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Mexican Anarchism

A report on a recent anarchist conference in Mexico

1996

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Although most attention on Mexico has focused on the libertarian aspects of the EZLN, a consciously anarchist movement is also coming into existence there. This emerging anarchist movement is disorganised and small but has a rich history. It was born in the last century under the influence of Rodakonoty and Chauvin, and later Ricardo Flores-Magon who is still a popular figure.

Groups today range from the counter-cultural Anti-Authoritarian Revolutionary Youth (JAR), to the Motin group which seeks to create the conditions for social anarchism. Throughout the whole of Mexico there are about 30 groups spread out in a dozen towns with 400 to 500 militants. In 1994, inspired by events in Chiapas, the Self-Management Libertarian Union (ULA) was born bringing together individuals from JAR, Motin and a social library. There are plans for a national journal put together by about a dozen groups spread out over five towns.

On May 1st 1995 when the official unions refused to organise a May Day march, Mexico saw its biggest protest march since 1968 with 1.5 million people demanding:

- an end to NAFTA,
- a rise in salaries,
- the re-employment of workers sacked during strikes,
- political freedom,
- support for the EZLN.

The anarchist contingent brought together some 3,000 people on this march.

Independent unions are appearing in several towns and are beginning to draw thousands of members, who have carried out sporadic actions at Ford, in telecommunications and in the oil industry. Some unions give libertarian ideas a warm welcome. In December 1995 a meeting took place between militants of the French Anarchist Federation and a dozen other Mexican anarchist groups in the premises of the Independent Textile Workers Union.

Source: *Le Monde Libertaire*, 7 February 1996