

The March Document

from Militant Kindergarten

Center for Especifismo Studies

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“It is ideology that should be within social movements, and not social movements that should be within ideology”

FARJ

Militant Kindergarten is a form of political education. The notes from our discussions have been synthesized into these documents in order to make them available, in the future, for people beyond our own organization. We consider these and other materials that we have made to be collectively produced and propagated resources. For us, resource management refers to decisions and coordination around supplies and practices. It consists of taking inventory, cataloging, and effectively distributing the resources of an organization. On the social level, if sectarians gain control of a mass organization, collectivized resources can be lost. For this reason, resource management also consists of defense against sectarian, or even partisan, control.

On the political level, supporters of the specific anarchist organization are fundamental to resource management and issues of capacity. They have contact with the organization through its social work, as well as through its public statements and presentations. This also includes older militants who have stepped back from militant engagement but may still want to stay involved with the political organization by participating as supporters. The militancy of the political organization, however, must continue through various fluctuations and cycles of struggle, persistently progressing the organization toward its objectives. The problem is that the political organization must keep from becoming isolated and inactive; it must favor flexibility and movement over stagnation and rigidity.

Additionally, experimentation plays an important role in militant formation and the flow of militants because radicalizing people need space and time to determine their needs, as well as their current capacity and its relevant cycles. People must realize for themselves what they are capable of and what they can seriously commit to. It must be explicitly asked: what is my capacity on my own? with support? in a group?

Contradictions in the capitalist organization of society produce classes of exploited people. It is important to theoretically link these contradictions because, over time, the seriality of instances of struggle reveals how individual struggles share common structures and antagonists. We see a

consistent character in the broad struggle against class society. By this we mean that there is a common popular protagonism in the struggle of peripheries against centers of power.

Mobilization and influence pass not only through the objective but also the subjective experiences of people in the community. Subjective perspectives offer an alternative to dogmatism, and rank-and-file engagement weakens bureaucratic centralization. Motivation and excitement are important for mass mobilizations, but they have to be anchored in collective struggle and real wins and accomplishments. There are no vacuums of power. When we don't organize ourselves, other powerful entities will do it for us. A more powerful force is always waiting for space to become available; for this reason, anarchists need to organize, overcome challenges, and follow through on commitments.

Words are tools capable of organizing, but not all words serve as means for the ends that the political organization seeks. While some words may be practical, useful, and unifying in one context, they may not be as relevant or as easy to organize around in a different context. For people in North America, "freedom" is a buzzword. So, in some cases, "emancipation" or "liberation" may be helpful in avoiding the passive use of "freedom". Regardless, words are not enough to ensure ethical actions. Militant ethics are not a form of lip service to ideal conduct; they are a means of defending against authoritarian tendencies inside and outside of an organization.

Capacity is a condition in which someone's needs are met, and our social movements will not be successful if they overlook the needs of the most militant participants and supporters. Militant capacity is a crucial element of revolutionary efforts. For this reason, the political organization aims to facilitate participation from people with varying degrees of commitment and with varying capacities and abilities. This, again, is related to the onboarding and vetting of new members and the necessity for clear connections between decision-making power and level of engagement. In practice, the people showing up the most and consistently doing the most work should have the most decision-making power.

The political organization interacts with the popular organization at "fronts". Following from the *especificismo* conception of organized struggle, the term "front" refers to the setting where class struggle occurs, the theater of conflict. It is the name for the place where the oppressed classes confront the ruling class. Fronts are not just categories of struggle; they're real sites of exploitation, domination, and (potential) direct action. Fronts are the broadest division of the actions of the specific anarchist organization. So, they may also be organized into smaller elements, also known as "stations" or "groupings of tendency".

Combined with the theory of concentric circles, "power mapping" not only reveals power centers but also antagonistic forces that oppress multiple peripheral communities and groups. On the social level, the political organization aims to have influence that is exercised through means of trust, ethics, commitment, and direct action, in short a "model of performance". Having influence is not the same as having dominating power. Furthermore, institutional leadership is not the same as influential people in a community. It is important that we respect the values of different people in different communities because, in order to be effective, anarchism must develop theoretical ways of connecting these localized struggles into an international movement. By mobilizing together and organizing our efforts, individual recognition of need is transformed into collective will. Theory like this is able to take an individual's energy, which has been put into a particular mobilization, and convert it into a social force capable of reaching to another mobilization, locally or internationally. Over time, these connections will generate enough popular power to transform society and produce a revolutionary rupture.

The militant model of performance described by *especificismo* uses direct action as a means of connecting manifestations of struggle over time. These actions take the form of political education, production of theory, and interaction with multiple parts of the community before, during, and after manifestations of struggle. While it is necessary and inevitable that, on the social level, some people will only militate for short-term objectives, the active minority of the specific anarchist organization fights for long-term transformation and short-term goals. In practice, organizational dualism is a way of keeping a long-term orientation while having the practical understanding of how to connect it to short-term struggles. On the social level, the political organization is always concerned with concrete wins for the exploited and dominated classes, in order to advance the protagonism of liberatory struggle itself. Over time, with clear long-term objectives and an insistence on interactions with others engaged in struggle, it begins to be clearer when, where, why, and with whom the political organization would interact. This prepares anarchist militants for interactions with other groups that make up social movements and mass mobilizations. Respecting and defending ideological boundaries in the popular organization is an ethical practice and a practical necessity because the social level needs autonomy, direct action, and direct democracy, and militant action needs to have a revolutionary outlook. Finally, since dogmatism is a constant threat to the effectiveness of the political organization, we have to always insist on being a relevant part of social movements and mass mobilizations because this relevance is a defense against dogmatic radicalism.

Necessity, will, and organization form a tripod of factors influencing any consistent, militant engagement. Popular power is the result of the social force of all three legs of the tripod. So, the militants of the specific anarchist organization must be very familiar with the environment in which they are working because social insertion consists of anarchism having recognition and legitimacy in social movements, that anarchist militants are a welcome and wanted presence in these movements, and that they are listened to as equals, not as vanguards of the masses or “sleeves” of those who have influence but are not engaged in doing the work. Militancy prioritizes a constant presence, integrating anarchism into social movements.

We believe we must learn and teach by doing. In our opinion, ideologically defining and defending our own boundaries makes our politics less reactive, creating space for people to learn, and not expecting everyone to know everything before we begin to work together. Take for example a neighborhood organization that may not foster a gender affirming space. This does not change the fact that secure housing for everyone is still just as necessary. In this space, we should both fight for housing and model gender affirmation because both of these positions are only relevant at a front of class struggle, that is to say on the social level as part of the popular organization.

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