Federación Anarquista Uruguaya
Popular Power
People's Ability to Organise their Own Society
January 7, 2024

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ing the common element that unites the diverse expressions in a single fist. The road is long, but previous generations have left us a rich legacy of experiences. Examples of constant struggle, in a decidedly anti-capitalist tone, in which organised anarchism also has a very rich history and valuable contributions. It is those tools of analysis and methodology that encourage solidarity, direct participation, and dignity in the struggle, while at the same time fighting individualism and resignation. Without expecting magical solutions of any kind, least of all from those who call themselves representatives of the people. In this sense, we rescue the slogan used by the comrades of the old ROE: "only the people will save the people". Likewise that criterion that stated: "In the daily militancy for a society without oppressed or oppressors, today the task is to resist, to accumulate for the fight from the fight itself".

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the various social struggles and in the understanding that the practice of these values makes possible a path towards a better coexistence among equals.

In this way our places of militancy must be at the same time schools without classrooms, where we educate ourselves through the systematic practice of the values that make change possible. To foster a culture of resistance, bringing into it the best of what we are and think as an oppressed people, while at the same time ensuring that the fraternity of those who struggle is breathed into the atmosphere.

Such a discourse-action is necessary to forge, slowly but surely, the rescue of the values and utopias that are the deep ferment of the Resistance. To raise the discussions, giving political and ideological combat to the system, and not to fall into the error of believing that this type of discussion is divisive. This is the feeling that those who want only their own conformist ideas to be accepted and practised have tried to build with malicious intentions.

Here the strengthening of resistance will go hand in hand with the idea that struggle is the only path that can yield real and lasting results. The establishment of this notion and this discussion within the popular movement is fundamental. To break with this attitude of relying on dialogue without struggle, of asking favours from those in power. History sufficiently proves that even in order for the people to improve their living conditions, organised struggle was necessary to directly confront the dominant sectors. It is along these lines and in these collective spheres of struggle that the culture of resistance to which we allude can be generated, from the most diverse expressions.

Yes, the fights are being fought in a somewhat diluted and fragmented way, just as the social fabric is fragmented. The question is to generate or increase these spaces of encounter between those who are fighting, each with their own contributions and experiences, each with their own specificities, seek-

but also, most worryingly, in the level of circulation of ideas of rebellion and questioning of the existing order.

When we refer to this, we are talking about degrees of penetration of a whole culture generated from the centres of power, disseminated at the level of bombardment by the so-called mass media, and often repeated by sectors that call themselves leftist or progressive. A culture of don't mess with the system, good manners and adaptation to capitalism as the only possible reality. It seems that such a culture, finally, has permeated certain sectors of the popular movement.

That is why we firmly believe that recreating a culture of Resistance is an urgent militant challenge.

In order to deepen the attitude of resistance, we reiterate, analytical tools are needed, through which to elaborate a critique and a proposal for such a specific milieu. In other words, clear guidelines for action in the field of social militancy. Guiding ideas that flatly rule out defeatist ideologies, which accept capitalism as the only possible system.

This process of elaboration is fruitful and begins to generate strong ferments of resistance when it takes place in collective spheres. It is part of the practice to be developed in these spheres, because it produces the popular strengthening that is a priority task in pursuit of the creation of a Strong People.

By this we mean social organisations (trade unions, neighbourhood organisations, youth organisations, student organisations, organisations demanding rights, organisations against discrimination, against abuses and repression, etc.) that are independent of the system's levers. We are talking about an attitude of non-adaptation to the guidelines of the system in the economic, political, ideological, ethical and moral spheres. In the field of values, which are so much under attack in terms of subjective identification, the rescue of solidarity and the feeling of belonging to the oppressed is today an urgent task. It is well known that values such as these are not decreed, nor do they come on their own, but are learned in daily contact, in

Organising Social Life from Below

Faced with the obvious historical failure of certain currents designated as socialist, a broad theoretical and political debate was opened up. Much of the material that was incorporated into it turned out to be nothing more than the old failed discourse now updated and which did not critically touch on the fundamental issues. Others took search paths that despite their contribution discarded elements that still suggest much to the present and which are the offspring of great popular struggles over a long period. Of course, we will not find answers for our time in proposals, approaches and theoretical elements that belong to an earlier social-historical context. But there is a system in force that, despite the changes that have been developed, maintains a fundamental matrix based on the domination that a large part of humanity suffers today. It is the capitalist system.

The core of this capitalist system and the way to destroy it in order to create a new civilisation was understood by many social and political fighters who left lucid proposals and on whose suggestions and intuitions there is room for reconstruction and updating in the light of the new existing reality.

To avoid any misunderstanding, we reaffirm that none of this can be taken literally, either as dogma or as scientific truth valid for all times and places. But we cannot in any way ignore or underestimate the fact that behind us, and at that time, there is a long struggle of the peoples and theoretical and political productions in line with it. Just as there are things to be discarded, it must be borne in mind that by updating the best of the past, it is up to the popular and political organisations of this time to make their own way, to set their own milestones, to work out what is missing.

Finally, we would like to highlight an approach that has been gaining ground and which we believe has at its core the elements that caused the failure of historical experiences that

were carried out in the name of socialism. It is the one that returns with a conception, a methodology and proposing the use of institutions and mechanisms of the system that in the end means more of the same. They say it is a new proposal, but in reality it is a continuation of prioritising the top, the vanguard, electoral participation and the use of the state to carry out profound changes that will lead to the creation of the future society. They say something like: take over the government, enter into the dynamics of the bourgeois state and from there with simultaneous work at the bottom produce anti-systemic change. A purely intellectual mixture, which does nothing more than repeat in another form the old approach of failed reformism. One thing is produced from the state, and something completely different is produced from an authentic process from below. This should have been settled by now. But this is not the case. So today we have those who theorise about an articulation of the top with the bottom. These are nightmarish dreams with a dramatic end.

Yes, today there are mixtures of levels that have different social dynamics as a fresh proposal for the present. In this sense, an analysis is developed about everything that construction from below means as part of the process of change. It even incorporates considerations about the dynamics that such a form of struggle can produce. An articulation with contradictory things that give rise to a sea of confusion, which can end up massacring honest efforts, when there are any. Efforts, intentions aside, which are finally led to a dead end, or rather, to continue circulating in the dominant wheel, repeating experiences that have already shown what they end up in.

Within these mixed elements, Bakunin's thought has sometimes appeared, taken into account as a socialist theorist who emphasised the bottom. It is true that he emphasised a form of social organisation that would lead to the destruction of capitalism, but it never occurred to him, as his writings attest, that this would be compatible with work from the state. He was

of view, the dominant power no longer seeks only to discipline society but to control the capacity to create and transform subjectivity.

Insofar as contemporary exercises of power are exercised on subjectivity, on the individual and collective body, it would seem that there is no place left to go beyond it. On the contrary, resistance is exercised in every place, hence the subject of resistance is a subject that escapes its "imprisonment", a resistant subject that confronts the dominant power, a subject, in spite of everything, capable of deploying practices of resistance and struggle in the whole of society. **Contemporary resistances do not have a privileged place, on the contrary, they are many and in different social terrains. They belong to a dimension that escapes the relations subject to the dominant power, and that dimension is in the type of subjectivation that they produce. The question of resistance is at the same time a question of power. For power is a relation of forces, and this relation of forces is already a relation of power. This being so, resistance establishes a relation of power. In this case of people's power.**

Resistance, then, for this long stage from the present to the Transition. Resistant action to strengthen struggles, to build links of solidarity between them, to prevent and combat their atomisation, to give them organisational power and to create new revolutionary possibilities.

Resistance Culture. Construction Phase of Pueblo Fuerte.

In this sense, it is clear that our social action is projected from the existing situation at a given social moment. That is why we try to see what the situation is today in the popular movement. In this space there has been a weakening not only in the number of mobilised people, in the level of militancy,

These are difficult times for the peoples of our continent, for our people. The level of organisation of the popular movement has dropped, as have the struggles that questioned the very existence of the system. In this sense, it is necessary to recover from the blows received and to find ways to overcome very adverse conditions, avoiding the so-called shortcuts that lead to nothing. We always have the faith that the people will find, in their various struggles, with favourable subjective constructions, little by little, the way forward. History is instructive in this respect.

"From the very moment there is a power relation, there is a possibility of resistance," says new research. So it seems to us, as long as there is injustice, exploitation and oppression, there will be resistance. And that resistance will be illuminating a different future, the possibility of the radical transformation of this order.

There are diverse struggles across the spectrum of the social-political field. Their permanence and depth is variable. There are some that emerge for the moment with great social force. Discontent seems to be seeking channels.

Yes, in the social sphere, the new situation manifests itself in different ways and encounters different resistances and struggles. These can be located according to the field in question. With varying degrees of relevance, they are manifestly present.

This takes place within the framework of a permanent process of social tensions, rebellions, confrontations and discontent.

It is argued that resistance is built on the basis of the lived experience of those who make it an authentic practice of freedom. The "command" is everywhere, it comes from everywhere. And yet resistance is first, to that extent it is necessarily in a direct relationship with the outside from which domination comes. It is in the whole territorial extension of the dominant power, it is coextensive with it. From this point

expressly opposed to the idea that the two planes could be coherently articulated.

We think it useful, then, first of all, to separate the wheat from the chaff. In this respect, let us look at some of Michael Bakunin's thought, his foundation and conviction that the real process of change is either from below or it is not. He says:

> *"To change and organise society from below to above. Of course, this ideal appears to the people as signifying the end of their needs, the end of poverty, and the full satisfaction of all their material requirements through collective, equal and compulsory labour for all, and then as the end of domination, and as the free organisation of people's lives according to their needs – not from the top downwards, as we have it in the State, but from the bottom upwards, an organisation formed by the people themselves, independent of governments and parliaments, a free union in associations of agricultural and factory workers, in communes, regions, and nations….*
>
> *Our programme can be summarised in a few words:*
>
> - *Peace, emancipation, and the happiness of the oppressed.*
> - *War against all despots and oppressors.*
> - *Full restitution to the workers: all the capital, the factories, and all the instruments of labour and raw materials must go to the associations, and the land to those who cultivate it with their own hands.*
> - *Liberty, justice and fraternity with respect to all human beings on earth. Equality for all…*
> - *The organisation of a society by a free federation, from the bottom upwards, of workers'*

associations, industrial as well as agricultural, scientific and literary associations – first in a commune, then a federation of communes into regions, of regions into nations, and of nations into the international fraternal association.

… to strive with all their efforts to reconstitute their respective homelands in order to replace in them the old organisation founded from top to bottom on violence and on the principle of authority, by a new organisation having no other basis than the interests, the needs, and the natural attractions of the peoples, and no other principle than the free federation of individuals in communes, of communes in provinces, of provinces in nations… and later of the whole world."

He adds very clearly which paths to take for the real emancipation of the peoples as well as which conceptions and strategies do not lead to that end. He says:

"Revolution by Decree is Doomed to Failure. As against the ideas of the authoritarian Communists – fallacious ideas, in my opinion – that the Social Revolution can be decreed and organised by means of a dictatorship or a Constituent Assembly, our friends, the Parisian Socialists, maintain that the revolution can only be undertaken and brought to its full development through the continuous and spontaneous mass action of popular groups and associations…. For, in reality, there is no brain, however brilliant it may be, or – if we speak of the collective dictatorship of a few hundred supremely gifted individualities – no combination of intellects capable of embracing all the infinite multiplicity and diversity of interests, aspirations, desires and

process of subjectivation, that which requires a major process of consciousness-raising in order to take revolutionary steps.

It is clear that in the imperatively coercive dynamics of the system of domination, it is not enough to have a people who are favourable and well disposed to change – obviously, much less in terms of potentialities that are not expressed at all -: it is essential to have an organised people fighting for change.

This could be the struggle of this moment in Latin America, in our Uruguay. The forms of mobilisation and resistance, the demands of the oppressed classes and categories can be very varied.

This fight demands that we catch up with the enemy in terms of organisation, technology, preparation for the struggle in its different forms, but surpassing it in morale, internal democracy and ideological firmness. A new stage is opening up, for an old hope for justice and freedom, which will require redoubled efforts.

The Importance of Resilience in the Stages of Change

The old resistance societies of the beginning of the century, the ones that had brought about so many achievements in the class struggles of the workers, gave a content to this word. It was something like a synonym for not inserting oneself into the system and confronting it vigorously. That is why in every demand there was a piece of tomorrow. Their struggles for improvements for today were, at the same time, part of a strategy of resistance and overcoming the system. Regardless of their successes and mistakes, of not having marched in the social-political sphere in tune with the times, this concept of resistance had a valid and profound meaning. Its anti-capitalist radicalism was unquestionable. Thus, as long as the capitalist system exists, it will always maintain its fundamental validity.

lar economic and class structure that this determines – it is not possible to think of the possibilities of a revolution led exclusively by the nuclei of the factory proletariat and perhaps not even by the wage earners as a whole. It is necessary to think of the construction, as a basic strategic tool for social transformation, of a front of oppressed classes and categories that has the working class as its central nucleus, including rural workers, the great diversity of self-employed workers – a sector progressively swollen by the crisis and the system's responses to technological changes -, the marginalised who demand work, the student body (a potentially salaried sector in the context of capitalist productive reconversion, called to constitute itself as a scientific and technological proletariat); anti-capitalist feminism, movements in defence of the eco-system, sectors demanding various rights or recognition.

In broad strokes, then, the front of oppressed classes and categories to which we refer is constituted as a permanent network of relations, linked programmatically, of the multiplicity of organisations from below capable of expressing in the struggle the immediate interests of these social sectors and of developing and deepening them in the sense of goals and orientations of a transformative and socialist type. A front of oppressed classes and categories that will be shaping its efficient organisational forms for struggle and advance. An organisation that we conceive as the fabric of the Resistance that operates in the heart of the Strong People.

The oppressed sectors as a whole have a latent power which they must transform into a conscious state: the power to decide whether to make society and the system of domination work or not. This resistant power of Strong People is the root of popular power, the realisation of which requires a long chain of mediations. Among them, and not the least important, is a whole

real needs which constitute in their totality the collective will of the people; there is no intellect capable of projecting a social organisation which can satisfy each and every one".

As for the use of the state in the process towards revolution, the Russian anarchist states:

"It is an old system of organisation, based on force, which the Social Revolution will abolish in order to give full freedom to the masses, groups, Communes, associations and individualities, destroying once and for all the historical cause of all violence: the very existence of the State whose fall will entail the destruction of all the iniquities of juridical law and of all the falsehoods of the various cults – rights and cults which have always been the complacent canonisers, both on the ideal and on the real terrain, of all violence represented, guaranteed and authorised by the State.

It is evident that only when the State has ceased to exist will humanity obtain its freedom, and that only then will the true interests of society, of all groups, of all local organisations, and consequently of all individuals forming such organisations, find their true satisfaction."

He adds:

"Free organisation will follow the abolition of the state.

That the State has always been the patrimony of a privileged class, like the priestly class, the noble class, the bourgeois class; a bureaucratic class, in the end, because when all classes have been annihilated,

the State falls or rises like a machine; but for the good of the State there must be a privileged class which is interested in its existence, and it is precisely the solidarity interest of this privileged class which is called patriotism".

In passing, Bakunin does something of what M. Foucault says: "to emphasise, more than the fundamental element of sovereignty.... (Patriotism) the relations or the operators of domination.... A theory of domination, of dominations, rather than a theory of sovereignty... to start from the relation of power itself, from the relation of domination in what is factual, effective, and to see how it is itself that determines the elements on which it rests. Consequently, not to ask the subjects how, why and in the name of what rights they can accept to allow themselves to be subjected, but to show how the concrete relations of subjection fabricate them... I do not mean, of course, to say that there are no great apparatuses of power.... I believe, however, that they continue to function on the basis of these devices of domination.... ".

We have then that Bakunin's conception of revolutionary social construction from below, which interests us so much, has nothing at all to do with statist articulations in the bourgeois institutional framework.

Incidentally, we will now add some of FAU's considerations on the general theme implicit here.

Bourgeois Institutions can only serve the Bourgeoisie: A Story with an End we know all too well

The following documents are opinions that our organisation gave in its weekly "Letters". They correspond to the year 1970. We are making an extract of several works that

1. the nature of the revolutionary process and
2. the class spectrum in Latin American countries.

The revolutionary process we are proposing has as its ultimate goal a socialist and libertarian society which, as such, delimits friends and enemies from the outset.

Bakunin said: "To establish a line of demarcation between the possessing and the dispossessed classes; for these two classes are confused with each other by a number of intermediate and imperceptible shades.... in human society, in spite of the intermediate positions which form an insensible transition from one political and social existence to another, the difference of classes is nevertheless very marked, and everyone will know how to distinguish the aristocracy of the nobility from the aristocracy of finance, the upper from the petty bourgeoisie, and the latter from the proletarians of the towns and factories; the large landowner, the rentier, the peasant proprietor who cultivates his own land, the farmer, from the simple proletarian of the countryside... "

An anti-capitalist and anti-authoritarian revolution unmistakably aims at the disappearance of the relations of domination and thus against the survival of all ruling classes and strata. It is a revolution that longs for the disappearance of the bourgeoisie as a class – without the classic philanthropic distinctions of reformism between big and petty bourgeoisie, national or foreign – the disappearance of landlords and rentiers, military castes, bureaucracy and state hierarchies. The socialist and libertarian revolution, precisely because of its radically anti-capitalist and anti-authoritarian content, can only find fighters in the oppressed classes and categories. In this sense, the central role in a revolutionary process of socialist and libertarian orientation belongs to the working class in general and to all the oppressed. By no means to any section of the bourgeoisie.

It is clear that in backward and dependent capitalist countries like those of Latin America – with the particu-

political-social structure that adequately articulates the protagonism of the people as a whole in a framework of Popular Power and direct and federative Democracy.

A new anti-authoritarian structure par excellence, the one that has been announced since the socialist beginnings by libertarians in general terms, although we assume it to be insufficient.

These elements are substantial parts of our strategy of people's power, they are irreplaceable conditions for an authentically socialist and libertarian path in the revolutionary journey of our peoples. We have attached to this a previous stage of Pueblo Fuerte.

This whole process, especially the previous stage, requires an indispensable complement or further definition of the revolutionary subject and its structural bases as far as its class content is concerned. Therefore, we will schematically raise the issue as far as it is indispensable for the purposes of this work.

As we have seen, the relations of domination specific to a given society originate in the constitutive element of social classes. On the other hand, the relations of domination existing within a given society not only resist any kind of simplification but rather determine a complex spectrum of classes and social categories and the struggles that accompany them. What we can and must determine, roughly speaking, within the framework of a complex and diverse struggle of classes and social categories, is the group of oppressed people who, because of their social situation, because of their condition as dominated segments of society, have the potential to become the axis and the motor of social change with revolutionary intentions.

Although there are elements of a general nature, our analysis will focus here on Latin America, where our specific action is taking place.

For the purposes of setting criteria, two elements need to be taken into account in the first instance:

have thematic unity, as it is our material we will free it from syntactic formality. As we said above, there are themes which are repeated but which today appear to be new. They are actually themes that were already raised a long time ago. Theoretical-political issues that are presented today as a new proposal or as questions, have been repeatedly discussed within the left for a long time. With these materials, it seems to us, we complete this synthetic primary approach to the structure of domination, its "components" and the techniques of reproduction they bring into play. In contrast to some of Bakunin's and Kropotkin's material, the order of analysis is less descriptive of the historical and more focused on categories. We have tried to remove as much as possible what is very specific to the place, trying to include what is of a more general nature. Let us see:

> *"Many years ago, when the world was ruled only by kings, many people had illusions about parliaments. But the liberalism that wanted this had a major flaw, which would become clear in time. Democratic liberalism focused only on the political aspect, on equal political rights. All it demanded was that everyone should have the right to vote. It looked only at political inequality, which it wanted to turn into equality, into democracy, and did not look at other, equally or more important aspects of inequality. Social inequality, inequality of wealth, the fact that, in the capitalist world that was being born, some were exploiters and others – the vast majority – were exploited.*

The state deserves special treatment because it is linked to a whole historical strategy of the Marxist current: the seizure of state power. The concept of power in these conceptions is, more than anything else, related to the state. This suggests the idea that power is in the political sphere and that it does not

circulate in other spheres. So for social democracy as well as for Marxism-Leninism, access to the state was the main strategic way. A strategic criterion which, on the other hand, has been, and still is, a central theme in many social and political organisations that call themselves left-wing.

Linked to this approach, to this conceptuality, is the concept of the vanguard. In fact there would be only one direction: from the party to the class and the whole population. There is the belief that the population, and its historical subject the class, should remain subordinated to the party and that alone it was incapable of creating instances of liberation. There is also the belief that within capitalist society it is not possible to generate, from below, basic conditions for its rupture. The degree of development of self-organisation, self-management, direct democracy of popular bodies did not matter. After all, it was not a question of creating a strong people but a strong party capable of leading. Total political reductionism, the offspring, moreover, of a whole general reductionist conception.

Other beliefs are that the main thing is to generate changes from the "infra-structure", the economy, to change mentalities; that the fundamental thing is to take the power of the state and operate from there, having as central importance the vanguard to lead this process. These beliefs are today more than questioned, one could say shattered in any rigorous descriptive analysis. This description must be articulated in order to produce hypotheses of a theoretical nature. In order to strengthen with rigour a strategy of Popular Power.

independence of the working class resists and is re-launched in new forms, even if it struggles hard in trade union contexts that operate as transmission pulleys of reformist parties or those that are frankly integrated into the system, or the struggles of new contested social movements. Whether they are struggles against poverty, inequality, discrimination, racism, in defence of the eco-system, economic injustice, various forms of political tyranny or oppressed minorities, or directly anti-imperialist struggles. Wherever it is, assuming the specific characteristics that each society and each conjuncture demands, we believe it is desirable to inscribe in them a project of rupture and organised resistance.

The wear and tear and the high level of disbelief in the traditional way of doing politics open up spaces for our conception of effective participation of the people, of practices of popular direct action, of building a strong people.

It is clear that it is not enough to note that the model called "real socialism" ended in failure and that it was never a truly socialist alternative; that formal bourgeois democracy is a deceitful and brutally unequal illusion. Nor that disbelief in the "virtues" of this "democracy" has advanced. The spaces that produce a given set of relations to serve a process of People Power signalling must be intentionally occupied. It is important to bear in mind at all times that the space that one conception does not occupy is occupied by another.

Pueblo Fuerte and Resistencia Stage: The Front of Oppressed Classes and Social Categories as the Subject of Change

We have proposed the need for a popular outcome as the corollary of a long process of revolutionary-oriented struggles and, consequently, the necessary protagonism of the popular organisations from below, finally a new and unprecedented

enough. It is necessary to be there with an "intention". Due to the high mobility of the social situation it is convenient to establish short term tactical programmes. It is also essential to manage with time. It is not possible to evaluate the effectiveness of a work in terms of months or a year. There are tasks that bear fruit in terms of time. Things done in a very short perspective, only punctually, leave little or nothing behind. We know that a social-political accumulation is a complex task and depends on many factors. Successes and mistakes, corrections and reiterations are combined over time. For a certain culture in society, we can add that creativity does not mean changing the wave all the time, but "inventing" and refreshing within the framework of an objective and a methodical task that maintains regularity. Creation is one thing, instability is another. A project of a certain length of time requires perseverance, regularity and a certain stability. And this regularity must be emphasised; what is transcendent is the daily work, the continuity in a diagrammed strategy, that the different tasks are finally convergent. Punctuality, the episodic task as a policy does not lead to any port.

Resistance and the Struggles of our Time

We see that with greater or lesser intensity, the questioning of the set of phenomena that we commonly call crisis is transformed into an option of struggle. Partial and vindictive struggles, some with a certain revolutionary content, with a greater or lesser understanding of the historical and structural roots of this crisis, with peculiar characteristics according to the specific social context that serves as a framework for them. However the struggle for greater social, political or economic justice, the struggle for new models of coexistence, is presented to us as the only certain alternative and as an inalienable attribute of the oppressed. Whether it is the struggle in which the

On Ideology and the Social Construction of Subjectivity: Creation through Social Action of a Strong People

The subject of change must be produced, it does not come about fatally or magically. It needs the discourse-action that makes it possible.

At certain historical moments, an articulated set of ideas, representations and notions are produced within the imaginary of the different social subjects. It is this articulated set of imaginary character, which takes the form of "certainties" defended by the social subjects themselves, that can transform these subjects into protagonists of their own history or into passive subjects and/or disciplined by the dominant forces.

What we define as ideology has to do directly with the historical constitution of social subjects and the way they express themselves in society. This is quite different from the notion that ideology is the falsification of reality, precisely because it is one of the fundamental components of any social reality.

As the FAU stated in the document *Huerta Grande*: "ideology has in its constitution elements of a non-scientific nature that contribute to energising action, motivating it on the basis of circumstances that do not derive in the strict sense of the word from them. Ideology, like other social spheres, is conditioned by historical conditions, although it is not mechanically determined by them.

It is in this relationship between ideology and the production of historical subjects, a relationship which, if it did not exist, there would be neither ideology nor subject, that the moments of ideological validity take shape. As well as, historical subjects/agents expand and lead to the hegemony of social bodies, starting from the validity of ideologies.

At other times, ideologies overlap in the same society or live in isolated zones. Faced with the fruit of neoliberal fragmenta-

tion, breaking the isolation of ideological representations with emancipatory potential is a permanent task of a political organisation with intentions of change.

In this sense, we can conclude the importance of the ideological struggle, especially in the current historical times in our continent, where we see the defeat of real Marxism, the violent arrival of neo-liberal ideology, the reduction of actions and armed national liberation movements, the right-wingisation of the institutional left, which is becoming more and more integrated into the system. And, in the light of these overwhelming facts, the intense resurgence of ultra-right ideologies that seemed to have been historically defeated and that are acquiring new clothes and are now strongly present on the political scene.

In the face of all these social changes and losses, in the face of a culture that proclaims the end of ideologies and history, that declares capitalism and its institutions as the only possible reality, the ideological struggle is now gaining strategic dimensions for the production of a new historical subject, capable of confronting such dominant conceptions on the basis of direct action. It is through ideology, through the power of ideas, that hearts and minds can be mobilised, articulating them collectively in an expression of resistance and progress insofar as it brings together different social subjects and turns them into agents capable of rewriting history and conceiving a new world.

As we move towards the Creation of the New: To a Society Organised by the People, by those at the Bottom.

The old socialists spoke of building a new civilisation, Che made it fashionable to speak of the new man. Durruti said that

the people seek their protagonism, where they confront injustices and demand vindications and in those general struggles of the people for a better existence.

About the Programme. Concerns and Precautions

The programme "we situate it specifically and concretely in the field of social practices. In the field where social tensions and struggles are expressed". The programme will take up the evaluation of the stage the system is at in our social formation and, by locating the existing space for action, it will deploy its work. The programme will comprise "the orientation of the whole of our action for a period". It is not a matter of doing what comes up, nor of estimating in isolation each thing that appears, nor of getting discouraged because progress is not immediately visible. It is about setting objectives and moving towards them. Choosing action and setting priorities according to those objectives. This implies, of course, that there will be activities that we will not undertake, events that we will not be involved in. They may seem important and even spectacular, but they don't count if they don't fit in with the aims for the stage of our programme. In other cases, if they do fit, we may be in the absolute minority or with great complications, but they are activities that fit our objectives. Choosing what is "fashionable", what is promoted with intentions and interests distant from those that move us, doing what we like the most or what brings us the least complications is not a correct policy. On the contrary, **the various struggles, experiences, demands for improvements or defence of conquests that the population is carrying out must count on us. Obviously more intensely those with a combative tone and a proper social sense. But just being there is not**

been processing in action and thought for decades and which we have understood to be of major importance for our future.

Something about our Project

Our anarchist revolutionary project is a logical consequence of the critique and our aspirations for a form of coexistence among human beings. For an organised social life without domination.

Anarchism as a critique of capitalism and the state, as a critique of the bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy, as a critique of domination, privilege and injustice in all its forms, as a radical critique of authoritarianism, necessarily becomes an attitude of struggle and finds its reason in the social struggles of the oppressed classes and social categories.

Our critique and our project are not exhausted in uprising, protest and rebellion but mature in a model of an unmistakably socialist libertarian society, in a strategy of revolutionary rupture on the basis of Pueblo Fuerte and Poder Popular and in a militant combative style of permanent agitation, with a focus on the concrete and daily problems of the people, of those at the bottom, but always with the perspective of large-scale social transformations. This project is channelled through the organisation of the social and political field with revolutionary intentions.

In Latin America and the world our anarchist project, today as in the past, recovers its relevance and possibilities for action in areas of activity where popular protagonism is being expressed and in those areas that have to do with the quality of life, the struggle against misery, the destruction of nature, discrimination and all forms of domination. Historically, libertarian thought has tried to be a spokesperson for these struggles. In our social formation our actuality and recognition can be found in the different social instances where some sectors of

we carry a new world in our hearts. These things allude to values, to a new way of life, to new social relations. If history teaches us anything, it is that this does not happen from above, it requires the construction of a new social subject. And for this construction, the active, transformative participation of this subject is fundamental. Building new ways of organising the transformative social struggle. For if the social subject has not come into contact with new, albeit incipient, notions and social relations, it cannot have other referents than those it is familiar with and tends to reproduce them.

It is by building social force and taking active participation in it that embryos of the new civilisation or the "new man", of another subject, can be formed. Let us say that this is the question of how consciousness is transformed, to use classical language. As far as we have seen, the economy by itself does not transform consciousness. Neither does popular participation by itself, even if it is a condition of possibilities, it must go hand in hand with a form of construction based on direct democracy. **What the subject experiences and how he/she experiences it on a daily basis, historically, within the framework of certain devices and struggles, would be the main element of changes in his/her consciousness.**

Dominant Power and People's Power

Of course, this brings us hand in hand with the treatment of another concept: that of power. An essential tool. The most rigorous studies seem to indicate some fundamental questions: that power circulates throughout the social body, throughout the different structured spheres. In other words, through all social relations. We would thus have power in the economic, legal-political-military, ideological-cultural spheres. We would have power at all levels of society.

On the smaller scales, power also acquires importance in the light of the formation of embryos of new civilisation, in the interweaving of resistance and different forms of self-organisation or self-management.

For there is a social universe of the everyday, of small dimensions, nodes of resistance, which as a possibility is a factory for the production of new notions and techniques of popular power. We have had as a definition since 1960 onwards that power is not synonymous with domination, and therefore it cannot be labelled as something only negative and almost synonymous with coercion and repression. The construction of an emancipatory power takes the opposite path to the power of domination.

Moreover, with regard to domination, recent studies tell us or suggest that its power does not lie in institutions or apparatuses. They are never amorphous, they are functional and always penetrated. It is worth saying that this power circulates within them, that this is their real form of existence. Here the classic Marxist thesis and those of economists and scientists who separate economic structures, almost always the structure of production, as preceding power or separate from it, are demolished. Linked to the structure of production, for example, are power, politics, ideology, classes, struggle and resistance. They exist simultaneously and thus unfold. Following this example, to say production in the capitalist system is to say classes, to say surplus value is to say exploitation, to say classes is to say violence and repression but also permanent degrees of resistance and possibilities for the creation of popular power.

Finally, it has to be said, there is something rather complicated here for libertarianism because of how the concept of power has been conceptualised historically. We have several questions: Does power transform or dissolve, is it always something negative that must be destroyed? Is power synonymous with repression? Are there organised forms without power?

Confusion, contradiction in social and political practices in complex situations due to the absence of experience in political work and in the exercise that emanates from it.

For us, political action is an instance, at the same time as globalising, of synthesis that society must offer itself in order to solve problems of a general and "national" nature. It is an instance that goes beyond and encompasses much more than the merely corporate, partial or regional. It is through it that it becomes possible to solve the set of global needs and problems of the population of a country, of a social formation.

Political action is a specific and differentiated instance and constitutes a particular space of practices. The organisation that expresses it, i.e. the political organisation, must understand this particularity.

The confrontations, contradictions and agreements that are settled in the political field have a general and synthetic tenor. At least today and in the period of transition, political organisation differs from other social practices by the issues it addresses and the way it deals with them. The fact that the libertarian political organisation must seek a different articulation with other social practices does not detract from its special character.

The process of rupture and that of the Transition require a strong and evenly developed revolutionary political organisation, with adequate knowledge: of the forces in conflict, of the different agreements that can be reached, of the general movements of the situation, of the ideological state of the population. Likewise: good technical development, plans for periods, proposals for all relevant events, special knowledge of the environment in which it operates.

We are aware that the above considerations do not exhaust, by far, the subject of transition and People's Power. We have tried, perhaps more precisely, to raise a problem which we have

of the concrete problems involved in the accumulation of forces for the rupture and the possible transition after it.

Two important themes to reiterate: 1) the concept of exteriority and of what the social human being is like; 2) the confusion of social processes with thought processes has, in general, had a very negative outcome.

In our tents, by virtue of these and other concepts, the specific political work has sometimes been disregarded. It would be implied that a society with free articulation of all its social instances, with all people participating, would not need the specific political instance.

This could perhaps be expected of a fully libertarian society, but it remains to be seen whether this is possible there. On what historical basis could we today decree the demise of the globalising instance at the political level?

But to return to the subject at hand, this abstraction is intended to be transferred to the present and, by the way, to the transition period. This may be the origin of the lack of political suitability of anarchism, the lack of "craft" to which Peirats refers to the experiences of Spain and which can be transferred more generally to anarchism. That lack, that lack of craft of which Peirats spoke when referring to the role of the libertarian movement in Spain, is the consequence of several facts:

The aforementioned lack and imprecision about the transition period. The revolutionary and anarchist absolute, eternally postponed for tomorrow, nullifies the possibility of seeking answers for today.

The rejection and confusion about what is political action, which is identified only with the mechanisms and practices of the system.

A totalising vision of revolutionary action, where confrontation and agreements with other forces were not perceived as necessary.

Is power not also and fundamentally the capacity to realise? Does it not mean at the same time the capacity for rupture and reconstruction?

We affirm that power is not the same as dominant power. We see power as the capacity for realisation. Realisation, in our conception, of a social organisation that ensures freedom, equality and full justice for all.

It is said that how something is "seen", what theoretical-political ideas are adopted, what social technology is put into operation, is of paramount importance for the practices that are to be implemented and deployed. It is in this context that we place this concept, because it has a major impact on the field of practice and strategy as a whole.

Elements of Dominant Power: The Need to Break with Them

Our insistence on finalist objectives and our concern to highlight the structural bases of social conflicts must form an obligatory part of our preaching. This is one of the main axes of our propaganda and action, and we always try to ensure that it is consistent, up-to-date and well-founded. It is justified to the extent that it is intended as a contribution to making possible a consciousness-raising process of rupture and transformation. This seemingly obvious statement is at the same time decisive in that it confronts us with a theoretical and practical problem of capital importance: the fact **that socialist society is probably the first known historical form of society which cannot be built entirely peacefully, nor by the action of supposed laws of history, but requires a profound collective consciousness-raising. It is this that will provide the possibilities of rupture.**

Having reiterated these general concepts, we now turn to some institutional and structural aspects of the system.

We have as an important element the institution of parliament. It is today a decaying institution. The parliaments, the elections, which the bourgeoisie demanded when it fought against the old ruling classes in order to gain the support of the people, today play a secondary role. Parliaments that in certain stages of the system played a preponderant role of social containment, surrounded by a whole ideological construction, by "discourses of truth" (in the Foucauldian sense), very worn out in the present.

At this historical moment, the system is not particularly concerned about the image of formal democracy and its proclaimed human rights. They are being used coarsely for their reproduction, to maintain their scandalous privileges and even to justify invasions and wars. This has made it lose effectiveness in terms of credibility at the level of broad popular sectors. The whole experience of the people, of those from below, especially through their struggles, has been creating certain subjectivities. This has given rise to visions that are different from those that the system wants to enshrine. It is also true that they have not always been positive in terms of a change in favour of popular interests. For these subjectivities operate in a context that fights them and tries to create as much confusion as possible.

A process of profound change in fundamental structures aimed at changing social relations as a whole cannot come from the so-called "neo-liberal state" or even from the "populist state". These concepts refer more to governments than to the state itself.

A genuine change process is of a very different kind.

In descriptive terms, we know that the state comprises a number of institutions. Army, police, judiciary, industrial enterprises, health and education services, political establishment, etc. Also president and parliament. All these institutions have theoretically fixed tasks in a general, 'legal' order, very broad powers. Historically, their form can vary, and so can

The points made above about direct democracy as a social system and direct action as an orientation are closely related to the definition we make here of Democratic People's Power.

As we have already pointed out, it is historically unthinkable that anarchists alone will make the revolution. It is equally unthinkable that we alone will make the reconstruction. Because, in a framework of construction of the new, this would imply, apart from intentions, a conception of dictatorship that would not allow the expression of dissent or of different proposals. Even in the case of a majority, we would be confronting and agreeing. And that is the basic principle of our concept of political practice. A society with a single ideological doctrine and a single political organisation is beyond our conception. The valid doctrine of freedom is strictly related to what each society can build in this sense. Of course, there is a framework within which we will be uncompromising: against any form of exploitation or domination.

It is impossible to guess which and with what characteristics will be the hegemonic actors in a future revolutionary conjuncture. But we must admit that we may not be the majority force. That is why it matters in what form we will be present.

We do not rule out that we could become, and this depends on our political development, a force of some gravity in some revolutionary process. This implies being clear about everything that needs to be confronted and shared.

The Political Level Today and Tomorrow

It is well known that there is often a wishful thinking that places itself outside social realities. It believes that everything that is elaborated at the level of thought processes is possible. We assume that some libertarian discourses have something of this. This can lead, and must be avoided, to an underestimation

previous struggle. But, always encouraged by the hope and the conviction that with the right tools and the struggle despite the difficulties that arise, the final victory will be of the resistant people.

Social Order without the State and without Domination

We will reiterate a theme that we dealt with at the beginning but now from another angle, bearing in mind the subject matter that we dealt with in the course of these general considerations.

The destruction of the state (the state being understood as the actual juridical-political form of class society, the articulating part of the system, which works for the legitimisation of existing social relations), is not a punctual, conjunctural act, but a continuous, permanent action of destruction and simultaneously the construction of a new social relationship, a process which is not necessarily uniform and linear.

The form that could be taken by another order in this necessary transition is what we will call Popular Democratic Power today. Direct democracy, of course.

This means that we are trying to move towards that democratic people's power which we conceive as a preliminary stage to socialism with freedom.

Popular participation will be a constant and priority orientation throughout this period, encompassing the whole spectrum of social and political activities.

In a way, the new post-revolutionary situation will come together here. Each process will have its own possibilities and specificities, but the general model of transition which seems to us to be viable and consistent is the one mentioned above.

their economic policy. For example, in times of crisis, those in power need someone to 'rule with force', to act in order to maintain 'order'. When, without a solution within their system, economic and social deterioration occurs, when unemployment and poverty increase, they know that this leads to growing expressions of discontent, and so they extend the repressive functions of the state. They even establish "states of exception" in the very heart of formal bourgeois democracy. States of siege, security measures, etc. This can be decreed at the international level, nationally or for specific areas.

There are approaches that present the state as very complex, but it is simple, there is a history that shows it, within the current system, the state represents the interests of the dominant classes. It always represents privileges.

It is not only anarchism that upholds the oppressive and domineering character of the state. Today there are rigorous studies that take into account its entire trajectory and the functions that give it existence and permanence. The web of power to which it belongs.

Thus we have the problem of the state as a place of "condensation" (coagulation, as M. Foucault would say) of diverse powers, as a specific place that has its own "relative autonomy" and is capable of channelling, maintaining and reproducing privileges of different orders.

Its centralising dynamic is suitable only for domination, as is its disciplining, controlling, coercive and repressive function. Perhaps with supremacy over other powers that fulfil functions of the same category at the social level. In addition to the dimension of its singular action and production, it has, at the same time, a certain specificity as part of the dominant power.

We would add that premises which are valid for the state in general, that is to say, for the state in the various historical systems, are not very clear. But what does emerge, and which has

a fairly general consensus, is **that it has a monopoly on organised repressive force; a monopoly on "justice" and the seller of this idea of "justice", its character of defender and upholder of privileges, possessor of a centralising and annulling dynamic of the "spontaneous", of what it does not control, of all the resistance it considers dangerous. He is the manager of the great operation of the normal and the abnormal, of the abduction of the body.**

Socialisation of the Political Function and all Community Functions: Socialisation and People's Power

It has been put forward by our Organisation since the 1960s and updated in 1986 along general lines of orientation which it considers to be those that create the real possibility of another type of society.

Realising in concrete social and historical terms the fundamental principles and values of libertarian thought leads us hand in hand to the problem of socialisation.

We proclaim the most complete socialisation of all spheres of social activity. The socialisation of the means of production exercised from the organs of real representation of society and not from the state, the socialisation of education, of the administration of justice, of defence organisations, of the sources of knowledge and information, and most especially the socialisation of political power. In this last aspect, we advocate the abolition of the state and governmental forms of power as the only guarantee for the elimination of all forms of domination.

Obviously, socialisation, as an imperative condition for its realisation, requires the re-appropriation by society as a whole, through its basic nuclei, of the goods and functions monopolised by the dominant classes, whatever they may be. A socialisation that we do not conceive of as narrow, constrained and

ables a different system. But from there to the belief that readiness for profound change is almost a given is quite a stretch. As has already been pointed out, people carry on their backs centuries of notions and representations, of political references and coexistence, of negative individualism. There are social and political practices that have deep roots. Power is not only in the state and outside the people. There are subjectivities that can reproduce the above or produce new forms of exploitation or oppression.

Again, the complexity of a transformation process demands a high level of understanding of the different social mechanisms; of the existing social imaginary at different moments. It is important to make sure that the tools of analysis do not become stagnant, that they tread on realities that have many dynamic interactions, that they account for the different forces at play.

In order to move forward, there are unavoidable requirements. To move forward with a finalist project with such ductility that it can be operative in the most diverse conjunctural circumstances. To pose and solve problems, to plan periods of action, to be attentive to changes, to estimate one's own forces, those of the enemy and of specific friends. To develop an analytical capacity that allows one to anticipate events to some extent in order to be able to operate more effectively in them. Work towards a technical and political development that allows for relevant advocacy. Be attentive and listen to what social action is teaching so that the organisation does not stop learning and can make the necessary adjustments and corrections.

There is no doubt that progress towards a Strong People requires a learning process that incorporates new ways of functioning. It is necessary to create the organic and institutional forms that correspond to it. In all its activities, it must strive for consistent social independence. A path that requires discarding old and vigorous myths that everything seems to indicate that they are ready to leave very slowly and without giving up the

First of all, we will reaffirm the fundamental concepts that guide our social-political action. We believe that the process in accordance with the model of socialist and libertarian society that we want to build, our action in the here and now and in tomorrow's transition is based on three interdependent and indivisible axes: Strong People, Popular Power and the permanent presence of the specific organisation. As we have already said, every act of direct democracy, of participation, of direct action, of self-management practice is a contribution to this construction. But at the same time it is important to take on board the lesson of history that a process towards a libertarian socialist society is impossible without a strong anarchist political organisation inserted in reality, with a revolutionary strategy that contemplates the methods to be applied in each situation.

General and vague phrases are not enough. It is necessary to think from the outset about the functioning of the economy, the global instances of political decision making, the ideological, the articulation of the different social areas, the values to be highlighted, etc.

It is necessary to dislodge the considerations that exclude a set of practical problems behind certain assumptions, those that history has taken care to invalidate. It is still common to find in our movement and among the classic theoreticians of socialism, the assumption, if not expressed then implicit, that the problems that prevent a just and united social organisation are "external" to the people. It would be economic and political structures such as the state that would be preventing the expression of a kind of innate goodness that is struggling to come to the social surface. It would just be a matter of removing these structures (which, on the face of it, no one supports) and the rest would take care of itself. It is of primary importance that the subjective construction be properly estimated.

Part of this is obviously true. These fundamental structures of the system tend to reproduce it. Only their destruction en-

limited to the economic field. A socialisation that is not state property. **The socialisation we conceive of is not a closed system, it is open to construction, therefore open to experimentation, debate and inevitable error. But what we do affirm in our conception is that this process of socialisation must be organised, exercised and realised from the real and basic organs of society and in confrontation with the state.**

We are fully convinced that this is indeed possible through direct democracy, exercised by the popular organisations from below organised in a self-managed and linked way in a federalist framework, where these same popular organisations express themselves in new institutional forms. Today we know more firmly than yesterday that the model of society that we propose is not only possible, but that it is practically, and according to the historical and revolutionary experience of different peoples of the world, the only current path of truly socialist construction.

We also know that the construction of a society animated by these principles is not an act of political predisposition, but requires a revolutionary break with the system of domination and the substitution of the current power relations in force in the present social organisation by original and unprecedented forms of power, a power which we define as popular power, and which we conceive as the exact opposite of political power centralised in the state, the bourgeois government and its apparatuses.

Nor do we ignore the fact that this revolutionary rupture is only possible after a long, complex and often reversible process of maturation, we know and we have to state it with the utmost frankness that a rupture of these characteristics is a non-linear and surely painful rupture. It is permeated by confrontation and violence, and that recourse to it is an act of legitimate defence of the oppressed classes against the institution-

alised violence of the oppressor classes. That is why we are conceptually insurrectionalists and we do not want to hide it because we know that the exercise of force by the system of domination transforms a strong people, if it wants to maintain and project itself, into a bearer of insurrectional practices. Even more so if it is a preamble to socialist construction. But it would be wrong to suppose that we are dreaming of imminent insurrections tomorrow, in a fortnight or in a year. **Insurrections only take place when vast popular sectors organised in a front of oppressed classes and categories assume and face them as the only means of liberation and apply their potential at a juncture that opens up possibilities. What we must do yesterday, today and tomorrow is to try to make our contribution to this process. It is to promote and maintain the spirit of resistance, struggle and organisation. What we do propose from now on is direct action, conceived in a broad sense, as a necessary practice of the organisations from below to confront capitalist exploitation and all forms of domination. What we do defend from now on is the broadest popular participation as a principle of political action** and therefore we oppose all those party leaders who pretend to interpret the needs, concerns and expectations of the oppressed outside of the people and even outside of their own adherents.

Direct Action and People Power

We have mentioned in passing the concept of direct action, which we believe is a concept of sufficient importance to insist on and extend its consideration.

The method of social and political action that we advocate has been and is direct action. Although direct action is automatically associated with the use of violent forms of resistance and struggle, the concept is richer in content. Fundamentally,

present; that some forces of the destroyed order will continue to operate. At the same time, as we pointed out above, the changes in people's habits and ways of thinking will not be so radical as to kill a whole long past. All this sets limits to the process that is being initiated. It is important to locate these limits so as not to propose unfeasibilities that could leave us out of any impact. For, as Malatesta says, "life must go on the day after the revolution, and if this life cannot be organised in a libertarian way, people will prefer authoritarianism to the absence of social functioning".

Having established the criterion that there will be no libertarian society on the day after the revolution, it is obligatory to consider what this period of transition towards what is proposed as a more complete social order: socialism with freedom, is like. What are the general proposals, to be adapted to each concrete historical circumstance, as well as the forms of social organisation at the different levels: economic, political, legal, ideological-cultural, military (regular organisations for the defence of the revolution), etc.

From the Present creating Strong People and People's Power

First and foremost, it is a question of taking into account and appreciating the efforts made by peoples throughout their history, the struggles to improve their living conditions. In addition to the subjugation which the dominant power sought and achieved to a great extent, **human beings are at the same time also bearers of resistance throughout this historical period. He is also the bearer of popular knowledge.** The countless struggles of the peoples for justice, for multiple social and cultural changes, for better living conditions reflect this.

Nor should we forget that in history there are countless transitions that become permanent situations, regardless of the intentions of some of the actors.

In addition to the internal causes mentioned above, there are external causes, whether from the international framework or from within society, be they reactionary elements or those who, also in disagreement with the previous society, advocate a model of change and society antagonistic to the one we want to build. The new post-revolutionary situation, the social and political forces at play, the ideological struggles, the spiritual state of the population, the possible developments and the attention to social life in all its aspects will all come together here. Each process will offer its own specific possibilities, but the model of transition seems to be common to all.

Yes, along with the new arrivals we have all the difficulties that can be present in an early stage of transition. Both this and the period of building Pueblo Fuerte is something that must be taken on board or give up participating in history.

Reaffirming the Realities that a Process of Rupture will raise

We have then, that even estimating the possibilities generated by the "leap", in the instance of rupture, a revolution does not make room for an immediate libertarian social order. Even if we take as a model a certain history of previous social participation of the population. There are certainly still dynamic paths to follow in order to achieve this.

It is necessary to pause a little and examine and reiterate, even if only briefly, the practical consequences that this concept of Transition entails in all areas.

For one thing, the revolution will not be made by libertarians alone. It is to be expected that various political and social organisations of different ideological orientations will be

it is about making the protagonism of popular organisations prevail, striving for as little mediation as possible and ensuring that the necessary mediation does not imply the emergence of decision-making centres separate from those concerned. In this sense, direct action is a logical consequence of the final objectives. Since the direct management of the various branches of social activity is the goal of People's Power, only direct action can be the methodology that corresponds to this objective in terms of rigour and coherence. In this sense, direct action is the complement of direct democracy.

To the extent that workers and all oppressed sectors increase the possibilities of practising direct action and direct democracy, they can responsibly assume the defence of their interests and acquire the necessary capacity to strengthen their ability to make decisions; they mature to the extent that they take responsibility for their successes and mistakes, assuming them as their own and avoiding subordinating themselves to external and foreign approaches that place them in a subordinate position.

Direct action expresses itself in multiple variants and at all levels and in all expressions, it is responsible for placing the workers and all the oppressed at the centre of political action. In this sense, for us class struggle, in a broad sense, is the daily struggle of the workers and all oppressed sectors which, through their own action, extending and deepening it, creates the conditions for protagonism, i.e. for the forging of their own destiny, for the realisation of their interests.

With the same sense of struggle against the dominant power, the methods of direct action must encompass all areas of social, political, ideological, cultural, economic, etc. activity, which constitute the capillarity and the whole of the social body.

Political Power and People's Power

The key distinctive element of the libertarian project of society, which deserves separate and special consideration, is our conception of political power.

In our practice of daily revolutionary intention, we must distinguish ourselves not only by a singular strategy of power but also by a militant style that implies a particular way of doing politics. This is logical insofar as our militant work is subordinate to and coherently related to our strategy of popular power, to our critique of society and to our specific project of libertarian transformation. This methodology of revolutionary work must be constituted by a set of inseparable elements that guide the coherence and unity of thought and action. In this sense, our Organisation recognises that the more or less traditional proposals of classical anarchism have proved to be insufficient, if not erroneous. Especially with regard to the question of power in general, a subject to which we have already referred.

We therefore recognise the need to patiently develop more detailed responses to certain key issues. For this elaboration we claim some premises.

With regard to the issue of political power, our fundamental political proposal is the destruction of the state as a special institutional sphere of political domination and the suppression of governmental forms that constitute an expression of the dominant power. Now, when we speak of the re-appropriation by society, by women and men as a whole, of the possibility of exercising the functions held by the dominant classes or groups, we are referring, in essence, precisely to the disappearance of the state and with it the whole culture and structure of dominant power that sustains and reproduces it.

It seems to us that the state must be considered on two levels: as the end of a set of diverse relations and as their reproducer.

For our time, it would be necessary to add, if only very briefly, the dominance of the systemic stage in which we find ourselves. Deleuze says with a certain irony with regard to the disciplinary society: "It is possible that the harshest enclosures may come to seem to us part of a happy and benevolent past in the face of the forms of control in open environments that are to come". He adds: "What we need most of all is to believe in the world, and to bring about events, however small, that escape control, to give birth to new space-times, even if their surface or volume is small". Malatesta said something similar:

> *"We must see to it that the people, as a whole or in its various fractions, aim at, realize, for themselves, all the improvements they desire, as soon as they desire them and have the strength to realize them, and by always propagating our complete programme, and always striving for its integral realization, we must push the people to aim at and achieve greater and greater ends, until they arrive at their total emancipation".....*
>
> *"In short, it is a matter of educating for freedom, of raising men and women accustomed to obedience and passivity to an awareness of their own strength and capacity". In any case, societies of control with a large part still under discipline, warn us more than ever that we must not forget that transition is presumably an extremely conflictive period, in which its protagonists find themselves under pressure of limit situations, of conflict between what should be and what is, having to make particular and global decisions about which there is not enough experience or full security. Decisions which unfortunately on many occasions may not offer a clear alternative or anything ideal.*

We also believe that this stage cannot be seen with a view that is too far removed from the horizon we have before us today. Positive possibilities must emerge that could not have been imagined in the previous situation. It would not be correct then to see only the previous references without incorporating the "leap" that enables the rupture to initiate a process of popular power on the road to socialism with freedom. In any case, the "leap" does not produce unlimited possibilities, magical possibilities. The possibilities of a given advance of the social order after the initial rupture will be fundamentally related to the reality that preceded it.

But it is foreseeable that problems will arise that hinder or are negative and even contradictory to the process being sought. The size of this force cannot be estimated a priori; it will certainly be different in each place. The new organised mechanisms will have to fight these elements of the past that are still there.

Yes, theoretically it is to be presumed that a whole culture of authoritarianism, individualism, little participation, and a certain submission to those above, will not change radically on a general level. A millenary culture that has taken root. Something of what Bakunin lucidly referred to: "the human being is determined by innumerable political, religious and social relations, by habits, customs, by a whole world of prejudices or thoughts elaborated in the course of centuries". Or as Foucault would later say:

> *"What makes power sustainable, accepted, is simply that it does not weigh only as a power that says "no", but that it actually penetrates, produces things, induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourses; it must be considered as a productive network that passes through the whole social body rather than as a negative instance whose function is to repress".*

For us, reintegrating political power into society means replacing the state and the government in their tutelary, dominant and usually repressive functions. It means socialising the mechanisms of expression and decision-making that should belong to the people and abandoning the mechanisms of repression and violent coercion in favour of relations of coexistence based on responsible freedom and freely agreed compromise.

In terms of libertarian realisation, this means that political power takes the form of a direct, federative democracy, exercised by grassroots institutions and the globalising bodies that express them.

This is why we think of a democracy that is different from the merely representative one. By direct democracy we mean a new institutional framework, where there is no room for any kind of privilege, be it economic, social or political. An institutionality where the revocability of members is immediately assured and where, therefore, there is no room for the usual political irresponsibility that characterises representative democracy, nor for the creation of that caste that so many people now call with disdain: "the politicians".

A practice and an institutionality that must reflect the rights and obligations of all members of society. Their right to be elected and to vote, and also their obligation to be accountable in an effective, practical, day-to-day way. And this must be valid for the wider social globality as well as for the grassroots. This is how we conceive of political freedom as a construction, a task and a collective will that has no limits in time. Our political vision of society is not the end of history. It is its continuation in the most harmonious, free and responsible way possible.

This is a way for all men and women to genuinely express their needs, to discuss, confront and mature them. And they can translate this process of elaboration and exchange into general political decisions. These are some of the bases of what we have always understood as popular power. **Popular power,**

which we reiterate, is conceived by us as revolutionary power led by popular organisations, where the political and the social acquire a new articulation that ensures it. Without such an articulation, we believe, there will be no real popular power.

Furthermore, we are convinced that the issue of power is central to the project and work of a political organisation. In this sense, for the FAU this is not a closed issue, on the contrary, it remains open and seems to us, today more than ever, to be one of the great theoretical and practical questions of the socialist project.

Social Participation and Collective Responsibility

The active participation of stakeholders in a process of change is another of the fundamental issues inherent in the People's Power we have been developing.

If the grassroots popular organisations are restricted to the role of passive audience and mute witness to the initiatives of others, if an artificial distinction is made between "cadres" capable of taking decisions and "masses" in charge of implementation, little can be expected from those same "masses" who are invoked.

The gestation of a consciousness and a protagonist will is a priority demand insofar as it aims to subvert the ideological roots that the bourgeoisie has scrupulously taken care to inculcate in the oppressed sectors, who thus accept their domination as "natural". The brutalisation, indifference, passivity, sense of inferiority, fatalism and blind obedience, which capitalism administers and stimulates with a business mentality, are challenged in action when it is born as the expression and reflection of a collective will exercised and manifested. On the contrary, the relative ineffectiveness of platforms of demands

societies. These are social and political activities that allow the population to participate and solve problems. They generate, at the same time, notions and experiences that lead to the growth of consciousness and confidence in one's own strength. From this preliminary process will come the strength capable of confronting the system and the conditions for the possibility of its rupture. This is the stage of building a strong people. It is in such a framework that the organised resistance of the exploited and oppressed can and must be deployed. A strong people with this organised resistance at its core will give organic form, as a distinct institution, to all that is rebellious and confrontational that is being built. The greater the possibilities of forms of organisation of popular power, the more popular participation has been developed in the pre-transition stage. The greater the presence of participation, of direct and self-managed democracy, of federalism, of new institutions based on equality and freedom.

Before continuing with the subject of transition, it seems necessary to establish another premise in order to avoid misunderstandings.

The destructuring of a system opens up new possibilities, new combinations emerge that were not in the previous order. But it would be negative to idealise, to believe that everything we will find will be of a positive sign and that the cursed legacies of the system will disappear just like that. It is possible to assume greater spaces for the development of the new experience and the installation of a social dynamic that favours the new framework. But also, the existing experience gives indications, it allows us to assume the continuation of remnants of the old system appearing in other forms or even being remembered, arbitrarily and for various reasons, differently from what it was by sectors of the population. Incidentally, the ideological sphere will have to be of fundamental importance in such circumstances. The new values will be closely linked to it.

been no systematic treatment of it. It does not even appear as a problem of transcendence.

And yet, there is no doubt, it is a relevant issue that has effects on the whole of the revolutionary work to be done before, during and after the de-structuring, the deconstruction, of the capitalist order. It is so important that according to how this issue is interpreted, certain approaches will be made and certain priorities will be established.

We have designated a period of transition as that period which has the social force to produce a revolutionary event and to initiate a new form of social organisation. In our specific case, we think that this beginning is oriented towards a libertarian communist society. First of all, it is necessary to establish a premise that for us sheds light on this whole approach. The socialist and libertarian society cannot arise by "evolution" from within capitalist society. This system makes no room for modifications in that direction. It firmly fights any attempt to modify its fundamental structures. It has mechanisms set up for this purpose. It is the declared enemy of this change. A new social order, corresponding to another system, will result from a rupture. That is to say, from the confrontation of forces that carry its aims to the end. A real power struggle. The dominant one and the one of the people that emerges.

In the previous process the elements relevant to this rupture will be fiercely attacked by the system that always works for its reproduction. Any component that affects this fundamental reproduction will be violently attacked. This violence can be expressed at different levels: political, legal, ideological, economic and social. Even giving a conjunctural priority to one of its levels.

It seems necessary here to mention, albeit briefly, the instance that we did not include in the transition period.

Undoubtedly, at this stage of the discourse, it is necessary to highlight something that is fundamental: there is a set of activities that can and should be carried out within capitalist

and plans of struggle becomes evident when they are not the fruit of conscious discussion and elaboration, to the extent that, and only to that extent, they will be a genuine expression of collective sentiment. In the bureaucratic rattle, the protagonism of the rank and file always appears as an objective that is, through life-long postponements, in a permanent phase of preparation, in the hands of the bureaucracy. There is no end to it insofar as it constitutes the most faithful continuation of bourgeois ideology within the oppressed classes themselves.

There is yet another dimension of popular participation which consists in the consistent promotion of all those popular expressions and experiences which break with the paternalism and tutelage of state or capitalist bodies. Substituting the functions of the state or the boss, even as a trial and in short-lived experiences, constitute, due to their highly demonstrative capacity, a critique of the system of domination and of the different variants of authoritarianism, and can also create zones of antagonistic subjectivity.

The multiplicity of "grassroots" experiences with which the popular experience has exploited the cracks in the system at different levels, creating possible alternatives for the resolution of specific social problems, is a channel of collective participation to be taken into account. It creates conditions of possibility for more far-reaching practices.

Self-Management

Self-management of social life must be the natural form of participation in the general or particular decisions of grassroots organisations. Self-management is reaffirmed and consolidated in the strict application of internal democracy, through participatory mechanisms of various kinds.

Our conception of self-management is not to be confused with the distorted

versions that associate it with a narrowly particularist vision, at times somewhat atomised and even capable of coexisting without contradiction with the system. On the contrary, we see it as an element of major importance in the process of rupture and in the possible instance of new social construction. Moreover, within the framework of the daily struggles for demands, the popular movement can and must consider forms of self-management, including at the economic level, which create the basis for the emergence of a new social and labour culture, truly participatory and responsible.

Direct democracy, self-management and federalism are thus the three fundamental, complementary and inter-related pillars of popular power, of political power in its libertarian, anti-government and anti-statist sense.

Political Practice

In order to avoid any misunderstanding, we will not deal here with the relationship between political organisations of revolutionary intent and the field of social, "mass" activity.

The points developed above constitute a rich methodological nucleus and a not inconsiderable guide for action with revolutionary intentions. However, they are in themselves insufficient to provide complete answers in each concrete moment. Both for action from popular organisations of social action and even more so for that which is proper to the specific political organisation of anarchists. That is why we see it as necessary to introduce and develop the concept of political practice first of all.

For us, political practice is all activity which has as its object the relation of the exploited and oppressed with the organs of political power, the state, the government and its various expressions. Political practice is the confrontation with the government as an expression of imposed power, the defence and

not something that can be totally separated from the transition, but it seems to us that it is a subject that deserves to be dealt with in relation to many things that are specific to it.

We will therefore deal first of all with the transition only in relation to the last two stages.

Transition is an issue that the revolutionary socialists of the 19th century were unable to address systematically because of historical limitations. It was also due to logical epistemological limitations. Their knowledge was linked to their time and their historical and revolutionary expectations were different. Perhaps with a hope and passion of greater proximity. Thus, here and there, only brief general mentions appear on this plane.

In our libertarian sphere, through thinkers such as Bakunin, Kropotkin, Malatesta, there are valuable partial contributions which in fact belong to a transitional space.

At this point it is essential to take into account experiences and elaborations that refresh and enrich our libertarian doctrine and the paths to be taken for an authentic process of transformation. Theoretical-political elements, concepts and categories that try to account for reality, like all things, undergo modifications, expansions and development, and we all know that refreshment and the effort to update them is fundamental for any organisation that wishes to operate in its time and its milieu.

In the century that has just left us, the defence of real socialism or various Leninist models, conditioned by circumstances of the survival of their disastrous experience, limited, with honourable and rare exceptions, the analysis of this subject to a pamphletary, dogmatic and extremely simplistic level.

We must recognise that literature on the subject is nonexistent in our movement. Indeed, it seems to have been constantly ignored. If anything, there are isolated and partial mentions that hardly correspond to this problem. But there has

And finally, in the strict sphere of political action, and recognising the existence of others, we claim the political as a separate sphere. We conceive, then, of the anarchist political organisation inserted in popular action as a tool that aspires to make our libertarian principles a reality.

Transitional Period towards a Libertarian Socialist Society: Strong People and People Power

We are fighting for a utopia that sets a horizon. A utopia that includes a different form of social organisation and coexistence among human beings. This utopia gave birth, as we see it, to a general project of social-political action and an aspiration for equality and freedom.

We know that our proposal deals with a form of social organisation that has not yet been experienced. With few and brief historical references. In this sense, we are considering what we want to present as impossible, in order to make it a reality. Thus conceived, this impossible is what takes a little longer, requires more effort, tenacity, imagination and responsibility.

There is a whole range of demands during the journey of change. Those that correspond to what has commonly been called "accumulation of forces"; those of a period of high confrontation with a social force capable of initiating a new social order; and finally, those that consolidate the construction of the new society, without the fundamental elements of the old enemy forces in sight. For the last two numbered stages we will provisionally accept the word transition. It is the one that has been most commonly used to designate more or less similar processes.

The period of accumulation of forces, with its corresponding strategy and tactics and all the elements that compose it, is

extension of public and individual liberties, the ability to make proposals that concern the general interest of the population or partial aspects of it. And political practice is also insurrection as an instance of violent questioning and an attempt at profound change at a suitable juncture. Political practice is also the proposals that take up popular demands and confront the dominant power bodies, that present solutions to general and concrete issues and force those power bodies to adopt them and make them valid for society as a whole. Taking the Uruguayan social formation as an example, these are the proposals for amnesty for political prisoners, plebiscites against impunity, mobilisations that extend popular rights, those that, like the University Organic Law, tried to mediatise the weight of political power in education, or those that try to achieve the same in other social areas. These are expressions of political practice and we must be present there, because it is this presence that justifies us, day by day, as a Political Organisation. Because the role of a Political Organisation is not and cannot be that of a cenacle of reflection or ideological meditation, of doctrinarism. Only our participation in the daily drama of the people justifies our existence.

Just as there are reactionary, conservative, liberal, reformist, etc. political practices, there must be a political practice of revolutionary intention. And it is the permanent presence in political activity, with a revolutionary or combative profile, which allows us to accumulate the necessary forces capable of nourishing a process of rupture.

A second and important aspect designated by political practice is that which has to do with the concrete analysis of concrete political conjunctures and fundamentally with what is deduced from this, that is to say: the relationship, disposition and orientations of the main forces in struggle, the fundamental lines of agitation at each stage and, therefore, the fundamental centres of action of the organisation.

Finally, and although at this point it is probably redundant to point it out, the importance of political practice lies in the fact that this, together with the reasons tacitly given so far, is the element that crowns, justifies and defines our organisation as such.

The FAU as an Organisation for Political Action

We will refer here, more expressly and specifically, to our Organisation. Its intentions, its purposes and how it sees its articulation with the social field.

The FAU aims to be a determined political expression of the interests of the dominated classes: the exploited and oppressed, and tries to place itself at their service; it aspires to be an engine of social struggles. Contrary to any elitist, avant-garde and authoritarian conception, its relationship with the field of social action is horizontal. That is to say, contrary to subordinating or mixing or ignoring the specific dynamics of the social field and thus substituting them for the action of political organisation. We maintain that they are two fields that, while respecting their specificities, should march together with the corresponding articulation that does not inhibit the action that corresponds to each one.

A driving force that neither replaces nor directly represents the oppressed. It aims to energise, organise and contribute to overcoming the so-called "spontaneous" dynamics of the popular movement. A contribution that helps to channel resistance towards its own camp, that helps to transcend the ups and downs of the current situation and ensures continuity to the rebellions, the daily struggles, the expectations and aspirations, as well as the ideological elements of rupture that are being produced.

For us, the political organisation is also a place where the experience of the popular struggle is accumulated, both nationally and internationally. It is an instance that tries to prevent the knowledge that the exploited and oppressed are acquiring over time from being diluted. A tool to fight against the confusions sown by the dominant power to be exploited for their benefit.

We conceive that the Political Organisation also acts as a stage for the production of conjunctural analyses, fundamental orientations and global strategies for the long term as well as for action in the present. For this reason, the Political Organisation is the appropriate body to take on the different and complex levels of activity that revolutionary work may require; it is the ideal body capable of ensuring the set of technical, material, political, theoretical, etc. resources that are an indispensable condition for a strategy of rupture that must be maintained over time and in the framework of a sea of difficulties with constant and diverse confrontations with the Dominant Power.

We reiterate that our vision of the Political Organisation is contrary to the various forms of "vanguardism", of "depositories of conscience", in short, of self-chosen groups, who feel that they have been touched by the finger of God. The Organisation, while respecting other levels, maintaining and promoting the spirit of revolt, assumes as its own all the present and future demands of a revolutionary process.

It is from organised militant work, both social and political, and only from this that the creation, strengthening and consolidation of grassroots popular organisations, which constitute the nuclei of revolutionary popular power, can be promoted coherently and with redoubled force.

The political organisation is not a finished thing, it is subject to various influences that demand adjustments. It is also a special instance of learning in relation to the social struggles with which it articulates its actions.