

On the Transitional Period

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Introduction

One of the most difficult problems of “revolutionary socialism” (by which we mean the ideas of those comrades who were to develop in the 19th century a strategy for a socialist revolution) is the period when society moves from a capitalist social structure (economics, politics and ideology) to a “communist” social structure.

The period, or better still, the phase of transition. There is no shortage of slogans regarding this question. There is an abundance of empty polemics and academic opinions. But what there isn't is clarity.

Given the confusion and resulting polemics, it is essential to clarify the matter fully — the phraseology, the vocabulary, the concepts and the strategy, not with the aim of convincing, but only for the sake of clarity with regard to what is necessary and useful for engaging in politics nowadays and with regard to the correct behaviour in the transitional phase.

First and foremost, we must clarify one basic point: anyone who is against the capitalist system and who wants to build socialism cannot but foresee a transition from one to the other.

Elsewhere, we have examined the political system under which we live, together with the existing political forces and the methods which must be used in order to build anarchist communism. In fact, the way in which we relate to our current social situation, in other words our attempt in real and concrete terms to produce a revolutionary alternative to western capitalist society (the current historical stage of development) is a key to working out a way to lead to a transition.

For reformists, the transitional phase is part and parcel of their way of making politics. In effect, through the “legal” structures of today's bourgeois society, the reformist socialists (social democrats) are already living the transitional period and, according to them, they are already beginning to live in a socialist society, without the need for any shocks to the system.

We agree with them in believing that everything that happens today can bring us closer to or further from socialism. However, as far as the problem of the transitional period is concerned, we view the transitional phase as a precise moment and, though its limits are indistinct, it is very different period from the one in which we struggle for socialism in a capitalist society.

For us, the transitional period has a precise beginning point which corresponds with the moment in which the BASIC STRUCTURE OF POWER IS NO LONGER ABLE TO IMPOSE ITS WILL UNCONDITIONALLY.

For revolutionary socialists, contrary to the reformists, the transitional period begins at a precise time on a precise day, in other words when the revolutionary socialist “party” takes power, pushing out the bourgeois power, and ends at a precise time on a precise day, in other words when the party's education of the people is complete.

We agree with them in believing that the length of the transitional period depends on the people's education in socialism, but we differ sharply in believing that socialism (understood as a society without State) does not begin after the transitional period but during it and that therefore the authority of the State must end at the moment the transitional period begins.

For anarchist communists, the transitional period is at one and the same time the final phase of the struggle against capitalism and against every other form of power (and is thus a time of harsh, military struggle) and the initial phase of the building of a “new” society (and is thus a time of re-building both politically and of the administration of society, and of the ideology and consciousness of citizens).

This period of transition will come into being when the struggle of the mass organizations (which anarchist communists are members of in their own right) within the capitalist system is characterized by revolutionary protest and action involving wide sectors of the exploited, and when the inability of the existing system of government to provide human beings with a decent life permits a general revolt by the majority of the exploited.

Internationalism

Anarchist communists believe that the division of the world into over 300 nations is the result of capitalism's economic and ideological needs. Anarchist communists belong to no "fatherland" and consider themselves citizens of the world.

A just society in only one nation is unthinkable. The economy, military strength and ideology of power can be destroyed providing there does not exist in the world any place where they can survive.

For this reason, our basic strategic programme does not allow for the existence of "socialism in one country", as Marxist-Leninists would have us accept. It does not, however, follow from this that the revolution must break out at the exact same time in every country of the world. It simply means that **the period of transition will not come to an end until all the various forms of power have been abolished everywhere.**

Accordingly, therefore, it must be part of anarchist communist strategy to develop the anarchist communist international and to work towards the development of supranational coordination between the mass organizations.

The aim of the anarchist communist movement is to eliminate cultural, ethnic and racial divisions at an international level. But this does not mean abolishing (by force or otherwise) "traditions" and the various types of culture. It means ensuring that they are not obstacles to the unity of the proletariat.

The problem is therefore a practical one and must be seen under two aspects: on the one hand, the material difficulties that arise and on the other hand, the political role that the organization must have.

The material difficulties derive first and foremost from the slow evolution from the national to the international. The objective is federalism, not of nations but of zones with different cultures and languages, and there is no doubt that the forces of reaction will seek to use these divisions in order to destroy the revolution.

It is important to maintain the cultural identity of a "people" and even to strengthen it so that social cohesion can develop and lead to the overcoming of national barriers.

Where capitalism tends to make society into an anonymous, controllable mass, it is our task to use this exploitation in order to defeat nationalism.

If each federation is able to find a path to revolution and make it believable to the masses, it will surely find itself needing to increase its forces, conditioning the choices at an international level and thereby levelling the various timescales and levels of maturity that exist internationally. This is not to be understood as interference, but as a more advanced practical indication which can inspire those at lower levels to work harder — without losing sight of the fact that different levels of consciousness do not mean that one is higher and the other lower.

Foreword to the Following Paragraphs

Dealing fully with all the problems regarding the transition to socialism is impossible if, as is the case with this document of basic strategy, we deal with the transitional period as the moment of destruction and construction following the violent revolutionary break with the capitalist system. This moment, the length of which we cannot determine, will have (and perhaps definitively resolve) the problems that anarchist communism and the historical experiences of the proletariat have thrown up and bequeathed us and about which we can say nothing today, unless it is to think about them again in light of the errors that have been made and of our current strategic development as a revolutionary organization, and of the revolutionary experiments being made by the exploited today.

But it is because of just this that we find ourselves, today, as a revolutionary organization and as organized militants of the mass organizations, examining the problems and possible solutions leading to the revolution and the alternative to capitalist society in which we foresee forms and methods which will probably exist in the period of transition.

It is because the transitional period is the culmination of a slow and inexorable revolutionary action that we are asking ourselves here and now about those problems which, once we come across them and resolve them one by one with a political strategy, will allow both the exploited and ourselves to reach the transitional period consciously and capable of victory.

This is why we must detail here and now, in this document of basic strategy, the basic points which must be clear to us and on which we are confronting, and will continue to confront, capital.

Towards the Overcoming of the Capitalist Economy

The first aspect of the economic problem regards acquisition, and with that the possibility of modifying the various economic conditions throughout the world.

In fact, in order to create a new form of economic organization, it is necessary to know the way economic mechanisms work, from information technology to distribution. A new social development also requires a technical ability on our part to resolve complex problems regarding the organization of labour (both manual and intellectual). Knowledge of the capitalist mode of production certainly does not mean that a slow modification of the situation is required, but this knowledge linked to the role that every person has within it, allows us to face the problems in a more global, less approximate way.

In fact, if capitalist organization changes, then the class structure will change in part, too. We will find ourselves faced with an increasingly changing situation which determines new social conditions.

The current form of organization would seem to be in some respects perfect; the fact that wide sections of the class are trapped by consumerism and by the petit-bourgeois aspects of life raises further questions: how to maintain class unity with regard to aspects of primary economic interest?

If we are to require a new society to overcome the purely intellectual or purely manual nature of labour, then large sections of those who are currently privileged need to be habituated to this. Disaffection at work and “inhuman” work must be combated in order to create the equilibrium which can bring the best out in everyone. Certain jobs will still have to be done in certain condi-

tions, but it will mean that even the condition of the scientist, pure and abstract, will make much more sense if it has a precise goal – the socialization of labour.

It is also a practical socialization, which enables a different management of wealth and knowledge. With the increase in divisions and of different interests within the class, a programme which gives us the credibility to say “we can live differently” becomes increasingly difficult.

If our society is able to provide a life fit for humans and if this can be demonstrated relatively, then our ideas for the organization of labour will seem credible.

The timescale of this change is important because it will depend on our immediate reaction to the past, which will allow us to overcome many obstacles. The immediate control of key positions in the economy must be able to ensure the possibility of immediately beginning the process of rebirth of production; the deeds of a “heroic” revolution are left to the past, a class that seeks security does not think of the revolution as a future but (perhaps) as the satisfaction of material and intellectual interests.

The concept of economic revolution will have to take on different features, not because certain models are necessarily wrong, but simply because capitalism has experienced them and has developed forms of protection against them.

For this reason, it is up to us to look for a way to develop the class struggle which is capable of getting the better of capitalism in all its various and changing forms.

But if we are not to fall into the trap of reformism or unrealism, we will need to provide each economic sector with an alternative form of management which can be updated and modified accordingly every time it is seen to be no longer effective.

The right use of the contradictions that capitalism creates is to ensure that these contradictions do not cancel each other out but that they go in the same direction. We must understand that interests, which are often particular and limited, are not enough to keep a movement alive. The desire for change must be tested and verified over time together with debate and the experience of the class. The class in its entirety.

The way in which economic life will have to be re-organized is important.

One of the first steps we must take is collectivisation, but we must be careful that it does not degenerate into a new hierarchical order with forced collectivizations. It needs to penetrate every sector carefully. And where there are pockets of resistance, they must not be crushed, but absorbed.

The new form of organization will establish which products are possible to collectivise and which are not. In a society which tends to decentralize wide sectors, it will be difficult to overcome private property, which will be confused with artisan labour, considered as free and therefore as a “class aspiration”.

Capitalist society is able to take on different forms without any significant effect on capitalist organization. For this reason we too will have to adopt different methods and timescales before we can overcome capitalist society.

Though the acquisition and expropriation of the means of production remain as a firm basis, this does not mean that without changing the substance we cannot (for obvious reasons) look for parallel routes.

The problem remains, however, during the initial phase, at the moment when new power relations are formed between the now conscious class and the capitalist organization which can make use of economic blackmail and repression. Overcoming this will be proof that the class has

reached a level at which the transition can begin, that is to say the ability to acquire the means of production, one road towards the building of socialism.

Destruction and Construction

During the transitional period the **battle** against capitalism is mixed with efforts to construct a new society.

This means that the essentially critical position of revolutionary class-struggle militants will have to be associated with a constructive capacity that these militants are today in a position to use only within political organizations (both specific and mass), but which they will, during the transitional phase, have to use with regard to the problems of society — hospitals, industry, distribution, etc.

First of all, though, we need to eliminate any misunderstanding there may be regarding this problem.

We will therefore systematically divide the enemy front into three different aspects which will require three different attitudes on our part: capitalist ideology, police and economy.

Today, all three are indistinguishable but in the transitional period, each of these three aspects of capitalism will play a distinct, specific role and will have to be defeated and/or replaced, each in a different way.

The ECONOMY, or rather the productive structures as the physical sites of the production and distribution of goods, must not be destroyed. We must take them over, make them function and be able to manage them.

This task, both during the transitional period but above all immediately after the start of this period, will belong to the revolutionary mass organizations, which will gradually have to involve all workers in the management of production and distribution.

The POLICE (or rather, capitalism's military defence structures) will have to be militarily defeated (and not abolished through the physical extermination of its members) and we will have to replace it with some force OTHER than the revolutionary army if we are to defend our gains in liberated areas, above all in the early phase.

In fact, while it is true that defence of the new society will be in the hands of the single members of that society, it is also true that as long as capitalist ideology exists, it will be necessary to have an "organization of people" which is responsible for the control of social order.

In order to ensure that false socialists do not appropriate this concept in order to create a new police force which can control and "lead" the revolution, in the neighbourhoods and towns where a need is felt for it, the anarchist communist militants (as militants and not as an organization) will need to do all they can to ensure the formation of autonomous, ZONAL groups firmly under the control of everyone living in that zone, which can carry out the tasks of control.

It is essential that specialized bodies are not created and that it is local communities who entrust this task, with a precise mandate, to a certain number of comrades who will be responsible for their actions and whose mandates can be revoked at any time by the community itself. It is also essential that from the very beginning, these groups slowly but surely evolve towards their own extinction.

The IDEOLOGY of capitalism cannot be defeated by any army. It is the only thing that must be completely destroyed by each of us and within each of us.

The struggle against the individualist, selfish and violent ideology that over many years capitalism has sown deep in everyone's mind, will be the toughest task and the most difficult battle we will have to fight.

It is an invisible enemy and one against which violence will not be the main weapon, nor the most appropriate on every occasion.

Understanding and unmasking what capitalist ideology really is and eliminating it completely, will be no easy task in a period (such as the transitional phase) when consciousness is not yet fully mature and in which the violence necessary for other things will only be an obstacle to the victory of the new ideology.

More than this we cannot say: this battle will not see the victors on the streets and the defeated in prison. All humans will either still be prisoners of the lowest and most repressive of the lies that capitalism has spread, or else they will be free from the oppression of their own past.

In this area, more than in any other, the battle that each of us faces will be at one and the same time isolated and collective and no-one can win or lose without greatly influencing others.

What Revolution Is

Many of those who cry for revolution and declare themselves to be revolutionaries have not reflected much on what revolution really means. Beyond the rhetoric, the risings suns, the noble heroes and the flags flying in the wind, the revolution is both a violent act (and for that reason anything but pleasant) and a liberating act. It is an act of great political maturity.

Violence: If it were possible to convince the capitalists that our ideas are good, then we would be non-violent. But for the very reason that we want to abolish every form of violence, we are against the violence of this society and we feel the need to defend ourselves when it attacks us and we want to destroy it when it is possible. Violence, however, is and remains a necessary method that we are forced to choose and is not, and must never be thought of as right or wrong irrespective of the reason it exists for. Violence is good only if the reasons for it and the aim of the violence are good.

We must be wary both of those who prefer to allow the weak to go on suffering just in order not to have to use violence, considered negative in the abstract, and of those who prefer to use violence even if it would be better and more effective to use another way to resolve a problem.

We need to remember that the end of the transitional period must be the end — FOR EVER — of every form of violence, otherwise the society which has come into being cannot call itself socialist. Furthermore, every form of violence that is pointless or unjustified will only serve to delay the moment when humanity can truly call itself free — above all free from violence from any quarter.

A liberating act: The revolution liberates us from the infamous past that is the history of human beings. As such, it is not only a violent but a glorious and vital event. But in order for it to be a liberating act, it must be the fruit of a desire for change and not only for destruction. It is not only an act of rebellion but also an act of liberation and reconstruction. The revolutionary event must not only be a moment of anger, it must also be conscious of its function as a progression along the road to the freedom of all human beings both as individuals and collectively. The new society will be liberating not only for those who were previously exploited, but also for those who, for economic and social reasons, did not previously feel the need for it. These people will

have to be won over by the liberating power of the new social ideas, and the liberating power of the ideas of brotherhood and solidarity will be the only weapon against the vice of violence and the fear of the future.

Freedom from oppression must translate into social reconstruction and along the way, even those who were crushed during the violent phase will have to be helped up again by their very enemies and, just as everyone else with the same rights and duties, will have to contribute to the victory of justice and of the new humanity with no class divisions.

An act of political maturity: Without political consciousness of the act being carried out, there can be no transition to a communist society. The revolution, therefore, cannot arise out of a mere act of anger — this can only be described as a revolt and a revolt can only be the spark for a revolution if it is accompanied by the desire to obtain a goal.

The desire and the instinct for a completely different society is neither a bourgeois fact nor a philosophical concept, but an indication of political maturity.

Motivating an act, such as the revolution, only on the basis of analysing the immediate causes that provoked it, means relegating the materialistic analysis of the situation to the same level as the analysis of the physical phenomena whose effects can only be predicted on the basis of other previous physical phenomena.

While it is true that the revolution is an economic fact, it is also true that the motivations which drive human beings, and above all the exploited, to act are not only of an economic nature.

The revolutionary act, as an act carried out by human beings, is both an economic and a social act, in other words it is an act determined both by economic causes (and the desire to change them) and by social causes (and the desire to build new social relations between human beings).

Our clarification of the too-often distorted and clichéd concept of revolution and our conception of the revolution must never become separated from the fact that the drive towards the revolution is also a drive towards social justice, towards the realization of values that are diametrically opposed to those which exist in this society, and therefore non-existent today, living only in the memory of past revolutionary experiences and in the desire for a different future.

The idea of a society that is completely new and different with respect to the existing one, that we can and must today envisage and that will come from the revolution, is not something to be scorned. It is an act of the highest political consciousness and must lie at the heart of the violence of revolution if it is ever to be thought of as a socialist revolution.

In conclusion, the political consciousness of revolutionaries is not a consciousness of the politics one is forced to engage in within a bourgeois society. It is the consciousness of and a serene and deeply-felt desire for a new society, for a social and ethical order which does not exist today and which remains to be built.

The Transitional Period

The transitional period presents two basic problems — the military defeat of the bourgeoisie and the building of a society without classes. These two problems co-exist and interact from the moment the revolutionary process begins, but we can distinguish an early phase during which the central problem to be solved will be the former, and a latter phase where the main problem will be the later.

First there is capitalism, then there is communism.

The move from capitalism to the period of transition is begun after an insurrection. But while it is true that in order to embark on the transitional period, an insurrection is required, the opposite is not true. In other words, not every insurrection can lead to a period of transition. In fact, it must be added that any basic strategy that considers insurrection as a method in its own right for ushering in the transitional period would be wrong and would be damaging. Insurrection must be considered only as the moment which naturally occurs at the start of the earlier phase of the transitional period.

In effect, what is important to clarify is that because the specific organization of anarchist communists will have to behave differently once the transitional period has begun, it must carefully analyse every insurrection and be prepared to behave according to whether the insurrection is believed to remain just that or it is destined to spark off the transitional period. In fact, it is of the utmost importance for the specific organization to survive these insurrections and not destroy itself each time.

The basic strategic criteria which must underlie every eventuality (keeping in mind that it is unrealistic to assume that a transitional phase will begin at the same moment all over the planet Earth, but will instead begin only in certain territories) is that there must be a socialization throughout the world of certain elements of continuity, by means of the international mass and specific organization. It is a mistake to think about defending or completing the transition within a limited territorial area. It is therefore equally mistaken to believe that the international forces of counter-revolution can be successfully fought by concentrating the revolutionary forces and experiences solely in the territory where the transition began. In fact, just the opposite is needed: local political strategies must be put into place in order to achieve this international socialization, obviously seeking to destroy the strong points of the international counter-revolution.

In effect, we must be able to act in the (too-often undervalued and forgotten) case that the transitional period begins outside the country and not only if it begins in our country.

If it begins in our country

In this case the insurrectional act may arise from one of the following situations:

1. a right-wing coup d'état to which the entire left responds with compact force, eliminates the need to reconstruct the pre-existing status quo and moves towards the road to a new type of society;
2. an electoral victory of the reformist left, followed by an autonomous decision of the grassroots factory committees, neighbourhood committees and school committees for mass direct action designed to obtain (both through legal means and by force) all that "socialists" consider to be right;
3. a radical general strike, supported and promoted by radical forces against a social democracy that is incapable of distributing the wealth of the country and of maintaining social justice.

If it begins in another country

In this case, the revolt of the proletariat oppressed by imperialism will provide a state of precarious economic equilibrium. The moment an exploited zone ceases to be exploited, the exploiting

countries will have to reduce their internal consumption and increase the exploitation of the weaker classes. It is thus necessary to support in every way the struggle of oppressed countries and ensure that in our country it becomes impossible to impose a strategy of increased exploitation by defending tooth and nail the economic conditions of the working classes.

This will be the starting point of our struggle, which will later have to be directed towards transforming the structures of the political management of our country, seeking to turn every strike into an insurrection and every insurrection into a revolution.

The beginning of the period of transition, in other words the destruction of a political power which is able to manage the politics, economy and ideology of a society without any great problems, is however only a challenging of one precise type of power which is historically defined and linked to an extremely precise class of people.

At this point, in a situation of an increasing clash between the old power that wants to regain lost ground and the oppressed classes that want to stop this from happening, there will develop a new clash: the clash between those who want to build a new power with the support of the oppressed classes and those who want to abolish power by splitting it up into fragments — one fragment for every human being.

It is thus necessary, in order to continue to be anarchist communists during the transitional period, to consider as enemies both the bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy and also the members of Marxist-Leninist parties. History has confirmed unequivocally the need for this.

Now, having distinguished two enemies (the old power and the supporters of a new power), we must specify that during the first phase of the transitional period (the insurrectionalist phase), the main enemy is the bourgeoisie and therefore we will find ourselves in solidarity with the Marxist-Leninists. But this solidarity with those who fight our common enemy must be exclusively military, and must be aimed at the essential and absolute need to preserve the autonomy of all the anarchist communist structures and the clear distinction from those of our ally-enemies.

The physical, political and ideological distinction between anarchist communists and others must be clear and we must always be ready not only to defend ourselves but even (whenever necessary) to attack our allies should they threaten our physical, political and ideological existence.

In the first phase of the transitional period, we can consider ourselves victorious if we have defeated the bourgeoisie and have not been destroyed or reduced to impotence by the Marxist-Leninists. We must be perfectly aware that what matters most in this first phase is not the ideological struggle (which will be in our favour, in any event) but almost exclusively the military struggle and what matters here is not ideology, but **STRENGTH** and numbers!

In the second phase of the transitional period (the construction of a socialist society), things will be very different with respect to the first phase.

The struggle against the supporters of the State (understood as an apparatus for the direction and control of the functions of a whole society), though remaining a military matter, will essentially be a political matter linked more to the success with which our ideas are accepted than to our ability to withstand a military clash.

Anarchist communism cannot be applied by force (though it must be defended by force) and so, in this phase we will have to make efforts to convince the unconvinced of the correctness of our ideas, both through the practical application of them and through discussion of our ideology.

We must allow everyone to experiment and to make mistakes (as long as they do not fight us) and welcome into our ranks those enemies who have changed their minds (ex-bourgeoisie or ex-Marxist-Leninists) without ever forcing anyone to behave as we would wish, but patiently

waiting for everyone to become convinced slowly but surely of what the whole of society can achieve.

If this happens, socialism will be born out of spontaneous social relations and natural economic relationships and in that way we can gradually build a socialist ideology.

The final act that we can and must predict today is the abolition of our own military force. It will probably happen naturally, but its extinction, when the moment comes to create it, will have to be clearly set out and foreseen, just as its creation will be.

After this, there will be the new society. No classes and therefore no class antagonism and, maybe, new problems for humanity, finally free from oppression.

The Specific Organization During the Transitional Period

The transitional period will be the definitive moment of truth, the unarguable verification of our theory and strategy, as long as our tactics are not wrong and the ratio of strength is not overly unfavourable to us.

In any case, no-one can tell what will happen during the transitional period and therefore no-one can predict anything precisely.

The economic and social characteristics of that historical period are neither predictable nor imaginable at a rational, scientific level. Furthermore it is perhaps unwise to make precise predictions in order not to fall into the error of presaging reality with a prediction that can only be purely ideological or theoretical.

One thing, though, is certain: if our anarchist communism is right, things will go according to our wishes. But if it is wrong, who knows what will happen.

Two things can invalidate this concept:

1. committing serious tactical errors
2. strength ratios which are overly unfavourable to us.

If the movement of all revolutionaries and/or our organization make tactical errors, if the strength ration within the revolutionary forces is unfavourable to us, then the task that awaits us is first and foremost to try with all our strength to oppose the errors and improve our strength ration. But it is also necessary to define (starting now) something that the historical experience of anarchist communists in Russia and Spain indicates as being of the utmost importance, that is to prepare and organize, during the transitional period, an organic plan (to be put into action should the libertarian revolution be defeated) for the survival of the specific organization and the mass organization.

Russia and Spain showed that when a revolutionary process is in progress, anarchists are not always, despite the enthusiasm and trust, able to express themselves completely. While not forgetting the errors made by the anarchists themselves, we should remember that in Russia the strength ratio of anarchists to Leninists was inferior, while in Spain, the revolutionaries made many tactical errors on a political and military level.

What happened must teach us that we have to be ready for defeat when the transitional period begins. We have to be ready to retreat with the fewest possible losses, to re-organize and attack

again in some other part of the world, at another time, the same struggle. Because it is not necessary, in fact it is downright dangerous, to allow ourselves to be destroyed and every member of the specific organization needs to know that should the anarchist communists be defeated in one country, the anarchist communists in 300 other countries are about to begin the same battle and must use the experience and the lessons learnt from our defeats, perhaps more so than from our victories.

THE FIRST TASK OF THE SPECIFIC ORGANIZATION DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD IS TO FORESEE AND ORGANIZE A RETREAT AND DEFEAT.

At this stage, having established that it is impossible to predict what will happen and having foreseen the worst, we need to define all the firm points that we can base ourselves on during the transitional period because while it is true that nothing can be predicted, it is also true that we can give ourselves the required knowledge and organization to allow us not to make the same errors again.

In the transitional period, the specific organization finds itself with two needs. The first is to exist and become stronger so that it can carry on its work of spreading anarchist communist ideas as efficiently as possible. The second is to weaken itself to the point of ceasing to exist, as its existence is incompatible with a society in which there is no class conflict.

Thus, on the one hand it must grow stronger while, on the other hand, should that happen, it must cease to exist.

In order to clarify this apparent paradox, we must refer to the two phases of the transitional period: in the first phase (the apex of the clash between classes), the specific organization must not only become stronger, it must also have a “military” form; the second phase (the elimination of class antagonism) is made possible thanks to the strength of the organization, but having completed its task, the specific organization must dissolve and extinguish itself.

For the extinction of the specific organization not to be a vain illusion and for the organization that we ourselves built not to become an impediment to the realization of our aspirations — a society without classes and without power — it is essential that we clearly and simply establish how to strengthen the specific organization without it becoming an organ of power, and how it is possible to ensure that its extinction is part of its very nature.

In the first phase of the transitional period, the specific organization must do what it has always done, that is to say:

- a. to bring the experience of past struggles into the current struggles;
- b. to act as a centre for debate and as a link between militants;
- c. to act as a pole of attraction for those new militants who in the latter phase of the class war will flock to our organization and who will have to be carefully selected, informed and added to the rest of the membership;
- d. to act as a centre of debate for all the problems that may arise and clearly indicate and propagate the tactic it recommends, and also denounce and combat the errors that will surely be made during the period;
- e. to clearly indicate allies and possible allies and support them unreservedly, but also to indicate just as clearly our enemies and fight them with every means;

- f. to support and participate in the military clash against the bourgeoisie and against all those who try to force a State (even a democratic one) or a dictatorship (even a proletarian one) on the triumphant revolutionaries.

If we consider the first four points, we can easily see how, as the social and political conditions change (that is, in the second phase), it becomes increasingly important to have a place (the specific organization) that is distinct from the rest of society, where certain questions can be tackled. In practice, as society itself gradually changes, it can become “the assembly” for all decisions and proposals.

This means that NATURALLY, and for objective reasons, all citizens (including the members of the specific organization) will find themselves actually having to carry out the functions of the specific organization.

But this is only possible as long as there are no enemies (organized bourgeoisie or supporters of the State) who fight this new democracy. In other words, it is possible only if we enter the second period of the transitional phase.

As far as the last two points above are concerned (e and f), the problem will be dealt with in the section dealing with the military question.

To conclude the question of the specific organization’s role in the transitional period, we can hypothesize a technical possibility for the extinction of the specific organization. As the constructive problems gradually overtake those of the physical struggle, the militants of the specific organization will find themselves operating increasingly in their workplaces, within the structures of the new society. It will therefore be possible at some precise point for a congress of the specific organization to dissolve itself into the structures of the new society once they are able to coordinate all or most of the problems regarding the whole of society.

On the Military Question

Once the transition has begun, while the work of social construction becomes urgent, there will still exist separately the mass organization and the specific anarchist communist organization.

From the point of view of enemies, there are various possibilities:

- enemies of the specific organization, of its propaganda, its action within the mass organization, etc.;
- enemies of the new social construction set in motion by the mass organization (internal and external enemies).

This would seem to be an objective fact, demonstrated by history.

The specific organization continues to carry out its specific task for an unforeseeable length of time. The problem of defence therefore hinges on the following points:

1. defence of the structures of the anarchist communist organization so that it can survive as a political organization;
2. defence of the structures of the mass organization, without which the revolutionary social construction itself would collapse;

3. defence of the work and achievements of the mass organization, or rather, defence of the revolutionary society itself.

As far as **Point 1** is concerned, it should be clarified that:

- in the transitional period, apart from the political defence of the specific organization, it will also be necessary to defend it militarily, for the same reasons;
- the function of the military defence of the specific organization is a technical function of coordinating militants in order to ensure the maximum effectiveness of the military action.

That being the case, the possibility that may arise for political deviations within the defence apparatus are closely linked to its technical organization and to possibilities of regression in the specific organization.

As far as **Point 2** and **Point 3** are concerned, this is a specific task of the mass organization's military apparatus, whose aim is to defend the work and development of the revolutionary libertarian proletariat.

This apparatus must be responsible to the normal decision-making structures of the mass organization, unquestioningly tied to its libertarian principles. Here too, within the military apparatus, there is the risk of separation and assumption of the direction of the mass organization.

One specific problem of this defence regards the possibility that, in various zones, there will always be some people who, despite not being regular members of the mass organization, decide to offer their military services for the defence of the social revolution. This will be a widespread phenomenon as the mass organization in this period will grow rapidly. But in order that it and its military apparatus grow correctly, two factors must be considered crucial:

- a. firmness of libertarian principles in the control and running of the revolutionary army;
- b. great elasticity in structures for the recruitment of new forces and in the coordination of combat units in the various zones.

These points are vital.

There then arise problems in the military relations between anarchist communist militants and militants of the mass organization:

- a. The anarchist communist militants are natural members of the mass organization and must act as such in the military structures of the mass organization, with a particularly intransigent defence of libertarian principles and in the solution of all practical problems connected thereto. However, they must never use their specific forces for actions which are contrary to and autonomous of the united forces, other than for the pure and simple defence of the existence (and never for the political line) of the specific organization itself.
- b. Can the specific organization launch a military mobilization against large political enemies (formation of proletarian dictatorships, new police forces, etc.)?

If the anarchist communist organization believes that political enemies of the **entire revolution** are being formed, even before an immediate and clear danger to the construction work of

the mass organization can be seen, then **it can and it must do something!** If these dangerous enemies are not merely obstacles to the pure and straightforward existence of the specific organization, then the organized militants **must be able** to elicit a military response which goes beyond simple “internal policing” by their organization.

In that case, the specific organization can and must propose an alliance with all the other anarchist communist organizations and militants and with the mass organizations. Everyone will be free to join the initiative or not.

If they do, the united military coordination must be strictly based on **precise, strict** lines, directing the military action in **precise and united** political ways with a precise aim (the defeat of the dictatorship, etc.) **and nothing else.**

If they do not, the specific organization must make a careful decision: either not to mobilize or to take the initiative itself as specific organization.

Attacking authoritarian State and police structures is not, in any event, harmful to the mass organization’s autonomy. The anarchist communist organization must encourage the masses to fight these political enemies and accept a programme and military structure suggested by the specific organization itself. If the cause is right and necessary, even those mass organizations and anarchist militants from other tendencies who were initially undecided will join in (in that case we must, as soon as possible, aim for a united and equally-representative military coordination between all the participating forces, though always with the condition of libertarian communist programmes and structures).

We will never tire of repeating that this type of military struggle will last until such times as its precise goal has been reached and is conducted with libertarian military structures.

The Task of the Mass Organization

One of the tasks of the specific organization before the transitional period is to “remind” libertarians who are part of the mass organization that the final goal of the class struggle is the revolution. Once this arrives, the mass organization must be able to transform its functions **from one day to the next.** From being an organ of economic struggle against the capitalists, it must become an organ for the coordination of production and distribution for the socialists.

This will be possible thanks to the fact that the libertarian organizational structure of the mass organization is not by its nature linked to any precise function, but as it is based on the principle of self-determination of its politics and practice, it only needs the conscious will of its members to transform the mass organization from being a labour union within the capitalist system into a basic structure for production and distribution in the socialist system.

This means expropriation and, at the same time, re-appropriation of the means of production.

On the first day of the revolution, this method will lead to the socialist society producing the same goods that were produced in the capitalist society.

The difference will be above all in the distribution industry, as it will be this which will immediately have to apply a principle (*to each according to their needs*) which is the exact opposite of the one which existed prior to that point (*to each according to their economic ability*).

It will then be the turn of every productive unit to pose itself the question both of the reduction of work and of the re-conversion of industry in a way that the principle “*from each according to their ability*” can be applied.

Self-management of the planning, production and distribution of goods will be carried out through the decision-making channels of the mass organization, so that in time the whole society can adapt itself to its own needs. However, one thing that must be immediately introduced is self-management, because no-one must be allowed even the slightest power to make decisions as it could result in some form of management power.

In order to achieve this aim, the mass organization will have to taken on, with great clarity and ability, all the decision-making tasks of society and it will have to defend itself, even more so as the political and military battle will be fierce, due to both attacks on the autonomy of the mass bodies and the struggle between specific organizations.

Naturally, we cannot predict the characteristics that this process will take on. We cannot predict mistakes or give indications: strength ratios, the maturity of the masses, social and political tension, practical needs, the international situation – these are all unpredictable. The only sure thing is this: demonstrating in even one neighbourhood, in even one factory, that self-management is possible means setting off an irreversible process that only a military defeat can block. On the other hand, no military victory, by itself, can make this process possible inasmuch as if whoever wins finds themselves with the possibility of making decisions, they appropriate this decision-making power by force.

Social organization will be based around collective participation in the political decisions and on recallable delegates for those representations that each factory and neighbourhood will need to have.

The libertarian mass organization will have to remain just that – distinct from society and from the other mass organizations – throughout the first phase of the transitional period and will welcome as members those who voluntarily and consciously approve of its activities.

Everyone will have to decide freely to join the mass organization and there will be a pressing need to ensure that everyone has both the chance and the will to join.

It is therefore necessary for the mass organization to take on the task of education and informing, allowing and promoting both inside and outside the organization the ideological debate (which becomes political during the transitional period, by force of things) that alone can determine the victory and the spread of a social practice based on the collective ownership of the means of production and on collective participation in the management of public affairs.

An anarchist communist victory will thus be the victory of right in this great debate, and our goal is exactly this: with the transitional period, when everything will be questioned, we will obtain what we have always desired. The whole society will transform itself into a huge assembly which will have to decide its own future and if we are then able to ensure that no force is able to impose decisions other than those which come from the right ideas, then we can happily predict now that everything will change for the better.

In the second phase of the transitional period, the reduction in the clash between classes and the almost total defeat of the reactionary forces will give rise to a widespread need among the population for a calmer, quieter life.

At this point, with the specific organization close to extinguishing itself, with the economy in a phase of restructuring and with the practice of self-management already spreading, the problems that will arise will be mostly centred around two political questions.

1. how to give society an efficient, self-managed organizational structure;

2. how to eliminate the political differences typical of the previous period and reach real political unity.

While the preservation of the “freed” society will depend on that society itself and therefore we can say that the solution to the first question will depend on the ability of all citizens, the elimination of political differences, on the other hand, will depend on the ability of the most conscious comrades (that is to say, the libertarians) to realize concretely a society where conflicts are always aired within a structure which includes everyone.

Only the relicts of the old society will remain outside the new one.

But for this to happen, it will be necessary for there to be, on the one hand, a maturing of political consciousness throughout society and, on the other hand, an EVOLUTION of the mass organization into society itself.

In practice, there should be a synthesis between society and the mass organization, in the sense that we should see, at the same time, everyone joining the mass organization (which in effect means that the mass organization becomes the organization of society) and the mass organization dissolving into society. This should all take place both by means of a conscious decision and as a result of a natural evolution.

This will depend on a real conviction being reached: that there are no more partisan interests, only collective interests.

At this stage, to go on with this line of reasoning would be to start describing the future society, because adding predictions and convictions about the transitional period would mean forgetting one fundamental thing, that is to say that no-one can or must decide for all the others. After all, the transitional period is in reality the moment when the others will decide without any power denying their freedom.

On the Relationship Between the Specific Organization and the Mass Organization

In the first phase of the transition there are two possible phases: one (taken for granted the need for the mass organization to build the new society) where the mass organization does not have the necessary clarity or strength to establish and fight its political enemies alone, the other where the mass organization does have this clarity and strength and inexorably becomes the new social government, in effect.

The length of the first phase is objectively determined by the conditions of the mass organization, by the enemies of the revolution and by the specific organization. It can range from zero to quite a considerable length of time. Even before the transition, the specific organization will have been working for the growth of the mass organizations so that they can be ready to support a revolutionary social government.

In the first phase of the transition, the anarchist communist organization must maximize this work and at the same time take action against the enemies of the revolution. How will it do this?

- a. Fighting these enemies must not damage the growth of the mass organization but prepare the ground for its autonomy.

- b. The specific organization **must** ensure that its political campaigns have the greatest effect on the masses and their approval, by means of the greatest possible involvement not only of wide sectors of the masses but also of the mass organizations themselves, allowing them the freedom to decide their position on the basis of their own real political conscience. In the first phase of the transition, **the specific organization will have to take the political initiative to clarify and explain who the enemies are and to invite everyone to join it in fighting them.**

If the specific organization makes mistakes in its campaign (moving too quickly, not explaining itself sufficiently, etc.), if it tries to impose its line on the masses in an authoritarian way (thereby itself becoming an enemy of the revolution), then the error will be seen in the low levels of mass participation and the political defeat of the specific organization. Thus:

- a. in the transitional phase, the specific organization must have the greatest possible number of contacts with the mass organization in all possible forms of political struggle, in order to give it the chance to develop;
- b. anarchist communist militants, natural members of the mass organization, must ensure that each occasion for new political and structural growth of the mass organizations must become new programmatic points, new structures, new functions, as a new social government, as the substitution of the same functions of the specific organization;
- c. the specific organization must continuously encourage the mass organization to take on those tasks for which it gradually develops political maturity and practical ability.

These three points are **enormously important** and require a good balance in the relationship between the specific organization and the mass organization.

As we can see, there needs to be a good balance between both organizations, the level of which must never remain still, but move ahead; a balance that requires continuous initiative by both organizations, with no prevarication. In fact, **in the first phase of the transition, we anarchist communist militants will be required to provide political initiative and behave with great correctness.**

The specific organization can and must have the political role of clarifying and driving on the anarchist communist revolution. It must do it by acting above all as a political organization, that is to say through continuous struggle and propaganda.

It must not have any false complexes. Once it respects the correctness of its relations with the mass organization, the specific organization **can and must** plough all its energies into unmasking enemies, launching political campaigns, prodding the mass organization, encouraging sincerely revolutionary militants to defend the revolution actively and to guide every problem towards a solution with energy, clarity and correctness.

On the Main Problems of Building Anarchist Communism

The problem of the new society is a problem that the FdCA must face at the level of basic strategy and cannot be avoided for the following reasons:

1. It is our task to summarize past experiments on the part of the exploited during previous revolutionary experiences, to find their limits and their errors. And it is this heritage which today shown us the pillars of a social revolution and the characteristics of a society without classes, which we can now define in more precise (though still incomplete) terms than past revolutionaries could. This is so much more important today as we need to recover the most basic motivation of our revolutionary being, that ideal tension be it “the practice of the imagination” or “practice of utopia” as some comrades have described it. This is all contained in establish in the most scientific and precise way all the various alternatives to the structures of capitalist domination and the capitalist society.
2. This section also includes a peculiarity which cannot be “written in stone” as with other parts of this document. In other words, it cannot just be decided and forgotten about; it must be the subject of a continuous process of study and research of past experiences and of the process we are involved in these days.

We are dealing here with the areas and content which the mass organizations must become capable of managing in the new society. They are, therefore, basic points of reference, starting now, for all the anarchist communist militants of our organization. For every one of these points we must establish what can be stated with certainty now and what can only be a matter of theoretical debate now but a practical matter in a future revolutionary transition.

a) Basic Strategy

Basic Strategy does not have to include the forms and make-up of the (future) free society; we can only set out the basic principles and recognize that, in order to apply them to our times, certain important problem must be resolved. Regarding these problems, we can be sure that:

- we do not even know them all, nor do we need to know them all in our Basic Strategy;
- we do not have any complete solution to the problems we do know.

b) Social and individual freedom

The anarchist communist society is a collective project and reality. As such it has the right to relate itself to every single individual. There is one error that this relationship must not fall into: that of privileging society (the system as compared to the individual). Once the anarchist communist society has been created, it must not become something which transcends the needs of the individual, a sort of god which exists for itself even at the cost of sacrificing the needs of human beings. We are not fighting for an anarchist communist society, we are fighting for a social agreement between human beings, one which we think must eliminate the current forms of exploitation and authority that we know today. If we believed in the anarchist communist system as something separate from the needs of so many human beings, as something to be achieved in its own right instead of as a means to resolve the needs of so many human beings without oppressing anyone, then we would be preparing ourselves to become idealists, dangerous authoritarians.

It may be that anarchist communism, once realized, will turn out to be only one stage towards the liberation of humanity: for us it would not be a defeat, since it is our (principal) aim to

achieve human freedom and one form of society or another is simply a more or less efficient tool to achieve this.

Anarchist communist society thus has the duty to make itself understood, because it is a project created by humans who have struggled for it and because it cannot be judged if it is not understood. It has the right to defend itself from those who understand it and who reject it in favour of a return to the socially unequal structures that previously existed. It does not have the right to defend itself from those who understand it but do not want to return to exploitation and think that it is possible to go further.

It has the duty to make sure it is understood.

It is a project of other human beings, it is the collective of human beings that has to make itself understood to every other human being who is not already a declared enemy.

It has the right to defend itself.

From those who do not want it to survive and make itself understood by others. We are only interested in making these enemies harmless to the life of the anarchist communist collective.

It does not have the right to defend itself.

From those who view the new society as a stage on the road to liberation and who will set out their criticisms, not in order to return to a society that we have already known (and will still know) to be wrong, but to go further along the road that has been taken.

This provides us with some basic lines:

- the need for discussion, for information, for libertarian and materialist maturity, as a basic foundation for the survival of the anarchist communist social project; it should be clear that we are not talking about pre-transition propaganda, but about the even more important propaganda required during the transition;
- the nature of the repression which will have to be only a response to those who want to repress us, only the repression of those who want to destroy us and set us back or take advantage of us for their own gain. It is difficult. It is easy to say (and we do say it) that we should not force others to join our social collective, but only limit ourselves to defending its existence and expansion; it is difficult to do it;
- the need for continuous constructive criticism among the members of the new society; the criticism should be made known to everyone, discussed by everyone and then transformed from a collective decision into a new theme of debate, a step forward a certainty or doubt to be clarified.

c) The socialization of wealth

Communism immediately: the law of value concerns exploitation, not socialism. Communism immediately with its law of needs, immediately with its problems so that they can be solved. And there will be problems. First of all how to enact the law of needs.

No form of wealth that can be used, either for the development of communism or for fighting it, must be allowed to remain in the hands of the bourgeoisie of any type.

Until such times as we can reach the productive power to satisfy every need of every person, certain needs will have to remain unsatisfied.

This leads to a double problem: do we establish a league table of needs (and if so, who will do it?) and who decides which needs remain unsatisfied? This is a huge problem, and one which must be resolved during the transition. But let us discuss it now. Strategically, we know it exists and that it is fundamental; but we must begin to talk about it, to make suggestions, to evaluate these suggestions, without however thinking that a few experts in the here and now can sit down around a table and solve the problem once and for all. Strategically, let us say that we must talk about it constructively and that we should carry out propaganda on the matter.

The league table of needs, the choice of prime needs..., these are scientific problems arising from a temporary situation of relative shortage of goods. There will be disorder, but we will have to leave as much of the production system as possible intact and operational. Rather than from “Man’s never-ending needs”, this relative shortage will derive from the destruction caused during the revolutionary war, from numerous transformations of the productive structures by the revolutionaries themselves in order to obtain, for example, more arms or vehicles with which to face the emergency that will eventually end. But above all, any shortages will mainly be due to the absurd use of the means of production currently on the part of the bourgeoisie. And this is reassuring. Mostly, it will be a case of conversion, more houses and fewer churches, more trams and fewer cars, and so on.

What is important is that **everyone be aware of this**.

Once we know these things, we will be happier to do without certain things because we will be preparing ourselves for greater satisfactions. And that’s it — the problem is not so much creating a league table of needs as in **letting everyone know** the real and full extent of the problem. On this basis, the technical problems take on a different dimension, they are not too worrying, they are something we can deal with. The new economic values will be things like making sure everyone has enough to eat, that the seas are clean, that we can breathe clean air, and so on. Working to solve these problems will mean working to solve our collective and individual problems. And it will also mean that everyone will be happy to take advantage of what science can offer.

d) Union of manual and intellectual labour

What does this mean? Does it mean spending half an hour discussing things around a table followed by half an hour digging the vegetable patch? No, the solution is more complex than that.

The principle is that the use of the workforce must not be guided by those who do not work. Every individual must be in a position to decide, organize and control his or her work as he or she sees fit. Everyone must know and be able to decide how to work and why. This is the principle.

It goes beyond a question of there having to be no technicians and manual workers, it goes to the source of this division. There must be no separation between command and work, those who command must not use the labour of others for their own interests.

The first step for the union of manual and intellectual labour is the abolition of exploiters and exploited, of those who work and do not know why, separated from those who direct this work for their own goals.

The second step is an appropriate scientific education for all. This is a problem with no easy answers. Now, we can say that:

- once alienation is eliminated, workers will once again take control of the objectives of their work, activating all the knowledge about the productive process that they have acquired through their work;
- the problems of production, in relation to the satisfaction of everyone's needs, concerns the new question of scientific education which will have to be introduced into the "schools" from the earliest years of the child's learning process and will have to be a general topic of continuous debate and information within the grassroots bodies.

The question must now be asked: is it possible to arrive at a situation where, in practice, we do not have some people who think more than others and others who do more manual work?

- As far a production in the fields and factories is concerned, there is no doubt but that it will be possible to eliminate the various managers of production.
- Instead, with regard to the areas that are today known as public administration, with the managers gone the work will undoubtedly be reduced to much fewer people with purely executive, more functional tasks.
- The last problem (and the biggest) concerns those areas that require much greater scientific knowledge (medicine, engineering, biological sciences, information technology, etc.). This subject requires study and debate, starting now, though much of the problem will only be solved when the time comes to deal with it.

The basic points to be remembered are:

1. to eliminate from every scientific branch the functions and knowledge that are only required by a class society in order to keep science separated from the proletariat, in other words, those things that are not necessary for turning science to the needs of all;
2. to see to what extent this knowledge is divisible, at a mass level, so that there can be mass control over its use;
3. to discuss realistically the relationship that the specific technicians of these branches of science will have to have with the mass organizations, in other words with the social government.

As basic strategy, this matter interests us only in its basic lines and in how to establish the problems. To recap, the basic points regarding the re-appropriation of intellectual labour are:

- science as a means of satisfying the needs of the collective;
- the division of knowledge hitherto protected with the aim of exploiting;
- education for all;
- continuous education and information;
- the elimination of management over workers;
- the control of specialist technicians, to be given purely executive roles.

e) Self-management of powers

As before, the basic principles and lines with which we must face the main problems. It is pointless to go over the basic principles again here as they are amply dealt with in our Theory, in our Basic Strategy document on the Mass Organization and in this document; at most we only need to re-state them with greater precision.

However, apart from the principles themselves, there are also some problems connected with putting them into action.

The only really serious problem is in the operation of real democracy. There are four aspects to this: the consciousness of the masses, knowledge and information, functionality, and the function of the executive and the technicians.

The first thing is CONSCIOUSNESS. The consciousness of everyone being able and having to decide. If serious mistakes are made in this area, then the entire revolutionary democracy would be at risk. We already know that before the transition, apart from building a revolutionary force, all our political work must be directed at building a consciousness of what the social revolution will mean (in other words, the mass self-management of powers).

Despite this, we must foresee the (extremely likely) eventuality that the transition will begin while there are still large gaps as far as this is concerned. There are therefore two needs:

- to apply our greatest efforts into clarifying, propagandising, spreading and discussing their consciousness (a task for the anarchist communist organization and, more importantly, for the mass organization);
- to not allow these gaps to lead to a distorted functioning of the new mass decision-making bodies. The trickiness of this problem cannot be over-emphasized. On the one hand, there is the risk that any gaps in the self-management consciousness of the masses becomes a pretext for the formation of structures where decision-making power (**not** executive power!) is delegated. On the other hand, it will have to be ensured that the functioning of the mass decision-making bodies is equally guaranteed, that is to say, to ensure that decisions are made equally in assemblies. Undoubtedly, we will have to study the most functional methods for the informing, calling and operation of assemblies. Let us repeat: the fulcrum of all this will be the mass organization.

KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION will obviously be the basis on which proletarians make their decisions. Knowledge of the general lines of each matter where they are called on to decide, constant and up-to-date information so that each decision can be the best possible one.

Without these, decisions will be uninformed, impossible to carry out or not suited to the problem in question. In fact, it could lead to the dangerous situation where technicians would predominate. In this area, more than in any other, alongside the anarchist communist organization's action of stimulus and propaganda, there must also be propaganda, stimulus and the building of adequate structures and means by the mass organization.

The FUNCTIONALITY of the mass structures is the logical consequence of the previous points. In the mass organization, the most conscious comrades will need to constantly remember and remind others that the creation of functional structures for mass democracy will have to be planned on the basis of the practice and growth of the consciousness of self-management, knowledge and information.

Once the first phase of the transition has begun, it will be a matter of providing a basis for the practical functioning of a social government that will win or lose in this phase. Only by winning will there be a basis for entering the second phase of the transition to anarchist communism.

ONLY if what was stated in the previous points occurs can there be a correct relationship between the decisions of the masses and any executive and technical or consultative bodies.

The executive bodies will have to operate according to precise rules, established by decision-making assemblies, regarding their relationship with decision-making assembly bodies.

We all know that the danger which derives from an erroneous conception or functioning of an executive is enormous, placing the entire revolution at risk. Let Spain be a lesson.

To summarize: great attention to the mass organization and great vigilance of its work by the anarchist communist organization.

The New Society

Before Karl Marx came along with his scientific socialism, all socialism was thought of as utopian.

For many people science and the creative tension for a new society are concepts which are contrary to and incompatible with each other.

We anarchist communists believe that it is right to reject the type of socialism that, in an attempt to escape scientific analysis of the situation, takes refuge in an idealistic vision of a future society. But it is equally right to reject outright that dismal concept of the Stalinist sort which views the future society exclusively as the fruit of economic and social forces which are scientifically examinable as regards their historical evolution.

By the term “creative tension for a new society”, we mean that which does not exist today, but is in our hearts. It is right that we achieve it and it is possible, against the wishes and the force of those who do not want anything new.

For us, science and utopia are not opposed to each other — they are simply different. Science is never something separate and independent from political will, which always determines its direction and its objectives. Science, that is to say the laws of nature, is discovered for a REASON and is used for another REASON. Whether the reason is the utopia of the perfect society or the desire to hold onto an unjust society, is something that depends on human beings.

Our socialism is therefore scientific but also a socialism of desires, a moral, creative socialism consisting of analyses of the situation and political needs, but also of a desire to create a just society which is within our ability to create.

To deny the value of this means believing in the incapacity of human beings to determine themselves and the collective they are part of, whereas we emphasize the potential ability of the whole of humanity to determine (scientifically and not idealistically) its own future.

For this reason, we must and we can talk about the future society now, or rather of the principal characteristics which we believe it must have, and in the full knowledge that there are serious limits to the extent to which we can do this. In other words, it is impossible to give an absolute value to what is said now, given the unpredictable nature of any society which may appear once the creative potential of humanity has been released, once this capacity has been freed from the age-long oppression of power.

We believe, furthermore, in the need to provide room also for a political debate on this voluntary, moral and creative tension, because this debate has its origins both in the purely “economic” needs of the exploited and in the need of every repressed human being to express him or herself completely and freely in society. This leads to a debate on the fragile ideological framework of this society which must be completely destroyed, with all its taboos and lies, before, during and maybe also after the political and military victory over capitalism and State socialism.

The concept of a better future society is identified by anarchist communists in the free society. But for freedom to be possible, it must be guaranteed by certain objective factors that we can list.

Firstly, it is essential that the division of humanity into social and economic classes disappear. Every art and trade must be equally respected and considered. Work, whatever it may be, must be important for what it is — work, and every worker must do a job that is, from the qualitative point of view, the equivalent of the jobs of other workers.

This means abolishing the distinction between manual labour and intellectual labour. However, this must not come about through a law which introduces equality between the two, but through a re-organization of society that can give everyone the chance to do both manual and intellectual work, so that the “intellectual” workers do not maintain control of knowledge and the “manual” workers do not maintain control of the transformation of materials.

The private property of the means of production must be abolished, but without entrusting property to any State apparatus. It must be the collective that guarantees the socialization of goods which are not for personal use and this must be done by means of constant control over the goods themselves.

In order for this to happen, it is essential that the management of the collective’s political and social life be really in the hands of the whole collective. Only this can guarantee the liberty of every individual and ensure that new forms of power do not reappear.

This will guarantee that the economy and politics of the whole society will suit those who decided them, in other words humanity, and not one class or one party.

One final thing. In order that a society be free also from economic need, it is essential that society’s wealth as regards necessary and indispensable goods be sufficient to enable satisfaction of the principle “FROM EACH ACCORDING TO THEIR ABILITY, TO EACH ACCORDING TO THEIR NEEDS”. The practical application of this principle will ratify the reaching within society of a new state of relations between human beings, consisting of solidarity and not envy, brotherhood and not enmity.

To conclude, in that society we will see the liberation of the individual from oppression by power. The individual will participate in and identify (as a free individual) with a non-oppressive collective. This is exactly what Bakunin had in mind when he said “I will be truly free only when everyone else is free”. A collective will never be able to give its members freedom as long as even one of its members does not participate with a free spirit.

We look forward to a society of free women and men, of young people who gain their freedom through a free education, of old people who live their age with the consciousness of having lived a real life. It is for all this that we insist in our struggle today.

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On the Transitional Period
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