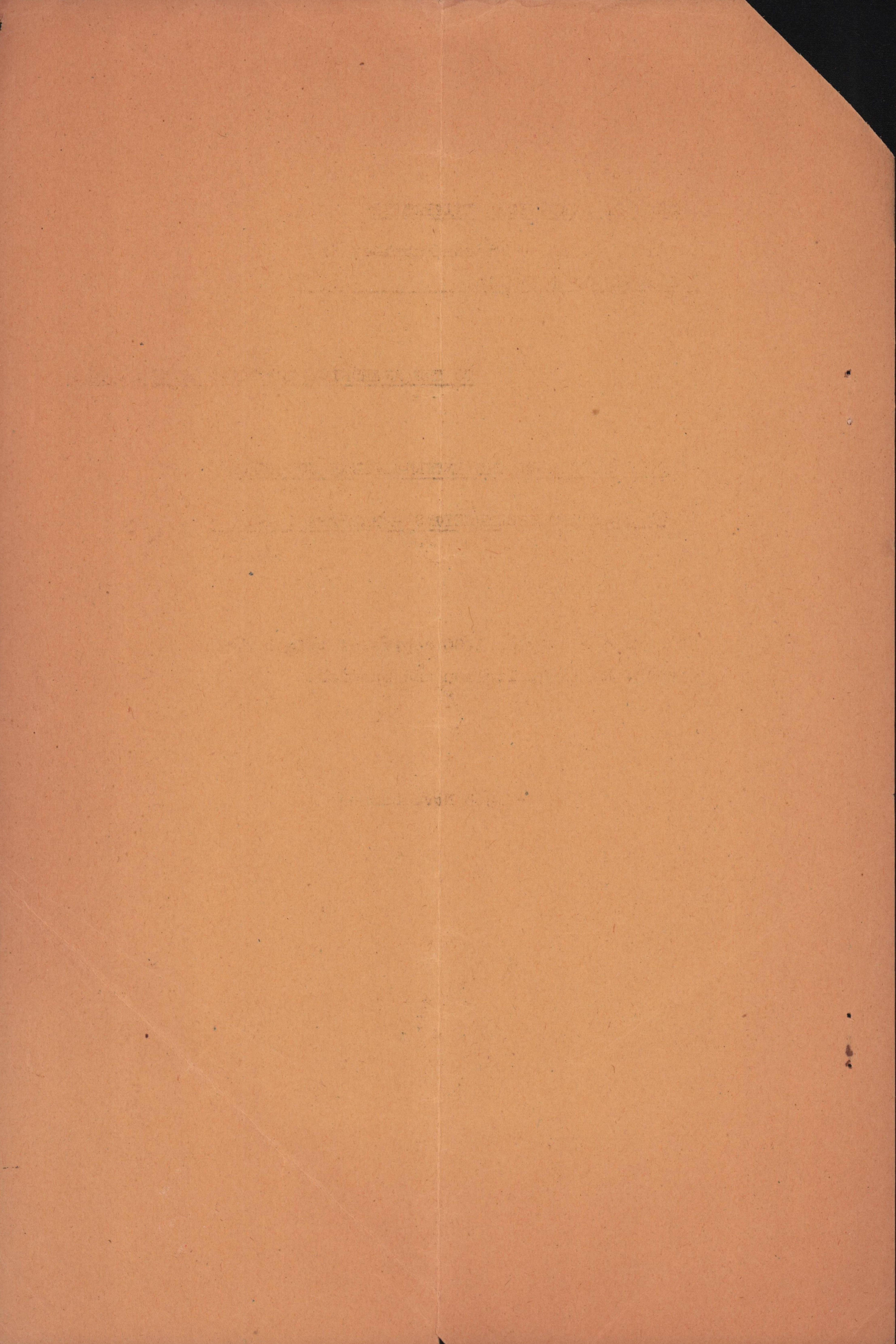


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GROUPS OF ANARCHICAL INITIATIVE

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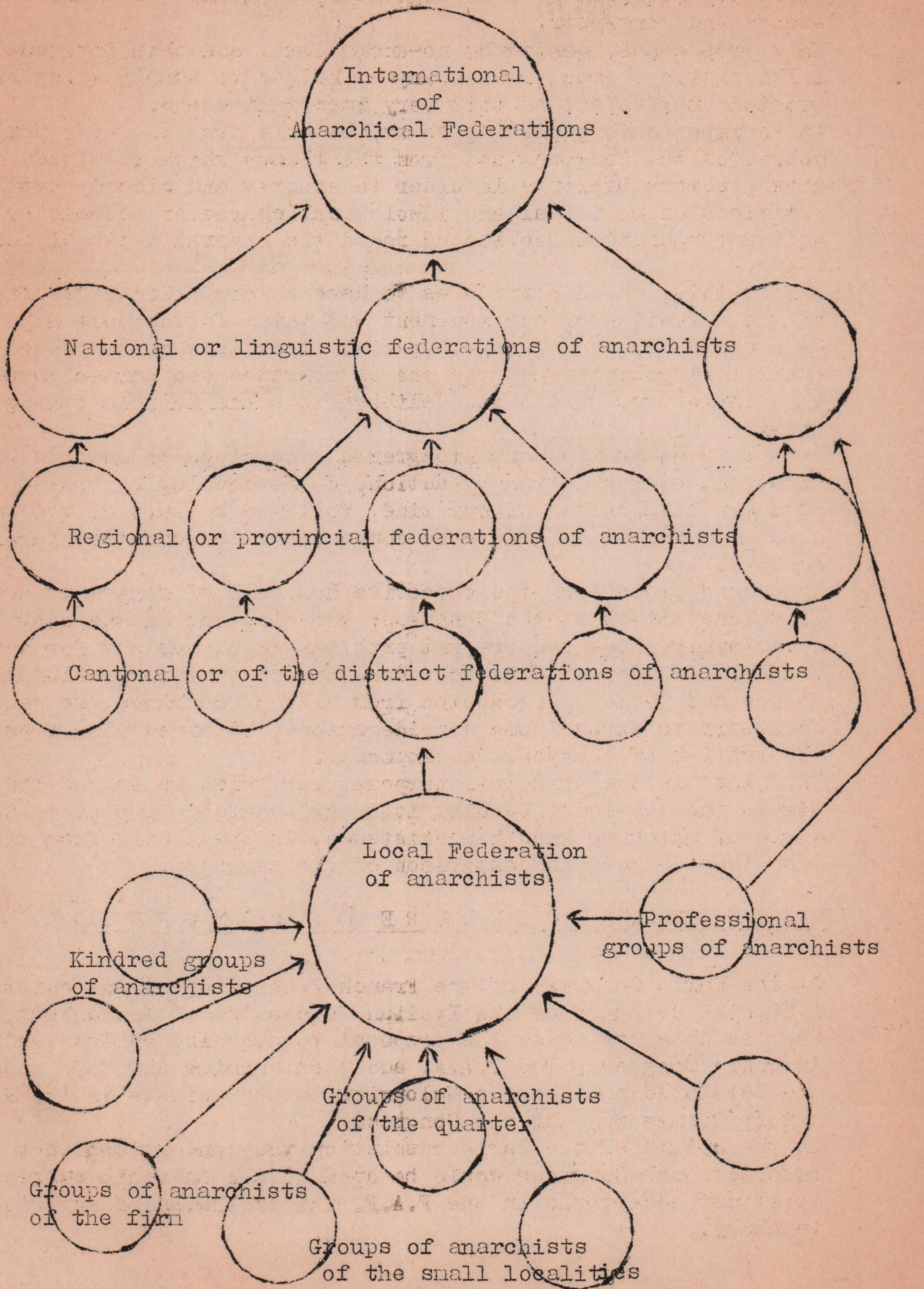
TO THE ANARCHIC_ MOVEMENT OF THE WORLD

OPEN LETTER ON THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

OF ANARCHIC_ FEDERATIONS - CARRARA (1968)

We have cyclostyled 1200 copies of this document in
French, English, Italian and Spanish.

- 1968 November -



The project of the Bulgarian comrade Balkanski : a absurd and ingenuous model of vertical structure.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

The middle-class press of many countries put in result the International Congress of Anarchic Federations which took place at Carrara, the first week of September, pointing out clamorous events and contrasts.

This propaganda, wanted by no-anarchists, and this interest of folkloristic character have anyway helped to supply wrong or distorted impressions of this very important event.

It is important, according to us, because from the very particular course of the Congress and from the theses which resulted, we can draw precious bearings in order to exactly and clearly settle the positions of political and ideological character assumed by the militant anarchists collected round the several national federations.

A fact this, which permits us to have a more precise description of the situation of our movement and which furthermore supplies us a useful and necessary comparison term between our ideological-political position and the one of comrades who participated in the congress or agreed the deliberations and motions sprang from them.

From this comparison our disagreement develops on methods of organization, of revolutionary action, of methodological policy of fundamental problems of our time, followed by part of the anarchic mondial movement (structured component at bureaucratic-hierarchical level).

In second place from the objective analysis of contrasts and discussions arisen at the Congress, and also out of the congress, a certainly alive and present problematic stands out for our movement. In order to aid, as a consequence of this problematic, a serene and usefull discussion from all our comrades, we deem it necessary to expose some considerations, obtained also from the observation of congress developments.

This last is the principal purpose, for which we spread this letter in the movement, sending it to all anarchic groups in the world of which we know the existence, indipendently from the position they assumed in comparison of the congress.

M E E T I N G P R O C E D U R E O F C O N G R E S S

At the Paris Congress of the French Federation of Anarchists, in 1965, the delegate of the Italian Federation of Anarchists, present as observer, made the proposal to organize an International Anarchic Congress. The F.A.F. accepted unanimously this proposal and delegated the comrade Malouvier to participate in the Preparatory Commission of the Congress.

In the spirit of the Paris resolution they understood that the International Congress would be open to all anarchic currents, as it is not acceptable in the F.A.F. the exclusion of any given tendency.

The preparatory commission of congress is constituted at Paris and the Iberic, French, Italian A.F. and the Union of Bulgarian Anarchists into exile participate in it. Guy Malouvier is appointed as secretary of French A.F.

A first international bulletin is issued and addressed to various organizations and individuals (about 100 copies, of which 50 in Europe). The answers and assents at the International Congress are at first very scarce.

At this point a second bulletin is issued by P.C. in which, after noticing a scarce interest in the congress from many organizations, asks to this organizations to be authorized to proceed with the business on the agenda and the month of February 1967 is choised to issue the final agenda. As this decision as been taken on October 1966, only four months were left for the discussion of same (time which was reduced preventing from doing the discussion in many cases, for instance the Italian A.F. informs his militants of the agenda on February 1967, that is at expiry).

In the P.C. the idea makes course, originated at the meeting of 25/7/1966, to restrict the congress only at the national federations and at the meeting of October 24, 1966, the above is put in concrete form with the following bulletin :

" With the proposal to make of this International Congress of Federations a responsible and important meeting, the P.C. asks every national federation to designe a delegation which represents it at the congress. The delegation formed in this way (of any number of representatives) will present itself at the congress with a proxy in which must be written the number and names of delegates designed by its national federation to be represented during the debates. This form of representation is the only valid. The delegation must be handed to the secretary of Congress P.C. the day when works will be started. Only delegation formly delegated will be admitted."

Then the P.C. decides the apparatus of delegations and the concering machine of congress.

But the heaviest decision is the one about the prescription of unic delegation. All the above was decided in the P.C. without delegates consulting the militants of federations they represented. In special way Malouvier, secretary of P.C., put himself in open contrast with the precise mandate he had from F.A.F., which after was compelled to do an extraordinary congress to decide for what concerns the participation at the congress of Carrara, as this assumed an aspect which at the previous congress of Paris was not foreseen.

The first blames to this lines come, in France the Aulnay group writes :

" Here are some ideas which make us believing that an Anarchic Federations Congress is not a good solutions:

The various federations are not necessarily based on the same basis principle.

Why we cannot accept a non-federate group when its positions can be similar to ones of an extranger national federation ? We think there are some discrepancies in the following fact: from one side you say "individuals or groupes who have difficulties with their federation, have to resolve them" and from the other side: "this do not prevent of gathering parallelly or successively a congress open to everybody who deals with the doctrine". Why then the X group who discussed with its federation and who always disappointed, would go to a congress open to everybody after a federations congress ?

We think for the moment being, the essential is to do a meeting of all federate and non federate groupes, in every country. In fact how to put together an Anarchic International basing it only on federations ? We must debate all problems before forming a A.I. It is the logical procedure and not the one which went to form this international between federations and to make afterwards a recall so that they reach it. And if a A.I. between federations shall be not represented the anarchic movement ? "

Always from France, the Sebastien Faure Group of Bordeaux writes to P.C. :

" We should invite to this congress not only all existing federations but also all non-joining groupes or militants, either for this non-ambiguous present activities or for their past; we think to the Noire et Rouge group.....

The anarchic federation chosen for the congress organization, or the preparatory commission, if this is part of its prerogatives, should worry to send invitations to all groupes and anarchic individualities, known in the movements of Italian and Spanish language without any discrimination. "

The meeting procedure of congress resulted from inside the P.C. who took into consideration only the proposals reached from Spanish, Italian and Bulgarian Federations, as well as from some militants of French A.F. partisans of the structuration, whilst it did not attach importance to insistent proposals coming from other groupes, between which the British Federation and of many groupes of F.A.F. itself.

The spanish comrade Quintana writely comments:

"If P.C. should have kept itself in the federalist practice, should have to ask to the international movement if there were or not partisans for a congress. Had also to ask what the international movement was thinking to talk about at the congress with the purpose that from the answers of everybody arose the Agenda.

On the contrary the P.C. pointed out on its account which had to be the Congress characteristics and, sole fact of the Anarchic history, the same issues the agenda before receiving the proposals which were to be reached from every country".

Therefore the P.C., deaf of all voices of disagreement, voices which were favourable to an international congress open to all anarchic militants, put in the agenda, the date and the place

of the congress treatment, conditions of participation, etc., in a final manner.

At the drawing on of the meeting date of the congress, the roster of organizations giving their assent is increasing, but many of them, during the congress, showed to be mysterious.

The British Federation of Anarchists meets the congress still being in disagreement with P.C. and as it could not accept absurd discriminations between the various groups, points out will give hospitality in its delegation to delegates of groupes excluded by the organizers of the congress, which will request it.

The anti-anarchic attitude assumed by P.C. is due overall to the fact that it is given power to discriminate between two or more groupes in a same country, making a preferential choice for that which was more faithful to its structural intentions, choice which automatically brought to the exclusion of other groupes. Then it was foreseeable that same federations had to leave the congress ascertaining in that place was impossible to develop a political speech not being shared by structurers of the international movement.

C O N G R E S S T R E A T M E N T

It is not our intention to do a chronicle of the Congress.

This will be done by the documents which the organizers of the congress will issue with the complete text, we think, of reports and interventions.

We are only interested to take into consideration some particulars moments in the light of what we said in the first part of this document.

Some observations, thence, on the technical part of the congress, that is in the treatment conditions of its works. We must first of all operate a severe separation between the people attending the meeting, dividing them more precisely in active and passive. Actives are the official delegates of the national federations, who only have the right to speak; they by turns present relations on individual points of Agenda and discuss some times the same relations. They only, the official delegates, have thence the right to do the real work.

Passives are instead all comrades of different nationalities who only have the right to be present at the congress, having never the right to speak.

Between the observers some non anarchic fellows have been admitted, whilst a special commission installed at the entry of the place, considers thoroughly the admittance, always as observers, of many known anarchists of movement.

The British delegate, the Swiss delegation and some delegates of the F.A.F. partisans of a congress open to all movement, ascertained the climate in which the congress treatment was developing, were compelled to leave it as they could not compromise from all simpler and fundamental anarchic principles.

The middle-class press wandered long on "incidents" caused by French group, gathered around Cohn-Bendit, showing up an open contrast of ideas and methods between old and young militants. In our opinion the contrast has instead to be more deeply pursued. More than contrast between two generations it is an encounter between two historical experiences; from a part there is the ultra-conservatism of a big part of anarchists, between whom there are the partisans of structure, cut out, as movement, from the heart of social fights; from the other part there are the activism and the spontaneism of the juvenile component of movement, which however still feels a lack of ideological criterion and of analysis. The Congress, tightly delimited to official delegates of represented federations, did not accept a dialogue which was necessary and useful to both components. This, in our opinion, has been a rough error, of which all the movement feels heavily the consequences.

PUBLIC OPINION AND CONGRESS

The anarchism is a serious thing. The advertising new throw, in the way of any commercial product, which has been done of the anarchism at Carrara is not a serious thing.

The advertising apparatus prepared in this way, could effectively obtain this advertising new throw, but the public opinion received information completely distorted on the essence of militant anarchism.

The folkloristic aspect, for the truth, almost non-existent, has been put in first line by the middle-class press.

The fact of wanting to insist, by some people meeting the congress about recalling of fights in Spain, about the trade-union struggles of people of Carrara, about the anarchic "martyrology", provoked a deleterious effect to our movement, for this reason the public opinion has seen anarchists in commonplace of Romanticism, orthodoxy, traditionalism, isolationist puritanism pushed to extreme consequences.

But what is more serious is the most interesting part of public opinion, young people, noticed the lack of a debate which precised the anarchic role in a moment which sees aspirations of men strengthened at a major liberty. A certain mobility of speech failed to congressists, the pressing uptodate problems have been superficially and generically met. The press developed this ideological poverty of congressing for wear and tear of public opinion.

The young militants of every country ^{who} in the last times have been in contact with working mass, who actived students' movements, which have been formed with action, who did not meet the congress as excluded, may be they were the only who had the possibility to bring a vivifying gust of wind which certainly would have shaken public opinion.

O U R C O N C L U S I O N S

We premise a clarification which doubtless is necessary for the militants of anarchic movement which upto now did not contact us, principally for comrades of extra-european continents. Besides the Italian Anarchic Federation (F.A.I.) further groupés of anarchists operate in Italy. Principally there are a lot of self-governing groupés (mostly juvanile) and the Groupés of Anarchic Initiative (G.I.A.), these last are the underwriters of the present document.

The G.I.A. are a whole of groupés which get out from F.A.I. at Carrara congress (1965) when inside of this federation the structural current prevailed which wanted to impose an organizing form in open contrast with the principles of anarchic associationism. In short, the essential points of dissent were the following: who joins F.A.I. must accept an "associative pact" which fixes a bureaucratic and binding programming, in open contrast with the principle of free associationism and of authonomy in association. The "associative pact" grants C. di C. (Commission of Correspondence) of F.A.I., so extended powers and controls that it results to be in a position, at least potentially, to exert a function of guide for militants which constitute the basis.

Placed the above, G.I.A. and many other autonomous groupés, disagreeing from F.A.I., consider themselves continuators of anarchic associationism, which grants all militants absolute freedom of initiative and full authonomy of action, that in the constant and fraternal research of all contacts which results useful and necessary for development of common activities.

According to us, anarchism is conceivable as a prism of many faces, for which reason the cohabitation and comprehension between comrades of many tendencies should be possible. Then we can but reject discriminations which have been operated for the purpose to bring the international congress of Carrara on that positions which the structurers had already in advance programmed.

The observers have been almost unanimous in recognizing that at Carrara the most part of "official delegates" just validates positions which were already in advance pre-established by the organizers of congress, whilst further delegates who wished to discuss them, seen the uselessness of their efforts preferred leaving the congress.

We invite the comrades to compare this congress with the ones which preceeded, from the one of Saint Imier. The congress of Carrara is certainly the sole which assumed such an intransigent and sectarian aspect. The exclusivism and dogmatism which accompanied deliberations and motions are mostly worrying for our movement. We have the net impression that the platform of Arscinov, which provoked so many polemics, has been revived at Carrara. The International of anarchic federations is now (at least on the paper) an accomplished fact. It doesn't matter if everything has been sacrificed, if the true anarchism, which is parallel theory and action, has been nulled !

In the second page we report the absurd structural scheme of the bulgarian comrade Balkanski. We wonder if it clashed with the International new created, in which case it would be only a tragicomic institution.

Please note that as a general principle we have nothing to object on the constitution of an Anarchic International determining the endeavour to favour more narrow and regular contacts between movements of different language. But if from this International are excluded already from the beginning considerable groupes of the anarchic movement, between which the younger and more fighting parts, the International cannot but reduce itself to a true nonsense, a declining shade of past years.

A point of which we are particularly interested to take in examination is the taking up a position of the congress towards the Marxism.

The usual high-sounding voices of condemnation of dictatorial state rose, but a dreadful ideological poverty has been also noted. In fact a deepened analysis of inside differentiations and of symptoms of marxism's crisis is completely lacking, which crisis has been overall generated by a ever-increasing anarchic mentality in young people.

The congress instead limited itself to rebate a general and dogmatic excommunication demonstrating to be anchored to past times. For instance the french delegates who remained at the congress, confirmed their loss of introduction, with a political discourse concrete and adherent to days of May in France, in the political reality of our days.

This criticism is extensible also to other organizations, as the fantomatic and ultra-structural Union of Bulgarian into exile and the Iberic Anarchic Federation, whilst all those people who could bring a remarkable contribution, either political or of direct experiences, were not present (i.e. the french young anarchists and F.I.J.L.)

In fact, in our opinion, it is indisputable that the taking up a position of anarchists towards dogmatic marxism must be decided, clear and never go down to any compromise, but it is furthermore indisputable that anarchists would sin of excessive dogmatism and then of fideismo if they put in condition to refuse any sort of dialogue with young marxist militants.

In fact whilst it is evident that the anarchic action must necessarily tend to hit the bureaucracy of party and syndacalist bureaucrats, who represent a kind of bearing between monopolistic groupes and working and rustic masses, it is furthermore clear it would be anti-historical and definitely anti-anarchic to castle on stiff frontiers which really would exclude the anarchism from global dispute which is putting in crisis either the marxism of bureaucrats or the catholicism of ecclesiastic hierarchies.

Therefore, considering that principle of absolute liberty, we deem it essential the anarchic presence makes itself known to every social level with the precise intent to make the masses aware and conscious in order to reach the result to push them on

a ground of anarchic fight. It is then necessary that anarchists insert themselves in any social and cultural claim and that they create the necessary presuppositions so that the action passes from the hands of bureaucrats who always deprive them of contents to will of free meetings.

It is then precise duty of anarchist to not devalue, naturally with all the due cautions, all that movements which, really moving on a anarchic ground, offer the possibility of a dialogue which develops always more out of the system.

Therefore the anarchists, if they do not want to be overcome from the dispute, owing to preconceived ultra-conservatism of determined currents which seem to live in a kind of historical catharsis, must take that initiative which tends to convoy on the plan of common research the today's contesters of the dictatorial system. Then, considering that value of anarchic spontaneism, it is undoubt every anarchic ultra-conservatism must be condemned, it remaining of fact on anti-anarchic and then anti-humanitarian positions.

The International which derived from the congress of Carrara is born on ideological closed and dogmatic basis, then it is destined to permanent immobility.

Anarchism is not structure, is not ultra-conservatism, it is over all action and continuous research of a way which brings humanity out of foreconstituted schemes, out of any tracing path, towards a new world where a man is really arbiter of his own destiny.

Groupes of Anarchic Initiative