

Anarchist Communist Manifesto

International Anarchist Communist Federation

Late 1920s

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Translator's note: *The period following the Russian revolution was one of great change for anarchists, many of whom fled to France to escape oppressive regimes. One contribution to the debates of the time was the Organizational Platform of the General Union of Anarchists - Project, produced by a group of Russian exiles including Makhno. Following publication of this, a group of Italian anarchists founded the 1st Italian Section of the proposed International Anarchist Communist Federation¹. The document below, dating from the latter half of the 1920s is the Manifesto of this Italian group, one of whose members was Giuseppe Bifolchi. Bifolchi later had to leave France and went to Belgium where he founded the monthly journal "Bandiera Nera" (Black Flag). During the years of the Spanish Revolution, Bifolchi fought as a commander in the Italian Column.*

Anarchist Communist Manifesto²

Anarchist-communists are unanimous in affirming that the principle of authority which today's institutions are based on is the fundamental cause of all social ills, and it is therefore for this reason that they are today, tomorrow and forever, unyielding enemies of political authority (*the State*), of economic authority (*Capital*) and of moral and intellectual authority (*Religion and Official Morality*).

In short: anarchist-communists are against all the dictatorships of political, economic, scientific or religious derivation; on the other hand they are sincere partisans of a form of social organization which is based on the free association of producers and consumers with the aim of better satisfying the various needs of the new society.

They are communists, because having carefully examined the social question in all its facets they are of the opinion that only a society based on libertarian communism will be able to guarantee every one of its members the greatest well-being and freedom.

They are revolutionaries, not for any fanaticism for glory in blood, but because they have observed that reforms are illusory and at the mercy of the whim of the ruling powers. These powers, even if they are democrats, are activated by reactionary despotic financial forces, evident or hidden, and only an Anarchist Revolution can put an end to the government and exploitation of man over man.

They are individualists, not in the sense of an exaggerated respect for the individual which, however it may be disguised, is a form of authoritarianism, but because they are supporters of communism for the very reason that it guarantees every individual the greatest physical, intellectual and moral development.

They are educationalists, because they believe that the best chance that the Revolution has of arriving sooner and having greater effect is directly linked to the level of revolutionary social education of every individual. They are convinced that the Revolution will be the logical natural product of the large-scale explosion of collective revolt, rendered conscious by a widespread understanding of the injustice of the present capitalist social system. Education of this type excludes the contemplative, fatalist, passive education which is an end in itself.

¹ A. DADÀ, *L'anarchismo in Italia: fra movimento e partito*, Milan 1984.

² The manifesto is in IISGA, *Fondo U. Fedeli*, b. 175, and now also in A. DADÀ, *op.cit.*

Social Programme

Anarchist communism, indispensable for the realization of a society without exploiters or exploited, is based on the free cooperation of individuals in order to satisfy each others economic, intellectual and moral needs, since it is only right that the organizations born from within the working class should regulate social functioning after the Revolution.

Inspired by the formation and development of an ever-growing number of associations in all fields of human activity, anarchist-communists have seen that the the spirit of association and federalism is ever more predominant due to the fact that political and economic centralism is providing ever more mediocre answers to the new needs of technical, scientific and social progress.

Encouraged by a similar libertarian tendency, anarchist-communists continue to be supporters of a social organization which will develop into the Commune, a local demographic agglomeration which is large enough to be able to practise social solidarity effectively by organizing the production in a rational way and, in its every act, taking into account the inviolable liberty of individuals and associations.

The libertarian Commune, in the way anarchist-communists understand it, is not a version of the present-day municipal councils nor is it a representation in miniature of any government, but a moral and material pact which unites the inhabitants of a given area in a common project in the economic, intellectual and moral field which can allow every individual of whatever sex and age to enjoy the right to freedom and to well-being, as far as the possibilities of production permit, naturally.

Relations between different Communes can be managed without useless, even dangerous interference from the central, national and international powers, in the knowledge that federalism is a basic condition for the safeguarding of the principle of freedom upon which the new communist society will rest.

Without wishing to go into long, bothersome detail which is almost always rendered null by tomorrow's reality, anarchist-communists, as a large part of their pre-Revolutionary programme, consider it sufficient to hold to the general lines of the libertarian Commune based on federalist or sovietist cooperation, sovietist in the sense of decentralization and as a spontaneous, conscious emanation of the technical and political capacity of the working class.

Organization

The proletarian coalitions for defence and attack against the constituted powers which have as their specific aim the maintenance of the present state of exploitation and oppression are not recent creations. They are the natural result of a painful centuries-long experience, given that individual revolt, though always appreciable for its courage, nobility and the spirit of sacrifice of the iconoclast, can never affect the organisms of oppression which are solidly organized and can never come close to effecting any social improvement or transformation.

It is for this reason that anarchist-communists are not content with proclaiming the goodness of their libertarian principles, but rather they unite in groups, in federations, in national unions and in the international union, in order to better resist and bring about the single moral and material front against the powers of repression and exploitation. It is in this way that they can

provoke, in the near future, the vast, tragic and painful epilogue to this uninterrupted class war, the libertarian Revolution, to bring about a definitive end to the existence of all classes.

History brims with examples of the repression of such unions carried out in every place and time by governments of all types, but the sole fact that they constituted a single, constant target which is stronger than the capitalist violence (and will continue to do so), encourages anarchist-communists to persist in their path, the only one capable of channeling the forces of the exploitation towards the emancipating Revolution.

With regard to organization, the present generation of anarchist-communists are certainly unanimous in recognizing that thus far their predecessors have done precious little to realise it, given the bitter, continuous reaction they were victims of and anarchism's lack of an ideological unity which could permit their physical unity without which, and despite popular disgust with the parliamentary farce and the undeniable decomposition of bolshevism, anarchism will be unable to find its way into the hearts of the working masses, the only ones who can bring about the Revolution.

But after the war, fascism and above all the painful lessons of the Russian Revolution of 1917-1919 (where anarchism only played a secondary role from the social point of view, despite its considerable intellectual development and its innumerable sacrifices and owing to its chronic disorganization, both in its constructive and often in its destructive programmes according to the most involved libertarians in the Russian movement), there arose amongst anarchist-communists from all countries a concrete idea of the necessity and the aims of anarchist organization, based on single, universal ideological and tactical principle, excluding the reluctance that smells of byzantinism and certain ideological and tactical reservations which are the most marked characteristics of bourgeois socialist democracy.

Let this tendency develop and triumph, since, if we seek further development of anarchism as a current of popular liberation and emancipation, it is right to wait until anarchist-communists are able to oppose the authoritarian coalitions with a strong, tenacious libertarian coalition with a homogeneous programme of destruction and reconstruction and homogeneous tactics.

Only in this way can there be the full participation in society of all those among the working masses who have been fooled by the daily lies of the bourgeois press and by certain revolutionary demagoguery and who continue to be ignorant of, misunderstand and even scorn the ideal for which so many have sacrificed and continue to sacrifice their lives, their freedom and a happy life.

1st Italian Section of the International Anarchist Communist Federation

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Published in The Northeastern Anarchist No.9 2004

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