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Emancipation

from the Anarchist Encyclopedia — S. Faure

G. Yvetot

1934

Emancipation: Of Latin origin, emancipatio, from the root, mancipium, slave. To emancipate someone is to remove from him the yoke that enslaved him, to free him, to set loose from any form of servitude. To emancipate oneself is to free oneself, to set oneself loose through one's own efforts. The word emancipation means the passing from the state of enslavement to that of freedom, the act of liberation of an individual, a nation, a class.

The bourgeois give this word a meaning different from that which, for us, has to do with the famous prophecy of Karl Marx: The emancipation of the workers will be the task of the workers themselves. This simple and clear meaning has been adopted by all the true emancipators of the proletariat, by those who don't contradict themselves by participating in electoral politics after having proclaimed the doctrine of auto-emancipation.

All anarchist propaganda is aimed at this goal: the economic and social liberation of individuals, their individual emancipation.

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All the propaganda of revolutionary unions is aimed at the same goal in specifying that they want the complete liberation of the workers, the collective emancipation of the producers.

Both thus want the complete emancipation of those who are exploited and enslaved by the capitalist system. Which is to say that they both identically tend towards a social emancipation that can only end in a revolution such as has never been seen, since the Commune of 1871 was defeated and the Russian Revolution was only able to arrive at the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

Advocating libertarian education, guiding the working masses of the cities, the sea and the fields to administer themselves through agreements is to create a popular mentality appropriate to the concept of a free society of emancipated producers. It means training a generation of individuals capable of organizing a free life for free men.

We think that it is thus that the social emancipation of all should be conceived. But in order to emancipate others it is indispensable to first emancipate oneself, by ridding oneself of all the prejudices concerning hierarchy, discipline, etc, that have nothing to do with Freedom, Accord, and Union for Life.

— G. Yvetot