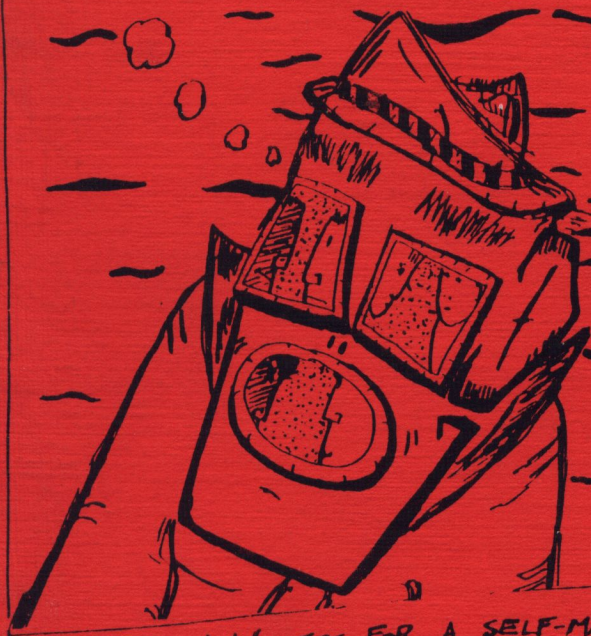




"AS WE SEE IT!"
(..TOWARDS THE
21ST. CENTURY...)



LIBERTARIAN WORKERS FOR A SELF-MANAGED SOCIETY 1988

AS WE SEE IT



THE LIBERTARIAN WORKERS FOR A SELF-MANAGED SOCIETY LOOK TOWARDS THE 21ST CENTURY

INTRODUCTION

The Libertarian Workers for a Self-Managed Society is an Anarchist Group which has been in existence in Melbourne, Australia since 1977.

This pamphlet outlines our viewpoint on the world today and forms the basis of our political programme towards the Year 2000.

The Libertarian Workers for a Self Managed Society meet regularly and as a group and as individuals we are involved in propagating Anarchist ideas in the communities in which we live and in the places where we work.

The Libertarian Workers for a Self Managed Society are responsible for the production of the Libertarian Workers Bulletin an Anarchist newspaper full of local, national and international anarchist news. We also produce "Anarchism the Third Alternative", a half hour radio programme of Anarchist news and views which is broadcast on 3CR (837 a.m.) every alternative Wednesday at 11.00 a.m. The Group runs an Anarchist Library which is open to the public which has material from over 40 countries in 25 languages. We are also the custodians of the Boris Francheschini Memorial Library (Italian Anarchist Library).

The Anarchist Media Institute is another Libertarian Workers project. The Anarchist Media Institute organises public discussion meetings, provides speakers for groups who wish to learn more about Anarchism, and also provides speakers for newspaper, radio and television interviews.

Members of the Libertarian Workers for a Self Managed Society are also actively involved in a number of other Melbourne Anarchist Groups.

**AN ANARCHIST SOCIETY IS A VOLUNTARY NON-HIERARCHICAL SOCIETY
BASED ON THE CREATION OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL STRUCTURES
WHICH ARE FORMED ON THE BASIS OF EQUAL DECISION MAKING POWER
AND WHICH ALLOW ALL PEOPLE EQUAL ACCESS TO THAT
SOCIETY'S WEALTH**

1.1 Throughout the world, people in all societies are divided into two main groups - those with power and those without power.

In Australia the ruling class is divided into a number of different groups - those who own the means of production, distribution and exchange, the directors of transnational and national corporations, speculators, high ranking government bureaucrats, media barons, cultural entrepreneurs, the higher echelons of church hierarchies and the top echelons within the armed forces, prisons and legal system - the disciplinary arms of the State.

What distinguishes the ruling class is that they are mainly order givers not order takers. Although most people in society are both order givers and order takers, most welfare recipients, non-paid home workers and child raisers, industrial, service, government and rural wage earners as well as self-employed people and farmers (who don't employ wage labour to run their business or farm) are normally order takers not order givers.

The traditional categories of class analysis have changed. The traditional working class is rapidly disappearing due to the influences of technology and an increasing ascendancy of a competitive ideology. It can be said that most people are in positions where they are forced to live their lives in a manner that they would not themselves choose. They are kept in this position by the use of force, i.e. economic demands and/or the coercive arm of the state. People have little or no say in the decisions which deeply and directly affect their lives; they are bossed at work, in community life and at home.

People never feel the power of co-operative work over their day to day lives and therefore lack confidence in their ability to control their own lives without the need of leaders, bosses and rulers.

2. The changes promised by relative improvements in the standards of living, increasing state control of the means of production, the ascendancy of social democrat, marxist and new right governments, all claiming to provide for the human needs of people, have not led to real freedom.

The reality is that these apparent changes have not effected the basic status of the ordinary person. We are still directed, manipulated and tied directly and indirectly to work. Few have been freed.

Capitalism, whether controlled by the state, corporation or the individual, remains an inhuman type of society where the vast majority are bossed at work and home and manipulated in consumption and leisure.

Media, the legal system, police and schools, impose values and morality which all serve to reinforce the power of the few and convince and coerce the many into acceptance of a brutal, degrading and irrational system.

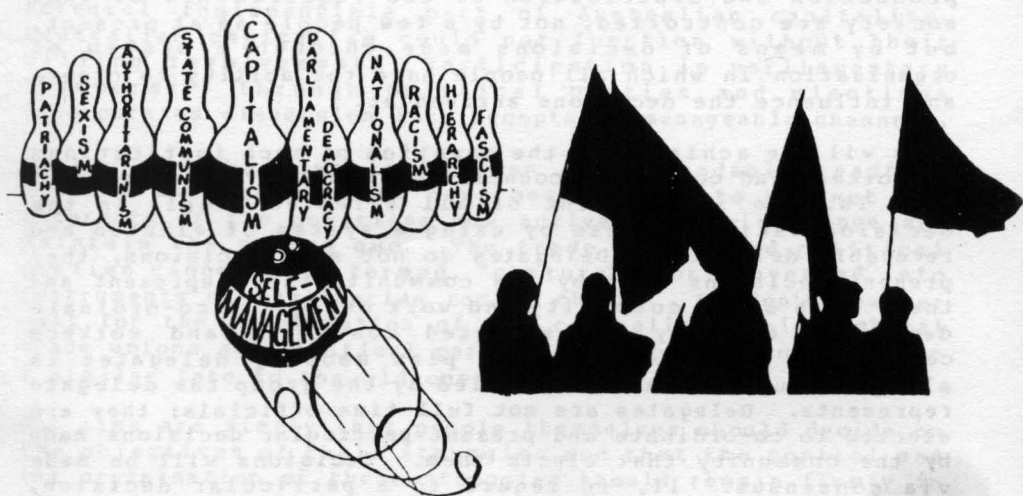
Moreover the Capitalist and Marxist systems have created new, hitherto unthought of problems: ecological disaster, the threat of world war III, growing destruction of the planet's life support systems, the ruination of much of Africa, Asia and Latin American and the breakdown of numerous societies.

Neither Capitalism or Communism have delivered what they have promised the worker.

The Communist world is not Communist and the Free World is not free!

As Anarchists we reject the terms "left" and "right" to describe governments and social and political movements. In today's world the terms "left" and "right" are irrelevant as all "left" or "right" wing governments, as well as most social and political movements, are characterised by centralisation of power and wealth.

Instead, we evaluate these movements by their tendencies to centralise or decentralise power and wealth. Decentralisation of power and wealth is central to anarchist philosophy and strategy.



3. **Anarchism is essentially an international movement** recognising common humanity. We recognise that hierarchical power structures and capitalism are international problems. The present hierarchy of nations and the increasing centralising of multinational capital necessitates an international perspective as these structures oppress us all.

We recognise however the individual and unique characteristics of regional movements and solutions and encourage peoples in these movements to develop individual strategies based on egalitarian values and practice to meet these situations.



**Anarchie. Anarchia.
Anarchismus. Anarquía.
Anarki. Anarchy.**



**No matter where
you are, one symbol
says it all.**

4. **As anarchists we advocate a society in which the** production and distribution of the requirements of that society are controlled, not by a few people as at present, but by means of decisions made through a system of organisation in which all people have the ability to create and influence the decisions arrived at.

This will be achieved by the creation of such institutions as workers and community councils based on direct democracy; that is, the involvement of all affected people in the decision making process by using a system of elected and revocable delegates. Delegates do not make decisions, they present decisions made by the community they represent and they, with other community and work delegates co-ordinate decisions made by the affected community and workers councils. Any co-ordination plan made by delegates is always brought back and ratified by the group the delegate represents. Delegates are not full-time officials; they are elected to co-ordinate and present particular decisions made by the community that elects them. Decisions will be made via consensus. If, in regard to a particular decision,

consensus cannot be reached, the people whom that decision effects will cast a voluntary vote to determine the proportion of people advocating various alternatives. The community wealth will then be distributed to the various majorities/minorities to enable them to further their particular preferences (as long as these are based on the anarchist principles - equal distribution of wealth/equal decision making power). The basis of an anarchist society is the democratisation of society from y roots.

5. Australian farmers and the self-employed are nearly always seen as being on the side of the Australian ruling class.

Ideologues who praise individual enterprise, deregulation, small government, welfare cuts and controls on trade unions have attempted to harness dissatisfaction among farmers and the self-employed by driving a wedge between them and wage earners and welfare recipients. These people have equated gains by wage earners and welfare recipients as gains which are won at the expense of the self-employed and farmers.

The reality which faces the self-employed, farmers, wage earners and welfare recipients is the same; monopoly capital through the banks, the money markets, transnational and national corporations and upper rank government bureaucrats control their day to day lives. An analysis of class based on power is the only analysis that adequately describes how these groups are controlled by the ruling class.

6. Late in the nineteenth century the Australian Trade Unions and the Australian Labor Party were formed to protect wage earners against exploitation by the owners of the means of production, distribution and exchange. Today trade unions have been absorbed into the existing patterns of exploitation in Australian society. They have become an integral indispensable part of Australian capitalism. Australian capitalism could not function without their willing involvement. Participation in parliamentary "democracy" through political parties and elections incorporates dissension into acceptable manageable channels.

Apathy of the powerless is an understandable reaction because the groups that have been formed to protect the interests of the powerless now actively inhibit change and maintain the status quo. The trade unions and political parties cannot be reformed, "captured", or converted into instruments of egalitarian social change. We don't however call for the proclamation of new centralised, hierarchical trade unions and political parties because they would suffer a similar fate to the old ones.

Our aims are simply that people themselves should decide on the objectives of their struggles and that the control and the organisation of these struggles should remain firmly in their own hands not in the hands of professional bureaucrats.

BREAK OUT OF THE MOULD!



7. Anything that encourages the passivity of the people, the apathy, cynicism, and their reliance on others to do things for them (which permits a high degree of manipulation even by those allegedly acting on their behalf), we consider sterile and harmful.

Meaningful action for anarchists is whatever increases the confidence, the autonomy, the initiative, the participation, the solidarity and the egalitarian tendencies of people and whatever assists in their understanding of society.

8. We do not accept the view that people are only interested in material rewards. On the contrary, we believe that our conditions of life and our experience of work constantly drive us to adopt new priorities and values and to find methods of organisation which challenge the established order and established pattern of thought.

On the other hand, people are fragmented, dispossessed of the means of communication and are at different levels of awareness and consciousness.

It is necessary that Anarchist ideas and actions are actively supported and defended to enable people to break-out of their isolation and hopelessness and face the task of organising their struggle autonomously and equally. This is the role of the Anarchist organisation.

It is done by carrying out meaningful actions which generalise the idea of self-management, supporting such actions of others, and opposing sterile action.

The anarchist organisation cannot abdicate criticism of any people's struggle which is controlled and directed hierarchically nor can it support the ruling classes of state capitalism in Russia and China or their employees as represented by the national liberation fronts in the Third World and in the Marxist-Leninist parties of the industrialised countries.



9. As people begin to organise on a non-hierarchical basis they will find that the ruling class, like all those throughout history, will not relinquish its power without a struggle, and our present rulers are unlikely to be an exception. Those soldiers and police who are also suppressed politically and economically will find themselves in a difficult situation when ordered by their bosses to suppress fellow workers.

We encourage soldiers and police who share in our ideas to form their own anarchist organisations within these forces, or to resign from the police or defence forces.

In a self-managed society, those hierarchical organisations will dissolve, and defence and social justice will be maintained by the workers' and community councils.

The building of anarchism will require mass understanding and mass participation. Compared to the spontaneous and voluntary action of the majority of people, the State, the boss and their executives are pathetic; as are those Social Democrats and Marxists who pretend to represent workers while trying to gain personal control of political and economic organisations through the existing hierarchical system.

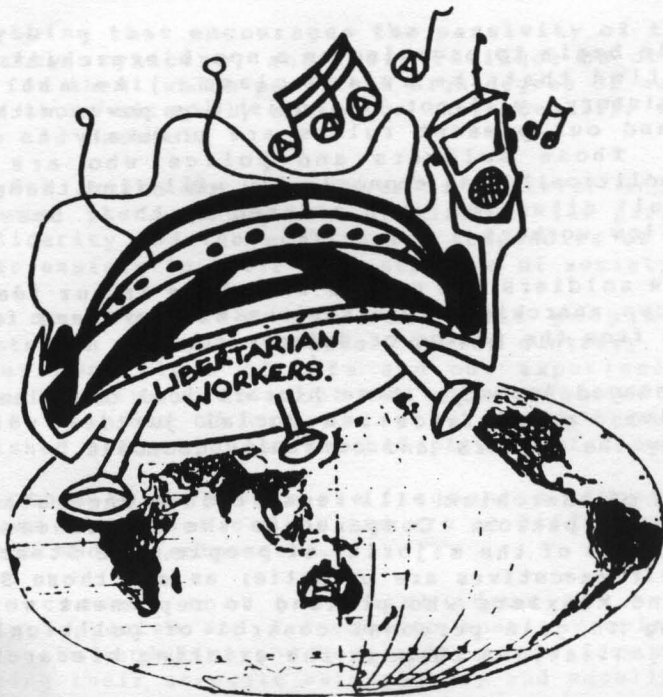
10. THE LIBERTARIAN WORKERS FOR A SELF-MANAGED SOCIETY is an organised group unified around the essential demand for workers and community councils as the basis of direct democracy. In these councils people will have equal decision-making power.

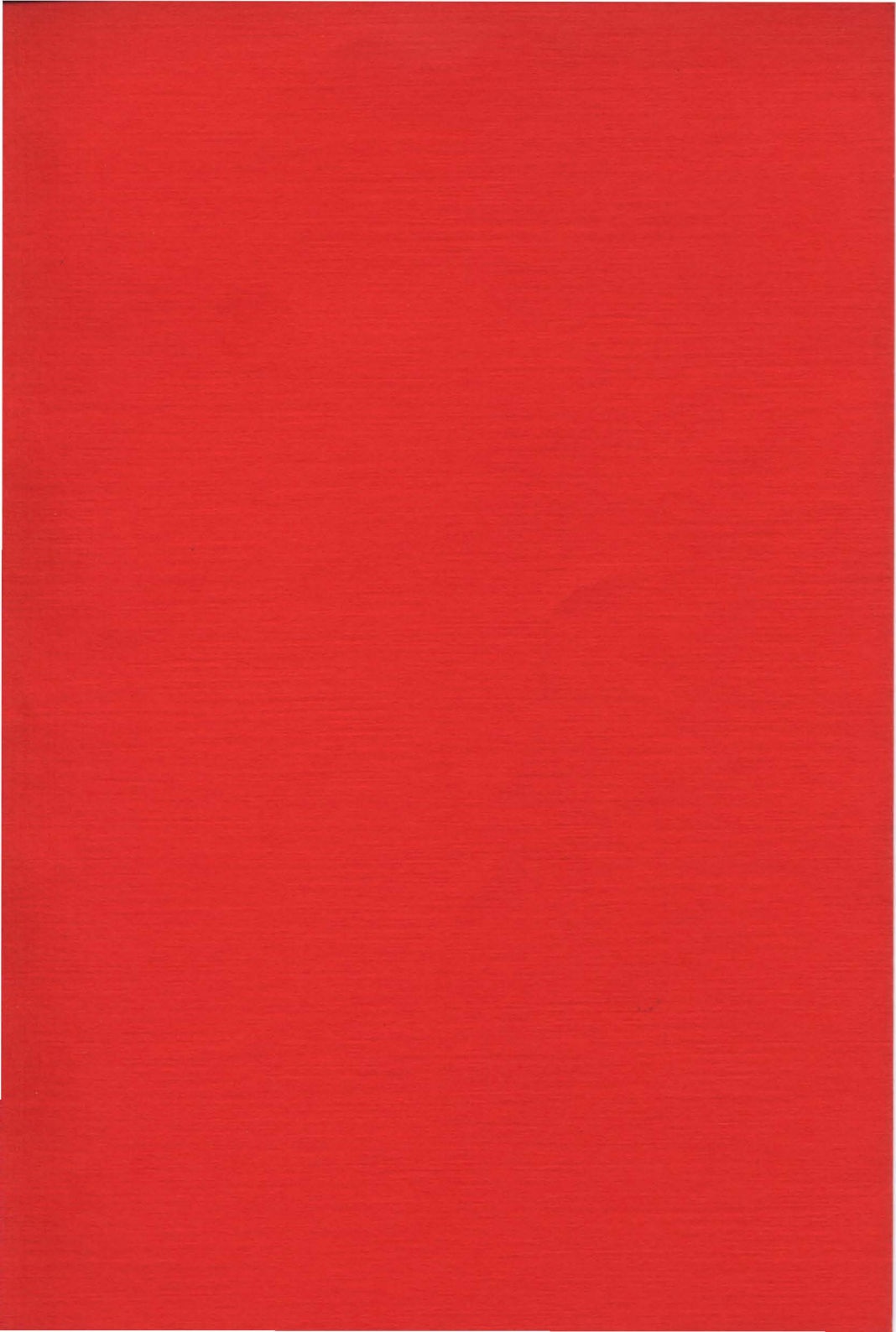
We do not see ourselves as yet another leadership, but merely people in anarchist struggle where we live and work. We do not reflect values of leadership internally. Our structure is based on equal decision-making power and autonomy.

As an individual member or as a minority, different political opinions on the best way to achieve these aims are able to be held and publicly articulated as the position of a minority opposed to the majority.

The function of this statement is to help all those who are in conflict with the present authoritarian social structure, both in the work place and in society at large, to generalise their experience, to make a total critique of their conditions and its causes, not just ones of their particular situation, and to build autonomous organisations. We encourage you to take part in an organised movement which is striving to make these aims a reality because isolated individuals acts, no matter how courageous or full of integrity, are easily defeated by ruling class oppression.

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**equal decision making power.
equal distribution of wealth.**

LIBERTARIAN WORKERS

FOR A SELF-MANAGED SOCIETY

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