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Ten Years After

The Re-emergence of Anarchism in Chile

Trafik

1983

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Note: The following article about libertarian socialists/anarchists in Chile is translated from the Summer, 1983 issue of the German magazine *Trafik*.

It's encouraging to realize that the anarchist movement is reborn, even in Chile, where a U.S.-backed military coup and dictatorship had seemed to have completely obliterated it, along with everything else. Yet, in spite of the pitiless, ongoing repression, accompanied by deep economic depression—for which the military authorities are, to a large extent, to blame—Chilean anarchists have begun to organize together.

In 1979, a new federation of various anarchist tendencies was founded. It goes by the name Socialist ideas and Action (PAS). Here, long-time anarchist militants were joined by libertarian socialists who, during the presidency of Allende (1970-73), had been independents in the Unidad Popular coalition and later members of the socialist party called MAPU. Immediately following the economic and military destruction of the Chilean revolution and reform government, the socialist movement completely collapsed and broke down into various factions. Some of these factions, having experienced the break-up

of the Unidad Popular and their inability to organize effective resistance to the dictatorship in the years immediately following the coup, decided to unite with the PAS.

In July '82, at a national conference, held in Santiago, the PAS worked out a "Declaration of Principles" which clearly addressed libertarian themes. They declared their goal to be "the destruction of the capitalist State and the abolition of capitalism's mass misery through the creation of a new social order based on the free federation of the people for mutual aid and cooperation in the production of social wealth, its collective distribution and egalitarian consumption, and its public control."

The PAS remained flexible as to strategies and tactics. They left it open how and where to intervene or propagandize. They also made clear that no individual who doesn't agree with an action decided to by a majority would be required to participate. In the section of their declaration entitled "International Experiences of Revolutionary Unionism," the PAS proclaimed the necessity of a break "with the political bullshit of bourgeois democracy," as well as "with the crap of the traditional, bureaucratically-structured unionism." The PAS defines their own unionist strategy as "collective action; on-going, critical analysis of real social development; direct action, which requires each person to be a responsible activist in struggle; the continual oversight and immediate recallability of all brothers and sisters who take on leading roles in elective bodies."

Given the existing conditions, Chilean anarchists are forced to carry out an underground struggle. And the requirements of this struggle have imposed on them the "choice" of a secure type of organization. Collective decision-making takes absolute precedence over spontaneous actions by individuals. None of the PAS militants can permit themselves the luxury of individual political initiatives, which may endanger the safety of the other members.

In a document worked out in Nov. '82, the PAS analysed the current situation of the Pinochet regime. They concluded that the junta has marched to a crossroads. They must either accept bourgeois democracy and a new capitalist social consensus or else heighten the potential for a new Chilean revolution by continuing on the road of intensified oppression and exploitation. Without pretending to have a crystal ball, the PAS militants feel that an attempt at re-establishing bourgeois democracy is most likely. Even if this direction is taken by the junta and the bourgeoisie, it will not undermine the movement to destroy capitalism. The PAS feels that it may simply lead to a greater explosion, as the revolutionary movement re-emerges into the open, as the flame hits fresh air.

The PAS is decidedly opposed to all so-called "democratic" politicians, who would make deals with the junta while they ride on the backs of the people.

The PAS appeals for the further development of the autonomy of the people in their unions and neighborhood groups, in the struggle against the junta.

"No to Fascism! No to Phony Bourgeois Solutions! Strengthen the Popular Organizations! The people must organize themselves to fight for a socialist, revolutionary and free Chile!"