

# **Affinity and solidarity against victimization and authority**

Monica Caballero, Francisco Solar

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These words come with some delay due to the restrictions on communication in the Spanish extermination centres. On 7<sup>th</sup> March 2017 Mónica and Francisco were finally released to Chile where they were greeted with a huge media spectacle and threats of repression. Today, at last, they are back in the streets with their dignity intact.

In the struggle to break with the system we seek and create forms of relations that are contrary to imposition and authority. Forms that make us feel at ease to realize autonomously, in our proposals and in our acts of daily conflict. With this feeling we understand that affinity is the most appropriate way to relate to one another as anarchists. It's not the result of empty slogans repeated ad nauseam, but shared practices and visions that have helped create lasting relations of brotherhood and comradeship, that go beyond simple friendships.

The trust and interest from feeling and knowing that we share ideas of permanent revolt are the substance and strength of affinity that help build and develop anti-authoritarian practices. These ideas cannot be separated from our choice of life that strengthens what we think and how we act. It is through such relations that we grow individually, are able to act freely avoiding the creation of bureaucratic and authoritarian attitudes and preventing any forming of power.

Critics of this position maintain that it is impossible to have any bearing on 'social reality' with this form and that it turns anarchism into a ghetto. We answer that we don't see anarchism as a political party that uses all kinds of strategies to grow in number so as to achieve hegemony. We believe that means must be consistent with ends, otherwise it would be a contradiction to aspire to total liberation. For us anarchism is not a realisation but a tension where individual initiative plays a central role.

As our period of imprisonment is coming to an end, we can say that we have experienced the birth, consolidation and strengthening of relations of affinity. Our comrades have given meaning to the word 'solidarity', filling us with strength and pride. Overcoming many difficulties, together we have been able to build positions and initiatives from which we have learned a great deal. Even if it might sound repetitive, it was our comrades' will and determination that destroyed the walls, bars, space time, eliminating obstacles of isolation and to communication. We tried and believe we succeeded in establishing relations far from and against assistentialist attitudes where prisoners are seen as 'poor victims of the system who suffer atrocious injustices'. By assuming that, as

anarchists, we are in permanent confrontation with power with all the consequences, we can put active combative solidarity into practice clearly and unequivocally.

The idea – the strength of ‘neither guilty nor innocent, simply anarchist’ is reflected in our positions against prison and repression, both outside and inside the walls. It represents a way of life and being in prison linked to the intransigence that opens endless paths for the comrades in the streets, paths that seek to destroy power without entering its categories and contrary to its predatory logic.

When repression represents an opportunity

The wave of repression that materialized in operations Pandora and Piñata represents the hardest blow inflicted on anarchism in Spain from the 1980s onwards. Their intention was clearly to rapidly eliminate a sector of the anarchist movement through harassment, persecution and prison. Obviously, the magnitude of the State repression had its consequences, it couldn't be otherwise. Many initiatives were interrupted, countless spaces were literally devastated by repressive fury and the fear of being shrouded in the paranoid fantasies of power, all led to a certain immobility which has gradually been overcome.

But, in our opinion, due to the clumsy and inconsistent theory of the police, the attack represents an opportunity to highlight the State's weak points, using the classic strategies of prison and intimidation to reduce and eliminate those who will not be domesticated. Likewise, we think that these operations are strictly linked to the growth of social movements and their absorption into the institutions; those who refuse to play the game of democracy can expect prison. That is why it is important to face the meaning of these blows and the consequent solidarity, to understand that the social movements that have transformed into political parties cannot in any way be our allies; on the contrary they are mechanisms of power with which we have nothing in common.

As has already been said on several occasions, with operations Pandora and Piñata the State tried to attack the ideas and practices that are radically different, as shown by the fact that none of the imprisoned comrades was accused of any concrete actions. What they tried to do was to punish a way of life, the option of a struggle against the established order and permanent anti-authoritarian activity, which in one way or another has influenced many spaces and aspects of the milieu. So continuing along the path of rupture represents a small victory showing that even when the State shows us its worst face, it cannot bend us. In that sense we think that solidarity with imprisoned comrades must necessarily transgress and be offensive, far from pessimism and victimization. The use of all our creativity, limited only by our anarchist principles, is fundamental for reinforcing our solidarity. In the war against dominion all actions are necessary.

Finally, we would like to send all our love and strength to our comrades imprisoned in Germany accused of a bank robbery, who are presently facing a heavy trial. We think of them every instant, and the pride and cheerfulness that they express is also ours, and they can also become your comrades. Now and always, a hand open to comrades, and a clenched fist to the enemy.

Death to the State and long live Anarchy.

**Mónica Cabellero – Francisco Solar**

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