

RSSF

The only surprising feature of the RSSF founding conference was that despite the endless succession of arid speeches, and the generally barren and hostile atmosphere, very few people left in despair before the end. Why?

The explanation seems to be that we saw, however belatedly, that the joyful playing in the streets of the world, culminating of course in the demolition of the reality principle on French barricades, made real the aspirations which for many of us had become simply part of a ritual. However limited their relevance to our own situation, these events have made us feel a need for greater communication and exchange of information and ideas between us. There is no need we feel for yet another hierarchical and bureaucratic 'organisation', as much a part of the spectacle as the power it seeks to oppose, existing for its members as a reified object (rather than subject, their collective will) in which the stated goals become divorced from individuals. In this situation RSSF would become utterly meaningless to its members and any participation would be routinised rather than being free and positive activity. We feel, therefore, that any structure should be strictly limited to what is seen by members to be absolutely necessary to communication etc.

A further danger arises in 'elitism', that is, while we can all agree that we don't want 'personalities', there is a danger that the media, if they bother to take notice of RSSF at all (and 'it is to be doubted if there will be any reason why they should, apart from their own paranoia) will impose leaders or 'central committees' on us. This has certainly been the continental experience. Too frequent set-piece conferences could also encourage this tendency, since some people who are more articulate tend to dominate them.

In sum, hierarchies and central committees divert revolutionary activity from its proper goals, by creating irrelevant conflicts, over, e.g., 'control' of the 'organisation', and by becoming objects of activity in themselves. 'The final goal is everything' (R. Luxemburg) The need for revolution is not attendant on committees.

We have been disturbed, if hardly surprised, by an unmistakable trend towards hierarchy and unnecessary centralisation on the part of NCC over the summer. For instance we are alarmed to read such things as "So and so to make flag and present to next NCC meeting" and to find that a central recruitment leaflet is deemed necessary, and on the initiative of a small majority of the NCC the date of the conference has been moved from that agreed to by the June conference (ie coinciding with the VSC October mobilisation) to 8/9 November. Some members of NCC seem to have been assuming both autonomy for themselves and a definite organisational identity for RSSF. This may have been because most of us were away, but we feel that the conference must decisively reject these tendencies

Specifically we would make the following suggestions.

- 1) RSSF should have no identity over and above its constituent groups. Therefore there should be (a) NO corporate symbols (the ridiculous idea of an RSSF flag should be thrown out as swiftly as possible: any flags, banners, etc, should be made locally.
(b) NO 'line' or centrally imposed political strategy and objectives, beyond the original terms of reference.
(c) NO press statements. An attitude of aggressive non-cooperation to be taken.
(d) NO centrally edited newspaper 'articulating in a lively and principled way (SIC!!!) the political objectives and strategy of RSSF' (to quote from NCC minutes).
- 2) RSSF can best fulfill its function of facilitating communication between groups as follows (a) office to which any individual or group would send news sheets documents etc. These would be collected, stapled together, and sent out to all members at least once a fortnight. The wishes of the authors of documents with respect to length, content (we are worried by the statement in NCC minutes that 'facetious documents would not be facilitated' -- who defines facetious??), availability for circulation, would be respected. Office telephone should be manned at certain times each day.
(b) contact telephone in each region with the number known to all members
(c) Coordinating committee. Absolutely no legislative power. All meetings to be open, and to serve as much as anything else as informal get-togethers. Specifically, the coordinating committee would:-
 - maintain supply of membership cards and lists of members etc
 - ensure maintenance and efficient running of the office.
 - arrange booking of hall for the next conference (date to be decided at this one)
 - coordinate assistance for new or small branches.We should explore ways of obtaining membership control over decisions taken by the NCC. Obviously events like demonstrations should be called by individual groups.
(d) Conference Emphasis on reports of activities of the various groups.

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, seen in their specific context. We hope that no future
conference will degenerate into the sterility of the
last one. A minimum of decisions to be taken. The
conference could be supplemented by dances, events,
etc.

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