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Obituary: Gerard Ali Khanifar (1950–1997)

Anarchist Communist Federation

1997

This French comrade of Arab origin has died on 21 February 1997. Born on 10 August 1950 he went to the schools organised by Michelin for their workers. Because of his North African background, school life was difficult for him and he remained forever marked by the humiliations he received there. He started work at Michelin among the ‘sans grades’ (the unskilled and lowest grade of worker). He became an anarchist in May 1968 when he actively participated in the worker-student liaison. His concern for effective organisation led him to join the Organisation Revolutionnaire Anarchiste (ORA). He served several prison terms for his active solidarity with Spanish and Portuguese Anarchists in struggle against Franco and Salazar. His uncompromising militancy put him on many a bosses’ blacklist. Self-taught, with only the lowest French qualification, in 1993 he obtained a diploma at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales thanks to his work on Bakunin *For a Contemporary Reading of Bakunin*. He went on to gain a doctorate with his work on the life and activities of a local French Anarchist. He prepared a work of

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popularisation on the ideas of Bakunin and contributed to the Biographical Dictionary of the Workers Movement founded by the Anarchist historian Jean Maitron. He was the only objector to the national census to appear in court. His industrial activities were both on an international level (solidarity with the British miners in 1984–5) and local (latterly work with the striking lorrydrivers, the unemployed and the casualised theatre workers). Theoretician and activist, he helped set up the Spartacus group of the Federation Anarchiste in Clermont Ferrand in 1994. For his friends and comrades he was warm, bon vivant and, above all, always in solidarity.