

1: Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists - maydayrooms

Libertarian communism wants to end all exploitation and violence whether it be against individuals or the masses of the people. To this end, it will establish an economic and social base which will unite all sections of the community, assuring each individual an equal place among the rest, and allowing each the maximum well-being.

Gerrard Winstanley, who was part of the radical Diggers movement in England, wrote in his pamphlet, *The New Law of Righteousness*, that there "shall be no buying or selling, no fairs nor markets, but the whole earth shall be a common treasury for every man," and "there shall be none Lord over others, but every one shall be a Lord of himself". Due to the communes established by the Diggers being free from private property, along with economic exchange as all items, goods and services were held collectively, their communes could be called early, functioning communist societies, spread out across the rural lands of England. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, common ownership of land and property was much more prevalent across the European continent, but the Diggers were set apart by their struggle against monarchical rule. He viewed the link between religion and what later came to be known as capitalism though not in his time as two sides of the same corrupted coin. He had once said, "Do not be afraid of your God - be afraid of yourself. You are the creator of your own troubles and joys. Heaven and hell are in your own soul". He worked with Gracchus Babeuf in not only writing about what an anarchist country might look like, but how it will be achieved. While both groups argued against capitalism, the anarchist communists departed from Proudhon and Bakunin, who maintained that individuals have a right to the product of their individual labor and to be remunerated for their particular contribution to production. But, Errico Malatesta stated that "instead of running the risk of making a confusion in trying to distinguish what you and I each do, let us all work and put everything in common. In this way each will give to society all that his strength permits until enough is produced for every one; and each will take all that he needs, limiting his needs only in those things of which there is not yet plenty for every one". The Italian Federation considers the collective property of the products of labour as the necessary complement to the collectivist programme, the aid of all for the satisfaction of the needs of each being the only rule of production and consumption which corresponds to the principle of solidarity. The federal congress at Florence has eloquently demonstrated the opinion of the Italian International on this point Peter Kropotkin Peter Kropotkin " , often seen as the most important theorist of anarchist communism, outlined his economic ideas in *The Conquest of Bread and Fields, Factories and Workshops*. Kropotkin felt that cooperation is more beneficial than competition, arguing in his major scientific work *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* that this was well-illustrated in nature. He advocated the abolition of private property while retaining respect for personal property through the "expropriation of the whole of social wealth" by the people themselves, [38] and for the economy to be co-ordinated through a horizontal network of voluntary associations [39] where goods are distributed according to the physical needs of the individual, rather than according to labor. Aims of life vary with each and every individual; and the more society is civilized, the more will individuality be developed, and the more will desires be varied. We do not want to rob any one of his coat, but we wish to give to the workers all those things the lack of which makes them fall an easy prey to the exploiter, and we will do our utmost that none shall lack aught, that not a single man shall be forced to sell the strength of his right arm to obtain a bare subsistence for himself and his babes. This is what we mean when we talk of Expropriation Imagine a society, comprising a few million inhabitants, engaged in agriculture and a great variety of industries" Paris, for example, with the Department of Seine-et-Oise. Suppose that in this society all children learn to work with their hands as well as with their brains. Admit that all adults Such a society could in return guarantee well-being to all its members; that is to say, a more substantial well-being than that enjoyed to-day by the middle classes. In the bulletin of the Jura Federation he declared "the Italian federation believes that the insurrectional fact, destined to affirm socialist principles by deed, is the most efficacious means of propaganda". They were opposed not only to political statist struggles but also to strikes which put forward wage or other claims, or which were organised by trade unions. Moreover, they were clearly meant to be exemplary, invitations to revolt. Having established the aim, the goal to which we hold, we

leave every anarchist free to choose from the means that his sense, his education, his temperament, his fighting spirit suggest to him as best. But we come together spontaneously, and not with permanent criteria, according to momentary affinities for a specific purpose, and we constantly change these groups as soon as the purpose for which we had associated ceases to be, and other aims and needs arise and develop in us and push us to seek new collaborators, people who think as we do in the specific circumstance. Most anarchist publications in the US were in Yiddish, German, or Russian, but *Free Society* was published in English, permitting the dissemination of anarchist communist thought to English-speaking populations in the US. A commander of the peasant Revolutionary Insurrectionary Army of Ukraine, also known as the Anarchist Black Army, Makhno led a guerrilla campaign opposing both the Bolshevik "Reds" and monarchist "Whites". The revolutionary autonomous movement of which he was a part made various tactical military pacts while fighting various forces of reaction and organizing the Free Territory of Ukraine, an anarchist society, committed to resisting state authority, whether capitalist or Bolshevik. The pamphlet is an analysis of the basic anarchist beliefs, a vision of an anarchist society, and recommendations as to how an anarchist organization should be structured. The four main principles by which an anarchist organization should operate, according to the Platform, are ideological unity, tactical unity, collective action, and federalism. The platform argues that "We have vital need of an organization which, having attracted most of the participants in the anarchist movement, would establish a common tactical and political line for anarchism and thereby serve as a guide for the whole movement". The Platform attracted strong criticism from many sectors on the anarchist movement of the time including some of the most influential anarchists such as Voline, Errico Malatesta, Luigi Fabbri, Camillo Berneri, Max Nettlau, Alexander Berkman, [61] Emma Goldman and Gregori Maximoff. Faure in his text "Anarchist synthesis" has the view that "these currents were not contradictory but complementary, each having a role within anarchism: He saw anarchism as more complex than that, that anarchist tendencies are not mutually exclusive as the platformists saw it and that both individualist and communist views could accommodate anarcho-syndicalism. The main goal there was conciling anarcho-communism with anarcho-syndicalism. Spanish Revolution of The most extensive application of anarcho-communist ideas is. In, the CNT changed its policy and anarchist votes helped bring the popular front back to power. Months later, the former ruling class responded with an attempted coup causing the Spanish Civil War "€” Factories were run through worker committees, agrarian areas became collectivised and run as libertarian communes. Anarchist historian Sam Dolgoff estimated that about eight million people participated directly or at least indirectly in the Spanish Revolution, [72] which he claimed "came closer to realizing the ideal of the free stateless society on a vast scale than any other revolution in history". It is one of the key texts of the anarchist-communist current known as platformism. The new decision making process was founded on unanimity: The FCL published the same year the *Manifeste du communisme libertaire*. Several groups quit the FCL in December, disagreeing with the decision to present "revolutionary candidates" to the legislative elections. This move alienated some members of the FCL and thus produced the end of the organization. The new base principles of the FA were written by the individualist anarchist Charles-Auguste Bontemps and the non-platformist anarcho-communist Maurice Joyeux which established an organization with a plurality of tendencies and autonomy of groups organized around synthesist principles. Inside the FAI, the Anarchist Groups of Proletarian Action GAAP was founded, led by Pier Carlo Masini, which "proposed a Libertarian Party with an anarchist theory and practice adapted to the new economic, political and social reality of post-war Italy, with an internationalist outlook and effective presence in the workplaces [These groups emphasized direct action, informal affinity groups and expropriation for financing anarchist activity. These groups started organizing themselves outside the FAI in organizations such as O. This movement was influential in the autonomia movements of the seventies. They published *Fronte Libertario della lotta di classe* in Bologna and *Comunismo libertario* from Modena. These organizations were also inspired on synthesist principles. In recent times platformist organisations founded the now-defunct International Libertarian Solidarity network and its successor, the Anarkismo network; which is run collaboratively by roughly 30 platformist organisations around the world. On the other hand, contemporary insurrectionary anarchism inherits the views and tactics of anti-organizational anarcho-communism [26] [82] and "illegalism". In, the group claimed responsibility for a

bomb campaign targeting several European Union institutions. With distribution of wealth being based on self-determined needs, people would be free to engage in whatever activities they found most fulfilling and would no longer have to engage in work for which they have neither the temperament nor the aptitude. As Kropotkin put it: Measuring the work by its results leads us to absurdity; dividing and measuring them by hours spent on the work also leads us to absurdity. Collectivist anarchism believes in collective ownership while communist anarchism negates the entire concept of ownership in favor of the concept of usage. In addition to believing rent and other fees are exploitative, anarcho-communists feel these are arbitrary pressures inducing people to carry out unrelated functions. So instead of working conditionally for the sake of the wage earned, they believe in working directly for the objective at hand.

2: Social anarchism - Wikipedia

In a group of exiled Russian anarchists in France, the Delo Truda (Workers' Cause) group, published this pamphlet. It arose not from some academic study but from their experiences in the Russian revolution.

Apparently, the revolutionary movement has suffered a great blow: The proletarian organizations, which, as the prefigurations of the communist world party were organizing the centralization of the struggle, were destroyed or distorted into the counter-revolutionary caricatures of themselves. Bolshevik social democracy, which called itself "communist", together with the traditional Social Democrats, tried to disintegrate and to falsify one of the foundations of its class-being, the class memory of the proletariat. In fact these tendencies imply the objective negation of the class as such, because their definitions of the class, just like their practical activity, disguises the basic antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat, by serving concepts like the Leninist theory of "socialism in one country", the "peaceful adjacency" of socialism and capitalism, the Bersteinian line of the socialist evolution of capitalism etc. These ideologies are the reflections of the negation of classes - the objective life condition of capitalism, which actively helped the bourgeoisie to absorb the class conflict and to reinforce the atomisation of the proletariat. But still, the counter-revolutionary period was unable to completely destroy the proletariat. That was practically impossible - and it will be so for the bourgeoisie that be -, because the revolution is not the consequence of personal will, but the production and inevitable accompaniment of the capitalist system. Many have tried to interpret, to elaborate the lessons of the revolution and of the defeat directly after the defeat - and to carry on on the basis of these lessons. One thing seemed to be obvious for conscious proletarians, the preparers of the new revolutionary wave: Actually, it is important to show that social democracy was not a revolutionary movement, what later according to the public opinion: It has been the tool of capital ever since, in its every manifestation. In reality its goal has never been the communist class struggle against the State, value and the dictatorship of capitalism, but the reformation of capitalism, the achieving of compromises, the maintenance of the State of exploited for the workers by some superficial help. Naturally this does not appertain to those millions of proletarians who were - due to the lack of the break, counter-revolutionary propaganda etc. The leadership of the Second International had already at its founding congress started its struggle for the elimination of revolutionary elements; and in every important question it committed against the elements entitled "anarchist". About the end of the revolutionary wave, in the counter-revolutionary tendency of Bolshevism also became apparent for most proletarians. Although only the more important news got out from the Soviet Union itself, the world still could see the tendency of the consequencing steps: The signing of the Brest-Litovsk treaty, and in connection with this, the repression of the Left SR revolt, the repression of the Makhnovshchina about, Kronstadt, and last but not least the NEP, when the triumphant comeback of every characteristic the capitalism was announced meant the more important turning points. The "center" of the Bolshevik Party Lenin, Trotsky abolished every revolutionary protest either inside or outside the party, and consequently followed the policy of maintaining Capitalism and the dictatorship of value. As early as they attacked the Moscow Anarchist Center by the force of arms: The reason was that the anarchists had organized their own armed force, the Black Guard, which was preparing for a cruel showdown with the class enemy. And there is nothing more frightening for capitalism than an armed proletariat. So in Bolshevism, the proletarian factions, which were confronting the State power of a re-painted capitalism for the sake of the revolution, were called "anarchist", "leftist divergent" again, or they were treated like criminals and bandits, by this denying their political role. So, at the beginning of the twenties, anarchism and "left-wing" communism seemed to be the only heir to the revolution - and social democracy came after them by all possible means. In many cases we can only mention people like Errico Malatesta, Alexander Berkman, Emma Goldman, who were in themselves manifesting tendencies. In England there was a powerful anarchist movement beside the radical communists, just like in Spain. But the foreign - especially Russian - anarchists fleeing from the counter-revolution found asylum mainly in France. Here we only deal with Europe - we are just mentioning that in this period the center of revolutionary activity had already been placed outside of Europe, mainly in Latin-America. The phenomenon called "anarchism" at that time meant very diverse and

controversial groups and tendencies. On the whole it was not revolutionary, moreover, its counter-revolutionary essence was due to the fact that in many elements it was really struggling for the revolution, but it regarded anarchism as a big family or community where the different tendencies want the same thing on an ethereal level. But this was not true. The majority of the "anarchist" groups used bourgeois words and their activity was only the completion of Social Democracy: Most of them praised the self-government of the producers, so instead of changing the base - the dictatorship of value on the human needs - they stressed a completely technical question, the ways of controlling. Others - first and foremost the council communists and many of the anarchist communists - formed a truly communist minority and continued their revolutionary struggle. There were all kinds of people in the French exile. Everybody was talking about Anarchism and they gave the most narrow-minded bourgeois phantasms this adjective. But essentially this process had the same goal only to a smaller extent which Bolshevism had on the "other side": They hashed the old position about "the abyss between Anarchism and Communism" - emasculating both sides which are in fact one and the same. But the "anarchist" side was also quick to answer back - the "leaders", first and foremost Berkman and Malatesta enumerated some untoward arguments against "authoritarian socialism", i. The most characteristic product of the era was a pamphlet entitled "Bakunin vs Marx" whose unknown anarchist author analyzed the "antagonism" of the two tendencies in a tone more suitable for tabloid newspapers. In , the biggest organization of French anarchists, the Anarchist Union UA started a great debate about a manifestation whose goal was to harmonize the positions of the individualists, revolutionary anarchism and syndicalism. The debate grew more and more acrimonious, and the anarcho-communists stated that they had nothing in common with the individualists and other bourgeois "anarchists", so they left the organization and founded the Anarchist-Communist Union UAC. The new organization stated that "the only possible means of struggle is revolutionary anarchism, the only possible goal is communism; the two are one and the same". They marked as a goal the "break with the Big Family of anarchism" which tried to unify the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary tendencies into one pseudo-community. The majority of the UAC was for the centralization of the struggle and the use of dictatorial means, insofar as in the founding of an anarchist party was put forward "party", i. Then a tendency - the "synthesists" - left the UAC, and following the lead of Sebastian Faure and the ex-Makhnovist Volin, fell back upon the old theory of the popular front, the "synthesis" of the many kinds of anarchism - while the revolutionary anarchists reinforced their organization under the name Revolutionary Anarchist Communist Union UACR , which operated until The Russian Anarchists who were mainly revolutionaries also participated in these struggles. That was the organ where they published the programmatic text of the group, the "Organizational Platform of Libertarian Communism", which later became famous simply under the name "The Platform". The appearance of the Platform instantly initiated heated debates. Led by Volin, the synthesists started an attack in their newspaper "Union". The platformists summoned a meeting on 5th February , whose goal was to organize an international conference of revolutionaries. The participants who were from 6 different countries worked out the main issues of the future conference: This was a very revolutionary programme on the level of the period, though it contains some strange elements too - e. The debate about the suggestion could not be finished because the police raided the assembly and everyone was arrested. Makhno was saved from death only by the campaign of the French Anarchists. In the end the "International Federation of Revolutionary Anarchist-Communists" remained a plan and many of the participants turned against it e. The individualist side led by Malatesta also started a great attack against the Platform. Makhno and his comrades on 18th August published the "Reply to the Anarchist-Communist". In this they explained their views about the necessity of the revolutionary leadership: The article wrote the following about these people: The fact that this many people who gather but on what foundation? In France, the platformists took many organizations under their control for a while, but in the end they always had to leave them. This was an important lesson for them that the obsolete, counter-revolutionary organizations should not be cobbled and reformed, because it is completely useless, but instead of that they should again and again, through many break-ups, concretize the class programme of the proletariat. Organizations were founded in Italy and in Bulgaria, just like in Poland - though that just adopted the general principles, rejecting the

Platform as authoritarian. The war dissolved the ranks of anarchism but since the capitalist peace has not brought much change compared to the capitalist war, the class struggle activity toned up again. By this time the Bolsheviks including the Trotskyites have already played their role and could not make any effect to the really class struggling proletarian elements. The revolutionary movement in many cases reached back to the Platform and created, somewhat controversial but in any case revolutionary organizations like the Libertarian Communist Federation FCL in France and the Anarchist Proletarian Action Groups GAAP in Italy at the beginning of the fifties, and later the Revolutionary Anarchist Federations in different countries.

3: Platform: Organizational Platform of the Libertarian Communists by Nestor Makhno

The Platform used to be known in English as the Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists, a result of its having been translated from the French edition popularized in the early s.

It is divided into two very distinct camps, differentiated socially by their situations and their functions, the proletariat in the wider sense of the word, and the bourgeoisie. The lot of the proletariat is, and has been for centuries, to carry the burden of physical, painful work from which the fruits come, not to them, however, but to another, privileged class which owns property, authority, and the products of culture science, education, art: The social enslavement and exploitation of the working masses form the base on which modern society stands, without which this society could not exist. This generated a class struggle, at one point taking on an open, violent character, at others a semblance of slow and intangible progress, which reflects needs, necessities, and the concept of the justice of workers. In the social domain all human history represents an uninterrupted chain of struggles waged by the working masses for their rights, liberty, and a better life - In the history of human society this class struggle has always been the primary factor which determined the form and structure of these societies. The social and political regime of all states is above all the product of class struggle. The fundamental structure of any society shows us the stage at which the class struggle has gravitated and is to be found. The slightest change in the course of the battle of classes, in the relative locations of the forces of the class struggle, produces continuous modifications in the fabric and structure of society. Such is the general, universal scope and meaning of class struggle in the life of class societies. The necessity of a violent social revolution The principle of enslavement and exploitation of the masses by violence constitutes the basis of modern society. All the manifestations of its existence: Everything in this society: At the same time the system of this society deliberately maintains the working masses in a state of ignorance and mental stagnation; it prevents by force the raising of their moral and intellectual level, in order to more easily get the better of them. The progress of modern society: Analysis of modern society leads us to the conclusion that the only way to transform capitalist society into a society of free workers is the way of violent social revolution. Anarchists and libertarian communism The class struggle created by the enslavement of workers and their aspirations to liberty gave birth, in the oppression, to the idea of anarchism: So anarchism does not derive from the abstract reflections of an intellectual or a philosopher, but from the direct struggle of workers against capitalism, from the needs and necessities of the workers, from their aspirations to liberty and equality, aspirations which become particularly alive in the best heroic period of the life and struggle of the working masses. The outstanding anarchist thinkers, Bakunin, Kropotkin and others, did not invent the idea of anarchism, but, having discovered it in the masses, simply helped by the strength of their thought and knowledge to specify and spread it. Anarchism is not the result of personal efforts nor the object of individual researches. Similarly, anarchism is not the product of humanitarian aspirations. A single humanity does not exist. Any attempt to make of anarchism an attribute of all present day humanity, to attribute to it a general humanitarian character would be a historical and social lie which would lead inevitably to the justification of the status quo and of a new exploitation. If the working masses are victorious, all humanity will be reborn; if they are not, violence, exploitation, slavery and oppression will reign as before in the world. The birth, the blossoming, and the realisation of anarchist ideas have their roots in the life and life and the struggle of the working masses and are inseparably bound to their fate. Anarchism wants to transform the present bourgeois capitalist society into a society which assures the workers the products of their labours, their liberty, independence, and social and political equality. This other society will be libertarian communism, in which social solidarity and free individuality find their full expression, and in which these two ideas develop in perfect harmony. Libertarian communism believes that the only creator of social value is labour, physical or intellectual, and consequently only labour has the right to manage social and economic life. Because of this, it neither defends nor allows, in any measure, the existence of non-working classes. Insofar as these classes exist at the same time as libertarian communism the latter will recognise no duty towards them. This will cease when the non-working classes decide to become productive and want to live in a communist society under the same conditions as everyone

else, which is that of free members of the society, enjoying the same rights and duties as all other productive members. Libertarian communism wants to end all exploitation and violence whether it be against individuals or the masses of the people. To this end, it will establish an economic and social base which will unite all sections of the community, assuring each individual an equal place among the rest, and allowing each the maximum well-being. The base is the common ownership of all the means and instruments of production industry, transport, land, raw materials, etc. The negation of Democracy is one of the forms of bourgeois capitalist society. The basis of democracy is the maintenance of the two antagonistic classes of modern society: The expression of this collaboration is parliament and the national representative government. Formally, democracy proclaims freedom of speech, of the press, of association, and the equality of all before the law. In reality all these liberties are of a very relative character: Democracy preserves intact the principle of private capitalist property. Thus it democracy gives the bourgeoisie the right to control the whole economy of the country, the entire press, education, science, art - which in fact make the bourgeoisie absolute master of the whole country. Having a monopoly in the sphere of economic life, the bourgeoisie can also establish its unlimited power in the political sphere. In effect parliament and representative government in the democracies are but the executive organs of the bourgeoisie. Consequently democracy is but one of the aspects of bourgeois dictatorship, veiled behind deceptive formulae of political liberties and fictitious democratic guarantees. The negation of the state and authority The ideologies of the bourgeoisie define the State as the organ which regularises the complex political, civil and social relations between men in modern society, and protecting the order and laws of the latter. Anarchists are in perfect agreement with this definition, but they complete it by affirming that the basis of this order and these laws is the enslavement of the vast majority of the people by an insignificant minority, and that it is precisely this purpose which is served by the State. The State is simultaneously the organised violence of the bourgeoisie against the workers and the system of its executive organs. The left socialists, and in particular the bolsheviks, also consider the bourgeois State and Authority to be the servants of capital. But they hold that Authority and the State can become, in the hands of socialist parties, a powerful weapon in the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat. For this reason these parties are for a socialist Authority and a proletarian State. Some want to conquer power by peaceful, parliamentary means the social democratic, others by revolutionary means the bolsheviks, the left social revolutionaries. Anarchism considers these two to be fundamentally wrong, disastrous in the work of the emancipation of labour. Authority is always dependent on the exploitation and enslavement of the mass of the people. It is born of this exploitation, or it is created in the interests of this exploitation. The State and Authority take from the masses all initiative, kill the spirit of creation and free activity, cultivates in them the servile psychology of submission, of expectation, of the hope of climbing the social ladder, of blind confidence in their leaders, of the illusion of sharing in authority. Thus the emancipation of labour is only possible in the direct revolutionary struggle of the vast working masses and of their class organisations against the capitalist system. The conquest of power by the social democratic parties by peaceful means under the conditions of the present order will not advance by one single step the task of emancipation of labour, for the simple reason that real power, consequently real authority, will remain with the bourgeoisie which controls the economy and politics of the country. The role of socialist authority is reduced in this case of reforms: Ramsay Macdonald, the social democratic parties of Germany, Sweden, Belgium, which have come to power in a capitalist society. Further, seizing power by means of a social upheaval and organising a so called "proletarian State" cannot serve the cause of the authentic emancipation of labour. The State, immediately and supposedly constructed for the defence of the revolution, invariably ends up distorted by needs and characteristics peculiar to itself, itself becoming the goal, produces specific, privileged castes, and consequently re-establishes the basis of capitalist Authority and State; the usual enslavement and exploitation of the masses by violence. The role of the masses and the role of the anarchists in the social struggle and the social revolution The principal forces of the social revolution are the urban working class, the peasant masses and a section of the working intelligentsia. That is why, during the early days of the social revolution, only the less comfortable strata of the intelligentsia take an active part in it. The anarchist conception of the role of the masses in the social revolution and the construction of socialism differs, in a typical way, from that of the statist parties. While bolshevism

and its related tendencies consider that the masses possess only destructionary revolutionary instincts, being incapable of creative and constructive activity - the principle reason why the latter activity should be concentrated in the hands of the men forming the government of the State the Central Committee of the party - anarchists on the contrary think that the labouring masses have inherent creative and constructive possibilities which are enormous, and anarchists aspire to suppress the obstacles impeding the manifestation of these possibilities. Anarchists consider the State to be the principle obstacle, usurping the rights of the masses and taking from them all the functions of economic and social life. The State must perish, not "one day" in the future society, but immediately. It must be destroyed by the workers on the first day of their victory, and must not be reconstituted under any guise whatsoever. It will be replaced by a federalist system of workers organisations of production and consumption. This system excludes just as much authoritarian organisations as the dictatorship of a party, whichever it might be. The Russian revolution displays precisely this orientation of the process of social emancipation in the creation of the system of worker and peasant soviets and factory committees. Its sad error was not to have liquidated, at an opportune moment, the organisation of state power: The bolsheviks, profiting from the trust of the workers and peasants, reorganised the bourgeois state according to the circumstances of the moment and consequently killed the creative activity of the masses, in supporting and maintaining the state: Action by anarchists can be divided into two periods, that before the revolution, and that during the revolution. In both, anarchists can only fulfil their role as an organised force if they have a clear conception of the objectives of their struggle and the roads leading to the realisation of these objectives. The fundamental task of the General Union of Anarchists in the pre-revolutionary period must be the preparation of the workers and peasants for the social revolution. In denying formal bourgeois democracy, authority and State, in proclaiming the complete emancipation of labour, anarchism emphasises to the full the rigorous principles of class struggle. It alerts and develops in the masses class consciousness and the revolutionary intransigence of the class. It is precisely towards the class intransigence, anti-democratism, anti-statism of the ideas of anarcho-communism. The worker and peasant class, organised on the basis of production and consumption, penetrated by revolutionary anarchist positions, will be the first strong point of the social revolution. The more these organisations are conscious and organised in an anarchist way, as from the present, the more they will manifest an intransigent and creative will at the moment of the revolution. As for the working class in Russia: Organised anarchist militants should go immediately with all the force at their disposal to meet these needs and possibilities, in order that they do not degenerate into reformism menshevism. With the same urgency, anarchists should apply themselves to the organisation of the poor peasantry, who are crushed by state power, seeking a way out and concealing enormous revolutionary potential. The role of the anarchists in the revolutionary period cannot be restricted solely to the propagation of the keynotes of libertarian ideas. Life is not only an arena for the propagation of this or that conception, but also, to the same degree, as the arena of struggle, the strategy, and the aspirations of these conceptions in the management of economic and social life. More than any other concept, anarchism should become the leading concept of revolution, for it is only on the theoretical base of anarchism that the social revolution can succeed in the complete emancipation of labour. The leading position of anarchist ideas in the revolution suggests an orientation of events after anarchist theory. However, this theoretical driving force should not be confused with the political leadership of the statist parties which leads finally to State Power. Anarchism aspires neither to political power nor to dictatorship. Its principal aspiration is to help the masses to take the authentic road to the social revolution and the construction of socialism. But it is not sufficient that the masses take up the way of the social revolution. It is also necessary to maintain this orientation of the revolution and its objectives: As the experience of the Russian revolution has shown us, this last task is far from being easy, above all because of the numerous parties which try to orientate the movement in a direction opposed to the social revolution. Although the masses express themselves profoundly in social movement in terms of anarchist tendencies and tenets, these tendencies and tenets do however remain dispersed, being unco-ordinated, and consequently do not lead to the organisation of the driving power of libertarian ideas which is necessary for preserving the anarchist orientation and objectives of the social revolution. This theoretical driving force can only be expressed by a collective especially created by the masses for this purpose. The organised anarchist

elements constitute exactly this collective. The theoretical and practical duties of this collective are considerable at the time of the revolution. It must manifest its initiative and display total participation in all the domains of the social revolution: On all these questions, and on numbers of others, the masses demand a clear and precise response from the anarchists.

4: Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists : Nestor Makhno :

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It arose not from some academic study but from their experiences in the Russian revolution. The Russian anarchist movement had played a far from negligible part in the revolution. At the time there were about 10, active anarchists in Russia, not including the movement in the Ukraine led by Nestor Makhno. There were at least four anarchists on the Bolshevik dominated Military Revolutionary Committee which engineered the seizure of power in October. More importantly, anarchists were involved in the factory committees which had sprung up after the February revolution. These were based in workplaces, elected by mass assemblies of the workers and given the role of overseeing the running of the factory and co-ordinating with other workplaces in the same industry or region. Anarchists were particularly influential among the miners, dockers, postal workers, bakers and played an important role in the All-Russian Conference of Factory Committees which met in Petrograd on the eve of the revolution. It was to these committees that the anarchists looked as a basis for a new self-management which would be ushered in after the revolution. However the revolutionary spirit and unity of October did not last long. The anarchists and some others on the left believed that the working class were capable of exercising power through their own committees and soviets councils of elected delegates. The Bolsheviks did not. This lack of confidence in the abilities of ordinary people and the authoritarian seizure of power was to lead to the betrayal of the interests of the working class, and all its hopes and dreams. In April the anarchist centres in Moscow were attacked, anarchists jailed and dozens killed. Anarchists had to decide where they stood. One section worked with the Bolsheviks, and went on to join them, though a concern for efficiency and unity against reaction “ Another section fought hard to defend the gains of the revolution against what they correctly saw would develop into a new ruling class. The Makhnovist movement in the Ukraine and the Kronstadt uprising were the last important battles. By the anti-authoritarian revolution was dead. It was the hope of the authors that such a disaster would not happen again. It looks at the lessons of the Russian anarchist movement, its failure to build up a presence within the working class movement big enough and effective enough to counteract the tendency of the Bolsheviks and other political groups to substitute themselves for the working class. It sets out a rough guide suggesting how anarchists should organise, in short how we can be effective. It stated very simple truths such as it being ludicrous to have an organisation which contains groups that have mutually antagonistic and contradictory definitions of anarchism. It pointed out that we need formal agreed structures covering written policies, the role of officers, the need for membership dues and so on; the sort of structures that allow for large and effective democratic organisation. When first published it came under attack from some of the best known anarchist personalities of the time such as Errico Malatesta and Alexander Berkman. This reaction was over the top but may have partly resulted from the proposal for a General Union of Anarchists. The authors did not spell out clearly what the relationship would be between this organisation and other groups of anarchists outside it. It goes without saying that there should be no problem about separate anarchist organisations working together on issues where they share a common outlook and strategy. The two terms are completely interchangeable. It was written to pinpoint the failure of the Russian anarchists in their theoretical confusion; and thus lack of national co-ordination, disorganisation and political uncertainty. In other words, ineffectiveness. It was written to open a debate within the anarchist movement. It points, not towards any compromise with authoritarian politics, but to the vital necessity to create an organisation that will combine effective revolutionary activity with fundamental anarchist principles. It is not a perfect programme now, and neither was it back in It has its weaknesses. It does not explain some of its ideas in enough depth, it may be argued that it does not cover some important issues at all. But remember that it is a small pamphlet and not a 26 volume encyclopaedia. It is not a completed analysis or programme, it is a contribution to necessary debate “ a good starting point. Anarchists seek to change the world for the better, this pamphlet points us in the direction of some of the tools we need for that task. It was

an anarchist communist theoretical review of a high quality. Years before, when they had both been imprisoned in the Butirky prison in Moscow, they had hatched the idea of such a review. Now it was to be put into practice. Makhno wrote an article for nearly every issue during the course of three years. Present at this meeting, apart from the Dielo Trouda group, was a delegate from the French Anarchist Youth, Odeon; a Bulgarian, Pavel, in an individual capacity; a delegate of the Polish anarchist group, Ranko, and another Pole in an individual capacity; several Spanish militants, among them Orobon Fernandez, Carbo, and Gibanel; an Italian, Ugo Fedeli; a Chinese, Chen; and a Frenchman, Dauphin-Meunier; all in individual capacities. This first meeting was held in the small backroom of a Parisian cafe. A provisional Commission was set up, composed of Makhno, Chen and Ranko. A circular was sent out to all anarchist groups on 22 February. An international conference was called and took place on 20 April, at Hay-les-Roses near Paris, in the cinema Les Roses. A proposal was put forward to: After a long discussion some modifications of the original proposal were put forward. However nothing was achieved as the police broke up the meeting and arrested all those present. Makhno risked being deported and only a campaign led by the French anarchists stopped this. In Bulgaria, the discussion over organisation caused the reconstitution of the Anarchist Communist Federation of Bulgaria F. The Spanish anarchists did not at that time have to worry about breaking out of isolation, and of competing with the Bolsheviks. In Spain the Bolshevik influence was still small. Today, after our own experience, it seems to me that their effort was not fully appreciated. This was to be followed in the late 60s & early 70s by the founding of such groups as the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists in Britain and the Organisation Revolutionnaire Anarchiste in France. Nick Heath, Update in With the rapid growth of anarchism in the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin wall the platform has again become an important document for groups and individuals seeking to overcome the anti-organisational tendencies of parts of the new anarchism. Andrew Flood Feb Introduction It is very significant that, in spite of the strength and incontestably positive character of libertarian ideas, and in spite of the forthrightness and integrity of anarchist positions in the facing up to the social revolution, and finally the heroism and innumerable sacrifices borne by the anarchists in the struggle for libertarian communism, the anarchist movement remains weak despite everything, and has appeared, very often, in the history of working class struggles as a small event, an episode, and not an important factor. This contradiction between the positive and incontestable substance of libertarian ideas, and the miserable state in which the anarchist movement vegetates, has its explanation in a number of causes, of which the most important, the principal, is the absence of organisational principles and practices in the anarchist movement. In all countries, the anarchist movement is represented by several local organisations advocating contradictory theories and practices, having no perspectives for the future, nor of a continuity in militant work, and habitually disappearing, hardly leaving the slightest trace behind them. Like yellow fever, this disease of disorganisation introduced itself into the organism of the anarchist movement and has shaken it for dozens of years. It is nevertheless beyond doubt that this disorganisation derives from some defects of theory: But the immutable principles and teachers have shown exactly the opposite. Dispersion and scattering are ruinous: This lax of social struggle applies as much to classes as to organisations. Anarchism is not a beautiful utopia, nor an abstract philosophical idea, it is a social movement of the labouring masses. For this reason it must gather its forces in one organisation, constantly agitating, as demanded by reality and the strategy of class struggle. Nor did Bakunin ever oppose himself to the concept of a general anarchist organisation. On the contrary, his aspirations concerning organisations, as well as his activity in the 1st IWMA, give us every right to view him as an active partisan of just such an organisation. In general, practically all active anarchist militants fought against all dispersed activity, and desired an anarchist movement welded by unity of ends and means. It was during the Russian revolution of that the need for a general organisation was felt most deeply and most urgently. It was during this revolution that the libertarian movement showed the greatest decree of sectionalism and confusion. The absence of a general organisation led many active anarchist militants into the ranks of the Bolsheviks. This absence is also the cause of many other present day militants remaining passive, impeding all use of their strength, which is often quite considerable. We have an immense need for an organisation which, having gathered the majority of the participants of the anarchist movement, establishes in anarchism a general and tactical political line which

would serve as a guide to the whole movement. It is time for anarchism to leave the swamp of disorganisation, to put an end to endless vacillations on the most important tactical and theoretical questions, to resolutely move towards a clearly recognised goal, and to operate an organised collective practice. It is not enough, however, to establish the vital need of such an organisation: Such an organisation, having incorporated heterogeneous theoretical and practical elements, would only be a mechanical assembly of individuals each having a different conception of all the questions of the anarchist movement, an assembly which would inevitably disintegrate on encountering reality. The anarcho-sindicalist method does not resolve the problem of anarchist organisation, for it does not give priority to this problem, interesting itself solely in penetrating and gaining strength in the industrial proletariat. However, a great deal cannot be achieved in this area, even in gaining a footing, unless there is a general anarchist organisation. The only method leading to the solution of the problem of general organisation is, in our view, to rally active anarchist militants to a base of precise positions: The elaboration of such a programme is one of the principal tasks imposed on anarchists by the social struggle of recent years. It is to this task that the group of Russian anarchists in exile dedicates an important part of its efforts. The Organisational Platform published below represents the outlines, the skeleton of such a programme. It must serve as the first step towards rallying libertarian forces into a single, active revolutionary collective capable of struggle: We have no doubts that there are gaps in the present platform. It has gaps, as do all new, practical steps of any importance. It is possible that certain important positions have been missed, or that others are inadequately treated, or that still others are too detailed or repetitive. All this is possible, but not of vital importance. What is important is to lay the foundations of a general organisation, and it is this end which is attained, to a necessary degree, by the present platform. It is up to the entire collective, the General Union of Anarchists, to enlarge it, to later give it depth, to make of it a definite platform for the whole anarchist movement. On another level also we have doubts. We foresee that several representatives of self-styled individualism and chaotic anarchism will attack us, foaming at the mouth, and accuse us of breaking anarchist principles. This is why we can calmly ignore the attacks from this camp. We base our hope on other militants: We invite all the Russian anarchist organisations dispersed in various countries of the world, and also isolated militants, to unite on the basis of a common organisational platform. Let this platform serve as the revolutionary backbone, the rallying point of all the militants of the Russian anarchist movement! Let it form the foundations for the General Union of Anarchists! The Dielo Trouda Group Paris. It is divided into two very distinct camps, differentiated socially by their situations and their functions, the proletariat in the wider sense of the word, and the bourgeoisie.

The Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists Platform 'are still in tactics of libertarian communism'.

It attests to the ideological bankruptcy of the organizational anarchists today that they should exhume not resurrect a manifesto which was already obsolete when promulgated in The Organizational Platform enjoys an imperishable permanence: Intended to persuade, it elicited attacks from almost every prominent anarchist of its time. Intended to organize, it provoked splits. Intended to restate the anarchist alternative to Marxism, it restated the Leninist alternative to anarchism. Intended to make history, it barely made it into the history books. Why read it today? Precisely because, poor as it is, it has never been surpassed as a programmatic statement of organizationalist, workerist anarchism. Not that latter-day workies deserve to be saddled with archaism like the Platformist policy toward the peasantry, to which many words are devoted. But much of the rhetoric is familiar – so much so that the formulations in circulation apparently cannot be improved upon. The Platform may have had great influence on those who have not had great influence. The Platform is a triumph of ideology over experience. No document of this type is complete – the Communist Manifesto is another specimen – unless it opens with some sweeping, categorical falsifications of history. At other times – including ours, in many places – the struggles have been confined to small numbers of militants. Maybe long, long ago in a galaxy far, far away Space does not permit listing all the societies of which this is not even colorably true such as colonial America, or ancient Greece, or Anglo-Saxon England, or Tokugawa Japan, or To give the reader the feeling that if he should mix it up with class society, he is part of the primary determinant of history, even if, as usually happens, his efforts determine nothing. So far, so good. This is of course untrue. Modern anarchism as something with a continuing history is the idea of Proudhon, who was as much an intellectual as he was a worker, and who was not engaged in class struggle or even thinking about it in If Bakunin got the idea of anarchism from the struggling masses, it took him long enough. Kropotkin got the idea from the Swiss workers in the Jura Federation, who got their anarchism from Bakunin. A platform, like a catechism, cannot accommodate complexity, plurality or uncertainty. An idea must have a single origin and a single outcome. If the masses originate an idea then no individual does. After all, if it were sufficient, there would be no need for the General Union of Anarchists. This choice of words is either revealing or unfortunate. In other words, take over the organizations of others for your purposes, not theirs. This part of the Platform is not much use to contemporary organizers, since the revolutionary unions they are supposed to infiltrate nowhere exist, and even they must know better than to try to start some, since they never do. Repeatedly the Platform requires that all the militants work toward creation of the General Union of Anarchists and undertake no revolutionary action not authorized by the organization. Maybe in the endgame, but there has never been a revolution which was not prepared by various activities of individuals and groups usually small. The Platform is unfathomable as an anarchist program except as a reaction to the anarchist defeat in Russia. Their hatred adulterated with envy, they long to turn the tables on the winners. They have to believe that they could have won – and maybe they could have, as their critic Voline believed – otherwise their sacrifices were meaningless. The criticism of weapons having failed them, the Platformists take up the weapons of criticism. Theoretician-leaders translate theory into commands. By rendering themselves uniform and predictable, the revolutionaries confer an immense advantage on their enemies. At exactly this point in history, the Fascists were expressing similar ideas in similar organismic metaphors. Notice that the secretariat both proposes and disposes. In its capacity as theoretical guide, it takes the initiative in transmitting and interpreting Union directives, and in its capacity as executive, it orders and supervises their implementation. The rank and file militants are only conduits. But such decisions must be obligatory for everyone who has accepted them [how? They voice other objections, including objections to the defense of the revolution by a centralized regular army. Anticipating criticism, the Platformists sought to discount it in advance by attributing it to rabid individualists. Instead, they were attacked by the most prominent collectivist anarchists: Voline, Malatesta, Fabbri, Nettlau and Berkman. With a similar if even cruder ploy, a recent convert to organizationalism, Bookchin, denounces his self-appointed enemies as individualists, although David Watson,

John Zerzan, L. Susan Brown and the rest are, without exception, collectivists. That the Organizational Platform is on its face a betrayal of anarchism is almost the least of its vices. It is fundamentally false in its historical method, positing an imaginal, vaguely defined revolutionary class as an eternal, immutable historical presence — not as something with real spatial or temporal coordinates, something repeatedly self-created but never in quite the same form or with exactly the same meaning. It calls for an organization so strongly predisposed to oligarchy that it might have been designed for that purpose. It offers a formula for victory conceived by losers. Above all, it contradictorily demands an organization at once inclusive and orthodox. It cannot command inclusion, but it can impose orthodoxy, and it clearly states that it will do so. The result is yet another sect. A project with the announced purpose of eliminating the confusing multiplicity of anarchist organizations only increases the multiplicity by adding one more.

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Organizational Platform Of The Libertarian Communists has 59 ratings and 2 reviews. Lee said: This is a necessary read. It can be found on-line, but I re.

Overview[edit] In general, platformist groups aim to win the widest possible influence for anarchist ideas and methods in the working class and peasantry—like especificismo groups, platformists orient towards the working class, rather than to the far-left. This usually entails a willingness to work in single-issue campaigns, trade unionism and community groups; and to fight for immediate reforms while linking this to a project of building popular consciousness and organisation. They therefore reject approaches that they believe will prevent this, such as insurrectionary anarchism, as well as "views that dismiss activity in the unions" or that dismiss anti-imperialist movements. The group, which consisted of exiled Russian anarchist veterans of the October Revolution notably Nestor Makhno who played a leading role in the anarchist revolution in Ukraine of 1917–19, based the Platform on their experiences of the revolution and the eventual victory of the Bolsheviks over the anarchists and other groups. The document drew praise and criticism from anarchists worldwide and sparked a major debate within the anarchist movement. Around thirty platformist and especificista organisations are linked together in the Anarkismo. However, it is not a formal "international" and has no intention of competing with these other formations.

Organisational ideas[edit] The Platform describes four key organisational features which distinguish platformism: Tactical unity — "A common tactical line in the movement is of decisive importance for the existence of the organisation and the whole movement: Naturally it should be common to all the persons and organisations adhering to the General Union. All activity by the General Union, both overall and in its details, should be in perfect concord with the theoretical principles professed by the union". The areas of revolutionary life, social and political, are above all profoundly collective by nature. Social revolutionary activity in these areas cannot be based on the personal responsibility of individual militants". In short, unity meant unity of ideas and actions as opposed to unity on the basis of the anarchist label. The pamphlet is an analysis of basic anarchist beliefs, a vision of an anarchist society and recommendations as to how an anarchist organisation should be structured.

Antecedents of the Platform[edit] The authors of the Platform insisted that its basic ideas were not new, but had a long anarchist pedigree. Platformism is not therefore a revision away from classical anarchism, or a new approach, but a "restatement" of existing positions. Indeed, "practically all active anarchist militants fought against all dispersed activity, and desired an anarchist movement welded by unity of ends and means". In his book *Facing the Enemy: A history of Anarchist Organization from Proudhon to May* p. Later translations to French have corrected some of the mistranslations and the latest English translation, made directly from the Russian original, reflects this. Most agree that the Platform was sorely lacking in certain areas and point out that it was a draft document, never intended to be adopted in its original form. The Italian Federation of Anarchist Communists FdCA, for example, do not insist on the principle of "tactical unity", which according to them is impossible to achieve over a large area, preferring instead "tactical homogeneity".

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It arose not from some academic study but from their experiences in the Russian revolution. The Russian anarchist movement had played a far from negligible part in the revolution. At the time there were about 10, active anarchists in Russia, not including the movement in the Ukraine led by Nestor Makhno. There were at least four anarchists on the Bolshevik dominated Military Revolutionary Committee which engineered the seizure of power in October. More importantly, anarchists were involved in the factory committees which had sprung up after the February revolution. These were based in workplaces, elected by mass assemblies of the workers and given the role of overseeing the running of the factory and co-ordinating with other workplaces in the same industry or region. Anarchists were particularly influential among the miners, dockers, postal workers, bakers and played an important role in the All-Russian Conference of Factory Committees which met in Petrograd on the eve of the revolution. It was to these committees that the anarchists looked as a basis for a new self-management which would be ushered in after the revolution. However the revolutionary spirit and unity of October did not last long. The Bolsheviks were eager to suppress all those forces on the left that they saw as obstacles blocking their way to "one party" power. The anarchists and some others on the left believed that the working class were capable of exercising power through their own committees and soviets councils of elected delegates. The Bolsheviks did not. They put forward the proposition that the workers were not yet able to take control of their destiny and therefore the Bolsheviks would take power themselves as an "interim measure" during the "transitional period". This lack of confidence in the abilities of ordinary people and the authoritarian seizure of power was to lead to the betrayal of the interests of the working class, and all its hopes and dreams. In April the anarchist centres in Moscow were attacked, anarchists jailed and dozens killed. The excuse was that the anarchists were "uncontrollable", whatever that may have meant unless it was simply that they refused to obey the Bolshevik leaders. Anarchists had to decide where they stood. One section worked with the Bolsheviks, and went on to join them, though a concern for efficiency and unity against reaction - Another section fought hard to defend the gains of the revolution against what they correctly saw would develop into a new ruling class. The Makhnovist movement in the Ukraine and the Kronstadt uprising were the last important battles. By the anti-authoritarian revolution was dead. It was the hope of the authors that such a disaster would not happen again. As a contribution they wrote what has become known as "The Platform". It looks at the lessons of the Russian anarchist movement, its failure to build up a presence within the working class movement big enough and effective enough to counteract the tendency of the Bolsheviks and other political groups to substitute themselves for the working class. It sets out a rough guide suggesting how anarchists should organise, in short how we can be effective. It stated very simple truths such as it being ludicrous to have an organisation which contains groups that have mutually antagonistic and contradictory definitions of anarchism. It pointed out that we need formal agreed structures covering written policies, the role of officers, the need for membership dues and so on; the sort of structures that allow for large and effective democratic organisation. When first published it came under attack from some of the best known anarchist personalities of the time such as Errico Malatesta and Alexander Berkman. They accused it of being "Just one step away from Bolshevism" and an attempt to "Bolshevise anarchism". This reaction was over the top but may have partly resulted from the proposal for a General Union of Anarchists. The authors did not spell out clearly what the relationship would be between this organisation and other groups of anarchists outside it. It goes without saying that there should be no problem about separate anarchist organisations working together on issues where they share a common outlook and strategy. Neither, as has been said by both its detractors and some of its latter day supporters, is it a programme for "moving away from anarchism towards libertarian communism". The two terms are completely interchangeable. It was written to pinpoint the failure of the Russian anarchists in their theoretical confusion; and thus lack of national co-ordination, disorganisation and political uncertainty. In other words, ineffectiveness. It was written to open a debate

within the anarchist movement. It points, not towards any compromise with authoritarian politics, but to the vital necessity to create an organisation that will combine effective revolutionary activity with fundamental anarchist principles. It is not a perfect programme now, and neither was it back in 1937. It has its weaknesses. It does not explain some of its ideas in enough depth, it may be argued that it does not cover some important issues at all. But remember that it is a small pamphlet and not a 26 volume encyclopaedia. It is not a completed analysis or programme, it is a contribution to necessary debate - a good starting point. Lest anyone doubt its relevance today, it must be said that the basic ideas of "The Platform" are still in advance of the prevailing ideas in the anarchist movement internationally. Anarchists seek to change the world for the better, this pamphlet points us in the direction of some of the tools we need for that task.

8: FdCA: The Organizational Platform of the Anarchist Communist

The Platform was a document produced in by Russian anarchists of the Dielo Trouda group which included Makhno. It looked at the experience of anarchists in the Russian revolution and suggested an organisational method for anarchism in the future.

The Pan-European Revolt of saw a distinct socialist current, still containing these contradictory strands, branch out from radical republicanism, the contradictions coming to a head in with the separation of distinct anarchist communist majority and Marxist minority strands within the First International. Marxism would further divide into rightist social-democratic and leftist Leninist strands in the Russian Revolt of But the mass tendency of anarchism arose during an expansive phase of mercantile-fiscal capitalism in the s, when imperialist pioneers began their surge into the unconquered half of North America, and turned their greedy eyes towards the material and human resources of Africa, Central America, China and elsewhere. It arose from the ghettos of the newly-industrialised proletariat in the heartland of imperialism and its key raw material producing nations, and its first decades infused everyone from Bohemian intellectuals to Mexican peasants with its raw self-empowerment. So it was that a first wave of syndicalist organisation sprang up: These organisations were each significant in their environs: The significance of this first wave needs to be underlined. Firstly, it is important to note that of the six main countries where this first wave entrenched itself, four were later to experience revolutions with significant anarchist involvement. In the case of Cuba, the anarcho-syndicalist movement there dominated the working class from that period until the late s, with a significant revival in the late s through its leading role in the Cuban Revolution of In Mexico, the movement dominated the organised working class in the s and was the primary engine behind the revolutionary peak of , while in Spain it became the most important revolutionary player in the s, but in Russia and the USA, it never rose to be more than a militant minority tendency. In Uruguay, the movement remained a strong enough minority current to engage in guerrilla warfare with the state from Secondly, the presence of non-European organisations in this first wave undermines the convention that anarcho-syndicalism was a French invention of the s, and emphasises its adaptability and applicability to countries as industrialised as the USA or as backward as Russia. In other words, it arose both in the global north and in the global south, but always in concentrations of expansive industrial growth not among the declining artisanal class. Its social vectors were those of intense upheaval created by both a massive and constant movement of workers around the world to satisfy this new growth, and by the loss of political control the old landed oligarchies experienced as a result of the rise of a modernising bourgeoisie, the unintended corollary of which was the rise of a militant industrial proletariat. Politically, anarchism rose during this first-wave period in response to the insufficiencies, authoritarianism and reformism of both radical republicanism and Marxist socialism, and as an organised, mass-based corrective to the vanguard adventurism of narodnik populism. The first wave broke on the shore of the destruction of the Paris Commune itself anticipated by the earlier Bakuninist uprising in Lyons which saw the driving underground of most revolutionary organisations, and with the split the following year of the First International into an anarchist majority and short-lived Marxist rump which dissolved in practice after only a year. The final collapse of the anarchist IWMA in ended the first genuinely international attempt to organise the socially-conscious working class. The Black International, which lasted until about , was dominated by the minority anarcho-insurrectionist tendency. Generally, the radical working class movement entered a period of defeat that saw an anarchist retreat from mass organisation, while terrorism became vogue for all revolutionary tendencies as capitalism contracted with two great depressions, the last in In it, Bakunin laid out the ground-rules for the IB that was founded that year. After spelling out the principles of the anarchist revolution, the Programme went on to address organisational matters following the dissolution of the nation-state and its armed forces, bureaucracy, courts, clergy and private property. That association starts from the basis that revolutions are never made by individuals, nor even by secret societies. They are, so to speak, self-made, produced by the logic of things, by the trend of events and actions. The key question raised by Bakunin, that of the role of the anarchist communist revolutionary organisation, was to remain a core debate

within the anarchist movement for the following years. Capitalism began expanding dramatically in the mids, with the opening up of the African colonies to imperialist exploitation, and a second wave of anarcho-syndicalist organising, larger than the first, exploded on to the world scene. An oft-forgotten key organisation in this resurgence was the National Labour Secretariat NAS of the Netherlands which dominated the Dutch labour movement for a decade and peaked at about 18, members in 1905 but it was in that year that in France the General Confederation of Labour CGT was founded on a model that was replicated around the Latin world. Macedonia saw anarchist guerrillas among those who established communes in Strandzha and Krusevo, while anarchists were among those who established the first soviets in Russia: St Petersburg and Moscow. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of the working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life. Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organise as a class, take possession of the means of production and abolish the wage system. The army of production must be organised, not only for everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organising industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old. In the same period, specific anarchist political federations mushroomed, instigated in part by the pro-organisationalist Anarchist International AI, founded in Amsterdam in 1905 by delegates from Europe, Latin America, Japan, Russia, and the USA, and lasting until about 1910. These anarchist federations, some of which affiliated to the AI, worked in parallel to and sometimes inside the syndicalist unions. Back in 1905, the first great anarchist revolution broke out in Mexico, providing the template, replicated in other upheavals to come, of how anarchist political organisations, militia and unions could work in concert: Mexico also showed how things could go awfully wrong: The anarcho-communists then broke with the COM and backed the Zapatistas, but the revolution never truly peaked, sputtered and finally died after 10 exhausting years, gutted by reformism. The imperialist powers had initiated the bloodbath because capital was in steep decline and beset on all sides by a militant working class which had a lot of momentum left. Despite the scale of the slaughter, the conflict unleashed two other revolutions – Russia and Ukraine – both of which drank deeply from the well of working class self-organisation before the counter-revolution unlatched the guillotine-blade. The Ukraine showed the efficiency of anarchist guerrilla warfare, based on popular support, directly-democratic urban and rural communes and internal democracy, a twin lesson that would stand anarchists in good stead in the dark decades to come. By the time the global revolt finally ended in 1917, the world was a totally changed place. The second wave transformed anarchism into a truly global phenomenon, with sizeable organisations fighting the class war from Costa Rica to China, from Portugal to Paraguay, from Sweden to South Africa, and with global syndicalism drawn together in the IWA, founded in Berlin in 1904 and representing between 1,5-million and 2-million revolutionary workers globally. But the defeats of the Mexican, Russian and Ukrainian revolutions lead a lot of anarchists to become defeatist, withdrawing from the fields of social and industrial struggle that they had dominated for decades, leaving the door open to Bolshevism. Those critical of this retreat found themselves having to defend the core principles of the social revolution. When Nestor Makhno and the surviving Ukrainian anarchist guerrillas fled into exile in following their defeat at the hands of the Red Army whose backs they had protected for so many years, they faced some hard questions. The most important was: They were also greatly disappointed in the poor support given to them by Russian anarchist comrades. We prefer the title the Organisational Platform of the Anarchist Communists, but it is more commonly known as the Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists, or simply the Platform. By union, the writers of the Platform meant a united political organisation rather than a trade union. Anarchist unions needed to be united with anarchist political groups, anarchist militia, and anarchist municipal soviets. The Platform emphasised the class struggle nature of anarchism, reminding militants that it was a workerist movement, but one that was not exclusively focussed on industry or the trade unions. It called for ideological and tactical unity plus collective responsibility and a programme of revolutionary action. But by executive committee, the writers of the Platform meant a task group of activists whose job it was to carry out tasks mandated by the union. However, since the Soviet and the RIAU were pluralistic organisations, consisting of anarchist, Social Revolutionaries, non-party revolutionaries and even dissident Bolsheviks, the Declaration did not assign the

anarchists a specific social function by name. But the document stopped short of calling for a specific organisation of a distinct revolutionary tendency to carry out that task – as the later Platform did. Unlike authoritarian socialist organisations where the committee would make all policy decisions, in a platformist organisation, the entire membership is the decision-making body. Any delegates or committees merely carry out tasks mandated by that membership. But Makhno and his co-authors argued that it was exactly because of the disorganisation of Russian anarchists that many of them went on to join the only group with a clear revolutionary plan – the Bolsheviks. Most of the anarchist opposition to the Platform has sprung from misconceptions. It was neither authoritarian as we have seen in discussing the executive committee, nor was it vanguardist, that is an attempt to get a tiny group of activists to lead the working class. It was also not intended to say that all anarchists should be absorbed into one massive platformist organisation. It quite clearly said that platformist groups would maintain links with other revolutionary organisations. Platformism is also not a different strand of anarchism: The debate also influenced the remaining anarchists in Russia itself, including former militants of the Nabat who had either been driven underground or jailed. This may account in part for the diversity and resilience of the Bulgarian anarchist movement, which organised workers, peasants, students, professionals and intellectuals, and not only survived, under arms, the fascist putsch, but the Second World War only to be crushed by Stalinist-Fascist reaction in Bolshevism was in many ways more insidious than fascism, by establishing a similar style of totalitarianism, but colouring it red by posing as the liberator of the working class. Disoriented by the propaganda success of the Bolshevik model and silenced in its gulags, anarchism lost ground throughout the world, despite retaining strongholds in Latin America and the Far East, and even helped establish the first communist parties – which were initially noticeably libertarian in orientation – in countries like Brazil, China, France, Portugal, and South Africa. But it was not all about repression: While many anarchist and syndicalist organisations were forced underground or destroyed in this long slide into darkness, important struggles against fascism and imperialism were unfolding in countries like Bulgaria and Korea. It is also amid this turmoil that impressive examples of anarchist-influenced worker self-management – like the Shanghai Commune – arose. Of greater significance were developments in when two huge continental anarchist organisations were founded: This continued anarchist resistance led to the upsurge of a third wave, with the sorely understudied Manchurian Revolution of , the extreme isolation of which limited its impact to Chinese, Japanese, Manchurian and especially Korean resistance. But it quickly gained grassroots support because it was based on worker and community self-organisation. It demonstrated how the upliftment of the working class through economic autonomy and education could combine seamlessly with a bottom-up system of decision-making and a militant defensive programme. Seen as a laboratory of virtually every known competing political tendency from anarchism to fascism, the Spanish Revolution was in many ways the most compelling of the century. But the compromises of reformists in the anarchist ranks, the outside interference of the fascist imperial powers, the betrayals of the Stalinists and the extremely fragmented nature of the republican camp all led to Spain being recalled, incorrectly, as the swan-song of anarchism, a song soon drowned in the carnage of the Second World War. Still, the worker-run fields and factories of Spain provided the best-studied methods for the successful operation of an egalitarian society on a large scale, a lesson that humanity will not easily forget. Although the defeat of the revolution was a great blow for the class, the third wave did not break until the end of the Second World War, when it peaked with armed anarchist resistance movements in France, China, Korea, Poland, Italy, Greece, Bulgaria, Hungary and of course, Francoist Spain, a resistance that was echoed in the anti-colonial struggles to come. Not only that, but numerous anarchist federations were formed during and in the immediate post-war period as anarchists rebuilt their political presence. The collapse of Spain also sent an anarchist diaspora into the world, from North Africa to Chile. Other anarcho-syndicalist organisations that sprang up in this period include: Another strong-point of anarcho-syndicalist organising in the immediate post-war period that is usually overlooked was in China where the movement grew to be about 10, strong in the cities, despite the difficult conditions of conflict between the nationalists and the communists. The same question raised in the s by the Platform, of how to organise in a free, yet effective manner, was faced during the Spanish Revolution, at the height of the third wave. Seeing how the communists and reformists within the trade unions were selling out the revolution, a

militant group of anarchists was formed in to maintain the revolutionary hardline. The Friends of Durruti AD were named after the brilliant Spanish anarchist railway worker and guerrilla fighter Buenaventura Durruti who died defending the capital Madrid against the fascist forces in . The AD was founded by rank-and-file CNT militants, key anarchist hardliners and anarchist militia, in particular from the famous Durruti Column and the Iron Column, which opposed the Stalinist and statist order to turn the militia into an ordinary authoritarian army with its class divisions and its heavy-handed punishment regime. In , when the counter-revolution, encouraged by the Stalinists, was in full swing in the rear of and at the revolutionary front, the AD published *Towards a Fresh Revolution*, a strategic document which was a critique of the reformist tendency within the CNT which had led to anarchist collaboration with bourgeois, nationalist, conservative and Stalinist forces in the Republican government. It was in effect a call to dissolve the bourgeois Republican government and replace it by the organised revolutionary working class under arms. Its other demands were: Like the Makhnovist Platform, the AD manifesto was also accused of being vanguardist and authoritarian, this time because of a misunderstanding, mostly among English-speakers, of what was meant by the revolutionary junta. Its task was merely to co-ordinate the war effort and make sure that the war did not defer or dismantle revolutionary gains. The rest of the revolution was to be left in civilian worker hands. The anarchist movement is widely seen as being at its lowest ebb in the s, when capitalism was in post-war boom and the Cold War between the alternate capitalisms of the USA and USSR was at its height. To a large extent this is true: Given that the Cuban Revolution remains to this day the touchstone of diverse tendencies that arose from the New Left, the centrality of anarchism to the revolution, and the fraudulent, counter-revolutionary role played by the Castroites cannot be overemphasised. The CUT came incredibly close to taking power in the Chilean Revolt of " before the reformist Stalinists and social democrats prematurely ended a revolutionary general strike " and laid the groundwork for decades of Chilean anarchist militancy. That started to change with developments like the founding of the hugely influential Uruguayan Anarchist Federation FAU in , an organisation that set the scene for non-sectarian Latin American continental resistance in the years to come. And despite operating in the most difficult of conditions, anarchist guerrillas plagued the authorities in Maoist China, Krushevite Ukraine and Francoist Spain, while there were anarcho-communist resistance organisations in occupied Korea: The last two are important in that they developed an anarcho-communism virtually in total isolation from the rest of the anarchist movement, giving an indication of the universal validity of anarchist practice, and they participated in the Iranian Revolution of , the most recent revolution in which anarchist guerrillas played a role.

9: Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists

*On the "Organizational Platform of the Libertarian Communists" Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists.
By Nestor Makhno, Ida Mett, Pyotr Arshinov, Valevsky & Linsky.*

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