

From Venezuela

Neither Chavism nor Its Neoliberal Opposition

El Libertario (Venezuela)

2003

These excerpts come from the English section of the *El Libertario* website. *El Libertario* is a collective in Venezuela that has been active for eight years now.

Everything with the people, nothing with the power!

Against a broken State and an inefficient market economy, self-management!

Against the maneuvering of the few, the autonomy of the many!

Against hollow slogans, political self-education and socialization of our experiences!

After a long period of military dictatorships, corrupt democratic governments and economic disasters, the Argentinean people have matured enough to experiment with new forms of organization as their reply to the crisis. Their mistrust of professional politicians has coined the superb phrase “Let them all go!”

This is apropos what’s been happening in Venezuela in the last few months. Two factions conceal their thirst for power behind popular citizen’s mobilizations that give them legitimacy; both boast of a rhetoric that has little to do with their real intentions and actions.

Chavism invents a revolution that has shown its seams and that has tried unsuccessfully to embellish the typical practices of the past it denounces. Its timid progress is buried under the red digits of unemployment, corruption, poverty and injustice. (To verify this assertion, we recommend consulting the report “The Human Rights Situation in Venezuela” by the NGO PROVEA, available—in Spanish—at www.derechos.org.ve). For their part, the opposition, under the provisional reins of a leadership that buried the country in the trash dump during four decades, makes the apology of neoliberalism, that project that in the case of Argentina, brutally demonstrated its ineptitude to find a solution to social injustice and exclusion.

Paradoxically, it has been those leaders with feet of clay who have placed in the people’s hands some tools to develop the politics that will get rid of them, with a clear touch of autonomy and self-management. Political consciousness grows with each mobilization, with the notion that criticism and self-criticism must be said out loud, with the formation of networks both complex and horizontal and with the total refusal to return to any past: that of the strong man, that of the military, that of the power-drunk political bureaucracies.

At the base, both sides show the ability to mobilize and to raise consciousness that we trust so on will revert to its own benefit, and not to the benefit of the bureaucracies. In this process, revolutionary inasmuch as it implies a new way of organizing for political action, we the anarchists have been integrating our wills and our ways.

Let’s carve with our knives of explorers of utopia, our tools that enable us to scare them all off, so that they may leave and never return. As a contribution, with the openness characteristic of libertarian thought, we have tried to

compile texts from people who from a critical position have distanced themselves from the comedy of Chavez, the CTV and Fedecamaras.

Venezuela is not an isolated case within the continent. Those who celebrate the supposed Latin American leftward turn, actually want to uphold a group that, hiding behind an anti-US speech, are signing contracts highly profitable to European capitalism and, with their nationalistic mongering, diverting people's attention away from the hunger and injustices they suffer.

As political power readjusts itself in several ways, the petty-bureaucrats and the lumpen-bourgeois keep giving us the snake oil seller's speech about furthering a revolution that never was. Fueled by rage suppressed for decades, and blackmailed with the imperative "Do not give arguments to the right wing" (sic), promising social movements censor their own demands in order to focus their efforts towards a false polarization, falling under a confused ideology based in the cult of the personality of a statist military man.

To accept blindly the "power to the people" slogan is to repeat the dark history that led to the so-called "dictatorships of the proletariat." To claim that power will dissolve itself is as ludicrous as to claim that History is a mechanical sum of events that will bring us unerringly to freedom and social justice. These will only be conquered by keeping with the anti-capitalist struggle without abandoning, even for a second, our critical spirit and inquisitiveness. The only way to get answers is to not stop asking questions.

Whether they like it or not, this unruly newspaper will keep on its task, to provide libertarian counter-information, denouncing power and injustice anywhere we find it. To accomplish that, we weave affinity groups; we build networks; we read, we write, we debate; we act and sing songs. Like that song that has been recently playing in our walkman: "Here they come, with their magnificent party, here they come, with recycled words, with old and stale thoughts. I need air, clean air, I want something new, something fairer."

El Libertario is focused around the newsletter which we publish every two months. On this section of the website we will be posting English articles based around the anarchists' perspectives on issues in Venezuela and around Latin America. If you would like to submit an article or comment please send it to: ellibertario@nodo50.org, or to Emilio Tesoro, apartado postal 6303, Carmelitas, Venezuela.

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