

Even More Minneapolis Anarchy

In response to "More Minneapolis Anarchy"

Various Authors
E.B. Maple (Peter Werbe)

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FE Note: This is a response to "More Minneapolis Anarchy," the letters beginning on page 15 of this issue.

Well, even more Minneapolis Anarchy has come our way since our introduction and page layout was begun.

First, a letter from "Some Chicago Anarchists," the conveners of the 1986 Haymarket Centennial, who question the necessity of multiple national meetings for the anarchist movement and in particular the January 16 planning meeting in Atlanta for the July Toronto Gathering. This is an abridged version of a much longer letter; the complete text is available from the above folks at: Box 163, 1340 W. Irving Pk. Rd., Chicago IL 60613.

Finally, E.B. Maple of the FE staff has his hackles up about a letter sent to the Anarchist Network List by a post-leninist group.

What Pressure?

To All Other Anarchists:

What has happened with the anarchist movement? "Increase The Pressure," what pressure? Two hundred people marching down the streets of Minneapolis. Get fucking real! Less than one out of every million people in North America was at the "massive" anarchist demo, June 22, 1987.

The "Pressure" placed on church, state and capital by the Philadelphia "Unconstitutional" demo on September 17 was unmeasurable because it was almost nonexistent. Once again 75 people, a few of whom called the cops for help, is not any threat to existing society.

For all the talk, the movement is barely growing. Even the sizes of the conferences prove the point. In the early '80s, several East Coast anarchist gatherings were held and two of them attracted over 100 people each. This means that the Minneapolis gathering, billed as a continental one, not regional and with substantially more publicity and support, drew less than 100 more people than the East Coast ones a few years before. There appears to be no growth worthy of three or four national meetings a year!

With our very limited resources, networking by mail requires much smaller costs than the staggering expense of people going to another city. Twenty people going to Atlanta, at a minimum of \$125 each means at least \$2,500 which could be used locally or on existing or new anarchist publishing projects. How this small fortune, in anarchist

terms, going to oil companies, car companies, and airlines serves the cause of building the movement boggles our minds.

Central to the Atlanta idea is the notion that local groups can't do things right. Things have to be coordinated by the aspiring central committee; a handful of people in Atlanta setting an agenda for all of us.

The reason the movement is stagnating is not lack of national direction, coordination and control, but a number of factors. The most important we feel is the withdrawal of contemporary concern for ordinary people. Instead of talking about factories, contemporary A's talk about factory farming. Instead of talking about the millions evicted and homeless in major cities, they fixate on a few thousand people possibly being removed 2,000 miles away (Big Mountain). Betraying their predominantly middle class, white backgrounds, they ignore recent reports that most Americans are only four pay checks away from being homeless.

The real reason our movement hasn't grown is that instead of talking about the dreadfully boring and shitty lives most people live, and trying to develop some sense of solidarity, contemporary "A" ignores the oppression of most people in its fervor to join its brother liberals in deploring the worst possible examples of systematic oppression.

We maintain that most of what anarchists are saying has no relevance for most oppressed peoples and that our task is to tie issues together and develop a critique that will unite all oppressed peoples.

Some Chicago Anarchists

Chicago IL

Left Salesmen

A friend recently sent us a copy of a letter from *The Torch* newspaper, official organ of the Revolutionary Socialist League (RSL), a 30-member national grouplet which is a split of a split of a split from the authoritarian trotskyist movement.

Stating that they are enclosing "a packet we are mailing to everyone on the Anarchist Network List" (they missed us for some strange reason), it includes *The Torch* coverage of the Minneapolis Anarchist Gathering and offers copies of their critical "A Look at Leninism" series.

Although the RSL seems to be going through internal changes regarding its leninist baggage, it should be recognized that they are involved in the time-honored (or disgraced) practice of "entrism," the leninist tactic of joining a larger, more amorphous grouping or party (a trade union or political organization, usually) with the goal of gaining recruits from the host body.

It's not that the anti-authoritarian movement should worry about this since we would probably be better off without anyone who would consider joining a socialist organization, or, as one friend told us, "Have a little confidence; we'll probably wind up recruiting them." However, the appearance of the RSL flitting around anarchist circles desperately trying to recruit members in an attempt to stave off its impending terminal collapse is more problematic than may appear.

The RSL isn't sinister like the RCP zombies, but they do have the capacity to alter the convivial quality of our gatherings and activities which are generally free of those with hidden agendas or programs. Being confronted with glad-handing politicians acting out a previously decided upon strategy is like asking a friend to dinner and suddenly having him or her try to sell you encyclopedias.

Also, the RSL retains an organizational arrogance born of their leninist roots that has not been lost during their "reevaluation" period. They defended mass murderers, authoritarian politics and the slander of anarchism for the previous 15 years of their existence. Then, after figuring out what the anarchist movement has known since 1917—that Lenin and Trotsky represented the counter-revolution in the Russian revolution—they have not missed a beat, and are now off and running trying to recruit people to the "new," more libertarian RSL.

RSL operatives, no less than the RCP, should be told politely but firmly that we don't want to be "worked," that we want to relate to free and autonomous individuals, not party functionaries carrying out directives from a central committee. If the RSL is at all serious about their rejection of leninism, let them show it in their acts, not just their newspaper.

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