

# Comments on the Proposals of Some Modern Saviors About Avoiding the Menace of Atomic War

Laurance Labadie

1960

During man's history, as an aftermath of scramble due to circumstances of absolute scarcity, the populations of the world in their ignorance have allowed closely-knit predatory and quasi-military organizations called governments to arise like cancers in their midst. People have allowed these organizations to grab whatever portions of the earth they could maintain jurisdiction over and call such domains "nations," foolishly believing that in some way these governments were beneficial to them. At the present time these governments, in their conflicts with each other in trying to expand and get more territory and people to rule over, threaten to decimate mankind and make the world uninhabitable. There is no way to stop them, because each of them would be as ready to turn their guns on their own populaces as upon other populaces if their own powers were questioned. This has certainly been the overt policy in Russia, and it is now happening in other countries as well.

For centuries, Russia has known not much other than autocratic absolutism. It probably should not be too much of a surprise that the outcome of a revolution which had been quickly captured by the worst form of authoritarian socialism should be the largest centralized slave state in history.

In America, which was a vast area sparsely populated by heterogeneous people from various parts of the earth, it was simply impossible to establish a highly centralized government. It was a matter of luck that liberty received its greatest advance in history. It was not until the conflicting privileged forces of capitalism had developed so far as to include invasion of all aspects of living, together with the technological advance which makes a police State possible, that government grew from being a mere pest to a downright menace.

The situation was similar in China which was too vast a territory and governed by too many separate bandits to allow a strong central government. It was not until as the aftermath of a war between powerful predatory regimes, plus the physical and psychological advances which are advantageous to the institutionalization of organized coercion, that the present totalitarian regime became possible.

In Africa, the same process is now proceeding with great rapidity. In this instance the first aspect is the separation of colonial areas from their erstwhile masters. On the surface this appears as an advance toward independence and liberty. But in point of fact it is merely the changing from foreign masters to home grown masters. The state, or rather the respective states with the inherently imperial drives which characterize it as an institution, will have these drives accentuated if either the capitalist or communist “methods of production” become implanted, as they are being implanted. The result is a foregone conclusion. These States will begin to fight among themselves; there will be allies and collusions, and the process toward consolidation and totalization of power will go on apace, accelerated by the use of modern weapons and a type of brain-washing which is found when the State monopolizes the school system.

The processes mentioned here, namely the consolidation, accentuation and centralization of coercive power is actually being advocated with a great degree of plausibility. Not only the Marxian communists, but the Nazis under Hitler, the Fascists under Mussolini, and even the New Dealers under Roosevelt, and of course the previous attempts of governments to gain control of open territories, as well as the trends inherent in capitalism itself which gave birth to colonialism—all these movements had at the end of their process, avowed in most cases, the rulership of the world. And today we are being presented for consideration world government as a solution for the dilemma in which the world now finds itself—in short, world slavery to the all-embracing and omnipotent State as a solution of mankind’s ills.

There is one fly in this panacean ointment, and this is that the conflicts implicit in the process are going to be fought with weapons which are definitely annihilistic. Whether this progress toward utter annihilation is one of those phenomena which Nietzsche calls Eternal Recurrence, and whether it has occurred thousands of times is a matter for speculation. It could hardly be a matter of history, for there would be no one to write it and no one to read it even if written. It would be a finale in the grand manner—presumably millions of years of evolution snuffed out in a flash. What tragedian or believer in *Gottterdammerung* has imagined such a spectacle?

The dynamics of State Socialism is the preparation for war. This is explicit in the theory of socialism, in that it presumes to fight against so-called reactionary forces in order to inaugurate and maintain the system,—in this instance, forces within a country. But since State Socialism is also a war against “capitalism,” it implicitly is a war against all non-State Socialist countries. It is one of the principal tenets of Marxian Socialism that it is ultimately to be a world system. And since they are not averse to the use of force to achieve the system, and of coercion to maintain it, it is obviously a military operation from start to finish. What is obtained by force must almost necessarily need be maintained by force, especially if it be a system to which all individuals must conform. All the actual attempts to achieve State Socialism substantiate this opinion.

On the other hand, if what is meant by capitalism is the State’s upholding of unlimited absentee holdings of land as property: if it means the monopolization of the issue of money and credit, either by the State or by an organization protected by the State, with (as a consequence) the arbitrary and exorbitant charges of interest over and above the competitive cost of such service; if it means the exclusive privilege to use manufacturing processes by means of patent monopolies; if it means obstacles placed in the way of freedom of transport and exchange—if capitalism means an economy based in these state-granted special- privileges, then as long as the beneficiaries of these coercive and invasively-held exploiting privileges control the power of the State, there is little hope for freedom in this world. Moreover, war between capitalist nations is almost inherent

and inescapable with such a state of affairs. Such a war is possibly being fore-stalled at the moment because of their common antipathy to out-and-out totalitarianism.

The financial systems of capitalistic countries make increase of debt and depressions a mathematical certainty. This certainty is attempted to be postponed by inflation. But notwithstanding that in America about forty billion dollars is being pumped into circulation as buying power, through military expenditures, without a corresponding amount of goods being added to the market, sellers have such difficulty disposing of their goods that they offer them without any down payment, even for as long as six months' time. The eventual consequence of this procedure will be intolerable. But the point is that without the pump-priming via the military machine, financed largely with fiat money, the economy would come to a standstill. This fact bulwarks the rationale for an ever larger military establishment, nicely aided by the threat of the communist block.

On the communist side, there is some likelihood that the populace would not endure their abuse except in the face of the threat, or alleged threat, of "capitalist imperialism." The engines of coercion or governments of both sides of the cold war therefore mutually support each other, and we observe a self-aggravating situation.

Thus we find an almost inevitable war situation arising out of the economic rules and coercive controls which obtain in both communist and capitalist systems. Even were all "countries" communist and nationalistic, there would be no assurance whatever that there would be no war between them. This is so because of the inherently belligerent and predatory nature of the State itself. The tendency of arbitrary power is to add to itself, until at least the rulers confront a greater military power, or if internal dry rot should precipitate a revolution.

If such a revolution be of an organized military type of operation, such as is implied by political organizations, in contrast with a spontaneous upheaval, it is inevitable that the factions of the revolutionary movement fight among themselves for exclusive power, and out of this conflict the outcome is practically certain to be a stronger organized coercive power, even stronger than had existed before, and so the tendencies in the world today are in the direction of either the super slave state or, in view of the destructive potency of modern weapons, utter annihilation.

The so-called fight against communism is at bottom a reactionary fight to maintain the evils of capitalism. It is the fighting of an effect, since the theory of communism as a social system is an outgrowth of the evils of capitalism, To try to maintain an evil against a greater evil, when the latter is a more or less logical development of the former, is a grand piece of idiocy. In this insane battle both evils will be eliminated, but only by the elimination of the human race.

From my analysis, the only way to avoid the threat of atomic war is in the abolition of governments. Is it too late to hope for this? The Russian government seems here to stay, and destined to get more brutal if necessary, as long as it can enforce loyalty on its police and soldiers. There is no question whatever that the governments of Russia and China are the worst menaces, simply because they have more people and resources at their command. Yet in the democratic countries it is only through the collusion between the government and monopolized banking systems that enough capital, largely in the form of ersatz money, can be amassed to produce the atomic bomb. And of course the possibility of amassing capital and manufacturing bombs in totalitarian countries is simple enough. It is the very existence of concentrated power to tax and to use tax money to enhance the very power which taxed in the first place, which constitutes a one-way street to hell.

In a non-governmental world, in a world where the political State had been replaced by voluntary associations in which people produced and exchanged necessary goods and services, it would be impossible to induce enough people to invest their savings in such mammoth military establishments as now obtain.

I believe there is no assurance whatever in evading the increase of more and more military expenditure by the hope that government rulers are going to agree to the diminution of military might. In fact they mutually support each other by their mutual threats. The hope that governments will agree to reduce military might finds lodgment in minds that misapprehend the nature of government. But such minds are virtually universal simply because they have been taught in government-controlled schools throughout the world. What would surprise me is that anyone so “educated” had managed to think his way out of the universally-induced superstition that governments are in any way other than unmitigated evils.

The shallow observance that often governments are solicitous in patching up the evils they themselves have caused (through granting privileges to special persons and interests) blinds people to the fact that the woes they suffer are of governmental origin. Any objective study, not only of the history of governments throughout the ages, but of their origins and necessary nature, would confirm the conviction that the State is the institutionalization of robbery, coercion, slavery, and indeed murder, as a method for conducting societies.

As things are going now it is a matter of time when more and more governments will possess the atomic bomb, and to expect—in opposition to the theory of Clausewitz, that they are continually going to refrain from using them to implement their inherently imperialistic policies is, in my opinion, a vain hope. This seems to me should be plain to anyone whose brains have not been brainwashed by nationalistic teachings in state-controlled educational institutions.

It is claimed by many people that in democratic countries the people rule. Unfortunately for that theory, in the country which produced the atomic bomb only a handful of people knew that the bomb was being produced, and presumably the dropping of it and the snuffing-out of nearly a quarter million innocent lives was the decision of one man.

World government as a solution of the threat of atomic war? No government is going to relinquish its sovereignty without putting up a fight, and in that fight will employ the bomb which is the avowed purpose of governmental consolidation to avoid.

Unfortunately the argument implicit here is not one which may be able to be proven by saying, “I told you so.” In the meantime one may indulge in agreeable chagrin, saying “Such things cannot be.” Perhaps man’s original sin was to think at all, as some theologians tell us. But thinking will be necessary if men are to discontinue their primitive ancestors blunder of perpetuating and institutionalizing the robbery and incidental murder which he resorted to as an unwelcome expedient in some of the scrambles which he faced in times of scarcity. Habit may be a labor-saving device, but it can also become a disastrous piece of negligence, as is becoming obvious.

Or if one wishes to become philosophical, he need not become *too much* concerned about blowing up the earth. After all, we all have to die sometime, and if it be in the cards that the whole farce is to be terminated, so be it. If men are such fools as to allow themselves to be blown to ned, perhaps it is all for the best. From the cosmic point of view it doesn’t make a particle of difference either way. But there are enough psychopaths in high places on both sides of the cold war as to make the odds for annihilation an almost sure bet.

The Anarchist Library  
Anti-Copyright



Laurance Labadie  
Comments on the Proposals of Some Modern Saviors About Avoiding the Menace of Atomic  
War  
1960

Retrieved 10/25/2021 from  
[http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist\\_Archives/bright/labadie/LabadieEssays.pdf](http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist_Archives/bright/labadie/LabadieEssays.pdf)  
From a mimeographed edition of a typewritten copy, signed and dated April 18, 1960. Reprinted  
in *Laurance LaBadie: Selected Essays* (Libertarian BroadSides), James J. Martin, ed., Ralph Myles  
Publisher, Inc., 1978.

**theanarchistlibrary.org**