

At work

Jean Grave

1919

After five years of enforced silence, Les Temps nouveaux have resumed their place in the struggle for human emancipation.

Perhaps, in my opinion, they resumed it too early, and before being fully equipped.

We should have organized our correspondence in such a way as to have an interesting global social movement. We should have organized the sale of the issue, so as not to be forced to set a price for a copy and subscription which could be an obstacle to our development.

I would have preferred that a whole work of organization had been started before risking the appearance. My opinion did not prevail. It remains for us to do afterwards, what was not done before.

Let us begin by organizing the sale of the issue: by the booksellers, it is too expensive, but the comrades can suffice.

To all those who think like us, to all those who think that the magazine can do good work, we ask you to organize in your locality a small group of comrades who think like them, even if there are only three or four to start with.

These comrades would take from us the number of copies they think they can handle.

These copies, they would distribute them free, or sell them at a high price, or at a reduced price, as they think fit. But these copies would be paid to the Administration at the high price, except for a 30% discount (whether the issues are sold or distributed). As Pierrot will explain in a future issue on the subject of subscriptions, sending out free issues is quite effective, but expensive; we can only practice it on a small scale.

There are still other ways: individuals can do what we said about groups, that is to say, take several issues on their own account. And all these means, used together, one helping the other, can give appreciable results, if each in his corner, wants to work at it to the extent of his strength.

All the more so since, having got into the habit of meeting, comrades can, in everyday life, find an employment for their activity.

Our rulers, far from taking measures to prevent speculators from amassing scandalous fortunes by starving the population, favor them, on the contrary, by a senseless policy of excessive protection. But the public, rather sheep-like until now, is beginning to show its teeth, and seems to want to protect itself. Here is already an opportunity for anarchists to get involved in these movements.

Getting involved individually is good; but getting along among one another, beforehand, is even better; hence the usefulness of small groups of comrades. We are much stronger when we act in concert.

Why did the Russian Revolution, the German Revolution, the Hungarian Revolution fail, — as far as what their goal was supposed to be, at least — is that the revolutionaries were not grouped, lacked cohesion. “Organized” groups of citizens should have replaced the bourgeois political and economic machinery; whereas, as in political revolutions, it was individuals who seized power! Flawed from the start, these revolutions had to fail.

If we do not want, once again, to demonstrate our impotence when opportunities to act present themselves, grouping together must be our first task. Grouping together, not to discuss endlessly but to do work, whenever it presents itself, to instigate it if necessary.

To sum up, while waiting to realize a fairly ambitious program, given the situation that the comrades, to begin with, get in touch with us, let them let us know what they can do for the review. We will see later how to expand our action.

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