

# *THE IDEA OF GOOD GOVERNMENT*

by **Errico Malatesta**

None can judge with certainty who is right and who is wrong, who is nearest the truth, or which is the best way to achieve the greatest good for each and everyone. Freedom, together with experience, is the only way of discovering the truth and what is best; and there can be no freedom if there is the denial of the freedom to make mistakes.

But when one talks of freedom politically, and not philosophically, nobody thinks of the abstract person who exists outside the cosmic and social environment and who, like some god, can do what they wish in the absolute sense of the word.

When one talks of freedom one is speaking of a society in which no one could force or stop their fellow beings without meeting with strong resistance, in which, above all, nobody could seize and use the collective force to impose their wishes on others and on the very groups which are the source of power.

Human's are not perfect, agreed. But this is one reason more, perhaps the strongest reason, for not giving anyone the means to "put the brakes on individual freedom."

Human's are not perfect. But then where will one also find people who are not only good enough to live at peace with others, but also capable of controlling the lives of others in an authoritarian way? And assuming that there were, who would elect them? Would they force themselves? But who would protect them from the resistance and the violence of the "criminals"? Or would they be chosen by the "sovereign people", which is considered too ignorant and too wicked to live in peace, but which suddenly gets all the necessary good qualities when it is a question of asking it to choose its rulers?

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