

The World Scene from the Libertarian Point of View

Free Society Group of Chicago

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Late in 1948 the Free Society Group of Chicago decided to mark its quarter of a century of existence by issuing a pamphlet expressing the comments of comrades in various countries about the world scene, as viewed in the light of libertarian philosophy. Request for articles to carry out this purpose were sent to a select list of writers.

Publication of such a symposium was planned for the early part of 1949, but for several reasons, which we need not go into here, its issuance was delayed until now. Yet it will be found that the articles contained herein generally have quite as much point as if they had been published at the intended time—for world conditions today, except for the greater tension caused by the war in Korea, are but little different from what they were then. And the Free Society Group feels that these commentaries have definite historical value.

Our cherished comrade G. P. Maximoff (whose untimely death on March 16, 1950, was an irreparable loss to the Libertarian movement throughout the world), was a prime mover in the planning of this pamphlet—hence it is fitting to dedicate it to his memory.

The Free Society Group takes this occasion to extend its cordial thanks for financial and moral support given to it by the Freie Arbeiter Stimme Group of Detroit, Michigan; the Washington, D.C., Group; the Russian Group of New York; Kropotkin Branch 413, Workmen's Circle, Los Angeles; the Boris Yelensky Sixtieth Jubilee Committee, Chicago; and many individual comrades throughout the country.

Especially do we want to thank Carl Goldberg of Chicago for faithful fulfilment of the last wish of his mother, Celia Goldberg, who died on April 25, 1949. By virtue of that wish, expressed orally and not in a written will, her whole estate was generously given to the Free Society Group and the Industrial Workers of the World. With deep affection and gratitude we salute the memory of Celia Goldberg, who for many years was a valiant and uncompromising fighter for freedom and liberty.

The State of the World, by G. P. Maximoff

EDITOR'S NOTE: Comrade Maximoff intended to write an article for these pages, with the title above, but unfortunately that article was never written. He was about to begin typing it on the very day of his death; and had typed the title on the opening page. When preparing to do any writing, Maximoff invariably made numerous notes, of ideas resulting from his widespread reading and observations of the actions, good or evil, of mankind. And the notes which appear below are those which he meant to develop in the article he planned for this pamphlet.

My fatherland is Liberty. Its enemies are my enemies. All my burning sympathy for the victim changes into equally burning hatred when the victim turns oppressor.

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There is no such thing as academic freedom. There is only one thing by that name: Freedom. Freedom is indivisible and belongs to all. Hence it cannot be taken from some without being lost by all. The citizen, so long as he is one who carries out all of his obligations, must also be granted all of his rights. For there are no rights without obligations, just as there can be no obligations without rights.

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Communism and Capitalism both teach the masses not to respect, but disdain, freedom. Both, when they speak of freedom, view it as freedom for themselves, for their party, sect, or clique, and thus alienate the masses of the people ever farther from the concepts of humanism, tolerance, and respect for man and his freedom. The struggle between those two mad actors, both of whom belong in a lunatic asylum, drags mankind ever more deeply into a state of stupor.

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The world is still too big a morsel for any one power to chew and swallow.

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If the struggle between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. is ideological, then, we want no part of it. Both ideologies are repugnant to us and contrary to the interests of the toiling masses. So much for the theory. Practically, however, we are forced to take sides in this struggle. Many of us will lose their ideological bearings and their integrity. But since we cannot destroy both warring factions simultaneously, and in the absence of a third force—an organized, independent working class—we have only this alternative: to sit by passively (an attitude which neither camp will

permit), or side with those whose victory will give us our best chance to unite the proletariat and overthrow the victors. That side, strange as it may seem, is the capitalist bourgeoisie, not the Communist dictatorship represented by a new class of bureaucrats. Such is the paradox of history.

Society must be so organized that its development cannot be diverted into channels for the enrichment of a few privileged oligarchs.

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Contemporary States appear, when their substance is closely examined, as Communist-type organizations, but perverted in the highest degree. Formally the State, as represented by the government, fulfills the functions of the topmost organ of the national commune: it enforces taxation (i.e., demands that each member contribute a certain amount of his labor for the common good) for education, sanitation, hospitals, medical aid, road construction, street lighting, public monuments, gardens, forests, parks, safety provisions, and defense from foreign aggression. But, government being in the hands of the strong, it establishes privileges and economic inequality, and fosters abuses of public funds; it prevents the population from taking direct part in its business and forces it to fight wars defending the interests of the wealthy. For the sake of these interests also, it perpetuates poverty, barring complete communism and complete liberty.

In theory a free Communist State is possible, if its government be truly a people's government. In practice, however, it is not realizable, for its organization is such that a minority regime is immediately established—a minority politically as well as economically. As a result, its communism or collectivism inescapably degenerates into serfdom, which takes the form not of forced labor, but of taxes for the people and profits for the privileged.

To realize those collectivist principles that are fundamental to the State concept, it is essential to change the form of community organization—to replace the State with a national commune which would be the end-result of a federative unification of local communes. The direct, universal, equal, secret vote should be applicable only to the lower organs.

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Literacy is neither education nor knowledge. It is only a technical means, a key, which not everybody knows how to use.

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The bourgeoisie entered the nineteenth century with a great deal of noise: with revolutions and guillotines, with the wars of Napoleon I and his victories. Behind it, in overalls, marched Socialism, only to be dealt with harshly in 1848 and 1871 by a bourgeoisie which thought itself strong enough to kill Socialism. It did not succeed in that, but it tamed the Socialists—forbidding them to do all that it had done before. Replacing kings and feudal lords, the bourgeoisie provided itself with a Parliament, in which it alone was to be represented, and called its dictatorship democracy; its government—the people's government; its laws—the peoples laws; its interests—national interests. By the end of the century the triumph of the bourgeoisie was complete and decisive. Nation followed nation in accepting its form of government, its economy, its philosophy, even those who were the objects of its rule and exploitation.

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“Progress,” wrote Spencer, “is not accidental but inevitable.” That is not true. Progress is an accident which has become not inevitable, but a function of Nature and social organization.

The bourgeoisie—through its departments of science, philosophy, industry, and trade—has generated forces which, while utilizing the achievements of those departments, aim to build new foundations and throw new light on science, philosophy, morals, industry, and trade, and then relegate the bourgeoisie itself to the museum of archaeology and paleontology. That is Socialism.

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The political centralization of kings, inherited by the bourgeoisie, has been perfected by the latter and augmented by economic centralization in the form of concentration of the means of production in monopolies. Monopolies, in their turn, when inherited by Socialism, combine in one centralized agency—the State.

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What is happening today is similar to what took place in the nineteenth century under the influence of the French Revolution. Then the bourgeoisie replaced the aristocracy politically by forcing an equalization of political rights and the substitution of autocracy by parliamentarianism. Today the bourgeoisie is being replaced by the proletariat, i.e., by a bureaucracy of the proletariat. In the field of economics it is being replaced by State monopolies.

The bourgeoisie is not only being replaced, but physically destroyed as a class; hence its parliamentarianism is displaced by dictatorship. Dictatorship, in turn, directs its blows at both the bourgeoisie and the working class, because the latter opposes the creation of a new bureaucratic class, the purpose of which is enforcement of State serfdom. Just as the bourgeoisie permitted outsiders no participation in the affairs of state, so the bureaucracy allows them no part. And while on the surface it gives itself the appearance of a democratic set-up, in reality it steadily strengthens its dictatorial hold on the whole population, leveled before it in enslavement and defenselessness.

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Is it permissible to arrest life? Certainly not. Life takes its normal course and states its demands. Yet the Socialists, who strive for power and gain it, wish to arrest life: they ask the working masses for patience, endurance, and deprivation and utter submission. They are incensed when those masses refuse to turn guinea pigs and submit to a system of vivisection which is, however, a prime condition for the success of State Socialism.

Anarchism does not demand this because, unlike a political party, it makes no promises of well-being, but calls instead for joint teamwork by all, from bottom to top, to achieve this well-being. The organizational form of society under our program would be such that, while it might be far from perfect, it would guarantee by its nature (rather than by police force) the peaceful realization of its aims of common welfare and an ever-expanding freedom. Here all would work and none merely make promises. Without free, equal labor which leaves room for solidarity and initiative, neither freedom nor material welfare can be achieved. And he who maintains the opposite is a hypocrite, scoundrel, or exploiter who seeks power for himself and slavery for others.

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France lives on the last pennies of her great past. But if she should fail to find in herself soon the enthusiasm, power, and sweep, for daring new ideas equal to those of her forefathers, she will find herself in a home for the aged.

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Revolutions occur not in the name of future generations.

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Subsidies are granted for the development of one or another branch of industry and its protection from foreign competition. Subsidies also are granted to curtail output of certain products, so as to maintain their price level and to encourage export.

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How can you flee reason when, without it, you could not even come to its opposite?

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The danger is not in the laws and regulations against liberty, but in society's state of mind, its psychological readiness to accept these limitations and aid in their enforcement. Slavery's strength is not in the chains, but in their moral acceptance and justification by the slaves themselves.

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Nationalism cannot be abolished; it can only be shaken off in a life of close co-operation.

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Money in Russia takes the place of ration cards. Its purchasing power depends on arbitrary decisions. When a citizen has a ration card for a pound of bread and is unable to get it from the distributor, he blames the authorities; if he has insufficient money for that pound of bread he seeks additional work. The function of money is exchange and accounting in the home market alone. The Soviet government has shown no interest in seeing the ruble stabilized and quoted in the international market. This would be unprofitable, making the continued unmerciful exploitation of the people impossible. Internally, money is the State's most lucrative trade.

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We live in an era of enormous changes, some fast and spectacular, others slow and unnoticed—yet equally important. Owing to those changes the world is divided—economically, politically, and geographically—into Capitalism and State Socialism (the latter being forced on the capitalists by events) and, between them, the remnants of feudalism and even primitivism. So it is important to characterize not only Capitalism, as was sufficient up to the time of the Russian Revolution, but also State Capitalism (State Socialism.)

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Commercial Feudalism: Each country surrounding itself by high walls of tariff, like feudal barons of long ago.

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There is infinitely more poverty and unhappiness in the world than satisfaction and joy.

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Now that the State extends ever farther its economic activities, having become direct owner of individual concerns and entire branches of industry, thus going into full partnership with Capitalism, the workers can see the State more clearly, not only as the oppressor and defender of exploiters, but as the boss himself. The State is the most malicious of exploiters, outranking all who come before it, including the feudal lords, because it concentrates in its hands moral, economic, legislative, judicial, and executive powers, placing itself above mortal despots and immortal gods. It is a combination of preacher, teacher, boss, legislator, judge, and policeman. As a result, it is now easier to reveal to the workers the true nature of the State, if we clarify its economic role and emphasize the fact that that role remains unchanged whatever its origin: the general vote or revolution.

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So far the history of human society has been a process of exchanging one ruling class for another—never the elimination of classes. In a given historical situation one class removes another from power, or forces it to share its powers and privileges, or, as the Bolsheviki have done, physically destroys the ruling class and fills its place entirely with the offspring of industrial workers, peasants, and intelligentsia, who form a new ruling class—a bureaucracy which continues the work of its predecessors which means the oppression and exploitation of the masses of the people.

Pondering these facts leads to the conclusion that power in human society is inevitable, as it cannot be destroyed. The paramount task confronting all honest men and women is to achieve the transfer of power to a class which would unfailingly serve the best interests of the great majority of mankind.

Social Rights and Freedoms: Their Vital Worth to us, by Rudolf Rucker

It has long been a truism that the social rights and liberties which we have inherited from former generations and which we now exercise freely, have lost their original meaning for most people. As a rule one cherishes only that which one has attained through personal struggle, forgetting all too readily the historic significance of the achievements made by others in previous eras, by dint of costly sacrifices. Were this not the case, we could not account for the great periodic relapses which occur in human evolution and progress. All the social gains won in the past, from the most ancient days to the present, would then be drawn, if shown on a chart, on a constantly ascending line, unbroken by occasional reactions.

It is only when such dearly won rights have become the prey of an unbridled reaction that we begin to realize how precious they were to us, and how poignantly their loss affects us. The present epoch and the shattering events of the most fearful catastrophe in the history of all nations, have taught us a lesson in this respect which cannot be easily misunderstood, and which should spur us all to sober reflection on the subject.

There was a time when supposed revolutionaries embraced the notion that drastic repression must necessarily generate counter-pressure of like intensity among the people, thus accelerating the cause of general liberation. This delusion, which could spring only from blind dogmatism, is still very much in vogue and constitutes one of the greatest perils in the path of all social movements. Such a concept is not only basically false, with no historical justification; what is worse, it tends to pave the way for every phase of intellectual and social reaction. For it is difficult to assume that people who have allowed themselves to be robbed of any of their bitterly-fought-for rights and freedoms, will exhibit burning energy in battling to achieve full human rights.

The irrational idea that political and social liberties possess no value for us so long as the system under which we live has not been completely removed, is equivalent to acceptance of Lenin's sophistical statement that "Freedom is merely a bourgeois prejudice." Yet those who would make this point of view their own must, if they are to be consistent, regard as purposeless all the rights won through past revolutions and great popular movements; moreover, they would be obliged to embrace a new absolutism which, in its inevitable effects, is far worse than the monarchical absolutism of previous centuries.

None of the rights and liberties that we enjoy today in more or less democratic countries were ever granted to the peoples by their governments as a voluntary gift. Not even the most liberal regime confers rights and freedoms upon a nation on its own initiative; it does so only when the resistance of the people can no longer be ignored. This holds good not only for Europe, but all countries on all continents; and not merely for any given period but for all historical eras.

The revolutions in Switzerland and the Netherlands against the tyranny of the Austrian and Spanish dynasties respectively; the two English revolutions against absolute monarchy, the revolt of the American colonies against oppression by the mother country, the great French Revolution

with its reverberations throughout Europe, the revolutionary events of 1848-49, the uprising of the Paris Commune in 1871 and the Cantonal Revolution in Spain in 1873, as well as the Russian Revolution during the First World War prior to the ascendancy of Bolshevism and its degeneration into a counter-revolution, the so-called *Dictatorship of the Proletariat*; the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 and the awakening of the “colonial nations”—all these events of historic scope have kept society in a state of internal ferment for centuries, creating the prerequisites for a new social evolution which, though frequently interrupted by reactionary relapses, yet serve to direct our lives along new paths. And these events likewise made the people of many nations increasingly aware of their elemental rights and zealous for preserving their own dignity, with the result that the horizon of our personal and collective rights and liberties has widened to a degree which would have been unthinkable under royal absolutism.

Without the French Revolution and its powerful reverberations in nearly all the countries of Europe, the outstanding mass movements of our time, the wide dissemination of democratic and socialistic ideas, and the development of the modern labor movement, the aspirations of which have left an indelible imprint upon history—none of these would have been possible; for it was the rights and freedoms established through that epic rising that prepared the soil upon which these new concepts could grow and flourish.

No one understood this fundamental truth better than Michael Bakunin when, in the stormy period of 1848-49, he sought to win over the Slavic nations of the East in favor of the revolution and to persuade them to join in an alliance with Western democracy, to smash the three remaining citadels of royalist absolutism in Europe—Russia, Austria, and Prussia. For he sensed rightly that the continuing existence of these last strongholds of unlimited despotism constituted the greatest existing danger to the development of freedom on that continent, and that these powers would constantly try to work toward a reversion to the days of the Holy Alliance. This attempt by Bakunin—ending in failure as it did—appears all the more significant since Marx and Engels themselves could think of nothing better than to advocate, in the *Rheinische Zeitung*, the extermination of all Slavic peoples except the Poles, even going so far as to deny to those nations generally any inner need for higher cultural attainment.

Human beings never resort to open resistance solely for the joy of it. Revolutions break out only when every other possible recourse has been exhausted, and when the blind inflexibility and mental myopia of the ruling classes leave no alternative. Revolutions create nothing new in themselves; they merely clear the path of obstacles and help bring to fruition already existing germs of new concepts. Every form of freedom gained through struggle possesses inestimable importance; it becomes a base for further progress, a stepping stone on the road to general emancipation. Even the most minor privilege and the meagerest freedom may have to be bought at the cost of heavy sacrifice; and to discard such treasure without a fight means playing into the hands of reaction and perhaps giving a fresh lease of life to the barbarism of times long past.

Even in democratic countries few individuals remember what such men as Chaptal, Tocqueville, Gournay, Turgot, Goyot, Buret, and so many others have taught those who would read or listen about the economic and social conditions of the old absolutist regime; indeed, these are things of which the predominant majority of our contemporaries have but the faintest idea. This ignorance of the era which preceded the French Revolution is largely responsible for the relative unconcern with which so many persons today view the overhanging menace of the totalitarian state and for the ease with which others accept the tenets of the new absolutism as the only alternative to the prevailing social chaos.

The system of royal absolutism constituted an hierarchy organized unto the minutest detail, and one to which every concept of personal freedom and equal rights was completely alien. Every individual was assigned his niche in society, a decision in which he had no voice at all. Only the thin stratum of the ruling classes enjoyed extensive privileges, while the broad masses of people had no rights whatever. The overwhelming majority of the rural population was bound to the soil which, as serfs, the living property of the feudal barons, they were never permitted to leave. Any attempt to escape from that servitude through flight was punished by savage corporal punishment or death.

This system, which held most of Europe in its grip until the outbreak of the French Revolution, not only deprived the mass of subjects of every form of human right, but through an endless and exacting supervision of every phase of human activity, it stifled all economic and social progress. A veritable mountain of royal decrees, ordinances, and regulations, precluded every possibility of improving or accelerating the process of production through new inventions or other innovations.

Rigid working methods were prescribed for every artisan, and no deviation from these was tolerated. State commissions fixed not only the length and width of the cloth, but also the number of threads which had to be woven into the fabric. The tailor was told exactly how many stitches he could make in seeing a sleeve into a coat; the shoemaker how many stitches were required to sew a sole on a boot. Hatmakers in France were obliged to comply with more than sixty different regulations in the manufacture of a single hat. Dyers were permitted to employ only officially specified woods in dyeing fabrics. Every manufacturer had to abide by regulations of this sort, with the result that in France, as well as in most other European countries, production methods at the outbreak of the Revolution differed little from those in effect a century before.

Spies were planted in every workshop. An army of officials maintained a close surveillance over factories, looking with eagle eyes for the slightest breach of the rules. All products which deviated in the slightest degree from the prescribed norm were confiscated or destroyed and stiff penalties were imposed on the offenders. In many instances the worker thus found "guilty" suffered the mutilation of his hands, and in others a brand was burnt into his face with an iron. In cases of severe infractions a culprit might be delivered over to the hangman and his workshop and equipment destroyed.

Very often additional ordinances were enacted merely for the purpose of extorting money from the guild master. The regulations were so sweeping and so preposterous that, even with the best of will, complete compliance was impossible. In such contingencies there was no recourse for the guild masters but to pay heavy bribes for the rescinding of especially oppressive ordinances. Extortions of this nature were by no means exceptional; on the contrary, they became increasingly common as the rulers avidly seized upon every conceivable device to fill the coffers of their treasuries, drained by years of profligate spending by the royal courts.

When Louis Blanc and various other historians of the Great Revolution relate that, after the abolition of this colossal burden of idiotic decrees, ordinances, and regulations, men felt as if they had been liberated from some mammoth prison, they simply are stating a fact. Only through complete elimination of those endless obstructions was it made possible to bring about a radical transformation of economic and social conditions. This transformation having come, a fertile soil was created for hundreds of useful inventions which formerly never would have seen the light of day. And incidentally, that fact provides irrefutable proof of the fallacy of the Marxian precept that the form of the State is determined by the mode of production in existence at a

given time. Actually it was not the conditions of production which gave rise to royal absolutism; rather, it was the system of absolutism which for more than two centuries forcibly prevented any improvement in the methods of production and thus paralyzed any tendency toward their modernization.

With the disappearance of the feudal order, however, not only were the possibilities of improvement in social production altered and enhanced, but the political and social institutions of various nations changed to nil extent that one scarcely could have imagined prior to that turning point. Feudal bondage, which hitherto had shackled men with iron fetters to the soil, and had imposed on each a mandatory occupation, was replaced by the right of freedom of movement, choice of domicile, and the privilege of choosing the occupation for which one thought himself best fitted.

The draconic punishments meted out for even slight disregard for regulations, frequently after confessions forced from the victims through torture, were supplanted by new concepts of justice which stemmed from the Revolution and which were more in accord with the dictates of humanity. Once it had been possible for members of the privileged classes to have their enemies buried alive in one of Europe's countless bastilles by the simple device of preparing a *Lettre de Cachet*. But now the lately won civil rights guaranteed that every accused person be arraigned before a judge within a specified period of time. He had to be informed of the charge against him, and he had to be given the right of counsel.

To us, who perhaps have never met with any different type of administration of justice, these safeguards may appear commonplace; yet there was a time when they did not exist, and it was only through prodigious sacrifices that they came into being.

Along with these human rights there evolved, gradually and by virtue of incessant struggle, the right to freedom of expression in speech and writing, freedom of assemblage, and the right to organize, as well as other gains. One need but recall in this connection the severe sacrifices that were necessary to bring about abolition of the hated institution of censorship, or the bitter conflict that the workers in England and France had to wage for the right to organize, to appreciate properly these rights. It is true that all such rights and freedoms have meaning only so long as they remain alive in the consciousness of the people, and so long as people are ready to defend them against any reaction. But this very fact should impel us all the more to uphold them and to keep a sense of their vital importance fresh in the public mind.

There are individuals who consider themselves extremely radical when they assert that such rights already have lost their significance, if for no other reason than that they have been embodied in the constitutions of various nations; that, at the most, they are trivial accomplishments which have not brought us a single step nearer to social emancipation. Whoever holds that opinion is rather hopeless; for thus he demonstrates that he has learned nothing from the devastating experiences of the recent past.

The point to be stressed here is not just that these rights are incorporated in constitutions, but rather that governments were compelled to guarantee them as a result of pressure from the masses. If such forms of freedom were in reality so meaningless, reactionaries all over the world hardly would have gone to the trouble to abolish or curtail them whenever they had opportunity, as we have seen them do in so many European countries in the last decade.

But to dismiss all political and social betterment as *insignificant* is absurd, if for no other reason than because we would then have to brand as worthless all attempts on the part of the laboring masses to improve their conditions within the existing social order. All intelligent in-

dividuals realize that the basic social problem cannot be solved solely with the usual battles for higher wages, important though these battles may be as a means toward an immediate essential economic end. If the above mentioned argument were true, there would be little point in combating the new feudalism of totalitarian states, since a few rights more or less would not really matter.

Everything that Socialists of various orientations have affirmed in the past about the shortcomings of the capitalistic economic order is still true today, and will remain true so long as it operates to the benefit of small minorities instead of furthering the welfare of all members of society. But this does not alter the fact that social movements which aim to do away with prevailing social and economic evils, can flourish only in a climate of intellectual freedom. They must be able to propagate their ideas and to create organizations or institutions which help to promote the liberation of humanity. Hence what is needed are more rights, not fewer; not lesser but greater freedoms, if we want to get closer to the goal of social emancipation.

Even the least of the freedoms won as a result of constant striving, sets up a milestone on the road to liberation of mankind, and by the same token the loss of the slightest social gain represents a setback for our cause. Certainly one will not achieve liberty for all by forfeiting without a struggle every personal freedom. Rights and liberties can be lost on a small scale just as they are often won in limited measure. For once the first step on this ominous path has been taken, all other rights and freedoms are exposed to the same danger. If we make the smallest concession to reaction, we need not be surprised if in time we lose the priceless heritage which others, through suffering and sacrifice, have won for us.

If any further proof be needed to corroborate this contention, it amply provided by the history of the last decade. That should suffice to open the eyes of anyone not afflicted with incurable intellectual blindness. The new absolutism is casting its menacing shadow today over all cultural and social gains achieved by mankind after centuries of travail. In Soviet Russia and in most Eastern countries dominated by its military might, the right of a man to live in a locality of his own choosing, or to enter the occupation which seems most promising to him, has been cast upon the scrapheap of passing time. The governmental bureaucracy allots to each individual an arbitrary place for his productive activity, and this he may abandon only upon express permission or command of the authorities. A privilege granted to the lowliest peasant after the abolition of serfdom under the Tsars, is no longer extended to any worker in the vaunted Red Fatherland of the Proletariat.

Prior to the Stalinist regime, not a single capitalist state had dared to set up concentration camps, where under the most rigorous conditions every worker is assigned his daily production quota, which he must fulfill under pain of brutal penalties akin to those inflicted upon the galley slaves of the Caesarian era. But in the Russia of Stalin and in the lands enchained by his tyranny the establishment of such slave labor camps has become a commonplace event, and millions of helpless human beings are its victims.

Simultaneously with this relapse into the darkest ages of feudalism came the suppression of all social and political rights. All organs for the communication of ideas, the press, the radio, the theatre, motion pictures, and public gatherings generally, fell under the control of an iron censorship, and a ruthless police system impervious to even the slightest appeal of humanity took command. The trade unions, shorn of the right to strike and of all other effective rights, were converted into tools of the all-powerful State and now merely serve the purpose of giving moral sanction to the enormities of an unbounded economic and political enslavement.

The brutal suppression of all social movements, from the Mensheviks and Anarchists to the so-called Trotskyism, within the Soviet confines; the employment of torture to extort confessions from persons guilty or innocent of wrong-doing, and the cynical mockery of all concepts of justice so glaringly evident in the notorious Moscow “purge” trials, the like of which Tsarist Russia could not duplicate; the re-introduction of the infamous practice of taking hostages, which makes even the families and friends of individuals allegedly imperiling the safety of the State liable to arrest and punishment; the deportation of the population of whole villages to remote areas in Siberia—these, plus a conspicuous array of other punitive measures borrowed from the barbarism of long vanished epochs, characterize a system which, according to its own figures, possesses barely 8,000,000 organized adherents in Russia, and yet undertakes to reduce more than 200,000,000 people to servitude under its inhuman regime of violence.

And that is not all! Under this new absolutism there exists neither freedom of thought in science nor any creative autonomy in art, the representatives of which are likewise at the mercy of the relentless dictatorship of the Communist Party machine. Not a month passes but that practitioners of the arts and sciences are arraigned before the bar of this new State Church for deviation from the prescribed line and denounced publicly as heretics. The very fact that virtually all such accused persons—including composers, painters, architects, economists, historians, anthropologists, construction engineers, and chemists—have bent the knee before the new powers-that-be, publicly confessed their “aberrations” and promised to mend their ways, is further evidence of the general degradation of character which becomes inevitable under a totalitarian regime.

While monarchical absolutism prevailed, it was still possible for individuals like Cervantes, Goya, Rabelais, Diderot, Voltaire, Milton, Lessing, and hundreds of other men of genius to express themselves. In Stalin’s Russia such latitude is unthinkable. During the reign of Tsar Nikolai II, Tolstoi could still venture to publish his famous declaration against the war with Japan in the *London Times*, and thus have the whole civilized world as a sounding board. The Russian Government dared not touch a hair of his head. One might well ask what would have happened to Tolstoi if he had lived under the reign of Stalin. To ask this question is to answer it; and the only possible answer to this hypothetical query will show clearly to what extent millions of people have lost their basic human rights. Millions of others will inexorably suffer the same fate unless they take an indomitable stand in all countries for the defense of rights and freedoms won at so bitter a cost!

Let us not deceive ourselves. This is the true nature of the new absolutism which, under the pretext of social emancipation, is today threatening to smother all freedom, all human dignity and hope for a brighter future, in order to plunge the world into a modern Dark Age the duration of which no one can predict. The peril is all the greater because in every country a fanatical and unprincipled group of disciples is at the disposal of these latter-day tyrants, unconditionally obedient to their every command. Consciously so far as the leaders are concerned, and unconsciously in the case of the intellectually backward masses whom they exploit for evil purposes, these disciples serve the interests of the Red Imperialism while paving the way for dictatorship in their own countries.

At the same time this new despotism tends to strengthen reaction in every country, with the result that the imperiled nations proceed to do away with long-established rights and freedoms with the ready excuse that such action is the only efficacious means of cutting the ground from under Russian espionage within their borders. The steady deterioration of civil liberties in

the “democratic” countries is a clear indication of the danger we face of being contaminated by totalitarian reaction on our own soil.

The urgent call of the hour is for a decisive collaboration among persons of good will in all strata of the population, who reject dictatorship in every form and guise, and who are prepared to defend their rights and freedoms to the last ditch. This is the only way to re-direct social evolution into new paths and to build a solid and straight road to universal emancipation. Above all, however, we must strive to re-awaken among the masses a strong desire for liberty and a sense of human dignity, and to spur them in their resistance against every threat to their inherent rights. Such an emphatic repudiation of reaction in all forms and phases is at the same time the only means of averting a new World War and of creating an understanding among peoples everywhere on earth on the basis of mutual aid and federalist principles. In a word, the power politics of governments can be frustrated only through resistance by the masses themselves.

Unfortunately there are still a great many complacent spirits who ostensibly believe that the sacrifice of social rights and liberties is essential to the achievement of economic security for everyone. Such a point of view is the most objectionable of all since it implies abrogation of all human dignity. Not only is this assumption thoroughly fallacious, as amply demonstrated by the wretched economic conditions of the Russian peasants and industrial workers; what is worse, it leads toward utter disintegration of character.

Let those who are of that mind reflect upon Benjamin Franklin’s maxim: “He who is prepared to sacrifice his freedom for security deserves neither freedom nor security.”

For us, however, the old saying still holds good: *Socialism will be free or it will not be at all!*

We Must Hold On, By Fernand Planche

I beg the forgiveness of those who may read this brief essay, if I do not manifest excessive optimism or if I shock somewhat the sanguine spirits and immediate hopes of certain rebels—of sincere friends whose faith I share in a doctrine of reason and love, namely Anarchism. This doctrine, the most recent one to emerge among all the social-humanitarian philosophies, is in all probability also the final one; for, yielding a complete answer, going as far as the range of human reason can extend, it made it possible for us elders of pre-1914 days to believe that this philosophy was going to spread with lightning speed. This we believed because it embraced all the reason, all the love, the entire synthesis of philosophies and sciences placed at the service of afflicted humanity since the dawn of history.

That was not a mad dream. The Christian doctrine, nearly two thousand years ago, spread over the face of the earth despite the fact that its adepts were ostracized from society, in spite of innumerable persecutions, and even though its martyrs were thrown to the lions in circus spectacles staged by cruel Roman emperors. It cannot be denied that this faith fulfilled a vast need for hope on the part of all the disinherited throughout the world, and that it bore a universal character—two primordial factors which we rediscover in this dream of yesterday which some day we must recapture: the International.

However, when Christianity became a mighty and unconquerable force by virtue of its great numbers, the Roman emperors made of it a State religion, by recognizing it as having official status. Thus the Church which professed to be the heir of a doctrine of love, in time perpetrated the Inquisition against heretics that is to say true Christians—and a long night of fifteen centuries reigned upon a world brutalized by superstition, intolerance, ignorance, and torture. What have these fifteen centuries produced? Almost nothing, or at least very little save for the cathedrals. For men of reason that era remains an execrable memory in which horror vies with hate for supremacy.

Obviously, with the knowledge now in mankind's possession, so prolonged a period of darkness would not be possible. However, it is indisputable that our present era presents a certain analogy with those distant days when the emperors converted Christianity into a State religion. In diametric opposition to Anarchism we have witnessed the development, in the past three quarters of a century or so, of the authoritarian Marxist doctrine, which claims to arrive at the same goal through other means. This doctrine, or its counterfeit, has attained tremendous momentum and in certain countries has become a State religion, with all the exactions which the term implies, operating through an inquisition which tolerates no power or principle outside of itself. The same drive for power is being enacted before our very eyes as that which took place in the period when Christianity triumphed, and when it believed it was triumphing for all times to come.

The Socialist doctrine is so influential among the masses that even a Hitler deemed it expedient to attach the word "Socialism" to the word "National", and all capitalist countries claim to be working toward some sort of socialistic goal! The need for hope among the disinherited people

of the earth, the universal nature of the doctrine, brings it about that millions of such “outcasts” fall into the trap, as in former eras; they do not realize that in every country their rulers, their masters, array themselves in one clique against another, whenever the difficulties between one country and another reach a crisis, until the ultimate catastrophe in which mutual extermination takes place; just as competition among nations caused them to exploit their peoples in peace times on the economic plane, when some nations enjoyed a standard of living twenty times higher than that of other nations.

And that kind of situation has existed since time immemorial. For ever since the days when all European countries were Catholic, states have waged war against each other, and economic competition in those centuries was as ruthless as in our day. They fought as savagely for pepper, cloves, ginger—in short, for spices and for gold as they are battling today for oil, minerals, underground deposits of all kinds, as well as for more or less rare and precious raw materials.

Where then do we stand in the face of the shambles to which our noble dream of equality, liberty, and reason has been reduced? Perforce we must acknowledge candidly that in this world of ours we are but an infinitesimal minority; that the hope of seeing our doctrine spread with lightning velocity among the masses has been largely frustrated, and that the masses in question have not yet come of age.

To be sure, there are signs and phenomena which prompt us not to despair, but there will be a long and arduous road to traverse, and the truly strong man is he who looks reality in the face, and not he who confounds his wishes with realities; for the latter, when disillusionment comes, is a man at sea, a lost man. Our present role, therefore, is to hold aloft the torch of enlightenment and of reason amid the confusions and ambivalence of our epoch. There is no example on record in which reason does not finally triumph; and if this final victory does not crown our own endeavors it will reward the efforts of our young people, thanks to our present faith in the future.

Moreover, the contribution made by the sciences and by progress, advancing with snowball momentum, is so great that the future is arriving at a dizzy pace, and fallacious doctrines will become completely discredited in a relatively short time. Under the thrust and pressure of the sciences, of marvelous inventions, of stupendous collective organizations, the world has progressed more during the last century than in the previous several millenia which had elapsed since man discovered fire. An invention of this magnitude, which appears improbable to the human brain, is promptly perfected, popularized, and universally put to use nowadays, whereas in former times inventions incomparably less important required centuries before they were perfected or brought within the reach of most persons.

Our generation is not fortunate in one respect; it does not have faith in the immediate realization of the ideal—faith such as prompted men like Emile Henry, Vaillant, the garroted victims of Spain, the martyrs of the gallows in Chicago, the victims of firing squads everywhere. The fulfillment of this dream is reserved for our comrades of the future. As for us, who on the continent of Europe lived through a first World War which shattered our spirit; a second World War which aggravated the situation and dealt cruel blows to our ranks; we who already can discern the outlines of a third World War taking shape; we who have witnessed the degradation of the critical spirit, of free judgement, and of the reasoning power of the advance guard of the proletariat—we can but *hold on*. For to *hold on*, to persist in our faith, is the justification of our existence, our *raison d’etre*, and that is why we must fulfill our role, which is to *hold on*—to keep going—in spite of everything!

Can We Afford to be Anti-Militarists in Our Day?, by Dr. H. Koechlin

Upon superficial analysis it may appear unnecessary to examine the question of our position with respect to anti-militarism. Surely an Anarchist can never be a militarist, we would be inclined to affirm. His devotion to the cause of freedom makes it impossible for him to subject himself to military discipline. His sense of social justice inhibits him from supporting any institution which has as its constant goal the entrenchment of class rule. His humanitarianism can never reconcile itself to the organized violence of militarism.

Still the question is not quite so simple when we transfer it from the rarefied air of theory to the soil of today's reality. Situations arise in which all freedom-menacing forces seem to have concentrated themselves at one point on the earth's surface, from which they threaten to annihilate the pathetic remnant of freedom still left to mankind. In such situations the temptation is present to bid us accept everything and to lend support to any movement or agency which is in any way fitted to arrest, for the time being at least, the liberty-destroying juggernaut. Ever since Hitler's ascendancy to power we have been living in such a situation. The principal foe was beaten in World War II by the militarism of the democracies. Today Stalin has taken his place.

Even though there have never been Anarchists who, in such a situation, acknowledged that we should stake everything on the militarist forces, none the less prominent Anarchists in analogous circumstances have not hesitated to array themselves upon the side of the war parties; this signified in effect that they balanced one militarism against another and cast their lot with one of them. We are reminded of Peter Kropotkin's position in World War I and that of Rudolf Rocker in World War II. This type of what might be called "truce Anarchism" is by no means so easy to refute as may at first appear, if one wishes to look squarely at the facts without preconceived prejudices.

It will not suffice to cite here the undoubtedly correct and oft-repeated argument that the source of dictatorship, terror, and war is to be found in capitalism and in the system of state control themselves; or that this source is indigenous to every government and therefore can be attacked only internally. This argument does not eliminate the fact that there are countries whose social and political structure permit Anarchists to wage this struggle, whereas in others all liberty-loving forces are systematically annihilated. Furthermore, it is incontestable that no government wages a war for freedom, but rather every war is carried on for the aggrandizement of capitalistic and imperialistic interests. Nevertheless the fact exists that not all imperialisms and not all capitalisms are identical. There are in existence imperialist and capitalist states which preserve a certain liberal tradition and which grant to the individual an actual minimum of freedom of movement, however pitiful and meager that may be; at the same time, there are other imperialist countries which regiment the individual into the tightest of organized systems and unto the minutest detail, so that no freedom of movement is left him at all.

In Europe this fact is more perceptible than in America. Hence, under these circumstances is it not sheer suicide not to grasp and mobilize every possible recourse which might avail to stem, in some fashion or degree, the further onslaughts of Red Fascism? For in order to be able to reject the militarism of the West as an ally, one should have to be able to count upon other, more acceptable forces, for example, the revolutionary proletariat. But then no revolutionary proletariat exists today! Let us cherish no illusions on that account. The proletariat is politically shackled. A substantial portion thereof still clings to faith in the “workers’ paradise” of the Soviet Union. Another part is ready to place itself at the disposal and in the service of its fatherland in a moment of crisis and to participate in a war, regardless of the purpose for which that war is waged.

As an autonomous force the working class today is devoid of significance. To be sure, there are found in all parts of the world certain freedom-dedicated persons and a handful of Anarchists. But even these are impotent and therefore of no significance and, thrown upon their own resources, never could withstand the test of violent resistance. There exists but one force competent to challenge an assault on the part of Red Imperialism against the last surviving freedoms left to us, and that is a Western militarism which is just as well organized and armed to the teeth.

It would seem that under such circumstances we could not remain even semi-pacifists, but should become thoroughgoing militarists. For having taken the first step, we must also take the second. Having said “A” we also should be prepared to say “B.” We must forego everything which might impair or hinder political and military preparedness. We would have to swallow the most crying injustices which might be committed by the democracies in their colonies and within their own boundaries; we should have to toil as diligently as the Russian Stakhanov workers. Any other attitude would make us guilty of being half-hearted and inconsistent.

For once we have given our approval to a war in defense of our liberties, we also must do everything in our power so that those who administer or wage this war may win it. Under such conditions it would be illogical to grasp the revolver but leave unused the atomic bomb. In short, in order to save our liberties we must betray our own ideal. How is this paradox to be solved?

To betray our cause for the sake of freedom, and to turn into militarists, would be senseless. For under such circumstances freedom would lose all rational meaning for us. We know from experience that no war is able to solve any problem. That in the course of a war dictators are apt to totter and fall is true; but it also is true that inevitably a war will result in the emergence of new dictators and dictatorships, since it tends to demoralize to the utmost all human beings who participate in it, actively or passively. So what is to be done? Shall we overlook the atomic bomb and, in accord with our tradition, reach for the revolver and throw up barricades, for the destruction of which an atomic bomb is not even needed? That, too, would be futile.

If, then, we would remain anti-militarists—and this we must—there exists but one course for us; and that course is the only proper one for those who share our views. It behooves us to renounce, as a matter of principle, the recourse to violence, and out of this renunciation to draw all logical consequences.

Let Stalin come and bestow upon us his “Socialism.” We do not bar his entrance into our land, because as Anarchists we cannot properly do so. Let the military men contend with him in their own fashion; they will not destroy him with their weapons, even though they may conquer him externally. We shall contend with him in our own fashion, through our passive resistance—that resistance which is in accord with our Anarchist practice—and thus demonstrate that the rape of mankind has a limit against which every dictator must ultimately be shattered and fail.

This course is long and entails far more sacrifices than the path of violence, but it is the only one possible. The wisdom of Leo Tolstoy is the ultimate logic of freedom upon which Anarchism is thrust again and again, whether it wills it or not.

Moral Decay of Our Society, by Dr. Herman Frank (Editor of Freie Arbeiter Stimme)

The violent upsurge of anti-Semitism in the last few decades has stimulated a number of profound studies of this most abnormal phenomenon of mass behavior. Most of the researchers have established the astonishing fact that Jew-baiting has not changed essentially through the centuries. This very fact is additional proof that hatred of the Jew is deeply rooted within the obscure crevices and morbid drives of human psychology. These psychic urges and evil propensities, as is well known, are slow in yielding to change and are little affected by external controls and by the impact of ideas and spiritual influences, such as education, technical progress, and the refinements of "civilized" life in general.

As an abnormal and criminal phenomenon, anti-Semitism is to be considered a special variation of the psychopathological urge to inflict torture and disgrace upon more or less defenseless fellow human beings. Thus, it is a form of sadism, which—in its turn—is not a new manifestation of man's mental perversion. In recent decades, however, we have witnessed a marked increase in nearly all sadistic urges, and especially in anti-Semitism.

Social psychologists advance a variety of explanations to account for this visible outcrop of sadistic tendencies in one form or another. One of the most plausible theories runs as follows: The unexpended accumulation of psycho-physical energies, failing as it does in our present authoritarian society to find an outlet in a constructively sound and creative human purpose, is bound to turn in a diametrically opposite direction; that is, toward destruction, unbridled brutality, and all kinds of hatred in its numberless manifestations and disguises.

Under our present commercial and industrial civilization, nearly all occupations are standardized and regimented to a degree of becoming automatic and soulless. Accordingly, the normally inborn urge to independent creativeness and full personal development finds ever fewer and narrower avenues of expression and free realization. As a result, the unexpended energies and the drive for self-expression are diverted, in an ever increasing measure, into morbid, disastrous channels. These outpourings of action assume manifold forms, which are an outgrowth of an unrestricted play of destruction, cruelty, and murder, all of them reaching gigantic proportions in time of war. In the so-called normal times of "peace"; that is, brief intervals in the life of our society between two declared or undeclared, cold or hot wars, the psychopathic urge manifests itself in racial hatreds, race riots, lynching, and, particularly, in many forms of anti-Semitism.

The newly developed science of mental hygiene has, with the aid of clinical and experimental investigation, demonstrated one all-important socio-psychological fact. It has been shown that the retarded human faculties and emotions, distorted and stunted by social backwardness (low standard of living, etcetera) and by the evils of authoritarian and capitalist oppression, with all their attendant mental frustrations and resentments, are bound to evoke feelings of hatred and malice on countless human beings. These feelings, in their drive for outlets, assert themselves in

the too well known barbaric cruelties of war, both external and civil, of interracial riots, and in the most vicious expression of race-hatred—anti-Semitism.

It is evident, therefore, that external means alone of combating anti-Semitism, such as measures of education, through lectures and literature, and formal resolutions or mild legal regulations, are of little practical help against the evil of Jew-baiting. Even the much stronger and ostensibly more effective measures, such as the passing of draconic laws against race violence and discrimination, are bound to be, in the last analysis, just as ineffectual. Laws on the statute books leave but a pale trace on the surface of life.

In like manner, tolerance and respect for the alien-born and the equality of all citizens in social and political life can scarcely be enforced from above—that is, merely by the power and authority of a dry-as-dust statute written in a book. And even if they could, they would hardly inspire any respect and prompt observance, and they would offer, accordingly, little security and no moral satisfaction at all to the oppressed racial or ethnic minority. This—aside from the practical inefficiency of laws designed to replace the dictates of social and ethical conscience and inner moral imperatives. Of even less value are international legal safeguards of rights for national minorities, such as those that were introduced and then miserably broke down in the wake of the unfortunate Versailles “peace treaty” of 1919.

Obviously, the eradication of anti-Semitism and of all other present-day brutalities is, first, a matter that requires long and fundamental treatment. In the second place, anti-Semitism, as is apparent from the main lines of our approach to this subject, is more a Gentile than a Jewish problem. True, the Jews are the objects and the targets of this most familiar type of “non-sanity”, yet the key to its cure or even mitigation lies in radical change and humanization of social life and structure, and this task is not one for which the Jews alone are responsible. Besides, the curse of Anti-Semitism threatens to undermine the foundations of non-Jewish life no less than that of the Jews. By its very psycho-pathological nature, anti-Semitism is none other than that form of brutality which is a festering sore upon our sick social body, exuding a poisonous toxin which corrodes also the dominating national group by inuring it to acts of violence, brutality, and sadism, though it is just in the name of the welfare of the majority group that the most unscrupulous and demagogic Jew-baiters carry out their murderous attacks on the Jews. Anti-Semitism, like a spiritual plague, undermines man’s moral integrity, and his intellectual stability and resistance power to withstand the onslaught of the rabble-rousers, impostors, and “leaders”, who feed upon the immaturity and credulity of the masses.

Fortunately, we witness now an ever-widening circle of non-Jews who are beginning to realize that anti-Semitism is, at bottom, not a Jewish but a non-Jewish or even universal problem. In any case, it is a far broader and deeper phenomenon, and a much less innocuous and simple one than the “dislike of the unlike”, as was so wittily but quite superficially, put by that brilliant man of letters in England, the late Israel Zangwill.

Anti-Semitism, with all the other manifestations of an ever-growing brutalization of society, is a danger signal of a deeply unhealthy state of human affairs in a socio-psychological sense. The acute intensification of anti-Semitism in the second half of the much-vaunted twentieth century appears precisely, and for reasons cited above, at a time when social instability, insecurity, degradation, and decay, on the one hand, and the growing discontent and self-awakening of the masses, on the other, have reached climactic points. And such, as nearly everyone understands, is the state of affairs, the condition of human society, at the present time.

Dark Road Ahead of Labor, by Manuel Buenacasa

In order to set forth fully and properly what the present-day Labor Movement is and what significance it has, it would be necessary to write a thick volume. And to state—not what this movement will be, since we are not prophets—but what it ought to be, would likewise call for an amount of space far beyond the capacity of our organs of enlightenment. We must, therefore, be pithy and concise.

Our comrades are wont to speak of problems which concern us, generally under the influence wielded upon those problems and upon our minds by the environment of the country in which they happen to reside. Thus, for instance, a Spanish Anarchist will utter more optimistic judgments and hopes with respect to the labor movement than will his opposite number in England, Germany, or the United States.

I—we—bereft of all racial, environmental, or temperamental influence, shall assert without any euphemisms that the present status of world labor organization is nothing less than disastrous, and that its immediate future offers very slight prospects for improvement or relief of the situation. Without fearing to sin on the side of pessimism—because we are not pessimists—we shall affirm, basing ourselves on statistics, that at least eighty-five percent of the organized workers of the world constitute a mass which is not only amorphous, lethargic, docile, materialistic, and meekly obedient, but that in addition, it finds itself linked by its own free will to the purposes of the labor leaders, and hitched to the cart of the State and to authoritarianism.

Perhaps a great part of the responsibility for this precarious state in labor circles falls upon the shoulders of the Anarchists, through our inhibitions or through our lack of intelligence, tact, or boldness to confront the politicians and the reformers found in the labor movement.

The International Association of Workers (our own A.I.T.) is scarcely playing a dominant role or figuring as an organ of real influence in the labor world, as compared with the 70,000,000 workers making up the colossal World Federation of Trade Unions. To be sure the latter has suffered a schism, but that fact does not give us cause to congratulate ourselves, nor does it modify our opinions or make them more flattering to us as realists.

This split, brought to a head by the antagonistic ideologies which divide the Western from the Eastern world, has served only to aggravate the disaster suffered by the workers of the world. The two elements engaged in this struggle both of them more or less Marxist, as evidenced by the heterogeneous leadership of the trade union movement, have both obeyed the directives of their respective governments. The fear of a future world war would be lessened, in our judgement, if the WFTU were to continue united and if it conformed to what ought to be the principal warrant for its existence: *opposition to war!*

As it is, the workers of the world being split into antagonistic groups and each one participating actively in the governments which, for quite some time, they have been obeying, it is no

exaggeration to affirm that the peril of a world-wide conflagration is greater now than before the schism.

Our A.I.T. might sound a fraternal clarion call for peace across the seas and frontiers; but the vast masses of workers, tamed and stultified by the dismal and deplorable actions of the trade union leaders, would pay no heed to such wise counsel. This is the present reality and the bleakest perspective, in our judgement, of the labor movement in the majority of the countries which style themselves civilized.

Optimists by nature in spite of the dense clouds which obscure the horizon of humanity, let us do what is necessary so that the labor movement may recapture its role as a historic entity. Let us implant into its innermost consciousness hatred for war, our hostility toward obedience and authority, our antagonism toward the State, our eagerness to give battle against all special privileges and the privileged classes; in a word, our immense love, ever kindled, for universal brotherhood and the most perfect understanding among men and nations.

And, in addition, let us abide by our resolve to battle openly for the attainment of our aims.

The present, as well as the future, of the labor movement, permeated with our liberating ideals, can thus represent the highest hope for human emancipation, provided that each and every one of us has the knowledge and the desire to contribute to that noble cause the devotion, tact, and understanding which the workers of the world deserve.

Should We Defend Democratic Rights?, by Albert Meltzer

Should we defend present-day democratic rights?

Curiously enough, this question today suggests precisely the opposite of what it asks! At one time it would have meant exactly what it said. Should we fight to maintain those guaranteed if limited liberties fought for through many generations by our predecessors, and by so doing extend them? Those who held a contrary point of view were those who defended militarism, curtailment of liberty for aggrandizement of the State (for instance, the supporters of conscription in England, and all those on the Continent who complained of “mob rule” and that “Liberty means license.”)

In times past the militarists had no compunctions about supporting a war, and patriots never hesitated to call a war a war, and not bring in a completely different argument about upholding democracy. The Spanish-American War, the Boer War, the Russian-Japanese War, all heralded the twentieth century with the last displays of old-fashioned uninhibited chauvinism, but with the growth of the Socialist movements and working-class thought throughout the world, these conceptions of imperial grandeur were already a bit shoddy at the beginning of the once-so-called “Great” War and completely discredited at its finish.

To a certain extent the English writer H. G. Wells must take a share of the blame, having coined the “war to end war” phrase that every cynic has sounded with a sneer at some time or other for the last thirty years, but most of all it was the demagoguery of Lloyd George, who seized the opportunity of using the liberal phrase-mongers, whose gifts for sloganeering he knew well enough (for they had brought him to power) and used as propaganda during World War I.

The French had not yet advanced to that position: they were preaching “*Union Sacree*”—defense of the motherland and the sinking of differences between worker and capitalist, in war-time—but the powers of this new type of propaganda were soon evident. At first they were directed at American neutrality, for the Allies feared that many immigrants in the United States, because of their memories of sufferings under Russian Imperialism, might well be pro-German. But in the hands of adept propagandists this liberal-democratic propaganda became a new and potent weapon of war, one designed to influence the enemy as well as the people of the Allied nations, and it was developed to its pinnacle during World War II.

It is really pointless to argue whether this or that Imperialism is better than another; the arguments are facile enough and can be put forward convincingly and at great length. What actually matters is whether the case put forward is fundamentally honest or dishonest. At the commencement of the First World War the propaganda of the Allies certainly was dishonest enough. It usually took the form of gross mistranslations; thus a German general’s purported remark about London: “What a city for plunder”. The words *trash* and *frillery* were mistranslated as *plunder*. The allegation that human corpses were being used to supply animal fat for soap-making was based on a mistranslation of *Kadaver* (animal corpse) as human corpse, for which

the correct German word would have been *Leiche*. In the Second World War such crude stuff was not necessary, for it was only too true that conditions under Hitler's regime needed no exaggeration.

But was Britain fighting against Hitlerism? Granted that everything said about Hitler was true—the fact remains that the Hitler regime was only incidental to the war; the British Empire was at war with its rival and the Hitler regime was merely incidental to that fact. All the propagandists knew it; all the gallant fireside warriors who abandoned their literary Stalinism to rush to the microphone with encouragement to European workers to throw away their lives in such mad schemes as that which led to the destruction of Lidice—all of them knew that the ruling class of this country was not interested in the European revolution about which they broadcast daily in the foreign service outpouring.

In the cold war now being brewed against the world's peoples, on both sides of the Iron Curtain, we see the same process at work again. Mr. Bernard Shaw, the garrulous apostle of English Fabianism, who realized so clearly that Social-Democracy was but one facet of the State religions of Fascism and Communism that he has managed in his declining years to support every imaginable evil in the world political arena, declared recently that fulminations against Communism were hypocritical since the West also supported the Communist principle in gas, water, etc. As if Stalinism had done no more than municipalize the domestic services!

Yet it would make no difference if the rival powers were "Communist" also: after all, we have seen this underlined by events in Yugoslavia. The possession of common Christian principles, which included the most positive injunctions against the shedding of blood, did not discourage the European nations from decimating one another through several centuries, and probably acted as a strong incentive to do so for the greater glory of the particular brand of divine revelation that each happened to be defending.

Political ideologies have no more in common with warfare than religious doctrines. England and Germany, the strongholds of Protestantism, have fought each other and so have nations with common democratic principles, as well as those like Germany and Russia with common totalitarian principles. Today, however, there is window-dressing which must be maintained in order to sell the goods, because of an enlightened public-opinion that demands something more than mere slogans—a few rousing speeches, for instance. Hence Russia now must be portrayed as *Victorious Communist World Revolution*, America as *Democratic Forces*, and so on. But the conflict, say between England and Russia, is no different from what it was when Russia was Tsarist.

Arguments beginning with the query, "*Should we defend such rights as we have?*" are apt to confuse the issue, whether intentionally or not. Participants in such arguments frequently assume that loss of national sovereignty necessarily means loss of civil liberty. That is far from being true, for loss of sovereignty usually has meant little more than loss of the right to criticize the occupying power, but where political activities have become obsessed with that one question, then such loss has followed. It is sometimes difficult for people to ponder the question without emotion, for not many patriots are willing to admit that in fact the real betrayal comes from within. They are as a rule anxious to show the affair as a rape, when it is so often the truth that the lady herself proved willing.

Examples of this are readily found in the records of British Imperialism, which for many years had the motto, *Trade follows the flag*, but really meant by it that the flag followed trade. It went in not as the victorious soldier but as the carpet-bagging salesman, and utilized every opportunity for commercial expansion and exploitation of the people's necessities to build up

“interests of the British Empire” until they came to need the protection of a gunboat and a troop of marines, who finished by running up the flag and adding a bit more red to the world map. Then when the colony had been established, gradually the Empire’s representatives took their place as *pukka sahibs*, who would not dream of mixing with the colored man. But their first foothold was established by bamboozling, co-operating with, coaxing, and playing up to the chieftain, the maharajah, the local plenipotentiary.

Even conquests nearer home, such as Scotland and Ireland, were made possible only because a treacherous ruling class sold out to the invader. If we are to scan recent European history we need mention only a single word that has passed into every language: *Quisling*. It is difficult for the French chauvinist, speaking emotionally of what the Nazis did, to admit even to himself that there was no lack of Frenchmen to help them—that in fact most of the excesses which took place did not even need an occupation to sponsor them. Beyond any doubt, if the Laval had managed to seize power under conditions equally as hazardous as those prevailing in 1940, they would have acted in the same way, with concentration camps and special police, even if there had never been any occupation. In fact, this did happen to some extent in Unoccupied France before it was occupied.

Certainly in these examples there was a great and pressing need for the defense of civil liberties to the exclusion of all else, and even neglecting to some degree the extension of civil liberties, which is the only excuse one has for a belief in them. But let us be quite clear that this struggle had to be, and where it existed *was* directed against the nation-state, that is to say, against the actual authorities of whatever nationality they happened to be, and was not served by supporting the other side.

This dangerous, false, and destroying doctrine is not a new thing in politics, but has been given a refurbishing since the intrusion of ideological excuses for war. Both sides in the conflicts of our period have encouraged it to weaken their opponents by sabotage and fifth-columnism, while as in that other parallel activity, espionage, violently denounce and condemn its use by the enemy. It has long been known in British politics (as for instance in the Casement dictum, “England’s enemy is Ireland’s friend,” whether it be Germany or France); and has become incorporated as a permanent feature in warfare since the Nazis encouraged the Fascist fifth column typified by *Quisling*, the Stalinists encouraged the Marxist-Bolshevik fifth column led by Kuusinen in Finland, and the Allies encouraged particular groups in Germany, at least unofficially, since the official line was a condemnation of all Germans irrespective of ideology.

The promises made in this fashion are a direct betrayal by those who make them, because they have no means whatever of guaranteeing that they will be kept, and such pledges are used purely for expediency. Hence the dissatisfaction with their supposed comrades by many resistant groups who swallowed this line of liberation from abroad. This has reached its apex in the Arab countries, where so many contradictory promises were made and where the resistant groups, unlike the minorities in Europe, were in a position to voice their dissatisfaction.

To rely upon liberation from an oppressive regime by foreign intervention is seen by historical and modern experience to be a false illusion. Those who believed that the Kaiser would destroy Tsarist Russia, or that the destruction of Japan meant the end of Asiatic imperialism, are sadly disillusioned now.

It is well worth taking one particular illusion, since this has been used for propaganda purposes in England and America to such an extent, and that is the belief sincerely held by thousands of Jewish people suffering from or sympathizing with those under the Nazis, people who looked

hopefully for Hitler's defeat, only to find that the great sacrifices they had made toward that end were largely in vain.

One must sympathize with those who were bitterly disillusioned when they learned that all that the closing of the death camps meant was the opening of the D.P. camps (corrals for displaced persons), but what are we to say to the politicians who created that false illusion? The New York chorus, for instance, that sang the praises of the British Empire nightly in 1940, those self-seeking *liberals with high ideals and low motives*, who licked the boots of Churchill & Company, and afterward could not understand how "Bevin had betrayed them" lest understanding might reveal that *they* had betrayed others! How can one forgive them for the fact that it took six years for the Stephen Wises et al to sail from the East River like Christopher Columbus in reverse, and rediscover the British Empire! Mr. Ben Hecht, who ran dry of fulsome adjectives for the Tory leader of the Empire to fill up his column, suddenly changed to being elevated by the British press to the role of Britain Hater No. 1 as he and they raised each other to the status formerly occupied by Goebbels in both cases! By the time "victory" came the New York *liblals* were running dry of Ireland and India and digging up fictitious characters like Fagin and Shylock to "prove" anti-Semitism in England!

What is the truth about all this? Did the British Empire really change? Only its critics changed. In spite of all their protestations to the contrary, the war was imperialist in 1940 and Churchill's Cabinet never tried to deny it, even the most "progressive" supporters of the government claiming only that they could "alter its character" and utilize it for European revolution, which now proves to be singularly ridiculous. It was handy to have a liberal coating of ideas, to talk about restoring democracy, breaking down racial hatred, etcetera, which enabled the Left Wing to support the war with an easy conscience instead of admitting to themselves that they were betraying what socialistic ideas they had retained. They would have supported it in any case, but the idea of a changed type of war was consoling to former conscientious objectors who found themselves supporting war when their fighting days were over.

In regard to the Palestine issue, the Government acted in a consistently imperialist manner and can hardly be said to have acted in opposition to its fundamental policy, except that the Labor Party had made rather more promises than it could keep.

When the war ended Russian pogroms under the Stalin regime compelled a multitude of European Jews to emigrate to Palestine. These murderous onslaughts took place particularly in occupied countries such as Poland and Rumania, where Russian invasion had once been thought a lesser evil than German conquest! All this was a deliberate plan of Stalin, who knew that as a result the British Government would necessarily split with the Arabs or the Jews, since this would force a change from the traditional line of appeasing both sides with different promises. The outcome was that tragic spectacle of treks from the death camps of Europe to the D.P. camps and voyages in hell-ships to finish up in Cyprus concentration camps or die in the dusty streets of Palestine.

The wordy American Zionists have chosen to represent this as betrayal by the British Government; but what observer can be taken in by the pretense that there was any fundamental difference between the British and American Governments on that issue? True, the British Government has taken the Arab side (and by so doing kept the Arabs in the Anglo-American bloc against the Stalin bloc) while the American Government has been conspicuously pro-Israeli (thus preserving the Zionist vote, which counts in the States, and keeping Israel in the Anglo-American bloc). But one would have to be very naive to believe that the results show good will on either

side, and British diplomacy has come off remarkably well with a pro-British President and a pro-Allied party in power in Israel, and a British-dominated mission to the only Arab state with any conquests! On which ever side they fought, they consistently represented the “master’s voice.”

In the face of such obvious Machiavellianism, who is going to claim that the last war was fought for the liberation of Europe from such evils as anti-Semitism? At a time when, as his many admiring stooges tell us, Mr. Churchill was aware of the danger of war, he told an audience that if ever the British Empire was defeated “we should need a Hitler to lead us back to our rightful place among the nations.” He spoke for the capitalist mentality.

One cannot emphasize too often the hollowness of the claim that wars are fought for any ideal, since that claim looks only at the surface and belies the real issues. It is like telling us, as history books do tell us in that disarming naivete of the schoolmaster—that such-and-such a war was fought over someone’s ear, for the love of Helen of Troy, for a certain succession to the throne, or over a case of tea or a gift of tennis-balls.

It is interesting to note that for the threatened third world war there is a distinct lack of cohesion so far in the ideals to be fought for in view of the disparity of mental development between the contestants. The hue-and-cry of the American witch-hunt, if there should be one in England, would drive every single member of the Government from office. For one thing, the Un-American Committee apparently recognizes no distinction between Socialism and Communism¹ but even if it did many members of the British Government have in fact been at least fellow-travelers and one was even banned from the United States in former days because of that.

Yet the British Socialists are no less anti-Russian than the Yankee witch-hunters; it is necessary, however, to put over more adult fare than stories about documents hidden in pumpkins; and the British public would not swallow the propaganda about Communism, revolution, red ruin, etcetera, which was abandoned in Britain twenty-five years ago even by the Conservatives. While the Americans are urged by their press to fight against Lenin and Trotsky, the British public gets a picture of Stalinist degeneration, party bureaucracy, and the betrayal of Socialism, which is nearer the truth but put forward to gain the same ends. After all, a musical impresario stages a symphony concert with much the same thought as he arranges for a jive session; in the cold war the Vatican and U.S. “bebop” may please the hot customers, but lovers of classical music also fill the hall.

Let us note here a small piece of hypocrisy in the British labor movement. When the truth about Russia first leaked out some of its spokesmen were the first to denounce such “betrayals”; when Emma Goldman first toured England on behalf of the imprisoned and doomed Russian Anarchists, it was not merely the Communists who were actively against her. Rather, it was the Bevins of the labor movement who denied a hearing to the revolutionary opposition in Russia on the ground that it “would benefit the Tories.” Why have they changed?

Let no one assert that they “have learned better since.” The British Labor Party had ample facilities for finding out the truth about Russia in the Twenties. It *knew* the truth. Labor MJVs left regularly to visit Russia. They were in touch with the Russian Socialists, whose testimony they suppressed, and whom they left to rot in Siberia rather than forego their share in the glamor value of the October Revolution which was supposed to have fallen on the shoulders of Lenin and his party bureaucrats like a mantle.

¹ It must be remembered that this was written in 1948, when the quest of the House of Representatives Committee on Un-American Activities was more sweeping than it has been since.

They have changed because whoever rules the British Empire must rule it as an imperialist. The same goes for Russia too. The conflict between Russia and Britain only a lunatic would think of as the struggle between Socialism and Communism expressed in national terms. Arid only constant Communist propaganda makes people believe that the struggle between America and Russia is between Capitalism and Communism (while the Wall Street-ites say it's Democracy versus Bolshevism.)

This economic struggle for imperialist supremacy can be traced back a lot further than the current political idioms.

And after all, what are Democratic Rights in the United States but a current political idiom? The average American politician does not even know what it means, and is capable of defending free speech and calling for somebody's suppression in the same breath ... Dickens once commented on this aspect of *parvenu* American capitalism. How upset were upholders of that system when a "help" used the word "master." "Oh, the depressing institutions of the British Empire! There are no masters here." "All 'owners,' are they?" asked Martin Chuzzlewit, who had seen the slaves!

Daily today we hear of speeches made by this or that politician who wants to defend free speech by muzzling everybody with whom he disagrees. Clearly he doesn't believe in democratic rights, which denote not only the liberty to agree but also freedom to disagree, but he would not admit this even to himself, for Constitution and Democracy are his slogans, his hocus pocus, as much as the Stars and Stripes. Hocus pocus likewise exists in England, of course, but instead of being confused with Constitution and Democracy it has become mixed up with the Monarchy. Any patriot here who wants to make a fool of himself can go along and cheer some particular royal personage, but the American must speak with sacred awe of Democratic Rights even if he does not really believe in them.

This idea of Constitution and Democracy means nothing more than that, not any more than the mumbo jumbo of the churches, who are prepared to use it on the most inconceivable occasions, not any more than the French policeman believes in the *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* cut into the jailhouse door, and not any more than the Communist Manifesto means to the Stalinites, who worship it in the same way as the Indians raised Gandhi to a divine figure at the precise moment when his disciples prepared to abandon his teachings.

I am aware that the conclusion which I have to draw will not appeal to those who have deserted the paths of struggle for pitiful attempts to climb aboard the imperialist band-wagon, with the excuse that in so doing they are defending present-day rights, and yet knowing all the time that every one of those rights is liable to be repudiated by the war leaders. In still pinning one's faith to an international and truly social revolution, shunning all political collaboration and all governmentalism, one can only appeal to those who have not lost their courage and hope for the future.

It may be said that we can never get back to the facile optimism of the nineteenth century working-class movement in the belief in international action. But we recall that those who sneer at nineteenth century materialism, for instance, are usually those who return to nineteenth-centuries-old Christianity, and by rejecting the too-easy solutions of the last century go right back to the superstitions of the Dark Ages.

The twentieth century has not been altogether in vain so far as the social problem is concerned; we saw the dawn rise in Russia in 1917, but even if the day did not turn out to be a very good one, this is no cause for despair, as an English summer shows! The early achievements of

the Russian Revolution, crushed by the Bolsheviks, who made a caricature of history by portraying the defeat of that revolution as if it were a victory, were put on a sounder basis by the Spanish Revolution, which gave further proof of the possibilities lying in effective action.

Even since the advent of the atomic bomb the Powers have been defied, not generally by people with a very internationalist outlook, but the supreme myth has been challenged. And social changes are taking place under our noses, particularly in the general outlook, which has changed from a dumb acceptance of all capitalist standards and values. The rights to work and to have a control of the place where one works are surely gaining ground as being just as vital democratic rights as the right to speak one's mind or write what one feels; it is only by this extension to democratic rights that these rights can survive.

People are no longer satisfied with democracy in its narrow, rigid, liberal sense of representative government or the freedom of institution. They begin to feel that the freedom which affects their working hours is fundamental to their status as men and women as much as (and the thinking would say far more than) the right to elect those who shall rule. As this idea of workers' control seeps into the main struggle for democratic rights, and is accepted as a principal part of them, so will the term "democracy" become obsolete, since we shall be moving from the idea of representative government to a far higher ideal, that of Anarchism, the absence of government altogether.

The Socialist wants to show all struggles as being in the past, particularly when his own government is in power; he wishes to call as his allies those who fought for trade union rights a hundred years ago, but to denounce as traitors those who fight for rights here and now. This conception of static democracy is a farce. The unofficial striker who seeks workers' control of industry in opposition to the State Socialist plans for nationalization, is carrying on the old struggle in its new form. Those who condemn him are like the reactionary American women who call themselves Daughters of the Revolution.

Progress never stands still. The only way to preserve liberty is to go on struggling for the greatest possible freedom. Those who misunderstand the Anarchist cause seek to prove the Anarchist society a Utopia. Even if it were, the Anarchist, by seeking to move the workers along to greater decentralization and greater participation in control of their own destiny, is improving society even though he may never see the free society toward which he strives realized. At the very least, this struggle has preserved such freedom as there is.

Freedom, let us say again, is not preserved by abandoning the struggle against the nation-state out of fear that another nation-state might be worse. Freedom is won only by unceasing demands for more made upon the existent authorities of whatever nationality. On certain occasions governmental arbitrary authority does not work; on those occasions you see a people conscious of what freedom means. The struggle does not merely imply defending what we have, but involves unceasing demands for more, the culmination of all such demands being what I consider the international social revolution, the final demand for full freedom.

Anarchism—Its Part in the World Struggle, by Dr. M. Pierrot

Anarchism is a yearning toward individual liberty. However, as Bakunin has expressed it, “no man can emancipate himself, unless he emancipates with him all those who surround him. His freedom is the freedom of all, for he is only really free—free not only in thought, but in fact—when his liberty and his rights are confirmed and sanctioned by the liberty and the rights of all men who are his equals.” Similarly, we can be completely happy only if all those around us are happy, once the spectacle of servitude and suffering has disappeared.

How can the liberation of ourselves and of all mankind be achieved? After all these many efforts and especially after those of the French Revolution, it must be realized that man can enjoy freedom only if he has achieved economic equality. We thus have to study economic and social events in order to act more wisely toward attaining our demands.

The first phenomenon we have to cope with is that servitude is the result of authority; that is, of all kinds of authority of which the privileged classes avail themselves as a means of coercion. It also is the result of the ignorance of the masses forced to accept their position of inferiority; too often they are accustomed to passive obedience.

It is certain, too, that the victory of a political group, of a class or of a religion, has never assured mankind of well-being with any degree of finality; hence the individual must guard against relinquishing the protection of his interests to a so-called elite, and each individual must be on guard to preserve his own personality against the encroachments of authority.

The Socialist Party, for example, advocated in France about half a century ago the transformation of society. It elected deputies. The number of deputies increased more and more. All their activity has consisted in the proposing of bills and voting on them a little later on, and it is true that as their influence became stronger and stronger, laws piled up and are still piling up which must of necessity culminate in statism. After the liberation, that is, after 1915, the combined activity of the Socialists and Communists brought about nationalization measures which regulate a segment of production, making it more complicated, without any tangible benefit to the proletariat.

The most typical example is Soviet Russia, where the government has consummated the complete socialization of industrial, agricultural, medical activities, and other affairs. Freedom of the individual has disappeared completely, as well as that of basic associations (communities, cooperatives). Everything is regulated according to an elaborate plan. The central authority decides on everything, thus suppressing initiative in the municipalities and other political subdivisions, whereas in a free society the communities and other political groupings would organize themselves in diverse ways, depending upon the preference, needs, and aims of the inhabitants or members thereof, and they would co-operate among themselves in harmony and free understanding, thus forming their own federations and centers of enlightenment.

Many human beings tend to believe in a unique and arbitrary solution of social problems (this tendency being the abuse of logical reasoning). The worst error is to apply this kind of reasoning in the domain of biological or social phenomena.

In order to solve all problems, the Marxists avail themselves of dialectics, notably the famous dialectic which Hegel first employed to prove the excellence of, and the need for, the hegemony of the Prussian kingdom. This serves now to solve political and moral problems, and even in biology the problem of genetics suffers from it, in spite of the findings derived from scientific research work in the Western countries, for it is evident that this, research work does not fall within the framework of Marxist materialism.

Such “logical madness” reminds one in a strange way of that of the Middle-Ages, when *Scholasticism* was supposed to solve all problems and finally ended up in a total void. What was needed was an intellectual revolution, which came into existence during the era of the Renaissance, and which took as its point of departure the free examination of real facts. Thereafter scholasticism became a dead issue.

And here is where dialectics came into being. Now, in the midst of the complexity and the diversity of social or biological problems, any method based solely on logical reasoning is extremely dangerous, and leads to erroneous conclusions. Observation is the only feasible method. Kropotkin has insisted on this point repeatedly.

One must admit that the Marxists are not the only ones who were imbued with “the folly of logic”. One finds this mania also among certain Anarchists, or at least among those who call themselves Anarchists. It has been evidenced by those who employed logical reasoning which they believed to be irrefutable, in order to justify narrow-minded egotism, or to strait-jacket themselves in sectarian fanaticism without any sense of the relativity of things.

Thus again and again absolute theories, for example in the matter of sexual problems, or population problems, or even regarding absolute pacifism, have been completely discredited.

Let us therefore take under consideration all the questions submitted to us for examination, so as to check and observe the whole complexity of the facts and their causes in their variability, and guard against trying to solve them by simple reasoning.

I observe that on the list of subjects submitted for our study and discussion the subject of education is missing. It occupies, however, a very important place. That is where Anarchist ideas have played a pioneer role. In former days education was founded on fear and punishment, in order to induce children and adolescents to stay on the straight and narrow path. Nowadays education relies upon kindness and gentleness, and it seeks to win the students’ confidence. Observation of their deportment and their reactions is of paramount importance. Instead of wanting to impose completely conventional ideas upon the children’s minds, the curriculum seeks to appeal to their intelligence.

At any rate, it does not devolve upon education to produce devotees of a religion, faction, or sect; its task is to build human beings who are capable of observing and thinking and who later on can formulate their own philosophy. That is why the meddling of all churches in education must be completely rejected.

Anarchism is not a political party. It cannot have the goal of creating an ideal social system. Its mission is to educate the individual and to resist oppression, in order to permit liberating attempts in all domains to progress—in the hope of achieving the suppression of inequality and serfdom, and of attaining universal harmony.

No effort is wasted. Libertarian-Anarchist action is an every-day affair. It is a continuous task at all times and at all places. On every possible occasion the Anarchist must impinge himself through discussion and by example on the minds of those who surround him.

In organizations created for the struggle against economic oppression, for instance in labor unions, the Anarchists have to exert an effort so that the workers may preserve their independence with regard to parties or politicians. At the same time they must not confine themselves to collective action on behalf of special interests, but should gird themselves with steadfast idealism for the welfare of all mankind.

Our task is to co-operate with all men, regardless of sex, nationality or color, for the liberty of each and everyone in the whole world, keeping always in mind the ideal of promoting a society founded upon confidence and mutual aid, without exploiting labor for the benefit of a few, and outside of any centralized authority, so that local and national understandings and free initiative may become possible.

The Choice Before the Nations, by J. Garcia Pradas

The libertarian—or Anarchist—attitude with respect to the slogans of “A United World” and “World Government” must necessarily depend, like all else, upon one’s concept of the State in general. For the “world” which we are discussing is not merely a geographic entity, nor need it be a single social organism; rather it must combine within itself the conditions which are characteristic of a political unit. As a matter of fact, the above-mentioned slogans have themselves sprung from a notion concerning the State which considers it as benevolent and—despite all lessons of history to the contrary, with a wilful disregard for the experiences of whole millenia attributes to the State the capacity for remedying its own evils; this, plus the ability to exercise its colossal powers, not to perpetrate greater wrongs than hitherto but, on the contrary, to perform greater miracles of benevolence than God Himself.

These slogans have gained great vogue in the Anglo-Saxon world. This phenomenon is significant and should serve to put everyone on guard, not because its origination in the Anglo-Saxon sphere imparts to it a sinister character but, on the contrary, because that fact lends the slogans an exceptional and candid nature. This must be understood, in view of the fact that one is apt to judge the State as an absolute or pure entity in terms of the concrete, historic, or real State which we have before our eyes; and it is noteworthy that nearly all the governments of British origin have possessed, as the present one possesses, a unique character which can in no way be regarded as universally valid for the State in its absolute sense in any country or epoch.

The original British State was the creation of William the Conqueror, who invested it with a structure quite different from that of the other European countries. William, as master of Britain, was none the less a vassal of the king of France. After subjugating England, he rose in rebellion against that king and gained his independence. However, in order to assure his independence, he was obliged to share his dominion with the Norman bandits who helped him to conquer that island, with the result that the State which he fashioned became a sort of *internal democracy* confined to the nobility. The Magna Carta did nothing more than confirm the privileges of the nobles, in conformity with the desire which John II cherished, to establish in England a monarchy on the model of the French dynasty.

From then on British democracy has been very much like a joint stock company, the shareholders of which have enjoyed not so much certain *freedoms* in the Latin-French sense of the word, as privileges and immunities. The number of stockholders has increased until it includes every citizen of age, but the original “Corporation” continued faithful to its original character; thus it is that in England, as well as throughout the Anglo-Saxon communities, one speaks of over-privileged, privileged, and under-privileged people. This situation has entailed, from the very beginning, the identification of the State with the national political organism, which at one time was confined to the nobility, then comprised also the middle class, and finally embraced also the proletariat.

Up to the present time the British body-politic has always contrived to control the State which represented it, for the “meeting of shareholders” kept under its control the Board of Directors of the Corporation, so that through the centuries the British mentality accustomed itself to the notion that the Corporation, the shareholders and the Board of Directors, plus the *capital* wealth of its dominions, were one and the same thing. When the political organism came to be co-extensive with British society itself, the confusion became greater, so that nearly every Briton today assumes that, nation, people, country, and State are one and the same thing. But actually these are quite distinct and diverse entities. The great Thorstein Veblen, in his *Imperial Germany*, eloquently called attention to this fact, and it is worth while to cite a part of his statement:

“It is as difficult for the commonplace Englishman to understand what the German means by the ‘State’ as it is for the German to comprehend the English conception of a ‘commonwealth’ or very nearly so. The English still have the word ‘state’ in their current vocabulary, because they once had the concept which it is designed to cover, but when they do not in current use confuse it with the notion of a commonwealth, as they commonly do in making it serve as a synonym for ‘nation,’ it is taken to designate an extensive tract of land; on the other hand, the Germans, having never had occasion for such a concept as that covered by the term ‘commonwealth,’ have no corresponding word in their vocabulary.

“The State is a matter not easily to be expounded in English. It is neither the territorial area, nor the population, nor the body of citizens or subjects, nor the aggregate wealth or traffic, nor the public administration, nor the government, nor the crown, nor the sovereign; yet in some sense it is all these matters, or rather all these are organs of the State. In some potent sense, the State is a personal entity, with rights and duties superior and anterior to those of the subject, whether these latter be taken severally or collectively ... The citizen is a subject of the State,

Under a commonwealth, as in the United Kingdom, the citizen is, in the ritual sense of heraldic rank, a subject of the king—whatever that may mean—but this relation ... is a personal relation___of mutual rank between two persons.

“‘The State is the people legally united as an independent power.’ So says one who speaks with authority in these premises. But then, also, The State is in the first instance power, that it may maintain itself; it is not the totality of the people itself- the people is not altogether amalgamated with it; but the State protects and embraces the life of the people. ...On principle it does not ask how the people is disposed; it demands obedience.’ ‘The state is power,’ says the same authority, and ‘it is only the State that is really powerful that corresponds to our idea.’ It might perhaps exceed the scope of the premises to follow him farther and find that *power* here means *military power*. Plainly, government by consent of the governed is not a State. The sovereignty is not in the people, but it is in the State. Failure to understand this conundrum is perhaps the most detestable trait of unreason that taints the English-speaking peoples in the Opinion of intelligent Germans.”

This is likewise our opinion. Potentially and essentially there is no State other than the one which Veblen was wont to designate as “dynastic,” because all of them are an “*imperium*” a military sovereignty or preponderance within their *frontiers*, which in turn—as was clearly evident in the Castilian state of the fourteenth century—were originally, and continue to be, war fronts. There are Englishmen like Bertrand Russell, and Americans like Lewis Mumford, who are quite capable of grasping the difference between the State and the nation, between the State and the country or society. But what usually happens is that, no sooner have they pointed out the difference between such entities, they become completely oblivious of it and it is upon this ‘oblivion’ that they erect their bizarre proposals of World Government. Other authors have done the same

thing on both sides of the Atlantic. For example, to cite only a few of the foremost figures in this respect, the historian Arnold Toynbee, the publicist Emery Reeves, and the genius of physics, Albert Einstein. The astonishing thing is that all of them advance these proposals in frank contradiction of the premises which they expound in support thereof.

Toynbee knows to perfection the final tragedy of other civilizations, all of which were destroyed primarily because of imperialistic madness, because of fanatical attachment to sovereignty, by the unbridled appetite for power and by the monstrosity which is incarnate in the State. He knows that, for example, the Roman Empire was “*just one world*” and that it was undermined and disintegrated not by the barbarians, but by the State which hired them in order to dominate its world by force of arms and to devour the State alive by nibbling away at its tribunals. He also is aware of the fact that the emperors and the powerful officials in their entourage became virtually insane from the authority they enjoyed. I low, then, can one expect that a world government at this time, when technology provides more potent weapons for those in control, will refrain from committing even greater outrages? If every State is a hierarchy of power, then whoever is at the apex of the World State will come to regard himself as God, with more reason than Caligula, Nero, or Augustus, and will oblige us to prostrate ourselves on the steps of his altar or risk being thrown to the lions, like the ancient Christians.

Bertrand Russell, Mumford, Einstein and Reeves, champion the creation of the World State for precisely those reasons which impel me to repudiate it; namely, reasons inherent in nature, the abuses and perils in national states. Whoever reads *Power*, the excellent volume in which Bertrand Russell analyzed the State in such superb fashion—a work surpassed only by Bertrand de Jouvenel’s analogous work, *Da Pouvoir*,—will fail to understand how this outstanding author hopes to remedy the dangers of the National State—dangers derived from political power no more limited than that of a rival State, the former being enhanced to the highest degree, till it becomes absolute and single; and when that point has been reached, there will not even exist the brake of the present imperialistic rivalries. And whoever reads *Programs for Survival*, the reflections of Mumford concerning the risks of any future war, will on the one hand admire his courage, his exalted intentions, his great philosophic insight; but on the other hand he will observe with astonishment the incredible naivete of one who, because of fear of a war among nations, is inclined to entrust the entire world to the indisputable authority of a World State—a conception so monstrous that not even the devil himself resorted to it to tempt Jesus when he offered Him uncounted kingdoms!

Einstein, despite the ardor with which he has devoted himself to the cause of peace, merits less attention in this field of political philosophy. One who has committed the folly of contributing to the unparalleled crime of creating the atomic bomb can still be forgiven; but he can never be regarded as a man who is competent in matters of a politico-social nature. And Emery Reeves is the self-same contradiction incarnate. His *Anatomy of Peace* is a devastating critique of the National State: from which one can only deduce, along with the Anarchists of all times, that, in his words, “The modern Bastille is the nation-state, no matter whether the jailers are conservative, liberal, or socialist. That symbol of our enslavement must be destroyed if we ever want to be free again.”

Entirely in accord; the National State which, although Reeves is unaware of it, is not the same as the *nation state*, must be destroyed. But not, as Mr. Reeves would strangely have it, in order to erect upon the ruins of such a Bastille another one to imprison the entire world, and from which there would be no escape, not even to the planet Mars; but rather that the nation, every man in

it and, in consequence, the whole human race, may become free. The opposite of the National State which today threatens us with an apocalypse of violence, is not its enlarged transformation into a world state, but only Anarchism, the spontaneous social order of mutual aid and of justice, without the crime of any sovereignty based on brute force.

We Anarchists are reputed to be dreamers, visionaries, Utopians, but we shall never indulge in such perilous dreams as the one common to all or nearly all great thinkers outside of our fold—namely to expect from absolute authority what relative authority denies us or takes away from us. In this respect, as in many others, we employ *a posteriori* judgement, having the courage to proclaim what experience dictates to our reason. National States are the successors of bandits or gangsters since the word “*bandido*” comes from “*banda*” or “gang” of criminals. Such bandits of past ages established their lordship through the force of arms; and their mutual plunder, the wars of rapine among them, left no one in peace. It was believed that the way to abolish such a deplorable situation would be to turn over to one “lord” the armed bands of a number of others, along with their respective sovereignties.

Thus we came to the level of the nation, to the National State, and to the army which the nation places in the hands of the State to defend that nation. But actually it is by this means that the State dominates the nation, subjugates, exploits, and enslaves it. The wars among the Lords of the Manor have been replaced by those among States boasting secret police and the atomic bomb. But the banditry of the latter cannot be remedied by the repetition of the grave error committed when we passed from the Middle Ages to the Modern Era.

It will be said that, at least, there will be no more wars among nations. But the answer we must give to Messrs. Russell, Mumford, Reeves, Toynbee, and to all protagonists of the World State is this: just as when the feudal sovereigns were incorporated into the monarchical nation and their wars among themselves were followed by civil dissension, so likewise when the National States are replaced by the World State, there will be no end to wars, only the name of the conflicts may be changed; in place of inter-nation or “international” wars we shall have civil wars throughout the world. We are still left with the fact that the State is, first of all and above all, an empire, an *Imperium*. Well then; the greater the State, the greater the Imperium and, consequently, the more unbridled is the imperialistic appetite. All this means that the struggle for power within the World State would in all likelihood degenerate into a ceaseless civil war playing havoc throughout the world.

This view is held not only by an Anarchist but also by a Spaniard of the 1936 generation, who in the last twelve years has proclaimed hundreds of times that in Spain it was *not Fascism* that rose in rebellion against the people and the Republic, but that the State itself was the guilty element—the Republican State, which at that time was the same as it had been under the monarchy, precisely the one headed by Franco. When—as is the case with the Anglo-Saxons, one confounds the people, country, nation, political regime, and the State, it becomes virtually impossible to understand how the State could rise against a regime which fails to suit it, and revolt against the nation—the sum of the people and the country. Yet these things do happen. And the almost godlike power enjoyed by the Universal State would always offer a temptation for politicians, militarists, and adventurers of every sort.

For let us bear in mind that the World State would, under the best of conditions, be governed only in a formal way by a Parliament which would delegate its powers to a government of its own choosing; the government, in turn, could convert the legislative powers into executive powers by means of a power apparatus which, in order to be effective, would have to feel free of any rivals

anywhere in the world and function as a hierarchy, through orders given from above and fulfilled below; so that the head of the world army or of any of its armed forces could rebel, either on his own initiative or in connivance with some political group, in order to impose upon the entire world a Jovian dictatorship through a *coup d'état*. Did not that very thing happen in Rome?

But even if we minimize that possibility—though it should not be overlooked—we would still be burdened with the permanent existence of the State, which has amply demonstrated in the last decade that it is by no means an “instrumentality of a class,” as the Marxists from Engels down to James Burnham believed, but rather *a class itself*, the very first social class in the historic process and the one that in turn creates social classes; the one that seeks to be the only privileged exploiter, the sovereign and master of society as a whole. Consequently, the creation of the World State would amount to the appearance of a class which, endowed with extraordinary powers, with limitless and unchallenged authority, would enslave all mankind. Hence it is that under no circumstances does it behoove us to hope for any good to come out of the proposal offered by the most gifted madmen of this era.

Then what is to be done? To continue with the present “international anarchy”? Genuine anarchy, gentlemen, is the complete absence of States, not the disorder which States further. “The present international anarchy”, like that other cliché of “medieval anarchy,” is nothing but “polyarchy” with constant banditry. And the only way to do away with this is to disarm the “archies” or national states with a view toward obliterating them completely afterward. When that has been done, we shall find to our pleasant surprise that there are no war fronts, no frontiers, and that the society of the world is one and one only, by the natural determinism of the human limitations which have engendered mutual aid, which have made man gregarious and a social creature, and have created a world society of co-operating entities, within which fall and fit thousands and even millions of small groupings of non-state elements—in other words, anarchic, non-state entities. In a word, the choice lies between Anarchism and the destruction of the world.

Present-Day Role of the Church, by George Woodcock

In writing of the role of the Church in the political and social changes which are going on in the present century, it is important first of all to be quite clear in our minds as to what we are discussing. Clearly, the libertarian is not concerned with attacking Christian beliefs as such, since his own attitude is based primarily on the assumption that each man should be free to believe what he likes and to express that belief freely.

Without actual tolerance there can be no liberty, and it is only where those who profess Christianity abandon the principle of individual conviction and seek to establish authority, that the libertarian can logically attack them. Therefore his quarrel is not with Christianity as a religious or ethical doctrine, nor with those who profess it as individuals, but with those organizations which seek to institutionalize religions into disciplined patterns of thought and action, and hence to establish spiritual, intellectual, and even physical hierarchy. There is a minority of Christians to whom these criticisms cannot be applied, and some of them, like the Doukhobors, can justly be accepted as libertarians in their attitude toward individual freedom.

Organized religion presents us with a bewildering variety of churches sects, and other organizations, all seeking to establish their more or less limited degree of authority over those who adhere to their doctrines, and demanding at least some extent of doctrinal uniformity and obedience to the sectarian creed. All these groups are dangerous, in so far as they weaken the sense of individual judgement and help to induce a form of institutionalized thinking which makes their members more amenable to authority in its physical form.

Each in its small way is a mirror of the State and, like faithful children, the great majority of religious organizations, as well as most of their members and ministers, support the ruling class in its times of crisis. Some, indeed, like the Church of England, are openly and avowedly State churches, but even the nominally independent groups are hardly less advanced in their support when the system of authority to which they are attached seems to be in danger, either from external attack or rebellion within.

Generally speaking, the various Protestant churches are the outcome of different stages of development of the capitalist-nationalist system. They were the bodies which sanctified the rise of the middle class from the sixteenth up to the nineteenth centuries, and gave it a sense of divine mission. Calvinism, in particular, with its doctrines of predestination, gave the wealthy a comforting belief that their condition of material superiority was ordained by God and that they had no fundamental responsibility to the under-dog, whose abasement also was fore-ordained. Similarly, the various Erastian religions, like Anglicanism and Lutheran-ism, sanctified the new national states which arose out of the break-up of the semi-international society of medieval Europe.

It is characteristic of the Protestant churches that, except for a few visionary sects of slight membership and influence, they have always assumed a subsidiary position toward the ruling or

rising economic and political interests. While they have served those interests, as Anglicanism, Calvinism, Congregationalism, Methodism, and even the Salvation Army all did in their turn, they have often acquired a kind of translated vigor, but they have never thriven independently, and where the Protestant churches are still of any importance today, they are so by virtue of their integration into the existing system of domination.

Hut the actual power and influence of the Protestant sects has declined radically since the last century. Protestantism, based intellectually on doubt of the Catholic doctrines, is in itself peculiarly susceptible to doubt, and the ruling classes quickly tended to lose reliance on it as their principal means of ideological support when it was subjected to damaging forms of criticism. Parallel systems of thought began to provide those buttresses of theory and myth which every form of authority finds essential for its continued existence.

Scientific materialism, itself the most important enemy of Christian thought in the nineteenth century, gave its own support to capitalism and the state's authority through Huxley's extreme doctrines of the inevitability of the merciless struggle for existence. Nationalism, blossoming to full vigor after 1848, provided new ideological symbolisms; the rise of pseudo-scientific racial doctrines prepared a situation in which Hitler could create a national ideology which had no need of Christianity, while the messianic element of Marx's historical teachings later provided a synthetic religion for Communist governments.

Under these conditions, surrounded by so many more potent forms of symbolism, the Protestant tradition has declined in most countries to a secondary servant of the ruling class, of little intrinsic power or danger. Occasionally an individual Protestant or a group within some church will become uncomfortably aware of the import of some of the original Christian teachings and take a radical course of action, but such rebellions have little weight, and in general the Protestant cults can be dismissed as wholly subsidiary to ruling class interests, and dangerous only as servants of those interests.

The case of Catholicism is entirely different, and here the libertarian faces an institution of vast experience and a power which, far from being impaired, is steadily increasing. The Roman Church has fought throughout its history for independent power; in the Middle Ages, using the weapons of interdiction and excommunication, it maintained a struggle which was on the whole successful against those rulers who tried to challenge its authority within their own realms, and it kept its place throughout this long era as an international body wielding temporal as well as spiritual power.

During the Reformation, the Church indeed lost ground as a result of its own inner corruption and the combined assault of philosophical skepticism and the political alliance of nationalist kings and rising middle-class financiers. But the success of the Reformation in Northern Europe stiffened the attitude of Rome; the Counter-Reformation and the rise of the Society of Jesus purged the rot that had entered the old medieval structure, and closed the ranks of the Church for a struggle waged by every means at its disposal. The immediate consequence was the consolidation of Catholicism in Spain and Italy, and the winning back of France and Ireland. From that time onward the policy of Rome was clear, and it has remained unchanged. It has been to consolidate the Church as an international organization with complete spiritual and temporal power.

For this purpose the Church has entered into any alliance that has appeared expedient, and, possessing an adoptive instead of an hereditary hierarchy, has contrived to retain a resilience and a continued efficiency which more rigid systems have lacked. Monarchies have died, dictators

have fallen, but the Catholic Church has continued, and today, once again, is strengthening its hold in most parts of the world. In England, for instance, long a stronghold of Protestantism, the Roman Catholic Church now possesses a larger number of *effective* members than even the Church of England, while many distinguished intellectuals have entered its fold in recent years.

The spread of Catholicism, and hence of the temporal power of the Vatican, can only be countered if it is understood that the sole objective of the Roman Church is the furtherance of its own international authority. The Vatican may support various rulers, but only for its *own* convenience; it is never wholly committed, will take up arms against a ruling class creed, like Naziism or Russian Communism, that seems a major threat to its own power, and will desert an ally without hesitation, as it deserted Fascism in Italy on the triumph of the Western Allies.

The Church of Rome, likewise, is not committed to political conservatism. In Spain it is reactionary, in France or Italy it is "Socialist" or "democratic" in England it is liberal and even pseudo-libertarian. In French Canada it can be seen in transition from support of the reactionary Quebec capitalists to advocacy of the radical movement among the French Canadian workers, whom it fears may slip from its hands.

Because of its adaptability and internationalism, because it represents the one live and independent religious body, because it is sensitive to social tendencies and able to assume protective coloring, because it is quite capable of advocating Fascism in one country and some parody of free Socialism in another, the Roman Catholic Church stands among the most dangerous institutions in the world today, and the libertarian should always be conscious of this fact.

A Catholic writer once told me that he thought a day would come when Fascism and Communism alike would be things of the past and when the last struggle for the soul of man would take place between Catholicism and Anarchism. His vision was perhaps over-simplified, but at least it did recognize the fact that the Catholic Church does represent the prototype of human authority, and that its pretensions are incompatible with those of men who seek the fullest and most fruitful freedom of relationships between man and man.

Anarchism, Anarchy, Anarchists, by David Wieck

Let us identify and locate ourselves, the Anarchists.

I shall speak, necessarily, of Anarchists as I understand Anarchists, Anarchism as I understand it.

We are people who have values, aims, and methods *radically* different from the dominant. Our comradeship is neither in doctrine nor daily program, on these we easily disagree, rather this: we face our nature, affirm life, stubbornly insist on the real and basic needs; and we understand that these are possible only as we are free from external oppression (authority as violence) and internal oppression (authority within us). We are people who insist upon, and affirm, liberty from authority, and freedom within the individual; we are those who assert (and follow our logic) that these ends of freedom and liberty can be achieved only by *directness*: freedom *through* freedom, liberty *through* liberty.

This last century, our oppressors, problems, goals, are specific in this way: the centralized political State, the dominant capitalist-military-political ruling class, an increasingly complex array of institutions binding these together, and the social organization (and ourselves) to them; holding society in tension and violence of world war following world war, concentration camps and extermination camps of indifferent flags and ideologies; most significantly in the systematic, ruthless, even purposeless, destruction of the principle of life. (The ideally adapted human today is composed, as it were, of a small small core of living substance, surrounded by a many times larger mass of deadness, confusion, violence; covered completely by a hard thin shell of customs, habits, and compulsions that constitute the daily economic rituals, the culture, civilization: this is the basic disaster; the great bombs are consistent, but ironically superfluous.)

Living so: burdened, threatened, oppressed, exploited, enslaved, regimented, killed, and left (living) for dead: for a century we have risen in rebellion, adamant in disobedience, joined as friends and neighbors in solidarity and community; this handful of Anarchists; believing firmly that this need not be, we need not live so, will be free.

Our definition in space and time becomes more exact now: the day after a century of unmitigated disasters to movement, comrades, friends, strangers; a handful still, seemingly forced to choose between illusion and despair; on the day before other atomic facts, amid the potent demonstrations of giant nation-states planning our (incidental) extermination. And, seemingly without reluctance, our neighbors perform the necessary labor: mass homicide, slavery, regimentation, and the rest.

These facts, the lack of even individual refuge for survival alive, the unimpassioned murderings by our neighbors—are these all there is? Are we to withdraw to museums and study histories of the decay of civilizations—or make peace, pact or armistice, so as to die a little later, in greater safety? (but not the safety of our *selves*). Or is it so, that there is work to do, joyful and rewarding work, and we may think and hope without illusion or despair?

There is this work, this illusionless, affirming thought, but it is easier not to see and do it.

Assume a worst: that it were so (*if it were so*), for example, that our neighbors, even our friends (our enemies cannot disappoint us as our friends can), are, forever will be, as they are (which we know too well); or, the same thing, the prevailing social orders are immutable in their central principle of slavery: were this really so (some argue) our Anarchism has no meaning, we ought to become one with the ideals and acts of the society and its population. No! Not so that a thing is better for being inevitable; not so that our happiness and health would no longer depend on rejection of this social machine, its inhuman demands, its suffocating terms: so, on the other hand, that a man must be as free as he *can*, make a revolution of indefinite (most possible) extension.

Were it really so—some argue this, too—that the mass is by nature docile, unrebelling, must be led and herded, it then does not follow that we should lead, herd and slaughter them into our (former!) Utopia. Even so, when we observe the State's seeming omnipotence, we cannot become its slaves, masters, or loyal opposition; again we protect ourselves, shelter our friends, undermine it in its locus of power (minds of subjects).

Or assume that no alternative to destruction can be: Could we then be “realists,” as we are bidden to be, argue the relative merits of a bomb now or two years from now; support (that is, help create) a war, be its soldiers, fabricate its weapons? No! if our belief is in life, community, and freedom, No! not by participating in a lesser evil (killing strangers, to the gain of our oppressors), but by rejecting all the evils will we mitigate them all. (And I deny that we will not one day abolish them!)

But let us not give these people the best of the argument a moment more! We are learning; there is work to be done; we know (our friends disappoint us; but not always) from day to day that there is ability for another life in us, our neighbors, strangers.

Experience and our science tell us that the nature of man is not such as slavery causes to appear.

If, less than of old, we have faith in the virtue of propaganda, dramatic insurrections, quick revolution; less than of old, in the inevitability of mass anarchic rebellion to economic misery; if so, we have learned much of the power of direct action, immediate action, personal action, group action, learning that what is revolutionary in time of revolution is not so much street barricades but the immediate revolutionary act: as the Spanish anarchists taught us, a village or a factory is enough. We have learned that as groups living the ethics and meaning of Anarchism we create an Anarchist community in and as our movement, and demonstrate by this new society our ideas, and their practicality. We have learned that as individuals we do most by this same living of ethics and meaning of Anarchism, creating a new environment for our non-Anarchist friends, creating the new society, a new life.

By daily acts of life we are more deeply angered, gifted with hatred at a kind of life (as it is); more deeply knowing, in our hearts, that we must live differently; more earnestly searching in each direction our strength allows us, ways and instruments and friends and comrades in a struggle which must have this form: the creation of new life, or continuing death.

More urgent work, a finer goal, labor more consonant with our persons and ideas, surely we cannot imagine. To those who wish immediate, simple, political answers to atomic problems, we would seem to give no answer: but it is by plotting the utilitarian murder of a million strangers in a far-off city that one can intervene in this politics, guide the hands of States. We select, for

our goals, other weapons: the strong desires and dreams of man, the strength and joy and magic of life. We *can* do this.

How Long Can Capitalism Survive?, by M. P. T. Acharya

Karl Marx was wrong in expecting the collapse of capitalism around 1848. Kropotkin was wrong in looking for widespread social revolution about 1905. But I have strong belief that a general disintegration of capitalism is near—much nearer than the most pessimistic adherent of the capitalist system can imagine. That collapse can come about in one or another of two ways: either without a war or after a war.

If governments postpone a war hoping that capitalism, sick and tottering, will recover, they miscalculate. If the war does not come soon, it will be impossible to carry on a war later, for capitalism will have fallen in pieces by that time instead of regaining its strength. There are two ways of going down and out for capitalism: with war or without war. In either case, it is doomed.

If those who are optimistic about the continuance of capitalism are correct in their contention (and unfortunately such optimists are more numerous in labor camps than among the capitalists), then there can be no hope for the coming of Socialism and therefore no use of any of us preparing for Socialism. If Socialism will not come for a long time, why try to create it? It won't come if capitalism can last long. While capitalists are having nervous breakdowns worrying about their own system, it appears that the Socialists and Communists are the only optimists with regard to the continuance of capitalism.

Reasons for anticipating capitalism's early collapse are ready to hand. Capitalism is a wage system, even if Socialists carry it on and even if Communists want to carry it on. In fact, they also are capitalists, for they can maintain the States in which they live only with the help of the wage system. But the capitalists will bankrupt that system so thoroughly that even the Socialists will not be able to salvage it.

It is no longer 1917, which made possible the resuscitation of the wage-system and abortion of the Revolution in Russia. The economic chaos in Stalin's country and the want of food there are evidence that the wage-method is in its last throes in the Soviet Union. A monolithic economy is more difficult to carry on with the wage-system than even the divided private capitalist economy. Under private capitalism, the ruined capitalists act as shock absorbers in any economic crisis, but in a totalitarian or monolithic economy, the shock affects the whole set-up.

Whether in Russia or elsewhere the wage-system, because it can be conducted only under the aegis of the State, leads to reduction of consumption, for the masses have to pay a substantial portion of their earnings to maintain the State, and as the cost of such maintenance rises, they necessarily consume less and less. Added to this, it is out of the pockets of the workers that must come the money to pay for interest, rent, profits, and sales commissions involved in the operation of capitalistic industries. Thus the wage-system constantly throttles consumption of commodities. And capitalism inevitably will abolish itself by strangling consumption. So will State capitalism that is called Marxian Communism. If we do not believe that the wage system lives on its own fat, then there is no use for Socialism, for capitalism could continue for all time.

That is what the Socialist and Communist Marxians hope for. Otherwise, their getting the State into their own hands will not be possible. Their hopes are based on their wishes.

While Marxism has been tried in various forms everywhere, the Anarchist theory, which is older than Marxism, has not yet been tested anywhere. Now, with the impending smash-up of the wage-system—made hopelessly bankrupt by the capitalists themselves, there is only one feasible possibility ahead. That is Anarchism. The time for testing Anarchist economies is nearer than ever.

If or when the capitalist collapse comes, mankind has before it only two alternatives—Anarchism or chaos. That is the perspective. It will depend on the Anarchists themselves how far they can put the human race on the road to Anarchist economics.

Capitalism appears fully entrenched—but only appears so. For it has no rival. But that does not prove that it can save itself, thanks to the wage-system and the steady reduction of commodity-consumption. Already its currency system has been wrecked; there is no chance of reviving the gold standard. Currencies in present use are fictitious. Yet the capitalists and their sponsors in the halls of government try to maintain the fiction by agreement.

Capitalism is money economics. It can continue by changing less money into more money; otherwise it is lost. The exchange of commodities is carried on only as a means of making less money into more money, both internally and in foreign trade. Now all countries are endeavoring to sell more and more goods abroad in order to earn more money with less money, because in internal trade sales will mean only the taking of more and more money from the wage-earners, thus reducing their power to purchase and consume. Internal trade alone cannot keep capitalism going. Now the capitalists of all nations are impelled to resort to the same trick, if they can do it: sell more to other countries and buy less from abroad. Otherwise, there will be less and less money internally. This means that more and more countries cannot buy or sell, and this will cut the ground from under capitalism and the wage system.

Today the world is nearer to a single capitalist economy than it ever was. That is the great difficulty and danger that capitalism faces. It is like the right hand trying to sell to the left hand and get profits—or the right trying to put some money into the left pocket in order to take out more money. It cannot be done. All the international economic and trade conferences called in these days are motivated by anxiety about this danger. But the conferees find themselves unable to agree, since each country wants to make the other countries pay profits that they cannot afford to pay.

Capitalism will be “tied up” whether Socialists are prepared for the situation or not. If it does not cease existing there can be no hope of Socialism coming and no use for it. Capitalism will collapse even without a general strike for social revolution. Otherwise, let us not think of Socialism at all. It would be only intellectual delectation without any practical use. Many Socialists appear to have the attitude that “it will come some day anyhow,” so why worry about the situation? But capitalism will crash about their heads with a deafening roar. It will be too late then to think of Socialism.

Socialism and Anarchism are ahead of us, or chaos. Never mind how soon. If the great collapse is to come, it is up to Socialists and Anarchists to prepare for it, even if it should come next month or next week. But according to all present indications, we seem to welcome chaos rather than Socialism and Anarchism.

Anarchism and Anarchists must be ready with a scientifically workable plan. For Anarchists, Anarchism is synonymous with scientific economics. For such economics inevitably make anar-

chic (non-state) conditions essential. But we Anarchists must formulate a scientifically workable social economic plan which will be for the benefit of all—an economic blue-print that will be acceptable even to non-Anarchists who do not care for Anarchism. We must not offer that program as an Anarchist plan, but only as scientific social economics, which are easily understandable to all and which will benefit all persons equally. We must deduce Anarchism from scientific economics, and show that it is inseparable from scientific economics.

People generally are bound together more by bread than by freedom, although for Anarchists bread and freedom are identical. While freedom may have different meanings for different people, bread has the same meaning for all. Bread and economic well-being. Economics being material, there cannot be absolute freedom. How to make the best of economics for the well-being of all without exception is the only thing that can be attempted today. That is the limit of freedom. Outside of economic possibilities there can be no freedom.

Today people are bound to hear how they can assure their living from birth to death, though they do not care for freedom. But they hope that the wage system will not be abolished. They are victims of everyone who promises higher wages, whether they really get a better income or not. Anarchists must say that we cannot live any longer by the wage-system, whether we want it or not, for that system will eventually lead to economic collapse even if sponsored by Socialists or Communists. Therefore those who promise higher wages are quacks, humbugs, and deceivers.

We have no solution for the great existing economic problem within the wage-system, nor has anyone else. Only rogues assert that they have. Today there is no validity in any battle for improvement of wages, but only in striving for abolition of wages. All else is illusion and delusion. The syndicalists must not let themselves get entangled in the struggle for wage increases, if they want to prepare for social revolution. The days for such struggle are over. People now want to hold to their jobs and to preserve whatever wages they can get; there are too many others waiting to take those jobs at even less wages if they are vacated. It is a waste of time to battle for higher wages. Either we abolish the wage-system or we go down with capitalism and Bolshevism. There is no third alternative.

Before us there is one huge, over-all question, and no partial questions. The wage struggle, trade union movements, agrarian problems, colonialism, present-day democracy, even the struggles against State Communism and Fascism, do not exist in the total problem confronting us. Those struggles will have their adherents, but they cannot help even themselves—for the whole capitalist system from the Fascist to the Bolshevik forms, based as they are on the wage-method, is cracking and is bound to crash. It is the special business of the Anarchists to point this out. If another global war comes, they cannot prevent it, and if a general economic crash has to come they cannot avert that either. Let others waste their time over the partial capitalist problems—and there *are* many individuals who squander their hours on partial problems. The chief concern of Anarchists is with the total problem: After the capitalistic collapse, which cannot be followed even by Bolshevism, what should people do? And how shall we make them understand what they should do?

Many voices still cry against exploitation by capitalism. But if capitalism collapses, no new exploitation through the wage-system will be possible. We may have banditry and murders on a large scale, but compelling people to work for wages will become impossible. That is how I envisage the future. We may all die of starvation but we will not be wage-slaves. Countless men and women are still willing to be wage-slaves, but will have no chance to be after capitalism falls.

The capitalists dig their own graves with the wage-system, whether the workers desire it or not, but that is no consolation to the millions of wage-slaves. In fact, they are afraid of the day when the capitalists will be gone. For they do not know how to live beyond that turning point. Here is rich opportunity for Anarchists to point the way—provided that they formulate a workable, scientific social and economic program. It may already be too late to propagate such a plan, for we are nearer to chaos than to Socialism. But certainly an attempt should be made—to the exclusion of everything else.

Bombay, India

The Right to Self-Determination, by Joseph J. Cohen

Words are bound to be the first victims in any era of great social disturbance. Their meaning and content are interpreted in various ways depending on the angle from which the person or group using them looks at the trend of general development.

Viewed in the light of the vanishing past, in which subjugated national groups were forcibly held together in the Hapsburg Empire of Austria, or in the Ottoman Empire of Turkey, *the right to self-determination of nations*, promulgated by President Woodrow Wilson in his historical Fourteen Points, appeared a progressive step leading to greater freedom and a better chance for the peaceful development of international relations. To the nations on the checker board of Europe at the conclusion of the first World War, the right to self determination appeared to be a just solution of the many complex problems arising out of the breaking up of the gigantic combinations of empires competing for supremacy in a world of power politics.

But when we study this problem from present-day experience and the standpoint of the new social order slowly but surely emerging from the chaos of repeated world wars, we find the solution proposed by President Wilson is in reality a stumbling block to lasting peace.

Parceling of each continent into separate hegemonies walled in by guarded boundary lines, tariffs, competing *valuta* and restrictions against foreigners, tends to insulate the peoples of the earth into antagonistic national sovereignties, suspicious of one another and hostile to everything cloaked in unfamiliarity.

The small, independent governments in Europe, created by the treaty of Versailles as a result of President Wilson's formula, did not contribute to the solution of a single one of the problems confronting the western world at that time. Rather did the problems become more complicated. The racial groups of Europe are so integrated and blended that nothing short of uprooting and resettling whole populations could separate them into their component parts. Whether they like it or not, they *must* live together. And any encouragement toward separatism, toward self-determination, is bound to lead to more harm than good.

The baneful tendency of the *right to self-determination* manifested itself in the newly created states which had owed their very existence to the promulgation of the principle. No sooner had they become autonomous than they began to limit the rights of their minorities. Poland, which had suffered oppression under the Russian tsar, the German kaiser, and the Austrian emperor, immediately set out to oppress, and curtail the freedoms of, millions of Jews and Ukrainians who had lived within her borders since time immemorial. The same thing happened in Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Latvia, and all the other newly created states.

The concept that a nation is endowed with the right to determine its destiny and regulate unhindered the conditions of life within its territory is based on the outworn principle of absolute right to property and on the fallacy that the rights of a nation are parallel to that of the family. Since the law recognizes the individual's right to own and dispose of property in his own way,

people are willing to grant the same right to a nation. The result is demonstrated in Australia, where 7,500,000 people occupying a territory nearly as large as the United States, by reason of their right of self-determination, do not permit people to settle there unless the latter qualify in certain limited classifications. In like manner, the 13,000,000 citizens of Canada occupying an area much larger than the United States feel justified in shutting their doors against newcomers.

Yet this is absurd. It can find no support in morals, ethics, or human usage based on any principle other than force. And any social arrangement depending solely on force must sooner or later lead to conflict and a test of arms. We are slowly coming to realize that, if we are to survive, our existence will depend on the unification of the peoples of the world and their integration into one family. *One world or none* is not merely a well sounding phrase, it is the *sine qua non* imposed upon our race by its historical development and the invention of such tools of destruction as the atom bomb and gas and bacterial warfare, which threaten to annihilate us all. Every effort to divide and separate human beings, even when based on the most idealistic of slogans, is a step backward and a hindrance to progress.

By the very nature and logic of its concept, the right to self-determination is applicable only to the basic human unit composing society, *the individual*. He is perfectly justified in claiming for himself freedom of action and conduct with the sole qualification of not infringing upon the rights of others, and being willing to limit his freedom by the equal right to freedom of his neighbor. Large groups of peoples, whole nations organized as sovereign states, based as they are on compulsion and guided by *raison d'etat*, can hardly be expected to do justice to the term. Any recourse to the right of self-determination on their part must bring only discredit to a principle once cherished by well-meaning idealists.

Anarchism and Agriculture, by Gaston Leval

In *The Conquest of Bread* and in his other famous work, *Fields, Factories, and Workshops*, Peter Kropotkin dwelt at length upon the problem of agriculture. Unfortunately his studies in that sphere have not been followed up, and one may safely state that our movement, in this regard, holds sonic generalized ideas which are vague and, what is more serious, rather one-sided.

Now it is certain that the solution of the agricultural problem, from the libertarian point of view, cannot be identical for all countries nor, frequently, the same for any given country in all its regions. Topography and climate, which determine the type of vegetation; the mentality of the inhabitants and their needs—all these factors combine to bring it about that, at least for a rather lengthy period, post-revolutionary developments are quite diverse.

For example, the farmer of France, and also in the United States—from what I have read on various occasions—is profoundly individualistic. The collectivization of the land and cultivation in common, such as was done in Spain during the revolutionary period from 1936 to 1939, could not be carried out in those two countries—at least not so rapidly. Even in Spain, the great majority of Catalan farmers, fundamentally individualistic, proved recalcitrant toward socialization, and the successful attempts carried out in that direction are computed at perhaps about thirty out of a total of 1,500 in that part of the country which the anti-Fascists held in their hands at the beginning of 1936.

Bakunin fully understood the difficulties of the problem when, during the discussions held at the First International, he recommended “abolition of the right of inheritance.” When the Marxists proceeded to ridicule his proposal he replied that any attempt to abolish small-scale property immediately after the Revolution would provoke armed resistance on the part of the peasants and would have to be imposed upon them by force; that this would be tantamount to the employment of reactionary means and would signify the death of the Revolution. However, he added, by doing away with the right of inheritance, you are preventing property from being passed on from father to son, and thus the succeeding generation will be truly a Socialist one.

I do not believe that one can adopt any single method, since, as I stated before, there are countries and regions where socialization can be carried out from the very beginning, and others where that is impossible. But the compromise solution offered by Bakunin demonstrates how complex this problem is.

Nevertheless, Socialist Anarchists generally are of the opinion that—regardless of the means employed to attain the goal—work on the soil, as well as in factory, mines, transportation, public utilities, etcetera, ought to be done in common, that is by more or less numerous groups of men, depending on the natural, human, and technological conditions at hand.

This viewpoint rests upon reasons which are of a moral and practical character at the same time. First of all *Moral*, since the isolation of the worker of the soil tends to preserve in him a narrow and selfish mind, impelling him to rely entirely upon his own resources—a kind of mentality little adapted for sociability or sentiments of solidarity, without which men nearly always come to regard one another as enemies. *Practical* also, because utilization of the tools of

work which science and technology have placed at our disposal is virtually beyond the reach of the isolated farmer. Production is adversely affected and man is compensated far less for his own effort.

If one analyzes the output of the small, medium-sized, and large land-holding for the same products and under like conditions of fertility and climate, universal experience shows that it is always the large-scale property which allows the greatest reward for man. It is in large-scale enterprises where machines are used most extensively that output per acre is greatest, which in turn makes for less expensive production costs. It is in holdings of considerable scope that, comparatively speaking, the effort expended for an equal output is the lowest. It is on the vast plains of Canada, the United States, Argentina, Australia—where the average farming area is incomparably greater than that of European countries—that wheat, the key agricultural crop, is produced at a far lower cost. Between a country like France, where the average surface of a farm holding is but nine hectares, and the United States, where it is 78 hectares or about 195 acres, it is only natural that in the latter country farming is less costly.

The large-scale farming project—whether it be capitalistic or socialistic, is therefore the most desirable from the standpoint of the best utilization of technological devices which it makes possible. The Campbell Company in the United States which cultivates some 20,000 acres of land with 150 workers, is a striking example of this principle. One single worker for fifty-three hectares! Nor is this phenomenon peculiar to the United States nor to Canada only.

The agrarian “collectives” of Spain have confirmed our thesis. Aragon, where the proximity of the battle-front led to mobilization of an average of forty out of every 100 men, and those the most robust—which represented not less than fifty percent of the available energy in normal times—the amount of cultivated ground was increased by thirty percent, thanks to the fuller use of technological devices, to greater speed of cultivation, and to greater productivity per man. And also, it was possible to assign a part of the labor crew to the construction of pig-sties, stables, connecting roads, artesian wells, poultry yards, orchards, and the like.

The superiority of the large-scale enterprise over the small one such that I am convinced, from the point of view of output, large-scale ownership is preferable to the small type, even in a society where the exploitation of one man by another will have disappeared, I also am convinced that in our present-day society the salaried worker in a big enterprise is better off than the minor proprietor living in primitive fashion rather precariously on his small patch of land.

In the two volumes I mentioned at the outset of this essay, Kropotkin upheld *intensive farming*. First in *The Conquest of Bread* he endeavored to prove that if Paris were isolated by a counter-revolution, the single Departments of the Seine and of Seine-et-Oise would be sufficient to feed that city by utilizing all the advancement made by modern agriculture. In *Fields, Factories, and Workshops* his idea assumes greater scope. He takes his point of departure from a humanitarian concept of the economy. He holds that it is necessary to integrate intellectual and manual work, as well as industrial and agricultural operations.

Unfortunately, in order to corroborate his thesis, Kropotkin endeavors to prove, with the aid of statistics, that intensive cultivation, which would make it possible to decentralize agriculture and to integrate the largest possible number of farm holdings in one area, also possesses the advantage of being less costly than extensive cultivation. Statistics of a partial nature appear to justify his position. An investigation of the problem on a world-wide scale, however, refutes his thesis. Intensive cultivation mobilizes too many technological devices and equipment of an

auxiliary nature, and proportionately requires an excessively large number of workers, or a disproportionate expenditure of energy, to be defensible from the purely economic point of view.

But it is an indisputable fact that the extensive type presents some advantages of a purely human sort. First of all, men engaged in tilling the soil, in sowing wheat or cereal grains of any kind, in tending this wheat and harvesting it: men who are accustomed to dwell in the immensities of space where one sees nothing but wheat fields, corn fields, vegetables or cotton—lead a monotonous existence and are in no way enriched intellectually by their toil. On the other hand, men who not only produce wheat, but also tend fruit trees, grow vegetables, raise live stock and, when circumstances permit, also wield the hammer, the plane, or the saw, unquestionably derive from their work a certain mental enrichment and even an inner psychic satisfaction.

Economically, therefore, Kropotkin's concept is untenable. But from the human standpoint it is highly defensible. However, its application depends on the possibilities of every spot, every region and country. Above all, that application cannot be one-sided. Geography is a fact.

One does not endeavor to cause wheat to grow—at least it would be folly to try it—in mountainous terrain. But it is possible to cultivate vineyards there, or olive groves, provided that the climate is suitable. Under present agricultural conditions one cannot raise cotton in France, Sweden, or Canada, nor coffee in Germany. Decentralization of agriculture is therefore possible only on a limited scale. But wherever it is possible, it is certainly to be recommended from the human point of view. For in a Socialist economy, even if it were less productive, the benefits of a material nature brought about by a change in regimes would amply compensate for losses caused by “humanization” of the agrarian economy.

Two great historic examples, the Russian and the Spanish Revolutions, shed valuable light on this subject as precedents. The compulsory collectivization effected in Russia has transformed vast tracts of land into veritable “factories of wheat,” of rye or of corn, according to the terminology adopted there. But it also has dehumanized the economy, so much so that it is the mechanics, the drivers of tractors, the heads of the machine repair shops, and the like, who dominate agriculture and the farmers. In Spain, on the contrary, the attempt was made to integrate so far as possible the entire economy of each village, of each collective farm, in such fashion, that every member of a “collective” took turns in growing cereal grains, raising vegetables or fruits, or raising livestock.

Every village or every collective farm project tended to constitute a miniature world of its own, united with the others, yet unfolding the widest possible range of activities itself. Naturally such an arrangement depended also, as it depends and will continue to depend, on natural possibilities. There are areas which can produce nothing but wheat, or vineyards, or pasturage. Where there falls an average rainfall of 1.6 millimeters (.062992 of an inch) per year, it is fruitless to try to obtain cereal grains or oranges. An abundance of grass makes possible the development of stock raising. Integration is therefore, one may safely affirm, a tendency the application of which depends upon geological and climatic factors which should never be disregarded.

But we are living today more and more on a world-wide scale. The world is becoming increasingly a vast economic unit, and continents and peoples are more than ever before interdependent. One may decentralize certain types of production, but in proportion as human needs expand in quantity and variety of products, other centralizations or concentrations become either necessary or inevitable. I have cited coffee, cotton, olives, and oranges; and one should add to the list lemons, cattle raising, from which not only meat is obtained but also milk, butter, tallow, leather, and other by-products. Thus there exists an interdependence among all nations; and the agrarian

economy, and for that matter the industrial economy, must be approached from the global point of view.

Baldwin, in his day, already recognized the need for a federation of all the peoples of the earth, both for work and for a common existence. World economic integration is therefore one aspect of the agrarian economy. In a sanely organized world the farmers of the United States, Canada, Australia, Argentina, and Russia, should produce for their brethren in Africa, Japan, or Italy. But capitalist society and the spirit of narrow nationalism prevent such solidarity or else confine it to purely commercial purposes.

For my part I hold that so long as production has not been brought up to a level making it possible to satisfy the needs of all human beings that inhabit the globe, specialized husbandry or farming is a necessity, since it is the most advantageous economically, as its operation in the United States demonstrates. Yet one realizes that this system presents other objectionable features. Diversified farming, or what might be termed "polyculture," not only offers the advantage of an infinitely more abundant spiritual satisfaction but what is more—in the presence of the calamities of nature such as droughts, killing frosts, and disease, it makes it possible for the farmer to lose perhaps his wheat crop, his harvest of grapes or apples, without being ruined thereby, since the other products of his farm allow him to fulfill his most urgent needs.

Similarly, if a sudden catastrophic decline in prices occurs, the producer who cultivates nothing but cereal grains, vineyards, beets, coffee, or cacao, becomes the complete victim of such a situation. In order that large-scale, specialized agricultural pursuits such as that of cotton in the Argentine Chaco, dates in Egypt, or rice in Indo-China, can be maintained, it is essential that, as an example of universal solidarity, the region which may be a victim of the vagaries of nature should be immediately supported and succored by the other regions. Since this cannot come to pass under a capitalistic order, one often has recourse to "poly-culture" (multiple crops) even at the expense of lower yields, and of a greater scarcity of products for humanity as a whole.

Integration, or co-ordination on a world-wide scale is therefore out of the question under the present system. The internationalization of agriculture implies not only the elimination of capitalism, but also the abolition of those nationalist prejudices to which the peoples of the earth are still so strongly addicted.

Local co-ordination, or a large-scale specialized farming operation dictated by natural conditions and the needs of humanity—which must be satisfied regardless of all doctrines—working the soil in common, common possession of the soil and of the implements of work; all these are no less necessary. The social principle is paramount, regardless of conditions of productivity. It is a fact that this principle will be more or less capable of fulfillment. In overpopulated countries, where it is necessary to toil upon the sides and slopes of the mountains, on strips of land surrounded by stones or rocks, collective work cannot be carried out on the same scale, or at least not in the same fashion as on the immense plains of the Ukraine or the Pampas. This fact we cannot escape. But whatever can be done in common will be done. And whatever yield is obtained will be shared in common, which is the essential thing.

How is this ideal to be realized? The limits of my treatise will not permit me to elaborate as I should like on this question, which may be approached under two aspects: favorable human conditions, and unfavorable ones. Let us consider unfavorable conditions, where the farmer displays individualistic mentality. It is clear that in such a case socialization cannot be imposed by force. It would, however, be necessary to accomplish as much socialization as possible, and to continue to press in that direction. On large holdings worked by a paid personnel, that would be

easy; namely by setting up, following the expropriation, management committees named by and composed of the workers, cultivators, and technicians.

But what about the small-scale farms? The difficulty here is considerable. Fortunately the evolution of society is on our side to help us, and thus the problem will be solved. An intermediate device meanwhile has arisen, and has gained a foothold in many parts of the world, notably in France and the United States. We are referring to the co-operatives, which are constantly increasing in importance.

In spite of all its moral and social shortcomings, the co-operative at least possesses the merit of accustoming the isolated farmer to unite with others for the purchase of machines or for their utilization, for the purchase of seeds, fertilizer, etcetera; for the sale of their products as well as for their preservation, for the use of refrigeration rooms, for the practice of artificial insemination, for the care to be given to animals, and for the slaughter of the latter. These collective practices help to germinate a spirit of sociability—a highly important achievement.

Let us suppose that a revolution breaks out in a country where small-scale landed property predominates, or where at least it is sufficiently important to hinder the course of the revolution if the owners should oppose it. The co-operatives, being “collective” entities though composed of separate individuals, could deal with the industrial collective entities of the cities. Thus these collective forms of endeavor might proceed to exchange or distribute their respective products. Then, gradually, in the face of the evidence of greater output, of greater contentment and security enjoyed by each member and his family, the example of the agrarian collective farms would finally win over the recalcitrant ones.

But at any rate the co-operatives, through the more enlightened social spirit which they manifest, would save the cities from being blockaded by hunger, such as is to be feared from every revolution, and against which armed expeditions would avail nothing.

Capitalism, Totalitarianism, and Libertarian Socialism, by Augustine Souchy

With the help of technology and industry, capitalism has achieved a prodigious accumulation of material wealth. However, this newly created wealth has been concentrated in the hands of privileged classes. The laboring masses have remained in a state of poverty. This is what constitutes the historic crime of capitalism.

Following the proclamation of human rights toward the end of the eighteenth century, social injustice was felt more deeply than ever before. An enhanced consciousness of personal dignity on the part of the individual, and class consciousness among the lower strata of the people, came to life. A resurgent reaction proved powerless to stem the social movement of emancipation.

In the revolutionary movement of 1848 the Socialist theoreticians made an attempt to transform society by means of revolution. They achieved but slight success. Their demands made very slow headway. In the period which followed, economic liberation of the proletariat became the militant objective and battle-cry of the social-minded labor movement. By dint of a desperate struggle the workers improved their standard of living. The goal of the social-revolutionary demands was to reconstitute society upon a new foundation.

Exercise of political rights in the liberal state of the preceding century had been the exclusive prerogative of the owning class. Those who had no property possessed no rights. In spite of revolutions and high-sounding slogans about freedom, social injustices remained entrenched. Notwithstanding the technical advancement that had been recorded, reactionary governments wielded power; and despite the piling up of wealth, mass poverty persisted.

Throughout this period social reformers devised plans for an equitable distribution of national resources and for a more just social organization. Thus Saint Simon proclaimed labor as the foundation of modern society. Fourier proposed the reorganization of society into economic phalansteries—small communities, each comprising about 2,000 persons living in common. Cabet believed that social justice could be realized through authoritarian communism. Robert Owen turned his factory over to his workers, and thus became the founder of co-operatives. Proudhon suggested reforms of the monetary and credit systems. His aim was a complete social democracy, and a social order without sovereignty. Karl Marx advanced the theory that capitalism must of necessity turn into socialism through internal laws of evolution.

Under the influence of political-socialist ideas the working class demanded the right of participating in the legislature and the shaping of the state. In Great Britain the Chartists fought for the extension of democratic rights to the entire population. In France—and subsequently in other countries, the labor parties demanded equal, secret, and direct suffrage. Political equality of rights for everybody, and the right of the workers to assemble and organize freely, became the slogan of the times at the end of the nineteenth century. The members of the “third estate” wanted to become free citizens.

The liberal state had granted its citizens far-reaching liberties. But social injustice had made these liberties worthless for the masses. Inasmuch as the state did not interfere with the economy nor with the social life of its citizens, capitalists were able to enrich themselves without interference, through ruthless exploitation of the workers. The proletariat was dependent upon the mercy and favor of the rich. Working hours were long, wages inadequate. Women and children were the objects of exploitation of capitalistic greed. Craftsmen became factory workers and had to abandon every hope of going into business for themselves. The working class had been degraded to the proletariat, using that term in its generally accepted sense.

The socialist-labor parties demanded governmental protective measures to counteract capitalistic exploitation. These demands found willing ears. In all countries laws were passed to protect the working classes. Under pressure from the masses working hours were reduced by law; employees were insured by statute against disability, sickness, and old age. In some countries even unemployment compensation and paid vacations were governed by law. Thus the state has changed its character. The liberal state of the nineteenth century, which was a pure instrument of power of the ruling class, has changed into the social welfare state of the twentieth century, controlling and partially taking care of the subjects from the cradle to the grave, alternately using or abusing them for its purpose of bringing about an increase of national power.

Simultaneously the state made itself also the owner of large economic enterprises. The beginning was made in Germany. Bismarck socialized railroads and the postal and telegraph systems. Nationalists and militarists in other countries followed in the footsteps of the German example. Numerous enterprises founded with private capital were placed under state control. The state became a large-scale capitalist.

The Marxist parties championed the tendencies toward socialization, In this development they saw a confirmation of their own theories. They declared that all private large enterprises were "ripe for nationalization", i.e., for the state taking them over. In Russia the revolution of the Bolshevik party in 1917 offered an opportunity to realize completely the Marx-Engels program. After the party ascended to political power, land and the means of production were declared to be the property of the state. Private capitalism was eliminated and replaced by state capitalism.

The Russian Bolsheviks maintain that their system, which they call "communistic," represents the highest social form of organization, and they advocate and press for its introduction into other countries. This sort of propaganda led to schisms within the international labor movement. In the Western countries, where for centuries political liberties have been greater and social conditions better than in Russia, introduction of state capitalism according to the Bolshevik pattern would represent a drastic step backward. Moreover, with regard to social legislation, Russia was far behind the West-European countries and America at the outbreak of the October Revolution. The social reforms offered by the Bolshevik state constitute very limited progress.

Social legislation during the last thirty years has advanced farther in the capitalistic countries than in the Soviet Union. The proletarian state is a worse employer than the private capitalist. Under the state-capitalistic system there exists neither the right to strike nor that of selecting domicile. The workers are delivered into the hands of the state, like serfs to their feudal masters. The standard of living is lower than in countries adhering to the system of private enterprise. Liberty is completely absent. For the slightest infraction of state laws the severest punishment is meted out. Fifteen million persons have been condemned to forced labor in concentration camps of the Soviet Union. That is the picture presented by the "Fatherland of the Proletarians".

The fusion of state capitalism and state socialism led to the formation of a powerful bureaucratic machine in the Soviet Union. The Communist Party, which is absolute in power, controls the economy, determines policy, establishes moral standards, and directs cultural life according to its own pattern. Economic and social privileges have not been abolished in the proletarian state. The state and economic bureaucrats form the new classes of the privileged. This fragmentary comparison of the liberal state, the democratic state, and the totalitarian state makes it easier for the liberal-minded Socialist to orient himself in the labyrinth prevailing in the camp of the Socialist movement.

The *liberal state* of the preceding century meant progress as compared with the “*ancien regime*”. Nevertheless it tolerated ruthless exploitation of the “have-not” masses ... The *democratic state* of our time, which may also be called a social welfare state, has healed numerous social wounds through social legislation. However, the basic evil of capitalism has survived ... The *totalitarian state* has eliminated private capitalism. In its place it entrenched state capitalism, whereby the working population is exploited as before or even worse than before, condemned to a total denial of rights, and deprived completely of its liberty.

As a matter of principle we Libertarian Socialists condemn all three forms of government and consider as our ideal an Anarchist order. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the working population in the democratic form of government lives better and enjoys more liberties than under the other two forms of government.

What attitude shall the Libertarian Socialists adopt in the present conflict between the democratic West and the totalitarian East?

The answer is simply this: They must place themselves on the side where there is more liberty, where greater well-being prevails, and where the possibility of a libertarian development is inhibited the least.

Does this explanation suffice, or shall the names of more liberal countries be cited?

To select the lesser of two evils does not always mean that one is an opportunist. The German Social Democracy of the Weimar Republic did not perish on account of its theory of the lesser evil. It was destroyed because it failed to fight. Lenin believed he could spring the handcuffs of capitalism with one blow. The present situation proves to us the fateful error of Leninism. The Russian people passed from the capitalistic frying pan into the totalitarian fire. Liberty and Socialism lie beyond capitalism and dictatorship. One single revolution—even though it may be called *social* revolution—does not bring about the fulfillment of the Socialist ideals. Gustav Landauer was not far wrong when he maintained that the socialist order would come about sporadically; like scattered islands in the capitalistic sea. Socialistic enterprises will gradually replace the capitalistic ones. For a long time to come both will exist side by side. The era of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity cannot be ushered in by totalitarian methods. Revolutions produce new impulses. However, once the revolutionary waves have subsided, then progress must be furthered by tenacious, persistent, and detailed effort.

For a century capitalism and Socialism have engaged in a gigantic struggle. The totalitarian governments put private capitalism into a governmental straight jacket. The result is shown in the form of cruel dictatorships. Capitalism has been maintained in the totalitarian state. Capitalistic exploitation can be abolished only if it is replaced by liberal social-economic reforms.

Tolerance is the supreme law of Libertarian Socialism. It operates through education and example. It cannot be introduced by force from above, but must be built up through voluntary efforts from below. It represents not one form, but a plurality of economic systems. It respects

human dignity, puts diversity and liberty in the place of compulsory unity, and federations of communities and regions in the place of the centralized government.

The gates to the socialistic kingdom of heaven are not opened by means of a single violent thrust of the faithful. Perhaps for a long time to come we shall remain prisoners in the capitalistic Purgatory. At least the methods of Liberal Socialism prevent the descent into the Purgatory of totalitarianism.

This is an advantage which cannot be overestimated.

Libertarian Movement From Within, by Ismael Marti

Even those of us who are mere apprentices in the realm of philosophy—casting modesty aside—are convinced that Marxism was guilty of a two-fold fallacy: Not only was it in error in affirming that man, as a social creature, is a product of the economic operation and evolution of society; it erred even more grievously in denying him his role as an agent and factor in the material process of which, according to Marxian fatalism, he is a prisoner.

Hegel had extolled the unconditional submission of the individual to the State as the greatest good and privilege. But Marxism went even further in its contempt for the human personality; for it rejects the will of the individual as a determining factor in the progress or retrogression of society on the path of history.

The dialectic school of historical materialism has thus become, by virtue of its abuse of syllogistic speculation, the successor to metaphysical and theological scholasticism. For both these streams of reasoning, at the end of their course, empty into the murky waters of philosophic error and doctrinaire authoritarianism.

Can anything be more patent at this time than the failure of the Marxist philosophy? The individual is, to be sure, a product of the economic system in which he lives—this had been affirmed by the so-called Utopian Socialists, and no one ventured to contradict them. But he is, in a higher degree, a psychic co-efficient in that self-same society, whose organic integration is nourished by so many biological, moral, and sentimental elements. And the most interesting thing of all is that, with reference to society the individual, like life itself, is the only solution known for the problem of perpetual motion; for he is at the same time both the mover and the moved, both the engine and the machine. He activates the social structure in which he lives, and is in turn propelled by the gears, or institutions, of which it is composed.

In his physico-social links with the human community the individual is analogous to a drop of water in a mighty river. The drop of water contributes to the latter its volume and force. And the river, while momentarily destroying the form of the drop of water, imparts to it the total impulse which it carries from millions of like drops and drags it along in its current. But just as any one of such drops is subject to evaporation, so likewise may any constituent member of society deviate from the course which the aggregate follows in a given direction. Undoubtedly the river has its basin, and in this sense it is a slave until it empties into its gulf or ocean; whereas the channels which the particular unfolding of every individual may follow, are almost infinite.

Man is free in his movements and there exists no social law which can pre-determine his acts. Yet how many members of society are there who are aware of, and desire to avail themselves of, this prerogative so indigenous to their nature? With every passing day their number grows smaller. It is this growing subservience of man in the present politico-economic system, which must challenge our attention in the functional mechanics of interdependence between the individual and society. Here then we find posed the great alternatives; namely, recognition of

the individual, in his progressive personality, as an independent being, or annihilation of man in such capacity and the consequent dissolution of society.

Which of these two roads are we following? Plainly we are sliding with dismaying acceleration into an abyss of de-individualization. We are approaching a rule that has no exception; at least in the area we have come to know as the Occident, we are obstinately taking the path everywhere toward what Kipling designated as “The Village of the Dead.” Thanks to our status as social animals we are approaching the ideal of the “standard” man.

We have ceased to be a community; we have become a mere herd. And inasmuch as gregariousness could not set us free, it is reducing us to the level of “Panurdo’s sheep.” We are blithely losing all the typical peculiarities of upright mammals. By the invention of engines capable of pulverizing the “Satanic rebellion,” the miracle has been wrought that those who enjoy riches and power can now sleep in tranquility. At long last, after centuries of strenuous effort by the religious and political soothsayer and the policeman, the race of voluntary slaves multiplies exuberantly.

It cannot be denied that capitalism, with the highly effective assistance of the Christian churches, has won a signal victory; it has exterminated the medieval type of man—rude in character, vigorous of will and possessed of strong individualistic fiber.

It is true that the Catholic clergy has not succeeded in imposing upon us the uniform shirt-front of the theocratic “reductions” or forced conversions practiced against Indians in Paraguay; also that there are still people who do not go to mass. But what difference does it make, so long as those who fail to attend novenas attend instead football games, and wear upon their souls the uniform of mediocrity? What more could Philip II or Henry VIII claim if they were among the living today? Perhaps the former would find our *fiestas* somewhat insipid, compared with the pomp and splendor of the spectacles of the Holy Office. Certainly the howling of our mobs would sound like barbarian music to his ears, reminiscent of the frantic maledictions uttered by the heretics whom he saw die on the stake.

To be sure, the citizen of the twentieth century has stripped from his instincts the peculiar cruelty of the times of Torquemada and the Borgias; indeed, the society of our century has progressed enormously—especially in its capacity to organize large-scale carnage!

The conclusion we must arrive at then is that we have a society bereft of soul, devoid of spiritual and human content. This society has nurtured in its womb a species of *homo sapiens* who is made in the image and likeness of his forbears. We can behold him everywhere; he is the standard type which surrounds us and stifles us; he is the one who goes into raptures about horse races, bull fights, prize-fights, football championships, and the like. Of course we have not yet attained absolute uniformity. There are still extant highly studious persons, of a restless mentality, who nourish the intellect with literary selections where they acquire knowledge of great merit and value; for instance, such exalted topics as “How Does One Handle a Hot Potato?”

At any rate we are emerging from illiteracy into the light of day. There are ever so many persons nowadays who read “pink novels, green novels, black novels,” sensational histories about warriors, bandits, and the like. And this tribal or national output is not to be attributed solely to the economic processes of capitalism; the “Father, Son, and Holy Ghost” of this outdoors congregation bear upon their moral physiognomy the indelible stigmata of a great welter of moral and psychological aberrations. Karl Marx, too, were he alive today, would enjoy himself immensely by viewing through his monocle the general culture of the atomic age, inspecting the political viscera of the Occident, and applying his stethoscope so as to catch, with the ears of a Galen, the

palpitations of international Communism, under the infallible suzerainty of the latest Tsar of the Socialist Soviet Republics.

Apart from historic factors, moral doctrines, schools of philosophy, sociological systems, and political parties have contributed in no small measure to forge this species of spiritual pauper which today is the cornerstone of our society. Every religious sect, all the churches without exception, have proved to be a Procrustean bed in which the slightest vestige of free thought and every manifestation of creative initiative were relentlessly amputated. This was especially true after a church passed from the status of opposition to a position of dominance. And if ethical and philosophical systems did not attain such overpowering success, it is undeniable that by their preachment of dogmas they divided the world into isolated, hostile camps.

What was done subsequently by the modern political parties? All have been characterized by a common aspiration: the ideal of vassalage. What is the net result derived from the enormous structure of doctrines erected from the time of Plato until our own day? Subservient, tamed man is the result.

It would appear, therefore, that one should quarantine doctrinal schools and systems; theories should be surrounded by a *cordon sanitaire*. One must learn to scorn signs, symbols, and slogans as cunning artifices. It is urgently necessary to lock up these pompous pedants in their attics; it is imperative that we laugh to scorn doctrinaires and spurn their glib doctrines.

What we need are not pretty words written in capital letters, nor ancient, moth-eaten gospels, dogmas of faith, principles of catechism, revealed knowledge, nor half-baked theories. There still linger on the programmatic Utopias of Syndicalism and the marvelous economic systems conceived by the diverse ideologists of Socialism. What we *do* need are ideas; but not ideas which have been artfully fashioned and polished in academic shops or else worn thin from rolling through so many heads; but rather “pointed and angled” ideas, as Ganivet might say—fruitful thoughts and fecund opinions, youthful ideas pregnant with other ideas. Only in this manner shall we be done with paralytic and paralyzing dogmas.

A plague that has become chronic by now: Revolutionary Messianism. Here is an idea that has become emasculated with use. No concept is more bandied and tossed about. This name is no longer a respectable phrase, but a shibboleth. Hordes of people of the most diverse mental makeup arise and retire, invoking the word “revolution.” So great has been its loss of prestige that, whereas it was once the bugbear of both young and old, it is now feared by no one. It is about to suffer the fate which overcame the apparition of Chanterville as recounted by Oscar Wilde.

You will recall that this phantom caused numerous inhabitants of the castle to die through successive generations. But tiring of his failure to frighten the American children—the last residents therein—and fed up with their jokes, he finally resolved to take passage on Charon’s ferry. The word “revolution” on the lips or from the pens of many types of persons produces in us the same derision that would be occasioned if a gigantic telescope were placed in our hands. Yet we must not become disheartened; it is well known that frequently the lack of ideas is covered up with a facade of words.

Aside from the fact that it affects the Spanish revolutionaries—of whom we are thinking—there is concealed at the bottom of this monomania a racial phenomenon. One must not forget that we are tropical and semi-tropical people, mortals inclined to be “hot-blooded.” One must also take into consideration the fact that the Semitic religion left deep imprints upon our history and has traced telltale marks upon the soul of the people. For the first of these reasons we are revolutionaries by temperament. For the second reason one discerns among us a Messianism

inherited from our ancestors and transplanted upon the revolutionary scene. It also is common knowledge that, through the centuries, Spain has been a nation afflicted with tyranny and misery. It suffices in this connection to recall the two hundred years of ruthless domination by Austria, plus two other centuries by the Bourbons. Hence ours was a soil which was rife for nourishing the redemptive illusion. And what fruits has our historic configuration yielded?

The Garden of the Hesperides has at all times produced an efflorescence of indigenous seeds, but its fruits repeatedly became corrupted, or else on still other occasions they were harvested while still green. Ample testimony of this affirmation is provided by the cities of Castile which rose in support of Spanish liberty against the government of Charles V, or the valiant Brotherhoods (“Germanias”) who fought so heroically in Valencia in that same epoch; or by the Revolution of 1936-39. In any event the latest period of exacerbated Messianism seems to us a phenomenon of decadence. Everything was entrusted to the revolution with a spirit of fatalism. By virtue of its invincible impulse and momentum this revolution, in the view of current credulity, was to solve the pressing problems of social equity and justice. It is for this reason that in the eagerness to hasten its advent, there was encouraged rather than hindered the multiplication of disruptive movements and of conspiratorial or *Carbonari* activities.¹

After the disastrous rout there occurred what might have been foreseen. The movement split into two currents: those who continued to adhere to the prophetic apostleship and heeded the apocalyptic message, the other embracing those who were disillusioned with “puerile romanticism” and who, departing from their own subconscious Jacobin loyalty, were seeking for a door upon which they might knock so as to obtain political asylum. And it is evident that neither of these attitudes is incompatible with the Messianic mentality. For in the last analysis, to the immaculate politicians of pure tribal descent, if a revolutionary party is not their Messiah, at least it will serve as their prophet. To those of us who are not members or disciples of any mystic Brotherhood, these still remains the right of not being revolutionaries while others may be so.

The point we wish to make—one that so many have been able to verify, is the existence of what we have described as the chronic and endemic plague of the libertarian movement of Spain. Whether this concerns an hereditary phenomenon or a hectic symptom of our childhood, our wish is that one reflect upon it and apply an effective remedy, provided that the diagnosis after careful observation proves to be positive.

Perhaps the reader will have guessed by now the direction and the road we have been following. One proposal that we wish to urge in these pages is to renew the attempt—often ill-fated—to proceed with a general re-examination or revision. But let novices remain tranquil and let renegades and turncoats bring on their bile. Compared with previous attempts along this line our desire is quite different. The Revisionism we propose is not one of maneuvering in reverse; it is one of language, of propaganda techniques, of principles and programs of action; of the evaluation of powers and convictions and translating them into activity; of moral attitudes militantly expressed.

As enemies of “charlatans, canons, and pedants,” we declare ourselves to be the very antipodes of all those who are contrite on account of having been “knights-errant.” We have nothing in common with those who profess to make a philosophy of the march to the rear, nor with those who

¹ Carbonari: the members of a nineteenth century secret political society, of revolutionary aims, in Italy, France, and Spain.

seek to justify their desertion of any movement of a progressive nature, by hurling anathemas against those who refuse to turn back.

This is precisely one of the points that must be revised; not to sleep with the doors open in order to prevent that certain elements meddle in our movement, either through oversight or intentionally, without notice or permission. And some formula should also be discovered for expediting the exit of those who are really hostile yet persist in remaining on the inside in order to capture or kill the movement. The number of would-be bosses and “shining lights” has multiplied too abundantly in our midst. It is a fortunate thing that they are readily recognizable; some masquerade as orators; others simulate college professors.

It is a long time since we have seen this situation develop. Not only is our organism attacked by its natural enemies from without; it is being menaced also by many varieties of termites from within. To all of these one must apply the appropriate aseptic treatment.

We must take positions! After the Revision we have advocated has taken place—a measure which seems salutary to us—it will be extremely appropriate to lay down the general lines which are most pertinent for the greater efficacy of individual as well as collective action.

There is no escape for us from the dilemma into which we have been thrust. But inasmuch as we are not inspired by the slightest polemic interest, we hasten to reply that if indeed we have impugned and challenged the doctrines of the “tabernacle” and the confessional schools of all kinds, in order to defend at first instance a movement, it is only because we hold a basically different concept of this Movement—an interpretation which is substantially at variance with all that is now contained within molds and formulas, in “recipes for erudition” in speculative disquisitions. And if we maintain that the Movement should have fixed outlines or directive principles, it is for the purpose of turning aside obnoxious disciplines, of eliminating alien substances in our system and of averting disastrous consequences.

Up to the present we have spoken a great deal about federations and confederations. We could go still further on this splendid path of the diffusion of our postulates, by furthering the development of a vast association of kindred spirits, manifested at the very least by cordial good-neighbor relations with those who will not come to us all the way, because they suspect that we reek of fanaticism. A certain degree of ingenuity must be exercised in order to lay bridges of friendship between ourselves and those who are in harmony with our Movement in their attitude toward justice and in never-ending vigilance for the cause of freedom.

Undoubtedly this viewpoint is not entirely new; but, regardless, it merits a more hospitable reception than it has hitherto received. If, for example, we did not insist in paying the homage of an excessive devotion to class conflicts and to revolutionary ideology, we would then succeed in exchanging that which is left us for that which we lack; namely, the compensation of valuable adhesions to our ranks would prove encouraging and would bring beneficial results.

On this one point we must express ourselves with the utmost emphasis: that he who would be militant, must be able to display a conduct which permits him to live in a glass house, so to speak. And all the tolerance with which we may be obliged to treat those who associate with us out of sympathy for our cause, must be converted into prudent intransigence and—we may as well say it frankly—into persistent vigilance toward those who hold positions of leadership or dominance.

One can be identified with us and yet remain organizationally outside of our Movement. Any Mason, for instance, can be a friend of ours if, in addition, he is a decent sort of person; but if a militant member of the libertarian movement should furtively enter the ranks of Masonry, he

would be guilty of betraying us. If he does so with the knowledge of the others and continues hobnobbing with atheists, then so much the worse for those who extend a welcome to a charlatan in our midst, or who give free rein to such a hypocritical intrusion. We maintain the same attitude toward those who reveal a tendency to affiliate first with one party and then another.

Will a new society be created? Let us cease cherishing illusions. If it were not that we have learned from certain types of mentalities recently revealed to us that revolution is a long evolutionary process with violent transitions, then so many Psalms and Psalmists of revolutionary content would impel us to renounce this thought. Analogous to the interpretation we have given concerning the revolutionary concept, is the conclusion we have reached with respect to the future society. Just as revolution is a movement aiming at transformation but beginning with reform, so similarly the “society of the future” will be subjected to an extended and prolonged historical cycle of gradual adjustment and change.

All this palaver uttered in our favorite circles about “establishing Libertarian Communism,” about “launching our economic system,” or “the operation of federations of industry on the day following the Revolution,” and the like—all these sound to us like paraphrases or parodies of the Four Gospels. And the invocations to the beatific bliss with which we shall be anointed in the post-revolutionary phase, remind us of the delirious prophecies made by pietists of the Christian paradise. But wherefore such unseemly haste, ye Maccabean gentlemen? Do you expect to pass on the bill for pending accounts so as to collect with usury for services rendered?

It was that desperate revolutionary haste to “implant the classless society,” along with a mentality which is markedly bourgeois, that impelled us in the first place to organize a semi-military Syndicalism among the masses, with an apparatus appropriate to syndicalist hierarchies because “that obligation was imposed upon us by the hostile front of capitalistic trusts.” Not without reason was there so much said about “syndicalist discipline,” about “syndicalist ranks,” and “a single front,” etcetera. In Mexico there were even formed, by conspicuous elements of the C.N.T. (National Federation of Workers), “gatherings of the super-militants”—a sort of Army Staff or an aggregation of field marshals; included in those “ranks” there was inevitably someone who deemed himself a “generalissimo.” From that toboggan we subsequently slid down, cheerfully and precipitately, to the lower level of minor officialdom arid of common politicians.

And with an impatience worthy of school youngsters, some of the devotees of “subversive gymnastics” exalted in the notion that “the hour of the Revolution” would soon arrive through the medium of a general revolutionary strike. For a period of at least twenty years there existed and flourished among Spanish Syndicalists, this phenomenon of collective psychosis. There even arose an extraordinary prophetic fervor. legion were the theorizers about apparatuses, architectural systems, future schemes and plans, so that the imminent collapse of capitalism would not catch us unaware. Although somewhat less impassioned, there still remain inventors and lyrical advocates of these marvelous mechanisms.

French revolutionary Syndicalism and German Anarcho-Syndicalism, grafted on the C.N.T. organism of Spain, yielded a luxurious plant. However, forsooth, there was lacking an Austrian Mendel, so that its fruits might be abundant instead of stunted and puny. Transplanted to other countries, such as Chile, the specimen perished from anemia, from lack of sap and inferior quality of roots.

Taking as our object lessons or principal texts, our battles in Europe and America; the Russian and Spanish Revolutions—the lessons we have learned have been ample and our experiences hard

in what has passed of this century. Why then are we not inclined—nay, resolved—with a serene spirit and self-criticizing judgement at least to modify our more grandiloquent fantasies?

Meanwhile it seems to us that we must change both our rudder and steering wheel. In this naval engagement which is of greater scope and crisis than that of Lepanto and of Scapa Flow, the prow must bear down upon the enemy. But who is arid where is the enemy? Let us not deceive ourselves. He is both outside of and within ourselves.

We have averred countless times that our war is against capitalism and “statism.” And we are wilfully blind if we do not perceive that those who are not capitalists or government bureaucrats at present, aspire ceaselessly to become so! If there is anyone who does not carry in the recesses of his consciousness a miniature J. Pierpont Morgan or an embryonic Stalin, let him raise his right hand!

What is of fundamental importance, therefore, is to forego delusions of grandeur which frequently cause us to turn our backs upon the future. We must change the moral physiognomy of the libertarian movement and erase from it the characteristic stamp of the Messianic and the violent. We Anarchists must become somewhat like the Epicureans and Stoics of ancient days—one cannot thrive by relying upon copying or simulating others. We refer above all to the moral attitude. Both of those ancient schools were serene in temperament, of firm character, of an exalted spirit. They set forth their opinions with simplicity concerning nature and man. And the appeal or “propaganda” of these movements of a moral character was disseminated without undermining activities or catastrophic prophecies on their part. The expansive power of inner freedom and of evolving conscience of their adepts—that is what constituted their unique features.

No great transformation has been produced in history without being preceded by a long series of fundamental and profound mutations. Every social renaissance is without exception the result of special conditions created by new currents of thought and by a higher conscience, the result of rigid customs and of new ideas. It is not by means of huge bounds or leaps but by dint of slow progress that we have advanced somewhat beyond primitive man. The only forms of communities that have been frequently and easily “implanted” by a “miracle” stroke, have been those of dictatorship. There will come to pass—we are not so dogmatic as to deny it—a great crisis capable of shattering the equilibrium of the present decadent institutions; but in resuming the course of social living with a new rhythm, we shall still not be in the presence of a new society, but only of a system which is a blend of the present and the past, with abundant seeds for future growth. If a revolution is to possess an emancipating content and be of social import, it must first take place in the hearts and minds of men rather than in the external forms of human groupings.

Let us not strive to put the cart before the horse, or the plough in front of the oxen, nor seek to alter the natural order of things by the mere power of suggestion of marvelous Utopias. With such naivete we shall never discover the horizon nor the stars which will guide us. On the contrary, we shall be exposed to constant peril.

Here, then, is another myth which we must discard: that of the miraculous revolution which, like the Magic Carpet, is to transport us to the “New Society.”

This Is No Time For Pessimism, by Sam Weiner

To be properly understood and evaluated, the present world situation must be looked at objectively and from a historical perspective. The historian of the future, in analyzing the basic economic, political, and social trends of this epoch, will describe it as one in which the system of private capitalist democracy broke down under the pressure of its own inner contradictions. The prolonged crises leading to wars were the inevitable result of the contests for world-wide economic and political domination waged by rival groups of capitalists.

Imperialism, with its enslavement of colonial peoples, simultaneously with the ruthless exploitation of the working class in the mother countries—unemployment and poverty everywhere, and at the same time the aggravation of already intense national patriotism—could only accelerate the inevitable breakdown. Side by side with the economic collapse of democratic capitalism, a like process was taking place politically. The archaic political structure of national sovereignty, i.e., the nation-state, acted as an obstacle to the growing technical and cultural developments which were by their very nature international and cosmopolitan. Such, in broad outline, were the main causes of World War I, which in its turn set off the Russian Revolution.

That revolution marked a new phase in the history of mankind. This phase is characterized on the one hand, by the struggle of the underprivileged peoples for economic and political liberty, for bona fide Socialism, and on the other hand, by the counter-revolution of the State, the dark, goal of which was State capitalism, or State dictatorship.

Peter Kropotkin, in his illuminating work, *The Great French Revolution*, says: “If the Great French Revolution was a summing up of a century’s evolution, it also marked out in its turn the program of evolution to be accomplished in the course of the nineteenth century.”

Those who engineered that violent upheaval proclaimed the principles of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, but succeeded in establishing political liberty only. The economic order of the day was what is now called free enterprise, *laissez faire*, dog eat dog.

During the nineteenth century, as Kropotkin saw, capitalism was born, matured, and degenerated, thereby setting the tempo and goal of the revolution which broke out in Russia in 1917. In the name of the proletarian masses in that land, notable effort was made then to extend the principles of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity to the economic field. The Russian Revolution failed, however, because the Bolsheviki, a political party believing in dictatorship, seized power.

Civil liberties were the real and vital gains of the French Revolution. Any group denying the validity of the rights of man could not advance the cause of humanity. Nationalization of economic life, without liberty, surely and inexorably leads to counter-revolution, to State absolutism, succeeding only in recreating and multiplying the worst features of the system which it supplants.

World War I, World War II, and the “cold war” alike must be regarded as desperate measures of moribund capitalism to stem the revolution of the twentieth century. Capitalism, in order

to save itself, is evolving into a system of nationalization, into State capitalism, which is rapidly consolidating its power for the struggle with the rival power bloc, Russian imperialism. It is from this point of view that the world situation must be considered.

What then, are the relative strengths and weaknesses of the contenders? The democracies are torn by internal dissensions. Private enterprise is battling for existence against the ever-growing tendency on the part of the State to own, control, or regulate the economic apparatus. This conflict is to be seen in every capitalist country. The private capitalists do not want to give up their power to the new bureaucracy of governmental administrators and politicians. While they jealously resist this political encroachment, they also are faced and harried by the revolts of colonial peoples and the discontent and bankruptcy of the European democracies.

All this tends to effect the shrinkage of their foreign markets. The democracies in Europe are slowly being strangled by the Russian octopus. They must either escape its clutches or suffocate. And time is working against them. They must go to war before the rival bloc becomes too strongly entrenched.

On the other hand, those democracies possess an arsenal and a highly developed industrial mechanism superior to anything the totalitarian powers could muster at present. They have the support of the Church, of many liberals, and of the Social Democrats, and a quiescent labor movement.

In so far as the totalitarian State is concerned there is no effective internal opposition. The degeneration of capitalism has provided a fertile ground for the infiltration of Russian fifth columns in every important land. The Communists were able to utilize the dissatisfaction of the workers with capitalism. Millions of workers for a stretch of years, looked upon Russia as the Fatherland of the Proletariat, and all too many of them still do. And the end of World War II marked the emergence of Russia as a first-rate power, steadily expanding its dictatorship in Eastern Europe and becoming the dominant Asiatic power through the conquest of China, Korea, and other areas.

Throughout the labor movement, unfortunately, the anti-Communist unions are demoralized. Fascism's rise and the confusion of the period it encompassed did not give the labor movement a chance to offer adequate opposition to the agents of Moscow. It is true that the workers were beginning to perceive the real nature of the so-called revolutionists. They were commencing to realize that the Russian Revolution in fact and in spirit had nothing to do with the Bolshevik counter-revolution. The constructive principles and achievements of the Spanish Revolution as well as the despicable role of the Bolsheviki in Spain, culminating in the Hitler-Stalin pact, were being correctly appraised by advanced workers everywhere.

However, a potent anti-Communist front was halted by World War II. Its prestige enhanced and restored by the heroic struggle of the Russian *people* in the war against Fascism, the Stalinist regime again became the symbol of the revolution in the eyes of the working masses. The populace of Europe generally was in revolutionary ferment. The colonial peoples of India, China, Indo-China, Malaya, and other lands struggled for freedom, thereby sounding the death-knell of the institution of colonial imperialism.

It is a great historical tragedy that every attempt of the industrial workers and peasants to develop the revolution in accordance with their needs and aspirations, is being ruthlessly suppressed either by the Bolsheviks in their sphere or by the "democracies" and their henchmen, the Social Democrats, labor fakers, and kindred others in their own orbit.

Nevertheless, the totalitarian world is subject to severe strains. Ravages of war have left Russia weakened economically. Although the dictatorship is firmly in the saddle, it is a fact that the

Russian people are profoundly dissatisfied with the Stalin government. The temporarily dormant nationalism of the lately conquered regions of Eastern Europe is coming back to life. Titoism is but a faint indication of what the Kremlin will have to contend with as time goes on. The Asiatic peoples who are in revolt against "democratic" imperialism are due for a rude awakening, when they find out, as they are bound to, that Red Imperialism can be even more ruthless than the "democratic" variety. History has shown that dictatorships become progressively weaker in proportion to their rate of expansion. The more they try to bite off the harder it becomes to swallow or digest their gains. Confronted by the threat of war with western imperialism on the outside, and the accumulating forces of revolt from within, Soviet imperialism is by no means certain of survival.

Yet democratic capitalism also is faced by a similar situation. Whether the peoples of western Europe, or of that part of the world not under Stalinist domination, will defend the capitalist system is extremely-doubtful. The collapse of the regime of Chiang Kai-shek in China could very well be duplicated in other parts of the world. While we cannot foresee too far ahead the course of historic events, it seems certain that neither Russian totalitarianism nor democratic capitalism could survive another full-scale war. The forces of social revolution unleashed by the double catastrophe of two world conflicts, and for the time being held in check by the opposing dictatorships, have not yet reached full momentum. The impact of a third world war ending in the break-up of the existing social order would give these forces unlimited play. The long delayed and aborted revolution of the twentieth century will march on.

This is no time for chronic pessimism. Events have proven the basic postulate of libertarian conceptions to be correct. We are living in a period of great social transformations. The horrors of war and dictatorship should not blind us, nor deprive us of historical perspective. We are witnessing the birth pangs of a new age, the age of Socialism. Our justified hatred of Russian absolutism should not lead us to accept the theory of the "lesser evil" which has played so great a part in the demoralization of the international labor movement since the beginning of World War I.

To support even conditionally the capitalist democracies would put us in opposition to the struggles of the peoples of the world, who are now in active revolt, or deeply discontented with the conditions under which they live. We must not forget that the ruling elements of the Church and the leavings of the Fascist movements are the allies of the capitalist coalition, and that the masses would not take account of our good intentions, but would lump us together with them.

Let us proclaim the lesson learned at so great a cost, that *neither* side can reconstruct society in the spirit of freedom. Let us lend our efforts to organize an independent alliance comprising those men and women in all countries, and their number is not inconsiderable, who know or who are beginning to see, that the love of freedom, far from being merely a romantic abstraction, is one of the mightiest creative forces in human life. Let us encourage and co-operate with all movements that are going in the direction charted in our basic concepts.

Greetings From Japan, by T. Yamaga and S. Ishida

EDITOR'S NOTE: In response to the *Free Society Group's* call for articles for this pamphlet, there came a notable document from Comrades Yamaga and Ishida, who acted as a committee of the Japanese Anarchist Federation. Their offering, in beautifully formed and legible red-inked words on four pages of soft rice paper, is phrased in what can best be termed Japanese-English. Because some parts of it are not clear in meaning to us, it has been deemed advisable not to attempt to put the whole into American-English, but simply to give those portions that are comprehensible. Thus we avoid risking the possibility of attributing wrong meanings to our Japanese comrades.

Where the trend of their thinking is evident, some slight editing has been done in the excerpts which follow, to clarify them, quite *as* one might change a word here and there in editing a translated text. For instance, when these authors speak of "the contradiction" between the two remaining dominant world powers—the United States and the Soviet Union—they apparently mean "the conflict" between those powers.

... If the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union should result in a war between these two rivals, it would be a supreme tragedy for mankind. For such a war, with its tremendous scope, would demand victims in numbers beyond estimate. We fear that that war, if it should come, would destroy all civilization.

Yet is this conflict as inevitable as is usually thought? We ought to acknowledge the mind of solidarity existing at the bottom of the conflict. In England, which has the most advanced capitalism, we can recognize the many socialistic tendencies, and in Russia we can see another example of human socialization. These scenes indicate the inevitable directions of such socialization.

The former nation has capitalism, and the latter, totalitarianism.

Capitalism can allow the free evolution of personality, but this freedom is only the freedom of the conqueror. Its fundamental principle is the "struggle for existence," i.e., (the supremacy of the strong) and the negation of the weak. So it allows free evolution of personality only to a favored minority. Yet true freedom is the right of all people.

The socialistic direction in Russia must be criticized severely, because under the materialistic conception of history the complete emancipation of personality is nonsense. .. As to the totalitarianism in that country, we reject it completely. Its principle is authority—not the authority of personality, but of the total negation of personality. Standing on the dignity of personality, we never can accept it.

"In Russia," Lenin said, "the proletariat has been emancipated." But the proletariat was emancipated only from the Tsar. What of the personality of the proletariat himself? Can we say that the proletariat working under the authority pretended by the so-called Communism in Russia was truly set free? (Here one sentence appears to say: "Actually the *soviet* (which means a work-

ers' and soldiers' council operating democratically with regard to public affairs) does not exist under the present Russian regime" This seems to have been pointed out in the writings of G.D.H. Cole.)

Atomic energy has altered our age. But so far this energy has been used only for terrible war. Thus capitalism moves to destroy itself. Karl Marx said: "We can see the falling of capitalism with our own eyes."...

The true emancipation of personality lies only in self-determination. What has the "One World" movement as its fundamental principle— capitalism, totalitarianism, or what?...We fear that so far as the ideology of "One World" will be successful on a capitalistic basis, it will end in capitalistic tyranny, like the Roman Empire...

One manifestation which holds large promise from a standpoint of mutual concern for humankind is the Christian faith, but certainly we don't agree with existing Christianity. It was a great turning point in history when Christianity was expanded from being the Judaistic national religion to become the Kata Kolis, the world religion, (changing) from the God of (implacable) justice to the Cod of love. We can recognize that our own ideology may be approximated almost to the same religious purpose. In his famous Life of Christ, Ernest Renan said: "Jesus was in some respects an Anarchist, for he had no idea of civil government." Government to him seemed to be simply an abuse. But from other viewpoints the gulf between present-day Christianity and our movement w vast.

Mankind has reached an age which demonstrates that we can have complete living only on a world-wide scope. Capitalism orients in the same direction, having contradiction within itself. Soviet Russia's (program) also has developed from Stalin's State-Communism to Trotsky's world-revolution.

As a means of breaking down nationalistic barriers, we strongly urge the adoption of Esperanto as a world-language which transcends all nationalities and other divisions of the masses of mankind.

Our ideal aim is the non-state federation, which would mean a complete transition from the reign of rulers to self-determination, the giving way of Presidents of republics to committees of the people, and the abandoning of the borders which separate the nations all over the globe. To say that this would be impossible is to underestimate the capacity of mankind for progress and to despise humanity.

The Russo-American conflict ought not to culminate in war. That conflict must be dissolved by human solidarity, i.e., by Anarchism, and by comprehending the true desire of people everywhere (the desire for order and amicable living.) Except in this way, the world cannot end that conflict, and there will be no hope for peace. Religion now is too far removed from the present global problem. If, or when, the One World movement recognizes the logic of the non-state federation principle, then its aim may be realized.

Decadence of Political Socialism, by Felipe Alaiz

Parliamentary Socialism is in a state of decline throughout the world; and it is declining precisely as a consequence of individual suffrage, which is always theoretical and basically anti-Socialistic.

The U.S.S.R. does not permit decisions by popular elections. If elections have been held in that country, they were completely government-controlled, with only one political party being tolerated; namely, the one that held and still holds within its grasp all the instrumentalities of power. This governmental or State party manipulates elections from its headquarters and generally pursues an international policy analogous to that of the Tsars. In the same fashion that the Tsars liberated—en route—the Bulgarian people from the yoke of the Turks, the Soviets now are counteracting in Bulgaria the influence of the Anglo-Saxon powers. But Stalin, as well as the Tsarist dynasty that preceded him, has a selfish goal to pursue; and in Bulgaria today there exists not freedom but rather repression against the progressive elements.

The Soviet rulers are appropriating unto themselves—in an accumulative and monetary bourgeois style and without the consent of the producers of wealth—all the resources of public wealth. The most acute problem confronting the Soviet regime—in contrast to the formal, ostentatious declarations constantly being publicized by Soviet representatives about international issues—indeed, the fundamental and almost sole problem of the Soviet State lies in the fact that the workers there refuse to be passive factors in the life of the country, with the result that production efficiency does not conform to official quotas.

So far as the aforesaid formal pronouncements are concerned they are often intended as diversionary tactics anyhow. But this failure to attain production quotas undoubtedly accounts for the increasing demand for internal capital in the form of loans—this in a country which styles itself proletarian—and the clamor for the “usurious” dollar. Work under duress, with a hail of penalties for those who fail to set a frenzied pace of production, does not avail to yield an adequate output for the economy of the Soviet State, and this very fact will prove to be its downfall.

Is there Socialism in Russia? By no means! Nor is the alleged Socialism of the Occidental countries the genuine article. Elections are staged on the basis of supposed democratic principles. But the fact remains that democracy places on exactly the same footing at its elections the bourgeois and the proletarian, and this is an anti-Socialist practice. Even Germany, with its dictatorial regime, collapsed. And this happened not because elections were held or not held, but because war production failed: and this occurred because war production was sabotaged by the Germans themselves; also because it was directed by the military and not by industrial elements as was the case in the United States.

In the last analysis it was the American mechanic, the non-military technician, that routed the professional German army. During the period of military occupation the German soldiers were begging bread coupons from us Spaniards, while our own Spaniards were carrying off mountains

of bread from the stores of the German Administration and turning it over to the Resistance Movement.

We Spaniards have had ample occasion to verify that the vaunted German construction organization known as TODT, the intricate system of espionage developed by the Nazis, the directives of Dr. Ley—high priest of the Hitlerian program—the code of principles laid down by Rosenberg and the insolent German High Command—all these forms of humbug celebrated in Spain by a pedantic publication like *El Debate*, were nothing but bugbears. Hitler himself was a complete cretin, as the Zurich professor and psychologist Jung has demonstrated. According to this scholar, Hitler was a victim of extreme neuroses which took the form of neurotic outbreaks with demonic delusions of grandeur. But the German laborer in the war industries staged a slow-down at the crucial moment. The Franco clique had faith in Germany, just as it believes in government budgets and in the execution block. None the less, German technical thoroughness suffered disaster, and proved to be one of the most deceptive bogey tales ever propagated throughout a gullible world.

Now just why did the German worker stand with folded arms at the critical moment? The exact motive we shall analyze later. But regardless of the motivation, it is an incontestable fact that he *did* stage a deliberate slow-down, just as the worker in Russia is now doing.

These clearly evident facts, recorded by both German and Soviet publications, represent an eloquent argument for the workers of the Occident Militarization of industry does not spell efficiency. The latter calls for industrial advancement, experience, time, proper examples and, above all—listen to this, ye who confuse man with inanimate objects—requires that the employees possess inner contentment and be not victimized by deception.

The Sunday elections and the spectacular mobilization of the voter prove quite easy for a certain period of time. But if Communism in France, for example, thinks it can mobilize the workers, the producers of wealth, with the same facility that it can line up the voters, it is greatly mistaken. Even those who cast their ballots for that Party will leave it high and dry if, from above, imperious voices preach the gospel of working all the harder even when there is not enough to eat. But even if there is enough food, work must never be reduced to slavery and never shall be.

Observe how the illusion of Parliamentarism or “suffragism” plays mean tricks upon its own protagonists. The same thing will happen in England. The “Laborism” of Britain has nothing in common with true Socialism, just as the Soviet regime is not truly Socialist. The “Labor Government” is but a limited party of public officials, former dock workers, professors without a Socialist background, and a doctrinaire nucleus with a mentality half Anglican and half altruistic in theory, glued like wax upon “bureaucratic envelopes.”

Its operational mass is not any ideological group but rather the multitude of workers in the trade unions—an honorable aggregation withal, for it exists, even though with difficulty, on the toil of its brawn or brain, yet one that has never launched any movement with a Socialist basis; nor have its spokesmen ever had any intent to launch such a movement. The only thing the latter have sought to do, by taking advantage of the votes of the workers, who do not live on their suffrage, was to govern.

It is obvious that the trade unions could socialize British economy without divorcing themselves from their affiliation. However, by entrusting political rule to the Labor leaders, the only result accomplished is that “Laborism” in power attacks the problem of industrial nationalization in a chaotic manner.

As for the banks, what is actually taking place in Britain? They are allowing a clear channel for the capitalist current; for the lucrative value of the shares is actually being enhanced by freeing them from any element of risk, while at the same time salaries and wages are frozen in order to revive the monopoly of the English pound sterling, along with the disastrous colonial policy and general misery. In substance, this is nothing more than the Churchillian program being carried out by a Laborite party in power.

What matters it to the English capitalist if the banks are nationalized?

To the stockholder they say this: "You hold 100 pounds in shares? Well, I shall make you a present of two hundred more, and thus you will have three hundred. Since before nationalization you collected nine per cent on 100 pounds, now we shall allow you three per cent on 300 pounds, and thus you will draw the same dividend as before. For it amounts to the same thing to invest a capital of 100 pounds at nine per cent as a 300 pound capital at three per cent." This is the great miracle wrought by the nationalization of banks in Britain.

So far as the profits of the bank are concerned, what difference does it make to the working-man whether these remain in the pockets of the private banker or in the government treasury? The government is able to exist by devaluating the money which is lent to it, thus perpetrating a series of "graduated" robberies. And with respect to commerce and the businessman, what matters it to them whether a loan or a discount of commercial shares is made by a private hanker or the State, since both of those, or either of them, get away with a larcenous commission? Is this Socialism? Is it even a recognizable attempt at Socialism?

If the self-same workers who so unwittingly bring the Labor Party into power have to assert their right to earn a few shillings extra in wages by resorting to a strike—a strike suppressed by the Labor Government through soldier strikebreakers—what opinion can one have of the privilege of suffrage? So that thereby one may elect strike-breaking agents? Is this Socialism? Nor is it to be wondered at that the Labor Government bends the knee before Dictator Franco, while Parliamentary Socialism throughout Europe kowtows to British "Laborism"!

In France the Communists and labor elements came into power via theoretical and individual suffrage, having held the reins of power since October, 1945, with the collaboration of the Vatican Party. Once they were in the seat of authority, Socialists and Communists formulated the inhuman and anti-Socialist policy of speed up for the workers, without enough to eat, just as Stalin would have it and as Hitler wanted it. Even the bourgeoisie no longer senses the need to promote or to propagate such a program. Is *this* what they call Socialism?

It is the attribute and privilege of the social aggregate or the body politic, under the principles of Socialism, to administer public matters without hierarchies or political monopolies or economic dictatorships, and without supreme governmental powers—rather than to traffic with the labor force for the profit of some minority. When the administration of public affairs is not in the proper hands, one must battle to regain it; yet no sane Socialist will preach or propagate bourgeois slogans or put them into effect, at any price. In order to arrive at this lamentable result it was necessary that Socialism dedicate itself to the furtherance of the polling place and the functionary. And that self-same bureaucracy which has already discredited the bourgeois society, will likewise bring into disrepute any governmental system, regardless of the title it bears, even though it be proletarian.

In Italy Socialists and Communists are governing along with other elements—all of them competitive, some of them Vatican-dominated— and of course both of them are deeply devoted to the elaborate nonsense of popular elections—the most unstable proposition on the globe, the

most fluctuating system as well as the one most conducive to deception. The outcome of all this manipulation we shall see before long; scenes of pandemonium will be witnessed in the polling places, and those who aspire to hold the reins of office will be able to perpetrate the tactics used by Mussolini himself, provided that votes can be garnered—a project not too difficult and one now in the making. The recently formed political party styling itself the Party of “The Man in the Street” is now aspiring to corral the Italian voters. Fortunately, the Libertarian movement will assure Italy a more worthy future.

In the Scandinavian countries there existed an evangelical Socialism representing a fair cross section of the population, but it will not be long before it becomes embroiled in Sovietism. Recently the “French Soviet Christian” movement brought out in Lyons a series of publications purporting to prove that Stalin is the fulfillment of the Gospels of Christ, whereas the Vatican, according to these Protestant “catechists” of Lyons, is the negation of the Gospels.

In general the Political Socialism of Europe has been reduced to the expedient of conducting elections and of seeking other goals of a similar nature, rather than fighting for social progress alien to official programs. It has collaborated with dictators and with deeply entrenched imperialism: and in the summer of 1939 Hitler, who called himself a “Socialist” but who was not one, and Stalin, who likewise was no Socialist, were enabled to unite in an intimate military alliance to crush Poland.

Socialists borrowed the practice of Parliamentarianism to begin with, from bourgeois policy, which is accustomed to grant a single vote to a banker, to a merchant, an invalid, a usurer or a ballerina, or even to a cretin—exactly the same as to a foundry worker or a mathematician. What sort of Socialism is this? This has served only to stimulate voting for candidates—in elections championed by these self-same candidates who think themselves to be men of destiny. Once they have tasted of the strong wine of power these men become almost frenzied with a sense of authority and there is no strait-jacket that will restrain them. Only the prohibition of elections, or the consequent budding of a righteous revolution, will serve to bring them to their senses.

Not only is Socialism being falsified; what is more, the entire irrelevant doctrine of the democratic framework is being stultified, inasmuch as genuinely universal suffrage is being eliminated in the so-called reconstruction of Europe; everything is being decided by the “powers that be” who have invited themselves to the banquet and are feasting there without regard to those who must foot the bills. Thus they revise frontiers, render judgements about the Danube River, decree what shall pass or not pass through the Strait of Gibraltar, and impose rigid regulations upon the 300,000,000 Europeans without bothering to consult them about their wishes.

Neither upon the apex, nor on the sides, nor on the base of the triangle known as Political Socialism does one detect the slightest vestige of that humanism—quite attenuated, to be sure—of a Jean Jaures, We *do* discern traces of humanism or concern for the elemental rights of man, on the part of many men who do not figure in Socialist Party circles or who, while they may be identified with Socialist circles, are shorn of all major responsibility or initiative. Among these factions everything is reduced to scramble for the prerequisites of power; everyone wants to govern, even though it be on a tripartite basis, in a coalition with erstwhile enemies who were denounced as monsters in the course of the political campaign. The other major goal appears to be the negotiation of a loan of dollars so as to impose upon the backs of the hard-working and undernourished laborers the crushing burden of debts. Can this be Socialism? What voter is capable of enduring such absurd contradictions?

Socialists are wont to reproach Communists for their dependence on “foreign sources,” as *Le Journal de Geneve* recently commented. That is indeed a well warranted charge. But it also is a fact that the “socializing Catholics”—that is what they are now, including the spokesmen of the “*Temoignage Chretien*”—look to Rome, and that the entire Socialist movement of the West is on its knees before the British Labor Party which, in turn, obliges them to uphold the special interests of British imperialism. Verily we have traveled a long way from the *Communist Manifesto* of Karl Marx!

The London-dominated character of Western Socialism—the latter, like the Labor Party itself, being seduced into anti-Socialist paths by popular suffrage—is obvious and tends to complicate politics to a bewildering degree. Thus Schumacher, German Socialist leader and opponent of fusion with the Communists, has his headquarters in the British Zone of Germany and makes frequent visits to London. Laski, chairman of what might be called the Executive Body of the Labor Party, is in visible contact with Socialist leaders of the Continent, as for example Attlee with Leon Blum; and Laski himself took a hand in the Socialist Congress held in Florence, expressing himself against fusion and scoring a victory all along the line. In the aforementioned Italian Socialist Congress of Florence, Pietro Nenni, Socialist chief and outstanding proponent of fusion, obtained only a five percent vote, compared with the anti-fusionist leadership by Saragat.

Seven times in succession the Labor Party rejected the request of the Communists for co operation. Even though a third of the laborist delegates voted in favor of collaboration, one notes among the labor leaders and their satellites in Europe an adverse reaction to Communism. If the voters participate in all these preposterous maneuvers, Europe again will become the prey of wars more violent than those of the past, with the workers torn by disunity and division, while they continue to prate of unity, and while they fail to discern that the Anglo-Saxon bourgeoisie and the Soviet dictatorship are tricking them all the time.

In Holland the Socialists have joined in a bloc with other parties, the Communists being excluded. The Spanish Socialists, who hurl endless insults at one another, had ministers of every conceivable antagonistic orientation in their government-in-exile.

All this welter of European Socialism is derived from the suffragist or parliamentary fallacy; and it is possible that Communism will lose some of its positions—except in the Balkans—in favor of a Socialism which is still in an embryonic state, and which will include all possible gradations and shadings from the confessional Christian variety, down to leftist Socialists opposed to Communism, all these allies being permeated with ministerial reformism, but impotent to accomplish anything practical, not even in conformity with their own programs.

Popular suffrage—which originated neither with the Russian Revolution nor with Socialism—has generated a veritable vortex of confusion, so as to enhance, by contrast, the middle-class institutions which have generally gone to rack and ruin on their middle and lower levels; whereas what we might designate as the “high-power bourgeoisie” allows the lower middle class to maintain businesses of slight scope and to sustain them in such fashion that the latter will not fall easy prey to the Soviet ideology.

Only progressive institutions divorced from the State—e.g. the system of co-operatives with all its shortcomings, the independent type of labor organization, cultural activities uninfluenced by the official hierarchy, morality and customs, the interchange of abiding values, the interrelationships of races, local life of people who manage their own destinies, etc.— can be said to have attained any authentic improvement and tangible progress possible—the kind from which there is no turning back.

Such institutions, characterized by a free and voluntary compact and by the stamp of civilization, will continue to grow and expand until they obliterate the fallacy of popular or parliamentary suffrage, which has succeeded only in leading astray a Socialism which was no real Socialism.

In the future status of the free communities of Spain, suffrage will be abolished, yielding place to accords concerning useful public works and common services, such as have been commended by the International.

25 Years of 'Free Society' Activity in Chicago, by Boris Yelensky

The distinction of being the pioneers of our movement in Chicago (if we leave out of account the era of the Haymarket martyrs, 1881-1893) is held by the David Edelstat Group, which, toward the close of the nineteenth century and for a considerable period thereafter, was notably active in Jewish circles. In the course of time it became a branch of the Workmen's Circle. Around the turn of the century there also was an English-language group which published a magazine called *Free Society*, the name borne by the group itself.

Subsequently the leading role in our movement in this Mid-Western metropolis was played by the Anarchist Red Cross, likewise Jewish. It carried on until the advent of the October Revolution in Russia in 1917, when it was dissolved. In the English-speaking sphere the most energetic organization here in that period was the Alarm Group, while another active group, more philosophic in its approach to the social struggle, centered largely about the Livshis family.

The red-baiting reaction and hysteria which raged under Attorney General Palmer after the First World War served to smother the Anarchist movement in Chicago, so that for several years it had no organized expression in this city. But the soil was fertile, and it was not long before the movement took root again. What lent great stimulus to our cause was the arrival of distressing news from Soviet Russia about the tragic plight of our martyr-comrades in that unhappy land. True, for a time the realization that the age-long battle for freedom in Russia had turned into a cruel regime of tyranny and dictatorship created disillusionment and confusion in our ranks. But presently a strong urge was felt to launch a campaign of enlightenment and to provide desperately needed aid for our stricken Russian comrades.

That urge came toward the end of 1923, when several of our comrades returned from a visit to Soviet Russia, echoing the anguished cries of our tortured brethren there for help. The grim word that they brought from prisons and concentration camps, impelled the organizing of our Free Society in Chicago.

The principal task of our new group at first was to collect funds quickly to aid our imprisoned and exiled comrades in Russia. In co-operation with several Social Democrats we conducted this activity under the name of the Aid Society for Russian Political Prisoners, and in 1924 we staged two highly successful benefit performances of *Arestanten Beller* in Chicago. This collaboration lasted for about two years, after which the Free Society continued its aid program independently.

In the spring of 1924 the secretary of the *Yidisher Federatsie*, Comrade Samuel Margolis, arrived in Chicago from the East to organize a twenty-fifth anniversary celebration in honor of the New York Yiddish weekly, *Freie Arbeiter Stimme*¹ This celebration, held in the following winter, also proved to be an overwhelming success, doubtless heightened by the presence of Joseph Cohen, then editor of the *F.A.S.*, as guest speaker. That event signaled the expansion of our

¹ See footnote at the end of this article.

society far beyond the bounds of Chicago, embracing Workmen's Circle branches, labor unions, and kindred sympathetic groups.

Two lecture tours undertaken in the United States by Comrade Rudolf Rocker in 1925 and 1930, lent powerful momentum to the Free Society's work. In the former year we arranged three public lectures for him, and all were attended by overflow crowds. A banquet staged in Comrade Rocker's honor likewise was conspicuously successful. Half of the proceeds from his Chicago lectures was turned over to him, and the other half was put into a fund to publish his writings. More than 2,500 persons came to those lectures, while many hundreds more heard Rocker after he was compelled to flee from Nazi Germany in 1933. Our Free Society cooperated actively in the project to publish Comrade Rocker's invaluable historical work, *Nationalism and Culture*, in the English language, until that undertaking was transferred to Los Angeles.

In addition to providing material assistance for our terrorized comrades in Soviet Russia, our society sponsored various educational lectures and open forums, beginning with the year 1926. Some of our leading members participated in those discussions, among them the late Jack Denenberg and Maximilian Olay. When open forums were booming everywhere in the winter of 1928-29, we hired the hall of the Northwest Side Arbeiter Ring School for such a forum and it became one of the most popular in the city.

An especially attractive offering was the occasional *vecherinka*, or social evening, which we staged. The forums served as an excellent medium for disseminating our philosophy and literature. Prompted by their notable success, the Free Society also organized mass-meetings and symposia in the Loop, the downtown section of Chicago, at which prominent speakers appeared. A particularly impressive affair was a mass-meeting held in February, 1931, on the tenth anniversary of the death of the peerless philosopher of our movement, Peter Kropotkin.

In 1930, following a suggestion made by the *Freie Arbeiter Stimme*, we arranged a public dinner to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Alexander Berkman's birth. It was our society which also arranged lectures in Chicago by Comrades A. M. Weinberg and Shaya Yanofsky. However, with the advent of World War II and the illusory war-time prosperity, open forums in general met with a decline and, toward the end of the winter season of 1939, we were obliged to discontinue this educational venture, after ten years of effective effort.

Originally our Free Society was established as a Yiddish-speaking group, but in the course of time the question arose as to what language we could most advantageously employ in continuing our propaganda activities. After extended debate it was decided that, inasmuch as our membership was no longer exclusively Jewish, we should conduct our agitation in English. In keeping with this resolution we organized, in 1928, the first conference (which enlisted strong support) for the benefit of the *Road to Freedom*, an English-language Anarchist review, then being published in New York City.

Though we had become officially an English-speaking group, we took an active part in the Jewish Federation Conference in September, 1930, when we organized an assembly of Yiddish-speaking groups from the Midwestern States in Chicago. For this the *Freie Arbeiter Stimme* issued a special Chicago edition.

Throughout the years our society has given substantial support to a goodly number of English-language periodicals, such as *Freedom*, *Road to Freedom*, *Vanguard*, *New Trends*, *Resistance*, and others, as well as to *Freedom* in London and to the libertarian Italian and Spanish press, and also to the Stelton School in New Jersey. In addition we sponsored a series of lectures in English by outstanding Anarchists, including Hippo-lyte Havel, Harry Kelly, and Marcus Graham.

In 1931, on the tenth anniversary of Kropotkin's death, the Free Society gave help to the local Russian Group, toward the publication of an international edition of a Kropotkin testimonial book of 352 pages in Russian. Prior to that time we had issued and circulated some 33,000 copies of five important pamphlets, including G. P. Maximoff's *Bolshevism: Promise and Reality*; Kropotkin's *Appeal to the Young*; Emma Goldman's *The Individual and Society*; Hippolyte Havel's *What's Anarchism?* and Voltairine de Cleyre's *Anarchism and American Traditions*.

We also helped the Alexander Berkman Fund in bringing to the public Comrade Maximoff's monumental volume, *The Guillotine at Work*, a devastating expose of official terror in Soviet Russia through twenty years. And we lent valuable assistance to other groups in their publication activities. Thus we gave wide circulation to a book published by the Philadelphia Radical Library Group—namely, Joseph Cohen's *The Jewish Anarchist Movement in America*.

Sponsoring and arranging for Emma Goldman's lectures in Chicago in 1934 was one of our society's most notable achievements. We organized this large-scale undertaking without the aid of specialized lecture bureaus or agents, none of which was willing to venture sponsoring addresses by one so *trafe*, or taboo, as Emma Goldman. Even the extravagant offer of a forty per cent commission failed to move a lecture bureau to manage her Chicago appearances.

Results exceeded our fondest expectations. The Goldman mass-meeting in the Loop attracted more than 2,000 persons; a lecture on the University of Chicago campus drew an audience of some 800; while an address in Yiddish was heard by about 700. A banquet and two other gatherings also were well attended. Naturally we were elated and immensely gratified when Emma Goldman, just before the end of that visit, paid us a high compliment in these words: "I have been in error throughout my whole life about our own groups, never realizing what creative capacity they possess."

Six years later it was our melancholy honor to accompany Emma to her final resting place in Waldheim Cemetery. The shattering news of her sudden passing reached us by telegram, along with word that her body was enroute to Chicago that very day. Despite the shortness of the time allowed us and the considerable costs involved, we managed to complete our plans for the funeral by nightfall. News of the death of this eminent and courageous libertarian created a tremendous stir in Chicago radical and liberal circles, and thousands of men, women, and children from all over the city hastened to pay their respects to her memory at Waldheim, where a memorable funeral service was held.

In August, 1936, our society called a special meeting of all Chicago libertarians to mobilize material aid for our embattled comrades in Spain. This gathering unanimously adopted motions to launch an intensive campaign to that effect, and to utilize to the utmost our connections with Workmen's Circle branches, labor unions, and other sympathetic groups. With the help of subscription lists, raffle tickets for art albums sent to us from Spain, eye-arresting posters, and special bulletins about the Spanish Civil War, we not only raised substantial funds for our beleaguered comrades who were resisting Franco, but also spread a great deal of enlightenment about the issues in that bloody conflict.

Too, we organized several highly effective protest meetings, and sponsored the presentation of a dramatic Spanish anti-Fascist film in a downtown theatre for a whole week. Despite bitter cold weather that week, and the hostility of the Catholic Church, we succeeded in raising—through the foregoing affairs and the sale of literature—nearly \$9,000 for this cause. Nor did our program of material and moral support end with the triumph of Dictator Franco. To this day monetary

contributions are being sent regularly to our Spanish comrades in France and other countries through the instrumentality of the Alexander Berkman Fund.

Nineteen Thirty-two saw—in conformity with an appeal by the International Workingmen’s Association—the organization in Chicago of a unit called the Aid Committee for Arrested and Exiled Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists in Russia. In 1936 this unwieldy name was changed to that of the Alexander Berkman Aid Fund, in commemoration of Berkman’s valiant efforts in behalf of our comrades so long persecuted by the Bolsheviki. At various times since 1932, our Free Society has sent appeals throughout the country, conducted an extensive correspondence with our comrades in Russia, and sent substantial help from Chicago to them, in addition to lesser contributions forwarded to kindred committees in Berlin and Paris. And we continue to play an active role in the humanitarian endeavors of the Berkman Fund.

From the beginning, our organization has never been passive or indifferent toward events of the day which affected our movement or the cause of freedom. Thus, during the Sacco-Vanzetti travesty on justice, we did everything in our power to arouse public opinion in behalf of those tragic victims of intolerance. Similarly we made our voice heard in the Mooney-Billings case, as well as in the less publicized Ferrera-Fallito episode. We gave active aid to the work of the Industrial Workers of the World in behalf of the framed-up Harlan County coal miners in Kentucky, and to that of the later Kentucky Miners Defense Committee, which won the liberation of all seven life-term prisoners in the Evarts Battle cases. In brief, we responded readily to the call of any group in the country—be it Jewish, Russian, Spanish, Italian, or English-speaking—which was making a fight to uphold the principles that we hold dear.

A unique activity of our society is its representation in the Pioneer Society, which has long devoted itself to maintaining the monument to our Chicago Haymarket martyrs in Waldheim Cemetery. This monument has been visited by countless thousands of our comrades and sympathizers from all over the world. In 1937 we were chiefly instrumental in organizing a fiftieth-anniversary commemoration of the Haymarket tragedy. That observance had a truly international character, and received wide and favorable publicity.

All these diverse and manifold activities have been carried to success on the principle of free initiative. And on the whole our Free Society has operated harmoniously, despite the wide divergence of points of view represented in its ranks. Our members have never faltered in the will and the impulse to contribute their share to the building of a new world of peace, and freedom. And that shining record of achievement under the inspiration of the libertarian philosophy, gives promise that courage and faith to continue the battle for the realization of our ideal will not be lacking among us!

EDITOR’S NOTE: Inasmuch as *Freie Arbeitr Stimme* is celebrating, in 1951, the sixtieth year of its founding, an explanation is needed here to keep the record straight. Mention is made on page 91 of a twenty-fifth anniversary celebration in honor of that weekly. There was a lapse of a few years in its publication in the first decade, and the Chicago affair actually marked the quarter of a century which had passed since its issuance was resumed in 1899.

Notes on the Authors Herein

M. P. T. ACHARYA wrote *Mutualism* and other books; works in a publishing house in India... FELIPE ALAIZ is author of *Social and Federal Spain* and other books; edits a Spanish weekly,

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Concerning the Translations

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