

## SPAIN:

February 1936: Popular Front wins elections

March: mass land seizures

July: fascist rising against Popular Front government begins. In response, workers seize factories in many areas, especially Catalonia.

September: Anarchists and POUM join bourgeois republican government in Catalonia

November: Anarchists join bourgeois coalition government in Madrid

December 1936: POUM expelled from government in Catalonia

May 1937: Bourgeoisie and Stalinists turn against POUM in Barcelona. Anarchists dropped from Madrid government.

June 1937: POUM outlawed

March 1939: Fascists finally triumph

# FELIX MORROW: FROM "REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN SPAIN"

## CNT-FAI: THE NATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF LABOUR AND THE ANARCHIST IBERIAN FEDERATION

The followers of Bakunin had older roots in Spain than the Marxists. The CNT had been traditionally anarchist in leadership. The tide of the October Revolution had, for a short time, overtaken the CNT. It had sent a delegate to the Comintern Congress in 1921. The anarchists had then resorted to organized fraction work and recaptured it. Thenceforward, while continuing its traditional epithets against political parties, Spanish anarchism had in the FAI a highly centralized party apparatus through which it maintained control of the CNT.

Ferociously persecuted by Alfonso and Primo de Rivera to the point where it actually dissolved for a time, the CNT from 1931 on, commanded an undisputed majority in the industrial centres of Catalonia and strong movements elsewhere. After the civil war began, it undoubtedly was larger than the UGT (some of whose biggest sections lay in fascist territory).

Hitherto, in the history of the working class, anarchism had never been tested on a grand scale. Now, leading great masses, it was to have a definitive task.

Anarchism has consistently refused to recognize the distinction between a bourgeois and workers' state. Even in the days of Lenin and Trotsky, anarchism denounced the Soviet Union as an exploiters' regime. Precisely the failure to distinguish between a bourgeois and proletarian state had already led the CNT, in the honeymoon days of the revolution of 1931, to the same kind of opportunist errors as are always made by reformists—who also, in their way, make no distinction between bourgeois and workers' states. Overcome by the fumes of the revolution, the CNT had benevolently greeted the bourgeois republic: Under a regime of liberty, the bloodless revolution is still more possible, still easier than under the monarchy. **Solidaridad Obrero**, April 23, 1931) By October 1934 it swung to the equally false extreme of refusing to join with the republicans and socialists in the armed struggle against Gil Robles (with the honourable exception of the CNT regional organization in Asturias).

Now, in the far more powerful fumes of the revolution of July 1936, when the accustomed boundary lines between bourgeoisie and proletariat were smeared over for the time being, the anarchists' traditional refusal to distinguish between a bourgeois and workers' state led them slowly, but decisively, into the ministry of a bourgeois state.

The false anarchist teachings on the nature of the state, it might seem, should logically have led them to refuse governmental participation in any event. Already running Catalan industry and the militias, however, the anarchists were in the intolerable position of objecting to the necessary administrative co-ordination and centralization of the work they had already begun. Their anti-statism as such had to be thrown off. *What* did remain, to wreak disaster in the end, was their failure to recognize the distinction between a workers' and a bourgeois state.

Class collaboration, indeed, lies concealed in the heart of anarchist philosophy. It is hidden, during periods of reaction, by anarchist hatred of capitalist oppression. But, in a revolutionary period of dual power, it must come to the surface. For then the capitalist smilingly offers to share in building the new world. And the anarchist, being opposed to all dictatorships, including dictatorship of the proletariat, will require of the capitalist merely that he throw off the capitalist outlook, to which he agrees, naturally, the better to prepare the crushing of the workers.

There is a second fundamental tenet in anarchist teaching which led in the same direction. Since Bakunin, the anarchists had accused the Marxists of over-estimating the importance of state power, and had characterized this as merely the reflection of the petty-bourgeois intellectual's pre-occupation with lucrative administrative posts. Anarchism calls upon the workers to turn their backs on the state and seek control of the factories as the real source of power. The ultimate sources of power (property relations) being secured, the state power will collapse, never to be replaced. The Spanish anarchists thus failed to understand that it was only the collapse of the state power, with the defection of the army to Franco, which had enabled them to seize the factories and that, if Companys and his allies were allowed the opportunity to reconstruct the bourgeois state, they would soon enough take the factories away from the workers. Intoxicated with their control of the factories and the militias, the anarchists assumed that capitalism had *already* disappeared in Catalonia. They talked of the new social economy, and Companys was only too willing to talk as they did, for it blinded them and not him...

### THE PROGRAMME OF THE CABALLERO COALITION GOVERNMENT

IS it necessary, at this late date, to explain that the cabinet of three Caballero men, three Prieto men, two Stalinists, and five bourgeois ministers, which was established on September 4, 1936, was a bourgeois government, a typical cabinet of class collaboration?...

The programmatic declaration of the new cabinet had nothing in it which the previous government could not have signed. Point II is its essence:

The ministerial programme signifies essentially, the firm decision to assure triumph over the rebellion, co-ordinating the forces of the people, through the required unity of action. To that is subordinated every other political interest, putting to a side the ideological differences, since at present there can be no other task than that of assuring the smashing of the insurrection. (*Claridad*, September 5, 1936.)

Not one word about the land! Not one word about the factory committees! And, as the representatives of the people, these democrats convened the former Cortes elected on February 16 by the electoral agreement which had given a majority to the bourgeoisie on the joint slate!...

The land decree of October 7, 1936, merely sanctioned division of estates belonging to known fascists; other wealthy landowners, peasant exploiters, etc., remained untouched. The aroused hopes of the peasantry were smothered.

The UGT workers in the factories, shops, and railroads were setting up their factory committees, taking over the plants. What would Caballero have to say to them? In Valencia and Madrid the government swiftly intervened, placing government directors in charge who confined the factory committees to routine activity. Not until February 23, 1937, was a comprehensive decree on the industries adopted (issued over the name of Juan Peiro, the anarchist Minister of Industry). It gave the workers no security for the future regime in industry; established strict intervention by the government. Workers' control, by its terms, proved little more than a collective contract, such as, for example, operates in shops dealing with the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union in America—that is, no real measure of workers' control at all...

Delegations of Arabs and Moors came to the government, pleading for a decree. The government would not budge. The redoubtable Abd-el-Krim, exiled by France, sent a plea to Caballero to intervene with Blum, so that he might be permitted to return to Morocco to lead an insurrection against Franco. Caballero would not ask, and Blum would not grant. To rouse Spanish Morocco might endanger imperialist domination throughout Africa.

Thus Caballero and his Stalinist allies set their faces as flint against revolutionary methods of struggle against fascism. In due time, at the end of October, came their reward: a modicum of army supplies from Stalin...

Such was the programme of the provisional revolutionary government of Caballero. Nothing was added or subtracted from it with the entry of the CNT ministers on November 4, 1936. By then the great democracies had had an opportunity, observing the CNT in the Catalonian government formed on September 26, to be reassured about the responsibility of these anarchists.

There was one troublesome point: the anarchist-controlled Council of Defence of Aragon, comprising the territory wrested from the fascists by the Catalonian militias on the Aragon front, had a fearful reputation as an arch-revolutionary body. The price of four cabinet seats for the CNT was some reassurance on Aragon. Accordingly, on October 31, the Aragon Council met with Caballero. The object of our visit, declared the Council's president, Joaquim Ascaso, has been to pay our respects to the head of the government and to assure him of our attachment to the government of the people. We are disposed to accept all the laws it passes and we, in our turn, ask the Minister for all the help we need. The Aragon Council is formed of elements from the Popular Front so that all the forces upholding the government are represented in it.

Interviews with President Azaña, with President Companys, and with Largo Caballero, added a Generalidad statement of November 4, have destroyed any suspicions that might have arisen that the government which has been constituted

[in Aragon] was of an extremist character, unrelated to the other governmental organs of the republic and opposed to the government of Catalonia. That day the anarchists took their seats in Caballero's cabinet.

#### THE PROGRAMME OF THE CATALAN COALITION GOVERNMENT

On September 7, 1936, in a speech criticizing the Madrid coalition with the bourgeoisie, Nin had raised the slogan:

Down with the bourgeois ministers, and the crowd had gone wild with enthusiasm. But by September 18 **La Batalla** published a resolution of the Central Committee of the POUM, accepting coalitionism..:

The working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes, declared Marx. This was the great lesson learned from the Paris Commune: not, as in the past, to transfer the bureaucratic and military machinery from one hand to the other, *but to break it up*; and that is the precondition of any real people's revolution on the Continent. And this is what our heroic party comrades in Paris have attempted. What is to replace the shattered state machinery? On this, the fundamental question of revolution, the meagre experience of the Commune was fully developed by Lenin and Trotsky. Parliamentarianism was to be destroyed. In its place rise the workers' committees in the factories, the peasants' committees on the land, the soldiers' committees in the army, centralized in local, regional and, finally, the national soviets. Thus, the new state, a workers' state, is based on industrial representation, which automatically disfranchises the bourgeoisie, except as, after the consolidation of workers' power, they individually enter productive labour and are permitted to participate in electing the soviets. Between the old bourgeois state and the new workers' state lies a chasm over which the bourgeoisie cannot return to power except by overthrowing the workers' state.

It was this fundamental tenet, the essence of the accumulated experience of a century of revolutionary struggle, which the POUM violated in entering the Generalidad. They received their ministry from the hands of President Companys. The new cabinet merely continued the work of the old, and like the old, could be dismissed and replaced by a more reactionary one. Behind the protective covering of the POUM-CNT-PSUC-Esquerra cabinet, the bourgeoisie would weather the revolutionary offensive, gather its shattered forces, and, with the aid of the reformists, at the ripe moment, return to full power. To this end, it was not even necessary for the bourgeoisie to participate in the cabinet. There had been all-workers cabinets in Germany, Austria, England, which had thus enabled the bourgeoisie to weather critical situations, and then kick out the workers' ministers.

The workers' state, the dictatorship of the proletariat, cannot exist until the old bourgeois state is destroyed. It can only be brought into existence by the direct, *political* intervention of the masses, through the factory and village councils (soviets) at that point where a majority in the soviets is wielded by the workers' party or parties which are determined to overthrow the bourgeois state. Such was the basic theoretical contribution of Lenin. Precisely this conception, however, was bowdlerized by the POUM. The same speech of Nin calling for the dismissal of the bourgeois ministers developed a conception which could only lead to preservation of the bourgeois state

*Dictatorship of the proletariat. Another conception which is an object of difference with the anarchists. The proletarian dictatorship means the authority exercised by the working class. In Catalonia we can affirm that the dictatorship of the proletariat already exists. (Applause)... Not many days ago the FAI launched a manifesto which said that it would oppose all dictatorships exercised by whatever party. We are in agreement with them. The dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be exercised by one single sector of the proletariat but by all, absolutely all. No workers' party or union centre has the right to exercise a dictatorship. Let those present know that if the CNT or the Communist Party or the Socialist Party would wish to exercise a dictatorship of a party it would confront us. The dictatorship of the proletariat must be exercised by all. (La Batalla, September 8, 1936.)*

For the dictatorship of the proletariat, as a state form, resting on the broad foundations of the network of workers', peasants and combatants' councils throughout industry, the land and the fields of battle, Nin was here substituting an entirely different conception: an agreement among the top-leaderships of the workers' organizations jointly to assume governmental responsibility. False, and having nothing whatever in common with the Marxist conception of proletarian dictatorship! How could the proletarian dictatorship be wielded jointly with the Stalinist-democrats and the social democrats who stood for bourgeois democracy? How could party agreements be the substitute for the necessary vast network of workers' councils?...

The Central Committee of the Militias was dissolved and its powers turned over to the Ministries of Defence and Internal Security. The local militia and anti-fascist committees, almost invariably proletarian in composition, which had been ruling the towns and villages, were dissolved and replaced by municipal administrations composed in the same proportion as the cabinet (Esquerra 3, CNT 3, PSUC 2, Peasants Union, POUM, and Accio Catala, the right-wing bourgeois organization, 1 each)....

Apart from the workers' majority, the POUM justified entry because of the socialist orientation of the government's economic programme. This criterion was utterly false, for revolutionary Marxism has always made clear that the necessary precondition to socialist economics is the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Bolsheviks in 1917 were even prepared, on the basis of a workers' state, to permit the continued existence, for a period, of private industry in certain fields, modified by workers' control of production. Precisely in those fields of economic life in which the Bolsheviks acted first, however, the Catalan coalition did not act: nationalization of the banks and of the land.

Finance capital, even in backward Spain as elsewhere, dominates all other forms of capital. Yet, all that the coalition agreed to, in point 8 of its economic programme, was: Workers' control of banking enterprises until arriving at the nationalization of banking. Workers' control in practice meant merely guarding against disbursements of funds to fascist sympathizers and unauthorized persons. Until put off nationalization of banking indefinitely nothing was ever done about it. This vast lever meant, as the next months proved, that the collectivized industries were at the mercy of those who could withhold credits. Precisely through this means, the bourgeois state, month by month, was to whittle down the economic power of the working class.

The Bolsheviks had *nationalized* the land and granted control of it to the local soviets: that meant *the end of private property in land*. The peasant need not enter the collectives; he was, however, no longer able to buy and sell land, and no creditor could seize it.

The radical Catalan programme, the collectivization of great rural properties and respect for small agrarian property, concealed a reactionary perspective: land could still be bought and sold. Even more important: according to the Catalan autonomy statute, the central government had the last word on economic questions involving all Spain, and it had only authorized seizure of *fascist-owned estates*. The coalition ignored the discrepancy between the two decrees. The POUM did not have sense enough to bring the discrepancy out into the open and force the central government to formally recognize the Catalan decree, or have the Generalidad declare its full autonomy in economic questions. That meant: once the bourgeoisie recovered its strength, the Madrid decree on the land would prevail.

On October 24, a long and intricate decree was promulgated, concretizing the government's conception of collectivization of the great industries, public services and transport. Before entry into the government, the POUM had criticized industrial collectivization, pointing out that the unions, and even the workers in individual factories, were treating them as their own property. Syndicalist capitalism was making of the factories merely a form of producers co-operatives, in which the workers divided the profits. But industry could be run efficiently only as a national entity, together with all banking facilities and a monopoly of foreign trade. Now the POUM accepted collectivization, which was nothing more than producers co-operatives, though real planning was impossible without banking and trade monopolies. The control of foreign trade which was promised never materialized. The POUM's proposal to include in the decree an Industrial and Credit Bank of Catalonia to attend to the needs and requirements of collectivized industry, was rejected. Thus, the foundations were laid for cutting to pieces the industries seized by the workers...

The collectivization decree provided for intervention in each factory of a government agent as part of the Factory Council. In all enterprises employing over 500, its director had to be approved by the government. Once elected by the workers in the factory, the Factory Council remained for two years in office, except for outright dereliction of duty, thus freezing the political composition of the councils and making it impossible for a revolutionary party to win control of the factories. The General Councils, embracing a whole industry, were even less flexible, eight out of twelve members being appointed by the leaders of the UGT and CNT, and presided over by representatives of the government. These measures, ensuring no revolt from below, were approved by all, including the POUM.

Is it not obvious that the economic programme of the Generalidad merely accepted some of the gains already made by the workers themselves, and combined them with a series of political and economic measures which would eventually wipe out those gains? Yet, for this and a seat in the cabinet, the POUM sold its chance to lead the Spanish revolution. By its blanket acceptance of the governmental programme, the CNT revealed the complete bankruptcy of anarchism as a road to the social revolution.

Like their counterparts in Madrid, the Esquerra and PSUC looked to the League of Nations and the 'great democracies' for succour. Nor was the CNT much better. Juan Peiró, after the fall of the Caballero government, naively declared that the CNT had been assured that the moderate government programme was meant for foreign consumption only.

This undoubtedly explains why the CNT sent no organized delegations abroad to campaign among the workers.

## **MURRAY BOOKCHIN: FROM "TO REMEMBER SPAIN"**

By 1933, the FAI's control over the CNT was fairly complete. Systematic organizational work had purged the union of Communists, while its reformist leaders either left on their own accord or had defensively camouflaged themselves with revolutionary rhetoric. No illusion should exist that this success was achieved with an overly sensitive regard for

democratic niceties, although the militancy of the *faístas* unquestionably attracted the greatest majority of CNT workers. But the FAI's most well-known militants -- Durruti, the Ascaso brothers, García Oliver -- included terrorism in their repertory of direct action. Gunplay, especially in "expropriations" and in dealing with recalcitrant employers, police agents, and blacklegs, was not frowned upon. These *atentados* almost certainly intimidated the FAI's less prominent opponents in the CNT, although "reformists" like Pestaña and Peiró did not hesitate to publicly criticize the FAI in the harshest terms.

Despite its influence in the CNT, this remarkable anarchist organization remained semisecret up to 1936 and its membership probably did not exceed 30,000. Structurally, it formed a near-model of libertarian organization. Affinity groups were small nuclei of intimate friends which generally numbered a dozen or so men and women. Wherever several of these affinity groups existed, they were coordinated by a local federation and met, when possible, in monthly assemblies. The national movement, in turn, was coordinated by a Peninsular Committee, which ostensibly exercised very little directive power. Its role was meant to be strictly administrative in typical Bakuninist fashion. Affinity groups were in fact remarkably autonomous during the early thirties and often exhibited exceptional initiative. The intimacy shared by the *faístas* in each group made the movement very difficult for police agents to infiltrate and the FAI as a whole managed to survive the most severe repression with surprisingly little damage to its organization. As time passed, however, the Peninsular Committee began to grow in prestige. Its periodic statements on events and problems often served as directives to the entire movement. Although by no means an authoritarian body, it eventually began to function as a central committee whose policy decisions, while not binding in the organization, served as more than mere suggestions. Indeed, it would have been very difficult for the Peninsular Committee to operate by fiat; the average *faísta* was a strong personality who would have readily voiced disagreement with any decision that he or she found particularly unpalatable. But the FAI increasingly became an end in itself and loyalty to the organization, particularly when it was under attack or confronted with severe difficulties, tended to mute criticism.

There can be no question that the FAI raised enormously the social consciousness of the average *ceneteísta*. More than any single force apart from employer recalcitrance, it made the CNT into a revolutionary syndicalist organization, if not a truly anarchosyndicalist one. The FAI stressed a commitment to revolution and to libertarian communism and gained a considerable following within the CNT (a more dedicated following in anarchist Saragossa than in syndicalist Barcelona). But the FAI was not able to completely rid the CNT of reformist elements (the union attracted many workers by its militant fight for improved economic conditions) and the sedimentation of the CNT along hierarchical lines continued.

In its attempt to control the CNT, the FAI in fact became a victim of the less developed elements in the union. Peirats quite rightly emphasizes that the CNT took its own toll on the FAI. Just as reformists inside the union were predisposed to compromise with the bourgeoisie and the State, so the FAI was compelled to compromise with the reformists in order to retain its control over the CNT. Among the younger, less experienced *faístas*, the situation was sometimes worse. Extravagant militancy which fetishized action over theory and daring over insight rebounded, after failure, in the crudest opportunism.

In the balance: the CNT had provided a remarkably democratic arena for the most militant working class in Europe; the FAI added the leavening of a libertarian orientation and revolutionary deeds within the limits that a trade union could provide. By 1936, both organizations had created authentically libertarian structures to the extent that any strictly proletarian class movement could be truly libertarian. If only by dint of sheer rhetoric -- and doubtless, considerable conviction and daring actions -- they had keyed the expectations of their memberships to a revolution that would yield workers' control of the economy and syndicalist forms of social administration. This process of education and class organization, more than any single factor in Spain, produced the collectives. And to the degree that the CNT-FAI (for the two organizations became fatally coupled after July 1936) exercised the major influence in an area, the collectives proved to be generally more durable, communist and resistant to Stalinist counterrevolution than other republican-held areas of Spain.

Moreover, in the CNT-FAI areas, workers and peasants tended to show the greatest degree of popular initiative in resisting the military uprising. It was not Socialist Madrid that first took matters into its own hands and defeated its rebellious garrison: it was anarchosyndicalist Barcelona that can lay claim to this distinction among all the large cities of Spain. Madrid rose against the Montana barracks only after sound trucks broadcast the news that the army had been defeated in the streets and squares of Barcelona. And even in Madrid, perhaps the greatest initiative was shown by the local CNT organization, which enjoyed the allegiance of the city's militant construction workers.

The CNT-FAI, in effect, revealed all the possibilities of a highly organized and extremely militant working class -- a "classical" proletariat, if you will, whose basic economic interests were repeatedly frustrated by a myopic intransigent bourgeoisie. It was out of such "irreconcilable" struggles that anarchosyndicalism and revolutionary Marxism had developed their entire tactical and theoretical armamentarium.

But the CNT-FAI also revealed the limitations of that type of classical struggle -- and it is fair to say that the Spanish Revolution marked the end of a century-long era of so-called "proletarian revolutions" which began with the June

uprising of the Parisian workers in 1848. The era has passed into history and, in my view, will never again be revived. It was marked by bitter, often uncompromising struggles between the proletariat and bourgeoisie, an era in which the working class had not been admitted into its "share" of economic life and had been virtually denied the right to form its own protective institutions...

It is not surprising that the most communistic collectives in the Spanish Revolution appeared in the countryside rather than the cities, among villagers who were still influenced by archaic collectivistic traditions and were less ensnared in a market economy than their urban cousins. The ascetic values which so greatly influenced these highly communistic collectives often reflected the extreme poverty of the areas in which they were rooted. Cooperation and mutual aid in such cases formed the preconditions for survival of the community. Elsewhere, in the more arid areas of Spain, the need for sharing water and maintaining irrigation works was an added inducement to collective farming. Here, collectivization was also a technological necessity, but one which even the republic did not interfere with. What makes these rural collectives important is not only that many of them practiced communism, but that they functioned so effectively under a system of popular self-management. This belies the notion held by so many authoritarian Marxists that economic life must be scrupulously "planned" by a highly centralized state power and the odious canard that popular collectivization, as distinguished from statist nationalization, necessarily pits collectivized enterprises against each other in competition for profits and resources.

In the cities, however, collectivization of the factories, communications systems, and transport facilities took a very different form. Initially nearly the entire economy in CNT-FAI areas had been taken over by committees elected from among the workers and were loosely coordinated by higher union committees. As time went on this system was increasingly tightened. The higher committee began to preempt the initiative to the lower although their decisions still had to be ratified by the workers of the facilities involved. The effect of this process was to tend to centralize the economy of CNT-FAI areas in the hands of the union. The extent to which this process unfolded varied greatly from industry to industry and area to area, and with the limited knowledge we have at hand, generalizations are very difficult to formulate. With the entry of the CNT-FAI into the Catalan government in 1936, the process of centralization continued and the union-controlled facilities became wedded to the state. By early 1938 a political bureaucracy had largely supplanted the authority of the workers' committees in all "republican"-held cities. Although workers' control existed in theory, it had virtually disappeared in fact...

Spanish anarchism is profoundly relevant for our time, and the Spanish Revolution still provides the most valuable lessons in the problem of self-management that we can cull from the past.

To deal with these problems, perhaps I can best begin by saying that there is little, in fact, to criticize in the structural forms that the CNT and the FAI tried to establish. The CNT, almost from the outset, organized its locals as factory rather than craft unions, and the nationwide occupational federations (the *Uniones de oficio*, or "internationals" as we would call them) which emerged with the IWMA were abandoned for local federations (the *Federaciones locales*). This structure situated the factory in the community, where it really belonged if the "commune" concept was to be realistic, rather than in an easily manipulatable industrial network that easily lent itself to statist nationalization. The *centros obreros*, the local federations, the careful mandating of delegates to congresses, the elimination of paid officials, the establishment of regional federations, regional committees, and even a National Committee, would all have been in conformity with libertarian principles had all of these institutions lived up their intentions. Where the CNT structure failed most seriously was in the need to convene frequent assemblies of workers at the local level, and similarly, frequent national and regional conferences to continually reevaluate CNT policies and prevent power from collecting in the higher committees. For as frequent as meetings may have been -- committees, subcommittees, and regional and national committee meetings -- the regular and close communication between workers and the "influential militants" did tend to become ruptured.

Confusion developed over the crucial problem of the locus for making policy decisions. The real place for this process should have been shop assemblies, regular congresses, or when events and circumstances required rapid decisions, conferences of clearly mandated and recallable delegates elected for this purpose by the membership. The sole responsibility of the regional and national committees should have been administrative -- that is, the coordination and execution of policy decisions formulated by membership meetings and conference or congress delegates.

Nevertheless, the structure of the CNT as a syndicalist union and that of the FAI as an anarchist federation was, in many respects, quite admirable. Indeed, my principal criticisms in the pages above have been not so much of the forms themselves, but of the departures the CNT and the FAI made from them. Perhaps even more significantly, I've tried to explain the social limitations of the period -- including the mystique about the classical proletariat -- that vitiated the realization of these structural forms.

Another issue that was a crucial problem for the FAI and which is still a source of confusion for anarchists at the present time is the problem of the "influential militant" -- the more informed, experienced, "strong," and oratorically gifted individuals who tended to formulate policy at all levels of the organization.

It will never be possible to eliminate the fact that human beings have different levels of knowledge and consciousness... The FAI -- illegal by choice, sometimes terrorist in its tactics, and aggressively "macho" in its almost competitive daring -- developed deeply personal ties within its affinity groups... In the FAI both friendship and love were often based on a demanding association, one that implicitly required conformity to the most "heroic" standards established by the most "daring" militants in the group. Such relationships are not likely to shatter over doctrinal disagreements or what often seem like "mere" points of theory. Eventually these relationships produce leaders and led; worse, the leaders tended to patronize the led and finally manipulate them.

To escape this process of devolution, an anarchist organization must be aware of the fact that the process can occur, and it must be vigilant against its occurrence. To be effective, the vigilance must eventually express itself in more positive terms. It cannot coexist with an adulation of violence, competitive daring, and mindless aggressiveness, not to speak of an equally mindless worship of activism and "strong characters." The organization must recognize that differences in experiences and consciousness *do* exist among its members and handle these differences with a wary consciousness -- not conceal them with euphemisms like "influential militant." The taught as well as the teacher must first ask himself or herself whether domination and manipulation is being practiced -- and not to deny that a systematic teaching process is taking place.

Moreover, everyone must be fully aware that this teaching process is unavoidable within the movement if relationships are eventually to be equalized by imparted knowledge and the fruits of experience. To a large extent, the conclusions one arrives about the nature of this process are almost intuitively determinable by the behavior patterns that develop between comrades. Ultimately, under conditions of freedom, social intercourse, friendship, and love would be of the "free-giving" kind that Jacob Bachofen imputed to "matriarchal" society, not the demanding censorious type he associated with patriarchy. Here, the affinity group or commune would achieve the most advanced and libertarian expression of its humanity. Merely to strive for this goal among its own brothers and sisters would qualitatively distinguish it from other movements and provide the most assurable guarantee that it would remain true to its libertarian principles.

Our period, which stresses the development of the individual self as well as social self-management, stands in a highly advantageous position to assess the authentic nature of libertarian organization and relationships... Capitalist institutions must be hollowed out by a molecular historical process of disengagement and disloyalty to a point where any popular majoritarian movement can cause them to collapse for want of support and moral authority. But the kind of development such a change will produce -- whether it will occur consciously or not, whether it will have an authoritarian outcome or one based on self-management -- will depend very much upon whether a conscious, well-organized libertarian movement can emerge.