

PLATFORM OF CONFEDERALIST UNION



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INTRODUCTION

The 20th century, a period of world-historical changes and great revolutions, came full circle with the full domination of the international state-capitalist system. From the 1970's to the beginning of the 21st century, societies around the world have lived under the boot of the ruling elites, western pseudo-democracies, dictatorial regimes, suffocating social control and extreme capitalist exploitation. Political and class struggles burning for the last two centuries risked being extinguished by the onslaught of the nation-state and capital, in a violent process of restructuring and readjusting the global system of oppression and exploitation of both human beings and the ecosystem as a whole.

At the same time, in parallel and dialectically with the advance of domination, the 21st century began, bringing with it a great wave of uprisings worldwide, which are reconstituting resistances and movements and reopening the cause of social revolution and political change across the globe. This cause develops from the basis of necessity: a social, class and political task for societies, peoples, movements and each and every individual.

In this local and global environment, we recognize the need for the mobilization of militant radical forces, movements and societies to cope with the multiform terrorism of state and capitalism and its attacks against every aspect of social and physical life. To build a broad, horizontal, confederal movement, organized both practically and theoretically for today and tomorrow that will lay the foundation for a realistic social and political program of revolutionary change.

ORGANIZING OUR RESISTANCE, CONFEDERATING OUR STRUGGLES

On this basis, we call for an organizational proposal of coalescence which is the fruit of a collective process following a call for co-organization from the Assembly of Squatted Prosfigika together with other comrades and collectives. It is the result of our common understanding on the question of the urgent need to realize the propositions of the libertarian radical movement in the here and now.

More specifically, we believe that in order for a movement, a political space or even a collective, not only to be able to withstand the pressure of the powers and repression, but also to be able to really set its projects in the present, it must organize itself on this need and perspective. When it does not organize itself in this way, in a multifaceted and multidimensional way, it cannot express the needs and struggles of the oppressed against the tyranny of the nation-state, capitalism and patriarchy, the main pillars of the global system of power of capitalist modernity. Its action cannot leave any historical imprint and influence on the dialectical development of things.

The proposal we put forward concerns the creation of a platform to which collective bodies and individualities will commit themselves with a strong programmatic agreement, attempting to co-opt them on the basis of a common framework of political community. The practical expression of this framework is, on the one hand, to be active from a radical and militant point of view in social and political struggles, locally and internationally, and, on the other hand, to be constituted in terms of a movement. The Platform, as a guide for our struggles and a vehicle of development, makes fertile ground for the reconstruction of a movement forged in the coherence of means and ends, which will move decisively and effectively towards a clarified goal, attempting an organized and collective action for social change towards a cohesive society. Fragments and characteristics of this society are here, scattered through the world and through time, as they are traditions of humanity for many centuries before the age of modernity and during it, up to the present day.

The Platform poses the question of a political and practical program on a contemporary basis, while at the same time attempting to overcome a number of political and organizational weaknesses of the radical movement concerning the connection, unity and perspective of the radical struggle. It attempts to promote a general rather than central unification of the radical, libertarian movement more broadly, organized in revolutionary communities, confederated on long-term and short-term plans/strategies of struggle, with understandings of collective responsibility and commitment as a cornerstone. It is essentially a practical general revolutionary organizational program of direct action and social engagement in the here and now.

"In all countries, the anarchist movement expresses itself in different local organisations which advocate different theories and practices, having neither prospects for the future nor a continuity of militancy, and usually disappear...On the whole, this situation of revolutionary anarchism can only be described as 'chronic disorganisation" [i]

[i] Diello Truda (Worker's Case) - The Organizational Platform of the Libertarian Communists (ARDIN Publications)

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PLATFORM

1. Long term plans and Strategy¹ as well as Stable Structures

It is the combination of the two that gives a realistic perspective to the hypothesis of social revolution. The territorialization of our struggles in social and militant terms, as well as the organization of our struggle with a prospective planning of our movement, are the link that unites us. The movement and society as our subject of reference in a unity of means, ends and their realization.

Stable structures are the basic material condition needed for the realization of our ideas and proposals, playing on the one hand a decisive role in the formulation/achievement of long-term and short-term strategy, and on the other hand providing answers to the daily questions of life and struggle (economic, social, cultural). Structures of social, political and class organization, self-defense, propaganda, accounting, and every aspect of social life (health, education, food, housing, etc.) are the rooted foundations we need to respond to the ongoing struggle against oppression.

Through the collective development and practical work in each of these structures, common experience is built and collective memory is consolidated in material terms, so that knowledge, technique, and, even more so, common perspective, are transmitted as collective acquisitions. The most suitable condition for breaking the unilateral specialization that sustains the de-socialization of knowledge and experience in contemporary hegemonic systems is the collective creative work in such structures as an organizational kinetic basis.

[1] It is important to stress that for libertarian/radical forces any pursuit of long-term and certain alliances with state or institutional actors is a serious mistake, which will inevitably cause enormous damage to their reference societies. At the same time as relations between libertarian-radical forces have a strategic character, relations with state or institutional actors of capitalist modernity are necessarily characterized by tactical flexibility and short-term character.

2. Common ideological basis: Anarchist Communism

It is necessary to define a common ideological starting point. We take the term ideology to mean a whole system of ideas, values and concepts, a set of tools for analyzing the world (e.g. historical and dialectical materialism, class analysis, etc.). A worldview, but not as something dogmatic (i.e. a sterile model that is not living, not evolving). At the most primary level, ideology is a basis on which society is built at the imaginary level. It realized through our struggles, fleshed out in modes of organization (social, economic, political, cultural), giving form to our freedom. (see the imaginary institution of society - Castoriadis)

We believe that Anarchist Communism can be a sufficient ideological starting point for co-organization with a revolutionary perspective, as the most forward-looking current of the socialist-revolutionary tradition.

Bringing it to the present day, utilizing the already existing legacy it leaves us, enriching it at the same time with the appropriate organizational and theoretical models, we can formulate a complete organizational proposal for society.

We have no illusions about the partiality carried by the revolutionary ideologies of modernity. Their updating through the richness of the struggles and ideas of the 20th century is an issue for modern revolutionary movements.

"Libertarian communism seeks to put an end to all manipulation and violence, whether directed against individuals or against popular masses. Towards this goal it will create an economic and social basis which will unite all sectors of the community, ensuring each individual an equal position among the others and allowing everyone the maximum welfare. Its basis is the common ownership of all the means and instruments of production (industry, transport, land, raw materials, etc.) and the building of economic organizations based on the principles of equality and self-management of the working masses" ^[i]

The ideology of Anarchist Communism can remain alive and rich in meaning as long as it preserves its values and draws its characteristics from the needs and interests of the oppressed—that is, its creators itself. It can be understood as a collective recognition that, only by horizontality and self-organization, can we come to confront the interests of the bourgeoisie, the oppressors of societies. The basic pillars of the ideology of Anarchist Communism are: freedom from any bond of exploitation, the abolition of centralization, communal ownership of resources and means of production and their equal sharing according to needs, the formation of communities, collective responsibility, free (and not wage) labour relations, equality and solidarity. These pillars are inextricably linked to social self-organization, which can in practice structure a classless and free society, promoting the free development of the individual as an active social subject. The collective recognition of responsibilities and the preservation of ideological values at the core of any kind of activity can bring together dialectically a wide range of different tendencies in the movement.

To be more specific and leaving for the moment a historical and etymological account of the terms anarchism, anarchy, communism, utopian and scientific socialism within their historical development, we recognize all these movements and ideologies as parts of the socialist movement of the oppressed class, which emerged in early modernity and continues to the present day.

However, by anarchist communism we do not refer to a combination of anarchism and communism as different trends in the revolutionary movement, but to a distinct trend within it as expressed by anarchist revolutionaries over the last three centuries. Anarchist, because it is founded on the total rejection of the current political, economic and social system of power based on centralization and the exploitation of all forms of life. It is an ideology that, although in the present has evolved into a transversal and multiform struggle, was born from and remains the cause of the oppressed. Communism, (i.e. communalism in a didactic translation, as the organizational and political expression of communities) because it is a social formation necessary to give form to our freedom and to preserve what we have achieved through the struggle. It is a proposal of life against the society of capitalist modernity. It is based on the decisions of the community, in which, through solidarity and reciprocity, each subject will find its full expression and develop. Communities manage the means and products of production and their equitable distribution. Through joint work and on the basis of the capacities of each individual, collective needs are met.

3. Collective responsibility and collective program, as the way and culture of the constitution and functioning of our revolutionary communities

"The fields of revolutionary life, social and political, are above all profoundly collective in nature. Social revolutionary activity in these fields cannot be based on the personal responsibility of individual militants" [i]

The creation of a common program and the commitment to its realization on the basis of the collective responsibility borne by the whole and at the same time by each individual, is the proof of a conscious and responsible understanding of the militant task, as well as its only effective expression. The understanding of responsibility that results from commitment to the common agreements and to the short or long-term plans that make up a collective program is the only guarantee of freedom for all and for each individual. It is freedom in terms of responsibility. The "freedom to..." and not "freedom from..."

When we refer to the term collective responsibility we are not referring to a state of collective coercion. We understand it, as explained above, as the natural way of constituting all kinds of relations, in an environment of interdependencies and interconnections. The essence of the term collective responsibility expresses in this way the conscious and yet fundamentally unconscious participation of each and every thing within an organic whole. A basic example of such an organic whole is the natural world, which is self-created and self-organized in every aspect. Collective responsibility is a way of physically co-organizing and expressing this natural paradigm in social functioning.

"...the whole Union will be responsible for the political and revolutionary activity of each member in the same way, each member will be responsible for the political and revolutionary activity of the Union as a whole" [i]

4. Class struggle and class analysis

"In the history of human societies, this class struggle has always been a primary factor in determining the form and structure of these societies.

The social and political status of all states is above all the derivative of the class struggle. The fundamental edifice of each new society shows us the level towards which the class struggle has moved and is moving. The slightest change in the course of the class struggle, as far as the relative positions of the forces of the class struggle are concerned, brings about constant modifications in the structure and organization of society"^[i]

In order to overthrow every aspect of the existing social and political condition and reality, we must first understand it in its totality, uncovering its structural elements and interpreting historical-social phenomena. The bases of any form of organization of society are structured by the social relations and the culture they bear, the mode and means of production (economic relations), as well as the prevailing material conditions. In recent centuries capitalism has been the dominant system/way of organizing the social imaginary and the economy. It is characterized by private ownership, the concentration of the means of production and wealth in a very small part of society, the bourgeoisie, leading directly to wage labour as the only means of survival for the majority of the population, the class of the oppressed, transcending the narrow concept of the working class. The entire bourgeois ideology is based on the moral superiority of the bourgeoisie, in metaphysical terms. The pretext of this moral superiority, combined with the prevailing material conditions, ultimately assimilates and adapts the social whole to the formed camps of capitalist modernity.

"Like all those that have gone before it, the bourgeois capitalist society of our time is not 'one humanity'. It is divided into two quite different camps, differentiated socially by their positions and functions, the proletariat (in the broad sense of the word) and the bourgeoisie" ^[i]

The two social strata in which humanity tends to be ultimately classified are not in harmonious relationship with each other, but rather in constant war. This antagonism is based on the conflicting interests of the two classes. The constant increase in the profits of the bosses and the exploitation of the working masses go hand in hand. This antagonism can only be overcome by the revolution of the oppressed internationally, the socialization of the means of production, and the destruction of capital, classes and the

nation-state. Today workers' struggles are alive and well, standing as one of the main resistances against the further impoverishment and devaluation of our lives. Precisely because class struggle is a dynamic process that directly affects every aspect of social life - from the smallest to the largest manifestations - we recognize that we are a constitutive part of it, with a decisive role. What is at stake is the optimal change of class, political, and social relations in favor of the revolutionary movement, with the maximum means at our disposal. We owe it to ourselves, as parts of the international class of the oppressed, to enter the arena in radical terms, means, tools and analysis, trying to bring out (once again) the revolutionary perspective of class struggle in contemporary conditions.

"...we must participate in our revolutionary unions as an organized force, responsible to the general anarchist union and with the direction of the latter, in order to carry out the work in the union" [i]

In the long term, the only option for the survival of the oppressed is the violent overthrow and destruction of the bourgeois edifice. Only an international radical workers movement, autonomous and non-aligned, far from opportunist forces and reformist characteristics, can be an active arm for social change.

Through the tool of class analysis we do not attempt to pass over the reality of the class as an organizational model of society as such. The great wealth of social sciences and humanities that has infused the movements with a more holistic and inclusive understanding of the complexity of what we call the world of capitalist modernity and the matrix of control and power relations that accompany it, does not negate the social basis and reference of the overall matrix of domination, but on the contrary confirms it. Classes, beyond their mere accounting-economic reference, as it has been analyzed mainly by Marxism, constitute the imaginative, theoretical and stereotypical perceptual and propositional basis of the world of domination. The organization of society under their possession, and therefore of their subjects, is the projection of these imaginative and worldviews onto the basis of social organization and activity.

5. Communal Confederation as the common organizational basis, dialectically linked to Autonomy and organic unity, as an integrated social system

Thus, as expressed through the Kurdish Freedom Movement's vision, Communal Confederationism is the actualization of the anarchist project of federalism as the main programmatic proposal of the libertarian and radical projects.

Confederalism must be understood as a whole, as a consciously formed set of interdependencies and interactions that unites communities through a carefully controlled (by the communities themselves) system of coordination. It involves the equal union of heterogeneities, the dialectical plan view of the real world as a unity of contradictions, the dialectical connection of independence and dependence in a richer articulated form of interdependence.

It promotes participatory development within society, but also between society and the natural world: all groups in society and all cultural identities are expressed equally in local meetings, general assemblies and councils, at the various levels of locality. It is a living tradition in the matter of human issues, a tradition with a centuries-old history. For generations, confederalism has sought to counterbalance an almost equally long historical tendency towards centralization: the creation, perpetuation and full establishment of the nation-state. It opposed political self-management and the autonomy of society, i.e. society governing itself through small or large self-managing decentralized units. It calls for a constant social vigilance, reflected in every aspect of social structure and activity. All institutions and structures are self-organized and self-governing. In essence, then, it is an organizational and propositional model much broader than both pre-revolutionary organization and revolutionary society. It encompasses the whole range and aspects of social expression, organization, collectivization and activity as organic and structural elements of confederal society.

"The era of the self-sufficiency of small collectives and eclectic networks is over. We do not need to close down the already existing self-organized class-social structures in order to build new ones or to construct a new factional system. We need, day by day, existing and new structures to take steps towards the formation of a universally confederal revolutionary movement" [ii]

[ii] Dimitris Chatzivaseiliadis - Antimilitarism and Revolutionary Anarchism

6. General administration and coordination as the coherent element and means of revolutionary struggle and social self-defense

By general administration-coordination we mean the vital core of the community organization that technically enacts collective decisions, carrying out and linking tactics to the strategic plan. Thus initiatives are not independent but rather are subordinated to the collective framework, creating a network harmonized towards the achievement of the common goal. The individual pieces gain greater flexibility by overcoming the barriers of immediacy-time and locality.

The concept of general management/coordination does not reflect a body of specialists. Instead, it expresses a common concept (idea/spirit) and relationship, interlinked with collective responsibility and a common organizational perspective. It expresses a conscious understanding of the responsibility we bear at any given moment, from a unifying and holistic perspective. The role and responsibility of the General Management-Coordination is contrasted with that of the Central Management, precisely because it is an organizational instrument of executive but not decisive responsibility. It expresses the result of the active awareness of all the individual parties in the field and is the method of organization and coordination of every radical and revolutionary movement internationally, from the mountains of Kurdistan to the jungles of Chiapas, India and the Philippines. It is a confederal general coordination of collective deliberations and programmatic decisions, with the capacity to achieve the objective goals pursued, with the means available and on the basis of the prevailing conditions. It is the collective tool for planning strategy and tactics, i.e. how to achieve the collectively decided objectives. It is responsible for the horizontal organization and coordination of tasks to achieve objectives, as well as the activity of the tasks and their individual allocation.

THEORETICAL - IDEOLOGICAL BASIS AND UNITY

In general, our proposal for co-organization is made on the basis of clear and concrete propositions and positions. The above common basis structures the theoretical-ideological, but also the tactical and practical unity of the collective body within which we organize. By theoretical-ideological unity we understand the common ideological-political vision which allows us to move forward towards our common goal: that of social and total liberation, equality, freedom and solidarity. We also understand the concept of the term to be organically linked to the decision-making framework and the concept of diversity and initiative. For us, ideological unity means a common basis of principles, general vision and practical application that allows a collective body to recognize the world around it, to survive and evolve, at the same time as it strengthens this unity through the dialectic of difference and common action.

“The revolutionary liberation and egalitarian movements are not the result of the abstract ideas of some academics or philosophers, but of the direct struggle of societies against the state, capitalism and patriarchy, of their needs and aspirations, aspirations that took shape during the heroic period of their life and struggle” [i]

IN CONCLUSION

With this call, we seek to invite the comrades and militants to join the political, organizational and perspective framework of the proposal. To join the overall functioning of the effort, finding within it a part of their own. Most of all, however, to comrades who wish to become active in a committed and conscious way in the projects of social, political and class struggle.

At the same time we call on collective bodies and organizations outside the spectrum of the institutional mechanisms to form a broad horizontal confederal movement in a revolutionary direction. We see ourselves as an organic part of this movement and we put forward this proposal aware of the weaknesses, subjective and objective, of the period and of the movement, but also of our own. Consequently, we submit our proposal to it, for an open dialogue and a prospective proposal of co-organization.

We seek to develop a dynamic stance, not in terms of hegemony, but in terms of co-organization and common perspective within the broader social, class, political and internationalist struggles.

We seek to be able in terms of mass power to stand in solidarity on the street against repression and its mechanisms.

We seek to set up our world in rupture with theirs in every aspect of social activity.

We put forth the struggle in every aspect of daily life, for a free, equal, confederate society of social self-management.

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