a proper theory that was not simply a repetition of other theories developed in other places and at other times. We seek to create proper concepts, aiming to give original character to the the-

ory that we wanted to create, and in this endeavor, we think we have been very successful as we, in our view, construct and formalize a coherent theory, articulating classical and contemporary theories, as well as our own conceptions. We desired to build this discussion and its formalization in a collective manner. It is not enough for us that one or another comrade writes all the theory of the organization and that others simply observe and follow their positions.

25. ANARCHISM

We understand anarchism as an ideology that provides orientation for action to replace capitalism, the state, and its institutions with libertarian socialism – a system based on self-management and federalism – without any scientific or prophetic pretensions. Anarchism is conscious action with the objective of imprinting the desire for social transformation on society.

26. HISTORY AND CONTEXT

In certain contexts, anarchism assumed certain characteristics that retreated from the ideological character, transforming it into an abstract concept which became merely a form of critical observation of society. Thought of from this perspective anarchism ceases to be a tool of the exploited in their struggle for emancipation and functions as a hobby, a curiosity, a theme for intellectual debate, an academic niche, an identity, a group of friends, etc. For us, this view seriously threatens the very meaning of anarchism.

27. SOCIAL VS. LIFESTYLE ANARCHISM

There is today a social anarchism returning to struggles with the objective of social transformation, and a lifestyle anarchism

when the organization determines a line to follow or something to accomplish, it is individual discipline that will cause what is collectively resolved to be realized.

77. EXPLOITED CLASS PROTAGONISTS

In the class struggle the exploited classes are always in conflict with the ruling class. The fact is that the contradictions of capitalism generate a series of manifestations of the exploited classes, and we consider this to be the best terrain to plant the seeds of anarchism. When we explain this point of view, we are not idolizing these classes or even assuming that everything they do is always right, but we are emphasizing that their participation in the process of social transformation is absolutely central. Social work and insertion are the most important activities of the specific anarchist organization. To this end, this whole process must take place within the exploited classes, which are the true protagonists of the social transformation that we advocate.

78. NEED-BASED SOCIAL WORK

The social work of the anarchist organization occurs in two ways:

- 1.) With the ongoing work with existing social movements
- 2.) With the creation of new social movements.

As we have discussed, we understand the social movements as a result of a tripod made up by necessity, will and organization. This means that organized anarchists must seek to stimulate the desire and organization for a movement that is based primarily on the needs of the exploited classes. Few are those who are willing to fight for an idea that will only bring long-term results. So, to mobilize the people we must, before anything else, deal with the concrete issues and problems that afflict and are close to them. The

are not anarchists. These activists could work with the anarchists in the groupings of tendency and defend their positions in the social movements together. A militant who has great practical affinity with the anarchists, but is not an anarchist, should be a member of the grouping of tendency and can be fundamental to the performance of social work. If they have ideological affinities, they may be closer to or even join the organization.

75. VOTING

One way or another, all the activities that are deliberated and which are the responsibility of the organization will have to be executed by its members. For this execution, there is the need to divide the activities between militants, always looking for a model that distributes these activities well, avoiding the concentration of tasks on the more active or capable members. When voting occurs, it can be easy for militants not involved in the issue being voted on to determine what others will have to do. Situations like those demand caution, especially when all the members that would carry out what was deliberated on lose the vote and are obliged to apply what was resolved by others. Since this should be avoided, we believe consensus should not be mandatory. To give proper efficiency to the decision-making process and to not give too much power to isolated agents, we chose this model of an attempt at consensus and, when this is not possible, the vote. This decision-making process is used to establish theoretical and ideological unity and also for strategic and tactical unity.

76. ORGANIZATIONAL DISCIPLINE

This position introduces a relation of co-responsibility between the militants and the organization. So, anyone that assumes a responsibility must have sufficient discipline to execute it. Likewise,

that renounces the proposal for social transformation and involvement in the social struggles of our time. We advocate that anarchism recaptures its original ideological character, or as we previously defined it, a “system of concepts that has a direct connection with action, [...] of political practice”. For us social anarchism is a type of anarchism that, as an ideology, seeks to be a tool of social movements and the popular organization with the objective of overthrowing capitalism and the state and of building libertarian socialism – self-managed and federalist.

28. EXPLOITED CLASSES

Accepting this classification, and being conscious of its limitations, we define the category of exploited classes as the peripheral areas that are dominated by the centre. Hence the need for all the struggles of the exploited classes to have a revolutionary perspective, in order that they do not seek simply to make parts of the peripheral areas constituted into new centers.

29. AUTHORITARIAN VS. LIBERTARIAN

Authoritarians, including some who call themselves anarchists, think of the centre as a means, and orientate their politics towards it. For them, the centre – considering this to be the state, the party, the army, the position of control – is an instrument for the emancipation of society. Libertarians do not think of the centre as a means, and struggle permanently against it, building their revolutionary model and their strategy of struggle in the direction of all the peripheries. Anarchism has to be in permanent contact with the peripheries in order to seek out its project of social transformation. Anarchists stimulate social movements in the periphery from the grassroots and seek to build a popular organization in order to combat – in solidarity – the existing order and create a

new society that would be based on equality and freedom, and in which classes would no longer make sense. That is, in its activity in the class struggle anarchism considers as elements of the exploited classes traditional communities, peasants, unemployed, underemployed, homeless, and other categories frequently overlooked by the authoritarians.

30. THE SOCIAL VECTOR OF ANARCHISM

The emergence of what we call the “social vector of anarchism” began at the beginning of the 1890s, driven by a growth in the social insertion of anarchism in the unions, which culminated in the second decade of the twentieth century. We call the social vector of anarchism those popular movements that have a significant anarchist influence – primarily with regard to their practical aspects – irrespective of the sectors in which they occur. These mobilisations, fruits of the class struggle, are not anarchist as they are organized around questions of specific demands. The mobilisations constituted in the social vector of anarchism are made within the social movements, considered by us as preferred spaces for social work and accumulation, and not as a mass to be directed.

31. REVOLUTIONARY GYMNASTICS

The means of struggle made by the mobilization around short-term issues serves as “revolutionary gymnastics”, which prepares the proletariat for the social revolution. Anarchism was able to present itself as an ideological tool of struggle.

32. THE STRIKE MOVEMENT

This whole conjuncture of mobilization occurred with ample influence of the anarchists, who tried to carry out their propaganda

and having an affinity for the practical work of the organization, the person may show interest in joining the organization or the organization can express its interest in the supporter becoming a militant. As we have seen, the anarchist organization is divided internally into fronts for the performance of practical work. For this there are organizations that prefer to establish direct relations with the social movements, and there are others that prefer to present themselves through an intermediary social organization, which we could call a grouping of tendency. The grouping of tendency puts itself between the social movements and the specific anarchist organization, bringing together militants of distinct ideologies that have affinity in relation to certain practical questions. The idea is that the specific anarchist organization seeks insertion in this intermediate level (grouping of tendency) and through it presents itself, conducting its work in social movements in search of social insertion. Since the views that we advocate in the social movements are much more practical than theoretical, it may be interesting to work with a grouping of tendency, incorporating people who agree with some or all of the positions that we advocate in the social movements (force, class struggle, autonomy, combativeness, direct action, direct democracy, and revolutionary perspective) and that will help us to augment the social force in defense of these positions.

74. WORKING WITH ACTIVISTS

The objective of the anarchist organization is not to turn all activists into anarchists, but to learn to work with each of these activists in the most appropriate way. This form of organization aims to solve a very common problem that we find in activism. For example, when we know very dedicated activists; revolutionaries that advocate self-management, autonomy, grassroots democracy, direct democracy, etc. and with whom we do not act because they

of commitment to the organization and where they want to be, the objective of the anarchist organization is always to have the greatest number of militants in the more internal circles, with a greater level of commitment. The proposal for entry into the organization may be made by the militants of the organization to the supporter and vice versa.

73. COMMITMENT AND DECISION-MAKING

The logic of concentric circles requires that each militant and the organization itself have very well-defined rights and duties for each level of commitment. In the model of concentric circles, we seek a system of rights and duties in which everyone makes decisions about that which they could and should be committed to afterwards. In this way it is normal for supporters to decide only on that in which they will be involved. In the same way it is normal for militants of the organization to decide on that which they will carry out. It is very easy for a militant who appears from time to time to want to set the political line of the organization since it is not they who will have to follow this line most of the time. For example, supporter who frequents activities once a month and makes sporadic contributions cannot decide on rules or activities that must be met or carried out daily, as they would be deciding something much more for the other militants than for themselves. For this reason, we make decisions and their commitments proportionally and this implies that the organization has clear criteria for entry, clearly defining who does and does not take part in it, and at what level of commitment the militants are. In any event, the anarchist organization always has to concern itself with the training and guidance of the supporters and militants so that this may allow them to change their level of commitment, if they so desire. As a supporter, knowing the political line in a little more depth

in the unions; not circumscribing these within the anarchist ideology – the unions were for the workers and not for anarchist workers – but utilizing them for the propagation of their ideas. There was even a large cultural movement that worked together with the union mobilisations and was very important: rationalist schools inspired by the principles of (Francisco) Ferrer y Guardia, social centers, workers theatre and other initiatives that were fundamental in forging a class culture, an object of union in times of struggle. There was also, at this ascendent juncture of struggle, the formation of two political and ideologically anarchist organizations which sought to work with the union movement. The first of these was the Anarchist Alliance of Rio de Janeiro (Aliança Anarquista do Rio de Janeiro), founded in 1918 by the need for an anarchist organization for working within the unions, and which was important for the 1918 insurrection. However, with the repression that occurred the Alliance was disbanded, returning to organize in the first Communist Party (of libertarian inspiration) founded in 1919. Alliance and the Communist Party grouped together members of a sector of anarchism which is called “organizationalist” and which understood as necessary the distinction between levels of action – the political level, ideologically anarchist, and the social level, of union mobilisations. These militants understood as necessary the existence of specific anarchist organizations to act together with trade unions. It is important to emphasize that, at this time, anarchists already had a preoccupation with their specific organization.

33. DEMOBILIZATION

The context of anarchism was marked, primarily, by the confusion between different levels of activity. Malatesta argued for the need for two levels of activity: one politically anarchist, and the other social, within the union, which would be the means of insertion. On one side, a part of the anarchists defended the need for

specifically anarchist organization, which should seek social insertion in the unions. On the other, anarchists who had understood militancy within the unions as their only task. Unionism, which was the social vector, the medium of action that should lead to an end – expressed by the social revolution and the constitution of libertarian socialism – ended up becoming the end itself for many militants. The social vector of anarchism was on an upward curve until the beginning of the 1920s when the crisis of anarchism, parallel to unionism itself, began to develop. Culminating in the 1930s in their demobilization and in the loss of this social vector.

34. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LEVEL CRISIS

The context of the crisis of unionism eventually extended to anarchism itself. So, a crisis at the social level also condemned the political level since there was no real difference between the two at the time. Without anarchist organizations, when the social level – or a sector of it – enters into crisis, the anarchists are not able to find another space for social insertion.

35. IDEAL PERES

The FARJ claims to continue the militancy of Ideal Peres and the work that originated from his history of struggle. In 2002 we initiated a study group in order to verify the possibility for the construction of an anarchist organization in Rio de Janeiro, the result of which was the foundation of the FARJ on 30th of August 2003. For us, there is a direct link between the militancy of Ideal Peres, the construction of the CEL, its functioning, the change of name to CELIP and the subsequent foundation of the FARJ. Ideal Peres was born in 1925 and began his militancy in that context of crisis, when the social vector of anarchism had already been lost. In the 1970s, after prison, Ideal organized in his house a study group that had

extent, are able to elaborate, reproduce, and apply the political line of the organization internally, in the fronts, and in public activity. Also, to a greater or lesser extent, militants should be able to assist in the elaboration of the strategic-tactical line of the organization, as well as having full capacity to reproduce and apply it. Moreover, the functions should be rotated in order to empower everyone and avoid crystallized positions or functions. The functions assumed by the militants within the organization adhere to self-management and federalism, or to horizontal decisions where all the militants have the same power of voice and of vote and where, in specific cases, there is delegation with imperative mandates.

72. SUPPORTERS

The next circle, more external and distant from the core of the anarchist organization, is no longer part of the organization but has a fundamental importance: the level of supporters. This body, for instance, seeks to group together all people who have ideological affinities with the anarchist organization. Supporters are responsible for assisting the organization in its practical work, such as the publishing of pamphlets, periodicals, or books; the dissemination of propaganda material; helping in the work of producing theory or of contextual analysis; in the organization of practical activities for social work: community activities, help in training work, logistical activities, help in organizing work, etc. An instance of support is where people who have affinities with the anarchist organization and its work have contact with other militants, are able to deepen their knowledge of the political line of the organization, better get to know its activities and deepen their vision of anarchism, etc. The specific anarchist organization draws in the greatest possible number of supporters and, through practical work, identifies those interested in joining the organization and who have an appropriate profile for membership. Although each militant chooses their level

aligned militants, and open enough to draw in new militants. The specific anarchist organization is divided internally into the fronts which act, each one, in a determined social movement or social movement sector. In this case, assuming that the specific anarchist organization works with three social movements, or with three social movement sectors, it divides itself for the work into three fronts. In our case, our specific anarchist organization is today divided into three fronts: (A) urban social movements, (B) community, and (C) agro-ecology (Anarchism and Nature). Each one of these works in one or more social movements. Front A in the homeless movement and in the MTD, front B in the community movement and front C in the rural movements of ecology and agriculture.

71. MILITANTS INSIDE

There is not a hierarchy between the circles, but the idea is that the more “inside”, or the closer the militant, the better are they able to formulate, understand, reproduce, and apply the lines of the organization. The more “inside” the militant, the greater is their level of commitment and activity. The more a militant offers the organization, the more is demanded of them by it. It is the militants who decide on their level of commitment, and they do or do not participate in the instances of deliberation based on this choice. So, the militants decide how much they want to commit and the more they commit, the more they will decide. The less they commit, the less they will decide. So, inside the specific anarchist organization you may have one or more circles, which should always be defined by the level of commitment of the militants. In the case of more than one level this must be clear to everyone, and the criteria to change a level must be available to all militants. In this way, it’s the militant who chooses where they want to be. Inside the specific anarchist organization there are only anarchists that, to a greater or lesser

as its goal to bring in youth interested in anarchism and, amongst other things, to put them in touch with former militants and establish links with other anarchists in Brazil. This study group would constitute the nucleus of the Libertarian Study Circle (Círculo de Estudos Libertários — CEL). With the death of Ideal Peres in August 1995 the CEL decided to honor him by modifying its name to the Ideal Peres Libertarian Study Circle (Círculo de Estudos Libertários Ideal Peres — CELIP).

36. ESPECIFISMO ANARCHISM

For us, the path to the recovery of the social vector passes, necessarily, through a specifically organized anarchism that differentiates the levels of activity and is present in the class struggle. All of our actual reflection aims to think of a strategic model of organization that enables a recovery of the social vector, in that this points to our objective of overcoming capitalism, the state and for the establishment of libertarian socialism. What we seek, in this context, is only a station in the struggle. Unlike the early twentieth century, when the preferred terrain of class struggle was the unions, we now consider that unionism can be a means of insertion, but that there are others far more important. Broadly understood, the existence today of particularly exploited classes permits the social work and insertion of anarchists: the unemployed, peasants, landless, homeless etc. For us, to be well-organized at the political (ideological) level will allow us to find the best path to bring back this social vector of anarchism, be it where it may.

37. CAPITALISM

As we emphasized earlier, the wage-laborer – classic object of analysis in the socialist theses of the nineteenth century – for us, constitutes today only one of the categories of the exploited classes.

On one hand, that which is called the “bourgeoisie” and which we will treat in this text as “capitalists”, holders of private ownership of the means of production, who contract workers by means of wage-labour. On the other, that which is called the “proletariat”, and which we will treat in this text as “workers” who, possessing nothing more than their labour power, have to sell it in exchange for a wage. Besides this, unemployment means that when the capitalists go to the market they encounter workers in abundance, as there is a greater supply of workers than there is a demand.

38. A COMPLEX MARKET SYSTEM

As a system that reproduces injustice capitalism separates manual and intellectual labour. This separation is the result of inheritance and also of education since there is different education for the rich and the poor.

39. GLOBAL EXPLOITATION

Motivated by the logic of profit, private enterprises are responsible for transferring the entire hierarchy of classes to the relationship between people and the environment. In general terms, economic globalization is characterized by an integration, on a global scale, of the processes of production, distribution, and exchange. Production is carried out in several countries, goods are imported and exported in enormous quantities and over long distances. This system, if it on the one hand leaves unemployed in areas with optimal conditions, on the other allows for the extortion that causes precarity to be accepted and threatens the organization of workers who are increasingly more controlled and pushed to the periphery.

groups that carry out social work. The fronts are responsible, in their respective area of work, for the creation and development of social movements as well as for ensuring that anarchists occupy political space – space that is in permanent dispute – and to exercise due influence in these movements. Generally, organizations that work with this methodology suggest that three basic fronts are developed: trade union, community, and student. We believe that the fronts should be divided, not according to these pre-stipulated spaces of insertion, but based on the practical work of the organization. In our understanding there should not be an obligation to develop work in these three fronts and, in addition, there may be other interesting spaces that demand dedicated fronts. Each organization should seek spaces more conducive to the development of its social work, and from this practical necessity form its fronts. In this sense, we support a model of dynamic fronts that account for the internal division of the specific anarchist organization for the practical realization of social work in the best way possible.

70. AN IMPORTANT PARADOX

The anarchist organization needs to preserve different instances of action. These different instances should strengthen its work while at the same time allowing it to bring together prepared militants with a high level of commitment and approximating people sympathetic to the theory or practice of the organization – who could be more or less prepared and more or less committed. The concentric circles are intended to provide a clear place for each of the militants and sympathizers of the organization. In addition, they seek to facilitate and strengthen the social work of the anarchist organization, and finally, establish a channel for the capture of new militants. In short, the concentric circles seek to resolve an important paradox: the anarchist organization needs to be closed enough to have prepared, committed and politically

trafficking, etc. – constitute obstacles to the construction of the popular organization since they penetrate social movements. In the vast majority of cases, they seek to take advantage of the number of people present there to: find support in elections, constitute the base for authoritarian power projects, get money, conquer faiths, open new markets, and so on. Authoritarian organizations and individuals do not want to support social movements but use them to achieve their (the authoritarian organizations' and individuals') own objectives, which are not consistent with the objectives of the militants of the social movements. The anarchists, by not constituting the necessary social force, offer two possibilities: either they will be used by the authoritarians as workhorses (aka "sleeves") in carrying out their authoritarian power projects, or they will simply be removed. When they are not organized, they do not exert the necessary influence to have even a little social force. Without the necessary organization they cannot maintain themselves in the social movements and much less exert the desired influence. For example, on seeing that some anarchists are struggling for a movement to use direct action and direct democracy, politicians and party devices will be against it, and unless there is a strong organization of anarchists, with social insertion and the ability to fight for these positions, the authoritarian positions will have greater chances to prosper. When we are properly organized as anarchists, we will not lag behind events but manage to mark our positions and exert our influence in the social movements, going on to have true insertion. So, from the moment we cause our positions to prevail, it necessarily means a decrease in the influence of the authoritarians and vice versa.

69. THE FRONTS

This political practice in different camps requires that the anarchist organization divides itself into fronts, which are the internal

40. HISTORY OF THE STATE

The state has always been an instrument for perpetuating inequality and a liberty-extermimating element, whatever the existing mode of production. We consider the state the set of political powers of a nation, which takes shape by means of "political, legislative, judicial, military and financial institutions etc."; and, in this way, the state is broader than the government. The state has been characterized by a "double game" of promising the rich to protect them from the poor and promising the poor to protect them from the rich. After the Industrial Revolution arose the so-called "social question", which obliged states to develop assistance plans in order to minimize the impacts of capital on labour. In the late nineteenth century arose, as an alternative to liberalism, a more interventionist conception of the state which, if on the one hand sought to create policies of "social welfare", on the other implemented methods to contain the advancement of socialist initiatives, already quite strong at the time.

41. THE STATE AND CLASS RELATIONS

A state that clearly defends the position of the capitalists could intensify class struggle, so there is nothing better, from the capitalists' point of view, than to give it an aspect of neutrality. Nevertheless, one should bear in mind that the state, as a strong pillar of capitalism, seeks to sustain it and, if capitalism is a system of exploitation and domination, the state cannot do anything else but sustain the class relations that exist in its midst. In this way the state defends the capitalists to the detriment of the worker. As it has a monopoly on the use of violence in society, it always uses it to enforce the laws, and as laws were made in order that the privileges of capitalist society could be maintained, then repression and state control are always to sustain "order". That is, to maintain the

privileges of capitalism and keep the ruling class in domination. Today the state has two fundamental objectives: the first of them, ensuring the conditions for the production and reproduction of capitalism; and the second, to ensure its legitimacy and control. For this reason, the state today is a strong supporting pillar of capitalism. The state extrapolates the political ambit and functions as an economic agent of capitalism, working to prevent or minimize the role of its crises or of the falls in its profit rates.

42. AUTHORITARIAN SOCIALISTS

Contrary to what the authoritarian socialists believed (and still believe), the state is not a neutral organism that can work at the service of the capitalists or of the workers. If anarchists have written so much about the state it is justifiably because the critique of capitalism was consensus between libertarians and authoritarians – the divergence was around the state. The authoritarians supported the capture of the state and the dictatorship of the proletariat as an intermediate stage – which was falsely called socialism – between capitalism and communism. The position of the libertarians which we hold today is that for the construction of socialism the state must be destroyed, together with capitalism, by means of the social revolution. Any state creates relations of domination, exploitation, violence, wars, massacres, and torture under the pretext of protecting the “citizen”.

43. REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

By delegating our right to do politics to a class of politicians that enter the state in order to represent us we are giving a mandate, without any control, to someone that makes decisions for us: there is an inevitable division between the class that does politics and the classes that follow. “Politicians” represent the hierarchy

tency between means and ends as well as mutual respect. That’s why we reject the individualist proposals of anarchism. The pursuit of libertarian socialism is the incessant struggle for freedom. And we assert federalism and self-management as principles of non-hierarchical and decentralized organization, sustained by mutual aid and free association, assuming the premise of the IWA that everyone has rights and duties. Internationalism is opposed to nationalism and the exaltation of the state, as they represent a sense of superiority over other countries and peoples and reinforce ethnocentrism and prejudice – the first steps towards xenophobia. By asserting internationalism, we highlight the international character of struggles and the need for us to associate ourselves by class affinities and not those of nationality. Direct action is posited as a principle founded on horizontalism and encourages the protagonism of workers, opposing representative democracy which, as we have already stated, alienates politically. Mutual aid encourages solidarity in struggle, encouraging the maintenance of fraternal relations with all who truly work for a just and egalitarian world. It encourages effective solidarity among the exploited.

68. NO POLITICAL VACUUM

We believe that there is never a political vacuum, anywhere. Among the various forces present in these spaces anarchists should stand out and bring to fruition their positions. In addressing the permanent dispute over political space, we are not saying that anarchists should fight for the leadership, supervision, or any position of privilege in the social movements. We talk, on the contrary, of the internal struggle that takes place when we want to influence social movements to use libertarian practices. The authoritarians seek to establish a relationship of domination over the social movements. We know that politicians, parties, unions, and also other authoritarian organizations and individuals – like the churches, drug

unity, and the unity of strategy and tactics. So, we can say that the activities of the specific anarchist organization are:

1. Social Work and Insertion
2. Production and Reproduction of Theory
3. Anarchist Propaganda
4. Political Education
5. Conception and Implementation of Strategy
6. Social and Political Relations
7. Resource Management

These activities can be performed in a more or less public way, always taking into account the social context in which the organization operates.

66. INTERESTS OF THE EXPLOITED CLASSES

In this political practice of placing itself at the service of the exploited classes, the anarchist organization is guided by a Charter of Principles. The principles are the ethical propositions and notions, both non-negotiable, that guide all political practice, providing models for anarchist action. The specific anarchist organization does not replace the organization of the exploited classes but gives anarchists the chance to put themselves at their service.

67. 2003 CHARTER OF PRINCIPLES

The 2003 Charter of Principles defines nine principles: freedom, ethics and values, federalism, self-management, internationalism, direct action, class struggle, political practice and social insertion, and mutual aid. The anarchist organization should seek to relate to all forms of popular struggle, regardless of where they may be taking place. We recognize and give precedence to the class struggle. Through ethics, among other things, we advocate the consis-

and separation between leaders and led, within and outside of their own parties. The more that the politicians are responsible for politics, the less the people engage in politics and the more they remain alienated and distant from the making of decisions. This, obviously, condemns the people to a position of spectator and not that of “master of oneself”.

44. SPECIFIC CRITIQUES TODAY

If we can apply these critiques to the state today, we must know that our reality is particular, and that the direction of the world economy has had profound influence over the form of state with which we live. This critique of the state is not linked to one or other form of state, but to all its forms. So, any project of social transformation that points to the social revolution and libertarian socialism must have the end of capitalism as well as the state as an objective. Although we hold that the state is one of the strongest pillars of capitalism, we do not believe that with the end of capitalism the state would, necessarily, cease to exist.

45. SOCIAL REVOLUTION

The objective of the social revolution is to destroy the society of exploitation and domination. Libertarian socialism is that which gives constructive meaning to the social revolution. Together, the destruction – as a concept of negation – and the construction – as a concept of proposition – constitute the possible and effective social transformation we propose. The social revolution is one of the possible outcomes of the class struggle and consists of the violent alteration of the established social order and is considered by us the only way to put an end to domination and exploitation. It differs from the political revolutions of the Jacobins and Leninists by supporting the alteration of the “order” not just with a political change,

through the state, exchanging one directing minority for another. Unlike political revolution, social revolution is accomplished by the people of the cities and countryside who bring the class struggle and its correlation of forces with capitalism and the state to the limit, by means of popular organization. Social revolution occurs when the social force developed in the heart of the popular organization is greater than that of capitalism and the state and, put into practice, implants structures that support self-management and federalism, wiping out private property and the state and giving rise to a society of complete freedom and equality. So, we do not understand the social revolution as simple evolution nor as an obligatory consequence of the contradictions of capitalism, but as an episode that marks the rupture and is determined by the will of the organized exploited classes. The construction of the popular organization will develop the spirit of struggle and organization in the exploited classes, seeking the accumulation of social force and incorporating within it the means to struggle in accordance with the society that we wish to build.

46. VIOLENCE

The violent action of the social revolution must, at the same time as the expropriation of the capitalists, immediately destroy the state, giving place to self-managed and federated structures, tried, and tested within the popular organization. So, the authoritarian conception of “socialism” as an interim period in which a dictatorship is established within the state is, for us, nothing but another way to continue the exploitation of the people and must be rejected absolutely, under any circumstance.

With a long-term perspective, movements have a greater ability for conquest, seeing as though the more distant the objectives, the greater the conquests – the first conquests not being the end of the struggle. The short-term gains, so-called reforms, when conquered by social movements, will serve as ways to lessen the suffering of those who struggle and at the same time will teach the lessons of organization and struggle. We believe that in struggling for reforms, social movements do not become reformists – those who understand the reforms as an end. Even with the struggle for reforms, social movements can sustain a revolutionary practice and be against reformism.

65. THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIFIC ANARCHIST ORGANIZATION

The specific anarchist organization is the grouping of anarchist individuals who, through their own will and free agreement, work together with well-defined objectives. Its function is to coordinate, converge, and permanently increase the social force of anarchist militant activities, providing a tool for solid and consistent struggle, which is a fundamental means for the pursuit of the final objectives. This organization is founded on fraternal agreements, both for its internal functioning as for its external action – without having relations of domination, exploitation, or alienation in its midst – ensuring that it is libertarian. This organization of well-defined lines joins the anarchists at the political and ideological level and develops their political practice at the social level – which characterizes an organization of active minority, seeing as though the social level is always much larger than the political level. To constitute this tool of solid and consistent combat, it is essential that the anarchist organization has well-determined strategic-tactical and political lines – which occur through theoretical and ideological

63. MILITANT CONDUCT

As there is no complete knowledge it is the process of exchange between the militants which allows for an education, in which there is no teacher and student; all are teachers and students. Everyone learns and everyone teaches. In this way occurs the construction of an education that respects people's culture and empowers militants through dialogues, debates, exchanges of experiences. Class solidarity occurs through the association of one person with another to form a social movement, or even of one social movement to another in pursuit of building the popular organization and the overcoming of capitalism and the state. When they are guided by the interests of class, social movements are internationalist. In this model of social movement there is a necessity for militant conduct with ethics and responsibility. Ethics, which guides correct militant conduct, is grounded on principles that are opposed to capitalism and the state and which supports co-operation, solidarity, and mutual aid. It also guides militant behavior which operates without harming others, which encourages support, not allowing postures aimed at division or unfair infighting. Responsibility, a principle that opposes the values of capitalism, encourages the militant of the social movements to have initiative, that they assume responsibilities and fulfil them – this will prevent that a few are overloaded with many tasks – that they have attitudes consistent with the fighting spirit and that they contribute in the best way to the social movements.

64. SHORT, MEDIUM, AND LONG-TERM

Organizational objectives must be pursued in the midst of struggle. Seeking to permanently increase the radicalization and social force of the popular organization, we understand it to be possible to reach the social revolution and so constitute libertarian socialism.

47. LIBERTARIAN SOCIALISM

As the social revolution must not be made only by the anarchists, it is important that we be fully inserted in the processes of class struggle in order to be able to orient the revolution towards libertarian socialism. Libertarian socialism is on the one hand socialism, a system based on social, political, and economic equality, and on the other hand, freedom. So, a project for a future society that promotes equality and freedom can only be, for us, libertarian socialism, which takes shape in the practices of self-management and federalism. A culture of self-management and federalism should already be well developed in the class struggles so that the people, at the revolutionary moment, do not allow themselves to be oppressed by authoritarian opportunists; and this will be through class-based practices of autonomy, combativeness, direct action, and direct democracy. The more these values exist in the popular organization, the less will be the possibility of constituting new tyrannies. When we treat our conception of social revolution, or even when we think of a possible future society, we want to make clear that we do not seek to determine beforehand, absolutely, how the revolutionary process or even libertarian socialism will occur. We know that there is no way to predict when this transformation will take place, and so any reflections must always consider this aspect of strategic projection of future possibilities from the point of possibilities, of references, and not of absolute certainties.

48. SELF-MANAGED AND FEDERALIST

Contemporary interpretations of self-management and federalism separate the first as the economic and the second as the political system of libertarian socialism. We do not understand the separation between the economic and the political in this way when

it comes to self-management and federalism. In the new society all those that are able to would need to work, there no longer being unemployment, and the work would be able to be performed in accordance with personal ability and disposition. People will no longer be obliged to accept anything under threat of experiencing want and not attaining their minimum living conditions. Children, the elderly and those unable to work will be assured a dignified life without depravation, all their needs being met. For the most tedious tasks or those perceived as unpleasant, in some cases, there could be rotations or alternations. Even in the case of the carrying out of production, where the co-ordination of some specialists is needed, rotations in function and a commitment to the training of other workers with similar skills will also be necessary for more complex tasks. In a system of collective ownership, rights, responsibilities, wages, and wealth no longer have a relation with private property and the old class relations, based on private property, must also disappear. Libertarian socialism is, so, a classless society. The ruling class will no longer exist, and the whole system of inequality, domination and exploitation will have disappeared. No one would effectively be the owner and the means of production belong to the collectivity as a whole, or all the members of the collectivity will be owners of a portion of the means of production, in exactly the same proportions as the others.

49. CITY AND COUNTRY

In the case of the persistence of the individual property of the peasants, of those that work the land themselves, it would be more appropriate to understand this situation not as property, but as possession. So, property would always be collective, and possession individual. Possession because the value of the land would be in its use, and not trade. And relations with this would be guided by the needs of the producer and no longer that of the market. Such

61. COMBATIVE MOVEMENTS

An important feature of social movements is their combativeness. By claiming that they must be combative we wish to say that social movements must establish their conquests by imposing their social force, and not depend on favors or good deeds from any sectors of society, including the state. Combativeness is characterized by a posture of defense of class struggle outside the state. Combative social movements do not fight in order to have power in the state or in their institutional structures of power. They are always organized outside the state, advocating the return of political power to the people. We also support direct action as a form of political action as opposed to representative democracy. However, there are those who defend popular power as the support of vanguards detached from the base, hierarchy, authoritarian parties, claims to the state and bureaucracies of various kinds. When popular power signifies this second model, then we are in complete disagreement. The struggle for emancipation must be done strategically, making direct action more or less violent conforming to the demands of circumstance. When it needs to be violent it must always be understood as a response, as self-defense in relation to the system of domination and exploitation in which we live.

62. DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENTS

Direct democracy takes place in social movements when all those who are involved in them participate effectively in the process of decision-making. Even the leaders and assumed functions are temporary, rotating, and recallable.

60. AUTONOMY IN MOVEMENTS

Political parties want to lead and direct the social movements, thinking themselves superior to them and judging themselves to be the enlightened that will bring consciousness to the exploited classes. Often their members are intellectuals that want to know, better than the people themselves, what is best for them. Other organizations that seek control, such as churches and bureaucratic unions, also do not help social movements. Social movements should not be linked to politicians or to any sector of the state because we know that when they come wanting to help, in the vast majority of cases they are looking for a “base” for their party-political interests, or seeking to calm movements, establishing their dialogues with institutions of the state. So, those who want to lead, to order or to cause such that the social movements serve their own goals should not have influence over them, since they do not struggle for the collective good of the movements but use the maxim that serving yourself is the best way to serve others. There is no problem with people that support social movements not being in exactly the same conditions as the other militants. So, we consider it just that employed people support the struggle of unemployed workers, that people who have housing support the struggle of the homeless, and so on. Furthermore, when we talk of autonomy, we must keep in mind that autonomy, for us, does not mean the absence of ideological struggle or even a lack of organization. When you encourage “non-ideology”, frequent spontaneity; when you renounce the project and the revolutionary program – often calling this autonomy – you open spaces and leave open terrain for the ruling class, the bureaucrats and the authoritarians that will occupy these spaces.

a situation alters everything, so it is necessary to establish a new category.

50. WORKERS’ AND CONSUMERS’ COUNCILS

The economy of libertarian socialism is conducted by workers and consumers. The workers create the social product, and the consumers enjoy it. In these two functions, mediated by distribution, the people are responsible for economic and political life, having to decide what to produce, and the consumers what to consume. The local structures of libertarian socialism in which workers and consumers organize themselves are the workers’ and consumers’ councils. Profit will no longer be the imperative in the relations of production. Councils are social bodies, vehicles through which the people express their political and economic preferences and exercise self-management and federalism. In them daily political and economic activities are decided and carried out. The workers’ council organizes production and the consumers’ council organizes consumption.

51. INTELLECTUAL AND MANUAL LABOR

Many tasks, primarily those involving manual labour are completely unpleasant, harsh, and alienating, and it is not fair that some workers are fully occupied with them, while others are dedicated to performing

enjoyable, pleasurable, stimulating, and intellectual tasks. If this happens then certainly the class system will be rebuilt, no longer based on private property, but on a class of intellectuals that will command, and another of manual workers that will execute the commands. Seeking to end this separation the workers’ councils could have a balanced set of tasks for each worker, which

would be equivalent for all. So, each worker will be responsible for some pleasant and stimulating tasks, that involve intellectual work, and other harsher and more alienating tasks, that involve manual labour.

52. FUNCTIONING COLLECTIVISM

The goal in libertarian socialist remuneration is that it be guided by the communist principle “from each according to their ability, to each according to their need”. However, we understand that to implement this principle libertarian socialism should already be in full function, with production in abundance. Until this is possible, remuneration can be done according to work, or effort – this being understood as personal sacrifice for the collective benefit. So, it would be a case of functioning collectivism, using the maxim “from each according to their ability, to each according to their labour”, and, at the moment in which it becomes possible apply the communist principle, giving “to each according to their need”.

53. TECHNOLOGY

Unlike some libertarian tendencies which believe that technology contains in itself the germ of domination, we believe that without it there is no possibility for the development of libertarian socialism. With the advent of technology and it being used in favor of labour, not capital, there would surely be a gain in productivity and consequently a significant reduction in the labour time of people, who could use this time for other activities. It is worth emphasizing that our ecological proposals differ radically from “conservationism” and “primitivism”. From the former, because this means the maintenance of class society and the complete commodification of nature. From the latter, because we consider the “anti-civilization” proposal a complete absurdity, seeking a ro-

ploited classes that will be able to provide the desired social transformation. We understand the popular organization as the result of a process of convergence of diverse social organizations and different grassroots movements, which are fruit of the class struggle. For this reason, we believe that we should favor all kinds of organizations and movements of this type, understanding this support as the consequence of our most fundamental ideas. When the organization has a class character this stimulates and empowers the class struggle. In this way the popular organization is built from the bottom up, from the “periphery to the centre”, and outside of the power centers of the current system. Authoritarians have treated the mass movements from a hierarchical perspective, seeking to dominate them.

59. NECESSITY NOT IDEOLOGY

We believe that social movements should not fit and lock themselves within an ideology, whatever it may be. We do not believe in anarchist, Marxist, or social democratic social movements, or those of any other specific ideology. For us, an anarchist social movement, or one of any other ideology, would only tend to split the class of the exploited, or even those that are interested in struggling for a particular cause. That is, the force that must drive the creation and the development of social movements is necessity, and not ideology. Although we believe that social movements should not be made to fit within anarchism, we think that anarchism must, as far as possible, be spread within social movements. Social movements are fruit of a tripod comprised of necessity, will, and organization. The social movements which we advocate are not and should not be anarchist but, rather, are fertile ground for anarchism.

work together, their social force is not simply the sum of individual forces, but much more than this. Organization can happen in an authoritarian way, by means of domination, or in a libertarian way, by means of free association. So, we can conclude that to be able to carry out our project of social transformation association is fundamental because it is through it, and only through it, that we will be able to accumulate the social force necessary to overthrow capitalism and the state. An increase of social force can be achieved with various instruments, but primarily the organization of the exploited classes with the greatest number of people possible and a good level of organization – which necessarily implies self-discipline, commitment, and responsibility. In order to differentiate the discipline much preached by the authoritarians from the discipline that we advocate, we choose to use the term self-discipline, it being for us, together with commitment and responsibility, indispensable for the construction of an anti-authoritarian organization that aims to increase its social force. This self-discipline, in our view, is less in the popular organization and greater in the specific anarchist organization, varying according to the context. In periods of greater social turbulence, the need for this self-discipline increases. In times of ebb, it can be smaller. For this the specific organization must constitute itself as an organization of active anarchist minority with a high level of self-discipline, commitment, and responsibility.

58. ORGANIZATION AS CONVERGENCE

We advocate a model for the creation and development of what we call the popular organization. It is undeniable that there is a latent social force in the exploited classes, but we understand that it is only through organization that this force can leave the camp of possibilities and become a real social force. It will be the permanent increase of the social force of the organization of the ex-

plained return to a distant past or, even worse, a kind of suicide of all humanity and a negation of all our contributions to the maintenance and well-being of nature. Ecological consciousness should be developed from the time of struggles that precede the revolutionary rupture and in the future society itself. Human beings differ from other natural elements and other species by establishing social relations with everything surrounding them, because they possess the capacity to think about themselves, to make theories about reality, and with these aptitudes have managed to drastically modify the environmental setting that is their surroundings.

54. SELF-MANAGED FEDERALISM

With the use of technology in favor of workers and its development; with the end of capitalist exploitation and the fruits of labour going completely to the workers; with full employment in place workers will have more time that could be spent in three ways. First, with the natural loss of productivity that the balanced set of tasks will cause, seeing that it will “de-specialize” labour a bit. Second, with political decisions, which will demand time for discussions and deliberations that would have to be made in the self-managed workplace and community. Finally, with the remaining time – and we think that with these changes time off will be much greater than that of today – everyone will be able to choose what to do: rest, leisure, education, culture etc. Both worker and consumer councils would use self-management as a form of management and decision-making, both in the workplaces and in the communities. We must bear in mind that the decision-making process is a means and not an end in itself and, so, we also have to concern ourselves with agility in this process. Clearly, consensus should not be used in the majority of decisions, since it is very inefficient – especially if we think about decisions on a large scale – besides giving a lot of power to isolated agents that could block

consensus or have a lot of impact on a decision in which they are a minority. Increasingly, society should develop its culture in a libertarian direction, and this should not only happen at the moment of the social revolution and after it; but already at the moment of struggle, of the construction and the development of the popular organization. There no longer being the separation between those that do politics and those that don't – since under libertarian socialism it would be the members of society themselves that would realize politics on a daily basis.

55. RESISTANCE

Capitalism and the state exert oppression over other political forces that constitute resistance to them. So, in order to attain our objectives, we advocate active and articulated resistance which seeks, in organization, the permanent increase of social force. For the construction of this resistance, it is necessary to align with those that agree with our proposal for social transformation. There is no way of thinking about this necessary transformation without organization and the progressive growth of social force. For us, the social transformation we want to take place passes, necessarily, through the construction of the popular organization, through the progressive increase in its social force until the moment at which it would be possible to overthrow capitalism and the state with social revolution and open the way to libertarian socialism. Furthermore, we argue that the popular organization must be accompanied by a parallel development of the specific anarchist organization, which should influence it, giving it the desired character.

56. STATUS QUO ORDER

Disorganization, poor organization, and isolation, in fact, end up supporting capitalism and the state – seeing as though they do not allow for the construction of the necessary social force. By not taking part, in an appropriate manner, in the relation of force or the permanent conflict of society you end up reproducing “order”. Disorganization and poor organization are reproduced on the social level – of social movements, in which one should build and develop the popular organization – with the difficulty of accumulating social force, causing the natural spontaneity of this level not to manage to carry out the set of desired social transformations. Isolation and individualism make it so that neither the political nor social levels exist in a desirable manner, articulating neither the popular nor anarchist organization. We must think of ways and means for the popular organization such that it can overthrow capitalism and the state, and, by means of the social revolution build libertarian socialism – its objective. At the same time, we must think of ways and means for the specific anarchist organization such that this can build the popular organization and influence it, giving to it the desired character and arriving at libertarian socialism by means of the social revolution – its objective.

57. SOCIAL FORCE

We believe that every individual, as the social agent that they are, naturally possesses a social force, which is the energy that can be applied in order to achieve their objectives. This force varies from one person to another and even in the same person over a period of time. To achieve their objectives, individuals frequently make use of instruments that can increase their social force. Organization that takes the form of free association is indispensable to our project of social transformation because, when individuals