

# **IAF and its Role in the International Anarchist and Libertarian Movement**

The Seventh Congress of the International of Anarchist Federations

2006

The Congress of the IAF, meeting today in Besancon, confirms that anarchism is the relevant response to the problems in the global situation. Anarchism, if it wants to be involved in its environment, must not forget that it evolves constantly in relation to the social reality and it must define its practices and its strategies for action in relation to these same realities.

Oppression and exploitation knows no borders, and anarchism will not be achieved except at the world level. It is for this reason that organized anarchists have created an appropriate tool—the IAF. We are unanimous in considering that the IAF cannot be an end in itself. Rather, it is an instrument to co-ordinate international struggles and for this reason should contribute to organizing federally the international anarchist movement. The increase in membership of the IAF, as well as the emergence of new groups that look with interest towards the IAF project, are a sign of the vitality of organized social anarchism.

The IAF is a federal organization, which exists through its local sections. The autonomous development of these local federations is a guarantee of their freedom and their capacity to effectively struggle within their own territory. It is inside actual political and social situations in which they find themselves that each federation chooses its own path which it judges to be the most appropriate at any given moment of the development of anarchism.

The momentum given to anarchism in the new social and cultural struggles has produced a growth, not only in numbers, but also in the capacity to organize anarchist actions. However, these do not always translate into clear objectives and libertarian practices. On the one hand, there is the persistence of nihilist groups without political and social perspectives, and on the other hand, there is the temptation to adopt reformist practices and to collaborate with ruling class institutions and organizations.

We think that anarchist organizations must pre-figure the future society. We cannot help but reject the principle that the majority can impose their policies on the entire organization as well as the logic of electoralism that comes from this. This critique constitutes the basis of anarchism as it was expressed at the St. Imier Congress of 1872.

It is in reinforcing our links, in exchanging information and co-operating with multi-faceted anarchist organizations, in the framework of the associative pact of our International, that we can construct social anarchism relevant to the contemporary world. We reaffirm the importance of

the development of practices, which are non-hierarchical and based on self-organization. These are far from vanguardist practices, which are foreign to organized social anarchism.

The emancipation of the workers will be the work of the workers themselves. The coherence between the means and the end is not only an ethical issue, but a distinctive feature of a libertarian social and political organization. This observation leads the IAF to adopt an open and constructive attitude with regards to the components of the anarchist movements in the world.

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