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Manifesto to the International Anarchist Movement

A Call for an International Revolutionary
Resistance Movement

Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin

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Movement

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Published by Monkeywrench Press and The Worker Self-Education Foundation of the Industrial Workers of the World Philadelphia. This version copied from the 1995 edition.

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1979

Conditions are becoming ripe for a thorough-going world Anarchist revolution which will replace the long-diseased and inadequate State/class social order with a stable society, transnational and Libertarian. But such a genuine revolution cannot take place unless the ground is prepared for it. The problem right now is to create a militant Anarchist minority, which would serve as the core for such social revolutionary movement. Many Anarchists are mere dreamers or armchair theorists, while their fellows around them are being destroyed by State machines. They do not inhabit the real world! Our failure to act will forever be cursed by tomorrow's slaves. As Anarchist revolutionaries (let us always remember that by definition Anarchists are active revolutionaries, ever at war against State machine, and if not, they are not Anarchists) we must be ready to struggle, not theorize. Anarchism has always been a dynamic doctrine of revolutionary struggle, and when it becomes a haven for bourgeois intellectuals and hippie freaks, then it is no longer Anarchism.

**THE FUTURE IS ANARCHISM,
OR THERE WILL BE NO FUTURE!**

SMASH THE STATE!

Anarchists should counter the myths and lies of these communists and capitalists and should expose their State crimes. But most importantly Anarchists should challenge the monopoly by the Marxist-Leninists on the ideas of Socialism and Communism. Anarchist Communism must begin to challenge and defeat the Marxist-Leninists in both ideas.

We must build an underground resistance movement with Anarchist freedom fighters taking revolutionary action against these dictatorships of the Communist party. It is a life and death struggle which will determine the true worth of Anarchist ideals and the future of our movement. There is no other way that freedom (Anarchist Communism) will be established in those areas of the world. It will be a violent, bloody struggle, but it cannot be avoided. Liberation will not be given to us, we must take it for ourselves. But naturally we cannot sing the praise of violence for its own sake. Rather than say that violence inevitably and logically proceeds from revolution, it is better to say that we are forced to resort to violence because, in order to retain their power and privileges, the counterrevolutionaries (Capitalist class) will try to suppress us with violence. All oppressed people have a right to rebel.

7. What is to be Done?

The creation of a large Anarchist social revolutionary movement — global in scope and with dense local pockets in many parts of the world — is a vital first step in preparing the ground for a successful epochal Anarchist revolution. It would provide the necessary support base which is now so badly lacking for Anarchist activities of all kinds — varying from a highly developed global information network (itself a vital step in the making of a militant global Anarchist movement) to successful anti-State military operations, where such are both necessary and possible.

Contents

Foreword to the Second Edition	5
Manifesto to the International Anarchist Movement	7
A Call for an International Anarchist Resistance Movement	9
1. Anarchist-Communist Infrastructure	9
2. Anti-State Military Activities	10
3. information	12
4. Anarcho-Syndicalist Labor Movements	13
5. Prison Support Work	15
6. Areas of Struggle in the World	16
7. What is to be Done?	18

the same. The State is our eternal enemy, but will go away only through the triumph of the Social Revolution. Anarchists should involve themselves in struggles in every field – varying from women’s struggles to the rapidly developing conflict between the much exploited poor peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the rich exploiting nations. It is vital that Anarchists involve ourselves in such grassroots conflicts now raging or ready to erupt. For unless we do, we will have no voice or influence in such developments, let alone be able to create Anarchist support bases in those areas.

In the Western industrialized countries, Anarchists should expose the corruption and incompetency of government, should build a powerful working class movement, and should build revolutionary communes, assemblies and Anarchist-Communist federations in order to create dual power in both industry and society. Libertarian educational, cultural and social activities should emphasize countering the effects of the authoritarian psyche, like racism, militarism, patriotism, sexism, the “work ethic,” and other ills; the objective being the creation of an Anarchist system of human relations.

In the fascist and State “Communist” countries, however, our struggle must be much more vigorous and revolutionary. There, Anarchists must lead an underground existence or suffer persecution or death. With the fascist countries this is clearly recognized and acknowledged, however, the Communists pose as revolutionaries and the State regimes they have erected as “workers’ states” where they are “building Communism.” Thus Castro in Cuba, Mao in China, and other dictators have been able to win a quite large international group of sympathizers and followers (especially among youth) for being “successful revolutionaries.” The ideas of Marxism-Leninism are in crisis as never before; people are unsympathetic to what they feel is Socialism as opposed to the Capitalism of the West.

that is those prisoners confined for their social or political beliefs or their revolutionary organizing activities and/or frame-up victims and those railroaded through the Capitalist courts.

This international defense campaign may involve armed support activities, an international boycott and General Strike against a target country's consumer goods and services, or the activities of multinational corporations; we will engage in protest demonstrations at Embassies and Consulates of the countries involved; an international Petition and letter writing campaign; and many other activities. We need an international prisoners-aid organization to lead and coordinate such activities. Of course, branches of Anarchist Black Cross exist in several countries, but full support must be given to building strong Black Cross or other Anarchist prison support organizations all over the world. The prison struggle is an integral part of the struggle against the State and it deserves the full support of all sections of the Anarchist movement.

Many prisoners will turn out to be some of our strongest Anarchist revolutionaries, and further we should not forget that Bakunin, Kropotkin, Johann Most, Sacco and Vanzetti, the Haymarket martyrs, Alexander Berkman, Makhno, Emma Goldman, Durruti, Martin Sostre and many other Anarchists were political prisoners. And to this very day, throughout the world many of our Anarchist comrades are in State dungeons. Shall we ignore their cries for help? NO!

6. Areas of Struggle in the World

The revolution cannot be confined behind national borders, but rather must be international in scope. We have to build an international revolutionary solidarity movement. Our objective is to spread Anarchism all over the world. Our tactics may vary from country-to-country, but our objective remains

Foreword to the Second Edition

When I first wrote this pamphlet in 1979, Communism was still going strong in the Soviet Union and its satellite countries. However, with the collapse of communism during the late 1980s (and also into the 90s) in East Europe and other parts of the so-called "socialist" world, leading to the partial discredit of Marxism-Leninism, this is a time for new revolutionary ideas and startling social change.

Anarchism and its known variants: Anarcho-Syndicalism, Council Communism, Libertarian Socialism, Situationism and the so-called Autonomist movement, and new forms not yet seen will arise and become immensely popular, in many respects, this process of political or ideological fertilization has already begun. These movements are class struggle-oriented and in favor of social revolution, instead of counter-cultural tendencies or classical Anarchist formations which existed in the 1970s, when I came to the North American Anarchist movement.

Because of this desire for new theory and tactics, Anarchist ideals will be evident in rank-and-file labor movements, neighborhood and community organizing, cooperatives, anti-racist organizing, feminism, and on the larger international stage. The 1990s and the next century will find the Anarchist and Libertarian Socialist ideas coming into vogue in a big way.

The bureaucratic Bolshevik revolution, which triumphed in Russia in 1917 and had dominated the world Socialist movement for almost 75 years, is no more. The Bolsheviks who crushed Anarchism in Russia and the Ukraine, destroyed the soviets, and erected a bloody, party/state dictatorship, have betrayed true revolutionary ideals. Did the workers rush to defend the Soviet state or communist bureaucracy in 1991? NO! Are they doing it now? NO! In fact, they wished it a quick exit onto the ash heap of history. Even though Gorbachev and Yeltsin have established a state Capitalist federation in its place,

and they promise the workers more prosperity and freedom, it is a lie that Capitalism has always told its workers. And a lie is still a lie.

The new state federation cannot possibly last, in fact, my prediction is that civil war and a new social revolution are coming soon in Russia and to the breakaway republics of what used to be known as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. You can rest assured that Capitalism will not last for long in Russia and in the rest of the former East Bloc. The people in those countries will not tolerate it, they want bread and freedom, not starvation and war. Up to this point they have had no alternative offered to them but the corrupt capitalist market system.

But, in fact, Capitalism itself is so crisis-ridden that it is on the verge of collapse; it is now in the deepest worldwide economic depression since the 1930s. It cannot provide any help to those countries.

We must prepare the ground for revolutionary struggle. When I first decided to write the Manifesto to the International Anarchist movement in the 1970s, even during my stay in prison, I knew the day would come when Anarchism as a social revolutionary force could take its place on the world stage as the major revolutionary political philosophy. That day is now here!

So I have revised the pamphlets I wrote back then, and hope to make them available to a wider audience and to a new generation of Anarchist organizers.

Not since the past century has Anarchism's future shown so brightly. So now let us get to work building the social revolution for the next century. We need to build an Anarchist International to work with other Libertarian revolutionaries throughout the world.

Since the time I wrote these pamphlets in 1970, I have changed my mind about many tactical, strategical and philosophical things about Anarchism, but one thing I have never changed my mind about is the necessity for social revolution.

In the Western industrialized countries, it is necessary to infiltrate the reformist trade unions (ever those under Communist Party control) and push them into a class struggle, revolutionary Syndicalist direction; create factory committees, as well as workers Assemblies industrial councils and other autonomous labor organizations, in order to undermine the trade union mis-leadership and evade government control of the unions. We must demand an end to government control of the unions and the repeal of all anti-labor laws, and also demand rank-and-file democratic control of the unions.

The International must represent the most oppressed workers especially immigrants to the western industrialized countries, racial minorities and women workers, and organize the unorganized workers. Further, with the current economic crisis in the Capitalist countries there are now millions of homeless and unemployed workers: there should be unemployed unions existing parallel to the workers unions to demand the bosses provide them with (socially useful) work and to provide strike support to workers on strike against the boss.

Anarchists of every stripe should join the sections of the International and once again make Anarchism a working class doctrine.

5. Prison Support Work

Anarchists oppose Laws, prisons and the State. Prisons or Laws are not designed to "protect society" or even to lock away dangerous criminals (the real criminals run the State), but rather is a means of State social control and slave labor'. The prisons are mere concentration camps for the poor, the powerless, and racial minorities. We must organize to abolish the prison system along with the State, and free all class war prisoners. Further, we must be able to organize a powerful international defense campaign to free "political" prisoners,

cells in the trade unions, and push them in the revolutionary Syndicalist direction.

Many countries in Africa, such as Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Zambia, and others (even South Africa, where there is a large African working class) have very large trade union confederations, but they are reformist and are under State control. The ideas of Anarcho- Syndicalism among the rank-and-file of such trade unions could create a revolutionary upsurge and add to the strength of the international Anarchist workers movement. Further, in the Third World it would change the nature of the liberation struggles from Marxist-Leninist authoritarian to Anarchist Libertarian; from the supremacy of a party or "Liberation Front" (sponsored by Moscow or Peking) to the self-organization of the workers themselves; from the ideas of a "Workers' State" to the creation of Anarchist Commune (which are especially fitted for African and Asian villages and city life and workers and peasants' councils and unions. This is a form a revolutionary struggle never seen in the Third World. It will change the course of history.

In Eastern Europe (including Russia), China, South Africa, and other repressive countries we would probably have to conduct our activities underground. The building of an underground autonomous workers' movement for revolutionary industrial sabotage and a General Strike, to organize the workers for self-management of production, and to undermine and overthrow the government is the number one priority. In many of those countries unions are merely organs of the State (if they exist at all); there is no right to strike therefore the International should organize clandestine workers Assemblies, factory committees, independent unions and other such free workers' organizations. These Labor Communes, Peasants and Workers Councils, Syndicalist unions should be established to create a dual power (Workers' Control) situation in both industry and in society.

But we must work at it, it won't happen by itself, believe me. We must do the hard work of organizing and propagating our views to workers, peasants, farmers and in neighborhoods, and other social units all over the world. We' must fight for the Anarchist way of life, it will not be given to us. Freedom is not just another word for inaction. So let's get busy!

Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin
Chattanooga, Tennessee
October 1993.

Manifesto to the International Anarchist Movement

"Before the First World War the main impetus for Social Revolution came from the Anarchist and revolutionary Syndicalist movements. However, following the defeat of the Russian Revolution with the triumph of authoritarian (State) Communism, world Capitalism tended to concentrate its energies on destroying this real apparent danger to its continued existence, thus giving the impression that the Libertarian movement and its ideas were superfluous, or, at best, a side issue to the main struggle, so far as the organized working class was concerned. Only in a minority of countries did Anarchism take the lead, while elsewhere the very idea of freedom went into decline. The modern States, totalitarian or democratic, private and State capitalism, all variations of political and religious ideologies, trade unionism (whether reformist or State-run), in general, all social groups which are part of the productive society have established, as a fact, a coexistence that tends

at any cost, to ensure the present status quo for all forms of privilege, exploitation, and authority.”

Albert Meltzer,

The International Revolutionary Solidarity Movement,

Cienfuegos Press 1974.

East and West, it is the States which are the oppressors of the people. But Capitalism is being undermined due to economic and political crises (depression, inflation, exposures of political corruption) and a myriad of other social and cultural ills. Our time is indelibly branded by the robbery of human labor, and by the exploitation of natural resources. The denial of freedom, world war and oppression by the State also characterize our period. State sponsored torture, murder, genocide and terrorism have been commonplace since the 1930s.

The incapability of bourgeois scientists and politicians to get to the root of these problems opens the door to Anarchist revolutionary activities. This obvious world wide destruction as well as the ever approaching planetary catastrophe — that even the Bourgeoisie can see — opens up for the Anarchist worldview the best possible circumstances since the beginnings of the Anarchist movement.

Thus, Anarchism presently faces an excellent opportunity to become a dominating social force in modern society, to change the scientific, cultural and social chaos into a free society, and to implement Libertarian Socialism on a world scale.

The Anarchist society, however, will only be realized as a result of world-wide, social revolution, but this will be possible only when there exists an international revolutionary Anarchist organization; an organization which can coordinate the existing resistance struggles of people, but without centralizing those activities and which can give to these actions Libertarian goals.

curing an international anti-copyright agreement among Anarchist/Libertarian publishers to allow free republication rights of all Libertarian works; creating one (or several) international Anarchist weekly or daily newspapers; creating a *Libertarian Press Syndicate* to offer Anarchist publications mutual aid and international connections.

In addition, the Information Bureau should establish propaganda networks to engage in underground revolutionary propaganda activities in those countries which repress Anarchist ideas. Every possible method of clandestine propaganda must be used: pirate radio stations and secret transmitters, to be established in the target country or a neighboring country; establishment of an underground printing press and secret distribution of Anarchist literature (such as was being done with the “Samizdat” literature in Russia); secretly plastering buildings with paint or posters for propaganda messages; spreading leaflets and other materials; holding impromptu rallies and demonstrations against government policy or repression; and other activities. The objective of the underground propaganda network is to inform the people of Anarchist ideas and to incite them to overthrow the State. We must be creative in our methods, our very lives and the fate of the revolution may depend upon it. *

4. Anarcho-Syndicalist Labor Movements

Many whole continents as well as individual countries have no Anarchist nucleus: Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Oceania, many countries in Eastern Europe and some in Latin America, are examples. In the majority of these countries where there has never been a history of Anarchist activities. *Anarcho-Syndicalist Propaganda Leagues* should be established now to propagate class struggle unionism, create revolutionary

fend themselves by taking the offensive against the State — so as to disrupt its normal functioning, and thus make all the easier the building of a Libertarian/Anarchist social infrastructure in place of the existing one. An intelligently executed and successfully run people’s guerrilla warfare campaign would have the effect of wearing down the State machine and its capacity for regimentation and control. This is the only way that Anarchism can raise its head in such repressive States!

Such activities require an international revolutionary organization. The military wing of such an organization must be decentralized and a semi-clandestine federation of dedicated revolutionaries. We will call them *International Revolutionary Action Groups*. These autonomous revolutionary cells would carry on clandestine propaganda, industrial sabotage, anti-State military activities, the organizing of Anarchist communes, assemblies, and an Anarcho-Syndicalist labor movement, among other activities.

3. information

Every individual who is involved in the Social Revolution must know how far our cause has advanced in other countries. We must not leave the tasks of news and analysis of our movement and its activities to the bourgeois and Socialist press. Therefore we must take all necessary measures to establish an *International Anarchist Information Bureau* to inform Anarchist comrades world-wide of the level of the struggle. The Bureau is also in position to spread Libertarian/Anarchist ideas world-wide. It would serve as a communications and propaganda center, and would carry on such activities as: translating and distributing Anarchist theoretical works into every major indigenous world language; creating a *Social Revolutionary Anarchist News Service* to act as a wire service and send information and news Libertarian journals and newspapers world-wide; se-

A Call for an International Anarchist Resistance Movement

The Social Revolution is proletarian internationalist, not merely an insurrection in one land, but must have as its goal world-wide Anarchist rebellion and overthrow of all states. We need an organization and a social revolutionary movement capable of launching, sustaining and coordinating our struggles in every country.

Although it may seem that what is being discussed here is a monolithic, centralized apparatus, such is not the case. There must be a network of organizations which are spread all over the world, but based on a common consensus for revolutionary struggle. The structures would be federated into an international revolutionary organization and Social movement. The revolution recognizes no border lines.

1. Anarchist-Communist Infrastructure

The Communes are the groundwork for this international organization, and are the primary social form of the new society. They will be the primary means to undermine the authority and control of the State. We will organize the new society in the shell of the old. Communes may take any form: labor or municipal communes, affinity groups and collectives. In a revolutionary situation, entire Free Cities would constitute communes. We must begin now to form Labor Communes and Community Communes, and not just be satisfied with forming small, isolated, non-functional communes, which are really just collectives for alternative lifestyles. Our communes would be an alternative way for us to distribute food, clothing and other essentials in the face of the economic crisis in the capitalist countries and to create an infrastructure for direct democracy by the people. This would undermine leaders,

political parties and the State, and would constitute the first shot fired in the social revolution. It would mean discrediting the state and rendering it an irrelevant dinosaur. People would be able to see how the future Anarchist society will work, by seeing it in an embryonic form today.

We need to be doing this organizing all over the world. Therefore we need an *Anarchist International* to organize national and continent-wide Anarchist federations, to coordinate those federations which already exist, and to link up those federations and communes with one another all over the world. In countries where there is no tradition of Anarchist activities, it should establish a string of Anarchist Propaganda Leagues, book shops, film, video, education, cultural and social groups, newspapers and theoretical journals, workers associations, and other organizations to spread Anarchist ideals, win people over to our views, and build a mass Libertarian revolutionary movement. Of course, the conditions in each country will dictate how this is done, and the local people will always serve as the revolutionary organizers, even though on occasion the initial impetus may come from delegates from the international organization. This is in line with our ideals of workers' self management and the self-determination of oppressed peoples.

2. Anti-State Military Activities

At some stage, it is inevitable that the State will recognize the danger to itself by such self-managed organizations and will try to forcibly repress them. We must organize self-defense committees, whether workers defense leagues or community self-defense groups, to protect ourselves and our movement from repression. Such military organizations would not be a party vanguard, a police force or a standing Army in the Statist sense, but would rather be defense units self-managed by the

workers and community itself, or in other words the people-in-arms. These militia organizations, | us our revolutionary unity, would allow us to at any time effectively resist attacks from the authorities, no matter from what direction they come (Left or Right-wing.)

In addition, there should be an organization to conduct an underground resistance struggle, especially in those countries where an open Anarchist movement would be impossible, or would be sure to be subjected to fierce repression by the State. Such countries as Iran, Russia, China, Korea, South Africa, Chile and other repressive countries are dictatorships — either Red or Black. The only hope for freedom from slavery for these unfortunate people and for the establishment of Libertarian Communism in those areas is to wage an underground resistance struggle. Such a struggle would not merely be military, but would also mean creating a propaganda network to expose and undermine the State, as well as spread Anarchist ideas; creating free unions and other autonomous worker organizations to sabotage industrial production and to act as industrial guerrillas and a catalyst for strikes and other labor protests; and other such protest activities. Guerrilla warfare techniques should be used: particularly well organized sabotage of State installations, and the assassination of secret police torturers and murderers, with the immediate aim of disabling the whole State apparatus as far as possible. When such extreme forms of revolutionary action are required however, a clear difference should be seen among revolutionaries between simple terrorism without popular support and guerrilla warfare arising out of the collectively felt frustrations of the common people.

It is very important and needs to be made quite clear that the creation of a people's guerrilla warfare situation would be a means and not an end in itself. The use of military methods would be necessary in every case where the attitude and actions of the State made it imperative for revolutionaries to de-