

Forging Commitment and Militant Responsibility

Commitment, Self-Discipline, and Organizational Building in Contemporary
Anarchism

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The scene is all too familiar: a meeting where tasks are distributed, many hands raised, words flowing with enthusiasm. A week later, several of those tasks remain undone, the commitments made dissolve into personal excuses and awkward silences. The cycle repeats, generating frustration, inefficiency, and, more deeply, a collective burnout that undermines any prospect of lasting transformation. What went wrong? What prevents us from sustaining militant commitment with continuity, coherence, and a sense of responsibility?

At a time when the challenges of organized anarchism are as strategic as they are subjective, discussing commitment, responsibility, and discipline can no longer be postponed. It is a political issue of the highest order. Without militant responsibility, there is no political accumulation—and without accumulation, there is no revolution.

Commitment as Practice, Not Feeling

A harmful confusion still lingers on the margins of anarchism: that militant commitment is an emotional state, a fleeting motivation, a disposition dependent on momentary enthusiasm. In this view, taking on tasks is symbolic, and their completion subject to personal contingencies. But this outlook clashes directly with any serious attempt to build class-based popular power and revolutionary organization.

Commitment, on the contrary, is a political, everyday, and deeply ethical act. It is the conscious decision to engage with a collective project aimed at radically transforming the world, and to accept the practical consequences of that decision. It means understanding that tasks are not mere technical duties but expressions of a collective will that only materializes if people take responsibility for it. In organizations such as the Anarchist Federation of Rio de Janeiro (FARJ), commitment is understood as rooted in the militant's awareness of the aims of the struggle, their engagement in discussions, active participation in deliberative processes, and their readiness to carry out agreed actions. Commitment is, therefore, the living form that political responsibility takes.

That form is not imposed, decreed, or expected to appear magically. It is built, nurtured, exercised. Commitment is born from conviction but is sustained through habit: in the conscious practice of being available, fulfilling what one has taken on, not offloading collective agreements onto others. In libertarian militancy, we are talking about a form of engagement that does not require supervision, because it is guided by ethics, not punishment. Because it is autonomous, not indifferent. Because it is free, not capricious.

Shared Responsibility as a Principle of Organization

One of the most persistent traps in libertarian imaginaries is confusing horizontality with dispersion, or plurality with lack of responsibility. Nothing could be further from the practice of organized anarchism. As many anarchist experiences have shown, an organization without shared responsibility tends to collapse under the weight of its own good intentions. Informality, lack of follow-up, and the absence of clear mechanisms for coordinating tasks do not guarantee freedom—instead, they foster inertia, individualism, and the reproduction of internal inequalities.

Responsibility in an anarchist project is not about the imposition of tasks by a superior authority. It is an ethical pact among equals who agree to sustain a shared will. It is a collective

understanding that if we do not organize rigorously, others will fill that vacuum: the state, the bureaucracy, the parties. The Geelong Anarchist-Communists, drawing from FARJ's contributions, put it clearly: the organization cannot act if its members do not act. There is no collective subject without concrete individuals who carry out its work.

Libertarian organizational culture needs structures that support and sustain responsibility. This means division of tasks, rotation, follow-up, evaluation spaces, and mutual care mechanisms. It also implies having a clear language to speak about unmet responsibilities—not with guilt, but with firmness. Critique among comrades is not authoritarianism: it is a gesture of political love. Because only through critique, self-critique, and debate can we build organizations that endure over time.

The Revolutionary Militant Personality: Between Coherence and Commitment

Talking about a revolutionary militant personality may feel uncomfortable to those who fear reproducing idealized or authoritarian figures. But this is not about moral models or ascetic archetypes. It is about recognizing that struggle transforms those who commit to it—and that this transformation involves subjective work as well.

Being a revolutionary militant is not just attending meetings or completing technical tasks. It is a way of life: a way of relating to the world based on an ethic of coherence, effort, and sustained commitment. It means learning to prioritize the collective, organize one's time, study, prepare, step back when needed and step up when necessary. It is a personality forged in practice, in the friction with others, in success and in error, in consistently sustaining a political line.

Fontenis, in advocating for an anarchist revolutionary organization with unity of action, ideology, and tactics, was not aiming to standardize militants, but to build a type of collective subject capable of sustaining a long-term strategic project. That coherence is not decreed—it is taught, cultivated, demanded. And that's what distinguishes a political organization from a space of affective affinities.

The Traps of Spontaneism and Anti-Organizationalism

The anarchist tradition has often been marked by a visceral rejection of formal organization—a result of historical defeats, state infiltration, and betrayals by other sectors of the left. But when that rejection becomes a principle, it ends up closing off any possibility of strategic action.

The experience in the Spanish state has made this painfully clear: the influence of countercultural and subcultural scenes, of insurrectionist dynamics without a social base, of identity-based forms of militancy rather than popular rootedness, has produced entire generations of activists without the tools to sustain long-term commitment. As stated in *Foundations for Political Organization*, anarchism in many cases became a parody of itself, disconnected from the reality of the working classes and incapable of building social force.

Combating these trends does not mean rejecting diversity or imposing rigid frameworks. It means understanding that organization is a condition for freedom—and that without militant responsibility, no revolutionary project can endure.

Strategies for Cultivating a Strong and Transformative Militant Culture

No one is born a militant. One learns to become one. The organization must embrace as a central task the ethical, political, and practical education of its members. This involves:

- Systematic spaces for political education where theory is studied, but also where practices are reflected upon and shared criteria are built.
- Clear structures for task distribution, role rotation, responsibility tracking, and collective evaluation.
- A political language that allows us to name, question, and correct lapses in commitment without falling into moral guilt-tripping or complicit silence.

And also, more practical and everyday forms:

- Shared calendars and accessible timelines for the entire organization.
- Regular task check-ins during brief but frequent meetings.
- Mutual support: never leave a comrade alone in carrying out a responsibility.
- Care rounds that ask, “*How are you doing with this?*”—not as pressure but as support.
- Spaces to recognize well-done work, highlighting the efforts that sustain the organization.
- Cultivating the habit of passing the torch: if you can’t take something on, propose who might.

These are not formulas. They are possible tools, concrete examples of how to make militancy a sustainable, careful, serious, and at the same time deeply human activity.

No Commitment, No Revolution

Revolution cannot be improvised. It must be prepared, organized, built. And that construction begins with ourselves: how we take on our part, how we relate to our organizations, how we cultivate consistency, libertarian discipline, and coherence between words and actions.

Talking about militant commitment means recognizing that struggle is not just a desire, but a practice that demands effort, care, and dedication. It means affirming that freedom is not given—it is built. And that building it takes more than good intentions. It takes commitment, responsibility, and a collective ethic willing to carry the revolutionary project through the hardest moments.

We are not here to accompany history. We are here to intervene in it. And that, *compañera*, starts by taking on your part. Not out of obligation, but out of conviction. Because the world we dream of will only become reality if we learn to build it—step by step, shoulder to shoulder, starting now. *Don Diego de la Vega, militant of Liza*

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