

# **Some Notes and Information on Anarchist Opposition to War**

**Including Translations and Summaries by Charlatan Stew**

various authors, Charlatan Stew

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\* Copies of the French originals were obtained from C.I.R.A. Library, Centre Internationale de Recherches sur l'Anarchisme, avenue de Beaumont 24, CH-1012 Lausanne, Switzerland. The Library circulates, for a modest membership fee, materials on all aspects of anarchism in all languages.

CHARLATAN STEW, Seattle, U.S.A.

# **I. Coming To Grips With The War by Federation Anarchiste Romande, Geneva, 1939**

Coming to Grips With the War: the ratification of the Russo-German Pact was followed immediately by war; the silence imposed by the ideologists (Communist and Nazi) has allowed the cannons to speak.

## **TO THE WORKERS: NO STATE, NO WAR**

Perhaps the tragic hour could have been postponed, but there was no hope that it could have been avoided. In these days of feverish and agonizing anticipation, in the face of the frightful menace, the peoples of all nations remain irresolute. Their passivity has its roots in the consolidation of human societies into powerful and ever-more militarized states. The pretext for this consolidation has been the necessity of repressing violent individuals and groups. But what it has actually achieved is the most monstrous organization of violence and the compulsory education of everyone in destruction and murder. And that is one of the basic reasons why anarchists want to deprive the state of the armed force it perpetually uses to threaten all those subject to its power. Because citizens have renounced their most sacred rights, and are used by states as instruments of life and death, the world's fate is in the hands of a few governments. The state machinery has been perfected to such a point that it is nearly impossible for an individual to escape.

## **OUR UTOPIA**

Peace will only prevail through an anarchist organization of societies, one that no longer fosters fighting between groups for goals of enslavement and usurpation. Only when people seek within their own societies to practice mutual aid and promote well-being and culture for everyone, when groups compete with each other only to attain more improvements in civilization—only then will there be peace.

This is criticized as utopian. But, accepting this criticism implies despairing of ever realizing a truly human life, and forces people to remain attached to the worst forms of degradation and death.

## **EVERYONE IS GUILTY**

Workers: In saying that everyone is guilty, we're not speaking about the responsibility of the masters of all states. They have had the power to stop the massacres in China, Ethiopia and Spain,

and have permitted them to proceed. What we are talking about is the guilt of those who have consented to be the instruments of such horror and infamy. In no country have we seen a broad movement of popular solidarity with all the victims, not even in those subject to Nazi military invasion.

At first, the British and French plutocrats were reassured by the triumphs of Mussolini and Hitler. But today they feel threatened, now that the two dictators are openly calling for armed imperialist expansion. The French and British governments are not opposed to the clearly warlike ideology; as a matter of fact, they themselves have been pursuing the most insane kind of arms race.

## **BOLSHEVISM AND FASCISM**

The Russian Revolution changed proletarian thinking in a short period of time, demonstrating the possibility of insurrection and emancipation. Fascism, which also claims to be revolutionary, has restored the shaken faith of the bourgeoisie in its own strength and durability. Concessions to labor are finished, along with the kind of liberal perspective that supported labor's demands. In brief, Bolshevism gave confidence to the proletariat; Fascism gave it to the bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie has supported Fascism and Nazism in order to avoid anything that might cause it to suffer a resounding defeat or might even lead to a mass movement going beyond the capitalist order. That is why shocking and unprecedented concessions were made to Mussolini and Hitler, in stark contrast to the harsh limitations imposed on the preceding Italian and German governments.

## **THE THREAT OF WAR USED AS BLACKMAIL**

The great powers' granting of such concessions led the Fascist-Axis powers to use the threat of war as blackmail. But this could not be prolonged indefinitely without the eventual outbreak of war. As Norman Angell has shown, Great Britain, in a departure from its traditional practice, pursued a policy which increased the strength and influence of its potential enemies. Moreover, class interest was placed above national, or even imperial interest. Patriotism in the strictest sense was left to the have-nots; the possessors of wealth were no longer interested in promoting it.

## **...ANOTHER ABSOLUTISM**

Meanwhile, some people persisted in their faith in the Russian state—and even the worst disappointments didn't really cure them of it. Their faith wasn't shaken, even though the Bolshevik state rulers allied their government with the Mussolini regime from its very beginning; even when, the day after Matteoti's assassination, the Russian ambassador threw a banquet for the Duce; even though, during the Italian war against Ethiopia, the U.S.S.R. was the main provider of grains and fuel to the Fascists; even when the U.S.S.R. gave the same kind of assistance to the Italian government during the Spanish civil war (while the Italian government aided the Spanish Fascists). Mussolini proclaimed in the Italian Chamber of Deputies that the Bolsheviks

were magnificent teachers; and the Italian shipyards have continued to provide warships to the U.S.S.R.

As for Germany, the Communists there joined with the Nazis (before the latter's rise to power in 1933) more than once to fight against democracy. And once Hitler came to power, the Rapallo Treaty between the German and Soviet governments was maintained. Commercial agreements were expanded, and not one diplomatic incident marred the relationship between the two powers.

For the sake of appearances, the German and Italian governments formed an anti-Comintern pact, the real value of which we understand today.

## **STALIN AND SPAIN**

We want to stress particularly Stalin's criminal duplicity with respect to Spain. While the Communists were denouncing the policy of non-intervention in Spain (advocated and practiced by the Western bourgeois democracies) as the worst kind of infamy, Soviet government representatives were participating in the Plymouth Committee in London and approving all of its decisions. This could only cause the greatest confusion among workers. Moreover, the Stalinist involvement in Spain resulted in the Republic's submission to Soviet tutelage and led to the perpetration of the worst crimes—the plundering of the country, and the creation of the worst resentments and deepest divisions among the anti-Fascist resisters—behind the facade of unity. This has been established by all too many documents and eyewitness accounts. When the history of the Spanish Revolution is written, it will clearly emerge that the worst betrayal suffered by the popular rising was at the hands of Moscow.

None of this diminishes in any way the heavy responsibility of the English and French governments in the defeat of the Spanish Republic.

## **AND IN CHINA AS WELL...**

We should also remember that the first invasion of Chinese territory was undertaken by the Soviet government (before the Japanese invasion of 1931), in order to take possession of the Eastern Railroad. The influential Paris financial paper *INFORMATION* observed that the Russians had provided an excellent example, one the Japanese government could use in its turn.

The above summary establishes that the Russo-German pact—which obviously encouraged the Nazi regime to carry out its aggression against Poland—fits into the consistent Stalinist pursuit of two-faced policies and betrayals.

## **THE INACTIVE PROLETARIAT**

Has the proletariat been equal to its task and its aspirations? No one could dare to answer yes.

Under the pretext of pacifism, proletarians have abstained from opposing the Fascist project, and have remained passive in the face of the gravest developments. There has been no pressure on governments, no direct action, no international solidarity.

The proletariat as a class has remained indifferent to all of the crimes, gloomily anticipating something, if not the worst, from a war that cannot be escaped. At the same time, it tolerates the very conditions that heighten the danger. Nothing has been gained by people saying, "we're

not at all interested in China,” “we’re not concerned about the Ethiopians,” or “Spain isn’t worth risking a war over.”

Nor was anyone concerned about Austria, Czechoslovakia, Albania, the Lithuanian seaport of Memel, Poland, etc. In fact, aggression in all of these places served to reinforce Fascist power and influence in the world—and war continued to loom as the final result.

Those who are inactive are always in the wrong. And this is especially true of the tens of millions of so-called conscious and organized people who have been inactive in the face of history’s most significant events, developments that will shape the fate of humanity for decades to come. What happened? Is it possible that, as a result of the tumultuous times, the workers had no plan of their own to elaborate and impose on their masters, the lords of state and industrial exploitation? The organized labor movement allowed itself to be absorbed by the state, submitted to its yoke, reduced to a passive instrument, counting for nothing as an international force.

We need to resist this actively; and we must not limit ourselves simply to negative responses.

## **THE MOST ESSENTIAL RIGHT**

This year, as the 150th anniversary of the Declaration of the Rights of Man is being celebrated, we anarchists demand an indispensable right, without which all other rights are mere illusions. Simply stated, no one should be required to kill others or to expose themselves to being killed.

Every individual’s life belongs to him or her, and no one else can require that it be taken away. We honor those who have voluntarily sacrificed their lives for a great idea, in a struggle for liberty. But it is the worst kind of degradation, it is absolute slavery, to allow anyone else the monstrous right to dispose of the existence of others.

What else can be said about the soldier’s obligation to kill? Human life has been earnestly declared sacred, especially after the execution of some tyrants, by the very people who then demand that we assassinate strangers—those guilty of nothing more than the inability to, or ignorance of how to, get out of military service—people just like ourselves.

This is the great dilemma posed by conscience, which all our spiritual pundits have avoided considering.

## **OUR TASK**

In these terrible times, with the cannons already booming, as the carnage intensifies—workers!, comrades!: we must resist becoming entangled in the ugly passions engendered by war. State violence has never been based on reason or humanitarian goals. We must remember now and forever that our enemy is our master, and that war has been planned and sought by masters, and masters must be eliminated to ensure a world at peace.

Where some have power over others, where some people exploit others, the result is rivalries, competition, ambitions, hatreds, usurpations, persecutions—which sooner or later must end in armed conflict.

Those who have so often insisted on effective power, on a government that really governs, on respect for authority, today they can see for themselves what these are leading to. The worst kind of disorder is not anarchy, as they always claim, but war, which is the highest expression of authority.

Workers, we must not despair in the presence of such collective madness. The time may come when things will change, when people will see a glimmer of truth amidst the worst barbarity. We must cease allowing our actions to be shaped by events. We need to prepare ourselves to give events a new direction, to revive the sentiments of mutual aid, fairness and fraternity. Only then can we bring into being the kind of justice invoked by Michelet: "the justice that we call by its 'nom de guerre'—Revolution."



## II. Anarchist Activity In France During World War Two

*Following is a summary of material from the C.I.R.A., Marseilles, BULLETIN No. 21/22 (Summer, 1984), which had the theme "Anarchists and the Resistance."*

Jean René Sauliere (alias André Arru) was one of the anarchist participants in the French resistance to the Nazis and their Vichy collaborators during World War II. He was born in Bordeaux in 1911 and became an orphan during the First World War. In early adulthood he made his living as a traveling salesman. He belonged to the Bouches-du-Rhone section of the Federation of Free Thinkers, and was elected its president. He also joined the anarchist movement and became a pacifist. Several years before the outbreak of the 1939-1945 conflict, he decided that he would never participate in any war. Like other pacifists and revolutionaries, he saw war as a solution worse than the evil it was supposed to combat. By 1939, Sauliere decided that he would not voluntarily submit to arrest for refusing to serve in the military if called. He intended to escape in order to continue the struggle as a pacifist and anarchist. This was a common attitude in the left libertarian and revolutionary syndicalist circles of the time.

In an article entitled "Reflections on Some Tall Tales," written in the late 1970s and published in issue 21/22 of the C.I.R.A. Marseilles BULLETIN, Sauliere noted that the history of the French anarchist movement between 1939 and 1945 has been almost completely neglected, and when dealt with at all, has most often been distorted.

One of the examples he cited was from Jean Maitron's HISTORY OF THE ANARCHIST MOVEMENT, Volume 2, 1914 to the Present (published in France in 1975). Maitron dispensed with the period 1940-1945 by asserting that the French anarchist movement was inactive and disorganized until 1943 because it was "leaderless" at the beginning of the war. He also asserted that some of the anarchists were "Germanophiles," others were Gaullists, and most were simply involved in individual survival during the war. But Sauliere, who was an active participant in the anarchist and anti-Fascist movement during the war, asserted that the charges that some anarchists were "Germanophiles" or Gaullists were definitely untrue. Sauliere did note that the pre-war anarchist movement was suppressed in France, after the general mobilization was declared in September of 1939. Its members were either inducted into the military, refused the draft, went into hiding, or were put under police surveillance. Louis Lecoin and a large number of other well-known anarchists wrote, signed and distributed a leaflet titled "Immediate Peace" a few days after the declaration of war, for which they were all arrested. At the same time, all anarchist literature was banned because it was basically anti-militarist and anti-war.

Nevertheless, Sauliere indicated, there were a number of individuals and groups who began rebuilding the movement soon after the start of the war. Neither lack of "leadership" nor lack of motivation were hindrances. The number of French anarchist activists had been small before the war relative to the numbers of activists involved in authoritarian left groupings. So, although many of them began undertaking activity, their criticisms of the established unions and political

left, and their small numbers, left them relatively isolated. This, in combination with the severe repression and police surveillance, made organized anarchist activity during the war years very difficult.

Before the war Sauliere was actively involved in the Bordeaux anarchist group. A number of other members in the group held the same anti-war, anti-military position as he did, and a number of the other young men had also decided to avoid the draft if war came. But Sauliere was the only one in the group who followed through when the general mobilization was announced. He went into hiding for five months in Bordeaux, until he was able to get papers that identified him as a person medically unfit for military service. With these, in February 1940, he went to Marseilles, where he was less well known by the authorities.

Adopting the name on his papers, André Arru, he contacted French, Italian and Spanish anarchists living in the area. Later he was joined by a Bordeaux anarchist comrade named Armand, who had been discharged from the military. They formed a libertarian group and began writing leaflets and pamphlets which they printed themselves. In the center of the city, during the nighttime curfew, they put up posters and distributed the leaflets in mailboxes and other places. In the beginning there were only two activists regularly involved; but their numbers grew to twelve as the war went on. At first, they were only able to print a few dozen small leaflets using very simple techniques, but later, with the help of activists in other cities, they were able to do professional printing of one to five thousand copies. From early 1940 on, they produced literature attacking the Fascists and all those responsible for the war, including capitalists and the Stalinist dictatorship. The Marseilles group put out at least five different publications of one thousand or more copies each: a leaflet titled "Too All Intellectual and Manual Workers (translated and reprinted below), a poster headed "Against Fascism and Dictatorship," a poster headed "Death to The Brutes" (also translated and reprinted below), a 45-page pamphlet titled THE GUILTY ONES, and a 12-page bulletin named REASON.

The Marseilles anarchists also made and maintained regular contact with anarchist groups in other cities and individuals in the area who worked with them. They were in touch with people in Paris, Nimes, Lyon, Montpellier, Toulouse, Foix, Var and elsewhere. They made contact with the anarchist printers Henri and Raoul Lion in Toulouse, who were actively involved in the French Resistance movement. The brothers printed posters, leaflets, the first issue of REASON, and the pamphlet THE GUILTY ONES for the Marseilles group, as well as books and other anarchist literature. They were eventually arrested and sent to a concentration camp, where both died. The Marseilles group's literature was distributed locally and in the other cities where anarchists were active.

The bulletin REASON: ORGAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY SYNDICALIST FEDERATION, issue No. 1, June, 1943, contained discussions of the Katyn Forest massacre, the Spanish Revolution and current events in France from a libertarian perspective.

The Russian anarchist Voline was living in the Marseilles area. Even though he was under police surveillance, he was able to evade the authorities in order to participate in the work of the group. He helped to put together and distribute the pamphlet THE GUILTY ONES, among other things. Sauliere/Arru also received assistance from Pierre Besnard, former secretary-general of the Revolutionary Syndicalist General Confederation of Labor (C.G.T.S.R.), in working on this project.

In his book, Maitron asserted that the anarchists did not have very many meetings during the war, especially before 1943, and that the meetings they had were not very serious. But Sauliere,

in "Reflections on Some Tall Tales," noted that he attended quite a few meetings, many of them before 1943, both in Marseilles and in other cities, along with anarchists from a number of places. The discussions they had were quite serious, including analyses of current events and debates about whether they should cooperate directly with non-anarchist anti-Fascists in their ongoing activities or remain separate and independent from the rest of the organized resistance., Many individual anarchists chose to be involved in the establishment Resistance as well as taking part in separate left libertarian group activities. Others preferred not to subject themselves to the hierarchical command system of the Resistance, in which they would have to follow the orders of Gaullists, non-Gaullists, Communists and other authoritarians. Because of their resistance activities a number of anarchists were arrested, imprisoned and, like the Lion brothers, sent to concentration camps.

The French anarchist groups worked closely with the underground Spanish anarchist movement in France and inside Spain opposing the Franco regime. They also had cooperative working arrangements with people and groups outside the anarchist movement.

In 1943 there was a clandestine anarchist conference in Toulouse. It was organized and attended by delegates from Marseilles and the other cities mentioned above, plus a representative from the underground movement of Spanish libertarians living in the departments of Ariège and Haute-Garonne. The group formed at the conference published literature under the name International Revolutionary Syndicalist Federation, F.I.S.R. was the French acronym. See their text "To All Intellectual and Manual Workers" below. It advocated revolution by means of the general strike, which would be a prelude to a new social order founded on universal human solidarity in the place of exploitation of human being by hi-an being.

One of the posters the Marseilles group wrote and published, "Death to The Brutes," is translated and printed below. The title was intended to catch the eye of passersby. The "brutes" referred to were the heads of the Nazi, Fascist, Francoist, Stalinist, Vichy, British and American states, the generals and their accomplices. The poster argued that they were all responsible for the war and the horrors that resulted from it.

One of the examples of distortion of anarchist wartime history which most disturbed Sauliere appeared in the best-selling book EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE: THE FRENCH LEFTISTS 1929-1944 by Jean Rabaut (published in France in 1974). The book primarily recounted the history of the French Trotskyists, but also mentioned anarchist activity during World War II. Rabaut referred to the poster "Death to The Brutes," although he did not reprint its text. He offered his readers a very distorted description of its contents, stating that it urged people to nail all "brutes" to doors, including those wearing the symbol of the "five-pointed star." He went on to note that this supposed contempt for the wearers of the "five-pointed star" did not stop Sauliere and his comrades from risking their freedom and perhaps their lives by making forged identity papers to help Jews. In fact, the only truth in Rabaut's statement was that the Marseilles group did, indeed, produce papers to help Jews and politically involved people evade Nazi and Vichy persecution.

Sauliere was very disturbed by the false charges. He asserted that the text of the poster was not at all anti-Semitic, as implied by Rabaut. In fact, it did not refer to wearers of the "five-pointed star" at all, but to those who wore the red star, symbol of the Bolshevik state. The point was that the rulers of the Soviet state should be viewed like all other rulers.

Sauliere insisted that anti-Semitism never existed among the anarchists involved in the Marseilles group, and to imply that it did was a gross falsification. When challenged by Sauliere,

Rabaut, in a letter, admitted that he had not checked the facts relating to his charge, apologized for his misstatement and promised to correct it in future editions of his book.

Sauliere and his anarchist comrades in Marseilles, as noted above, produced forged identity papers to help political refugees and Jews. They also sheltered a number of people who were fleeing the Vichy government and Nazi occupation authorities. A couple they had assisted were arrested by the Vichy police and were intimidated into revealing the source of their false documents. Because of this, on August 3, 1943, Sauliere, his companion Julie Vinas (who was a Spanish political refugee) and another French anarchist, Etienne Chauvet, were arrested by the Vichy police. When the police broke in, the three had just printed and were preparing to put up the poster "Death to The Brutes." Three other comrades who were planning to help with the pestering were warned by a neighbor in time to avoid capture.

The arrested anarchists were interrogated for five days, but luckily were not tortured. The men were sent to the Chave prison in Marseilles and Vinas to a prison hospital.

In prison Sauliere/Arru and Chauvet met Communists, socialists and Gaullists, who had also been arrested for resistance activities. The two anarchists openly criticized the Petain regime and refused to go along with the celebration led by the Communists to mark the October Bolshevik revolution, or to sing the patriotic songs the Communists sang to impress the Gaullists with their loyalty to the French nation-state.

In March of 1944 some of the Communists, led by one Charles Poli, organized an escape, and invited the Gaullist prisoners to join them. The escape was a success; but seven of the political prisoners were left behind, five, including the two anarchists, for purely ideological reasons. In her book HISTORY OF THE PARTISAN GROUPS (M.U.R.) OF BOUCHES-DU-RHONE FROM SEPTEMBER 1943 TO THE LIBERATION (published in 1962) Madeleine Baudoin included an interview she had with the Communist Poli. He confirmed to Baudoin that the Communists purposely left the anarchists behind in prison because of their anti-patriotic attitudes. He was aware that the two had participated in the resistance in various ways, including forging papers to help people fleeing the Nazi and Vichy authorities. But, he asserted that, as Communists, he and his comrades loved France and were true patriots. They could tolerate differences of opinion and would have been willing even to help monarchists who shared their love of France, but not anti-patriotic anarchists.

After the escape, the political prisoners left behind were transferred to the prison at Aix, from which they escaped, at the end of April 1944, with help from the local resistance organization. Many years later, Sauliere learned that he and Chauvet had been scheduled to be sent to a concentration camp from the prison at Aix.

On their way to safety, two of the escaped prisoners had to be left behind because they were too sick to walk the distance to the rendezvous point arranged for meeting their local resistance guide. Those who made it were taken into the countryside, where a maquis unit was forming. The escaped prisoners were asked by the F.T.P. leader if they wanted to join or go their own way. The two anarchists decided to go off on their own to rejoin their own contacts. So, after a few weeks of rest, they were given forged identity papers and food and were escorted to a town. Sauliere then contacted other anarchists and was joined by his companion Vinas, who had been released six months earlier. Together they went to Toulouse at the end of June, 1944 and re-contacted other anarchist comrades there.

The groups in the region had been inactive since the August 1943 arrest because of fear of police surveillance; but activity was renewed as soon as Sauliere and Vinas became involved again. In

August, 1944, the Toulouse group put out a pamphlet, which was printed and distributed the same day the German army evacuated the city. They had great hopes for the future—everyone “assumed that the Francoist regime would now be overthrown and a republic could be restored in Spain.

Although Sauliere understood fairly clearly that the end of the Second World War would not bring the rule of social justice, at first he believed that things would surely be better than before the war. He felt that things would have to be different because people had learned from the mistakes of the past and because all of the political ideologues had been discredited. But he later recognized that he and his comrades had been naively optimistic; and, by the 1970s, he sadly acknowledged that there was less social justice after the war than before. Despite this, Sauliere continued to believe that he and his anarchist comrades had acted as they had to. When interviewed in Marseilles in 1970 by Madeleine Baudoin, he asserted that, given the same situation, he would do it all again, but would try to learn more lessons from history and not repeat mistakes.

After the war Sauliere continued his anarchist activities, settling in Marseilles again. In 1948, because of his wartime draft resistance, he was sentenced to a five-year prison term. But this was suspended because he was able to produce twenty-eight affidavits from people who had known him in the resistance.

### III. To All Intellectual and Manual Workers

*The following is a complete translation of a text written in Marseilles in 1943 by Jean Sauliere (alias André Arru), Voline and other comrades. Between 3,000 and 5,000 copies were printed in Toulouse. It was signed International Revolutionary Syndicalist Federation (F.I.S.R. was the French acronym).*

To all intellectual and manual workers: At a time when humanity, led by madmen, strivers and hypocrites, is collapsing under the repeated blows of greedy profiteers of all sorts, we are once again making a sincere appeal to all reasonable and practical individuals to try to avoid total destruction and to take advantage of the present chaos to turn their efforts toward a rational and humane form of social organization. It is undeniably the fault of all governments that the blood of workers has been flowing in torrents in all countries for three years. Although Hitler and Mussolini most directly provoked the conflict, others were also responsible; including international financiers. Industrial and financial trusts bankrolled the Italian Fascist movement and the German National Socialists from 1919 to 1930. They also funded the press in the various democratic and fascist countries to wage the bellicose campaigns that incited the strong and unending resentment in all countries from 1930 to 1939, which led to the present war. At the same time, they blocked any movement for the liberation of the working masses.

The present conflict is the doing of the money powers of each nation, powers that live internationally and exclusively off the exploitation of human beings by human beings. It is also the result of international competition, shady deals, and political rivalries between men and systems, as well as the result of the venality, weakness, hypocrisy and stupid recklessness of the politicians of the whole world. And we mean all of them. Secret diplomacy has been used ruthlessly in both London and Berlin, in Paris and Moscow, in both Washington and Tokyo.

Now yesterday's imperialists pose as liberators. The makers and peddlers of the Versailles Treaty, the inventors and wreckers of the League of Nations, the accomplices of Hindenburg and Dollfus, the stranglers of the Spanish Revolution, the fomenters of the Mexican counter-revolutions, those who have supplied Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy—they claim to be bringing order to the world. But they have never wanted anything but disorder and the disunity of the nations of both hemispheres.

What do sordid English imperialism and ferocious American capitalism have to offer us? Quite simply, a return to "the pre-war situation," a return to the Versailles status quo or something like it, and the reconstruction of the League of Nations, the continuation of the exploitation of labor by capital, the bank as mistress of the world, gold as king, the thousand and one diplomatic combinations, the thousand and one political and financial combinations that we know so well. In sum, they are offering us the makings of another nice little world war in twenty-five or thirty years—if the people of the world are not capable of constituting a true League of Peoples which would guarantee peace and organize the world through social revolution everywhere.

On the other hand, what do the apostles of the "national revolution" have to offer us? They offer a revolution in reverse, which would throw humanity back to the darkest times of its existence,

into an abyss of racial and religious fanaticism, a total slavery of the laboring masses and an absolute obliteration of the individual.

Then there is the USSR. Even though Stalin's republic has done away with private capital, it has not done away with class differences. There are still high functionaries, the military elite, privileged workers and, at the bottom, the people. What's more, we find it guilty of having suppressed every practice, appearance or idea of liberty. Unfortunately, the GPU is quite the equal of the Gestapo; and, besides fascists, the concentration camps in Siberia also imprison socialists, Trotskyists, unionists and left libertarians. Unfortunately, the USSR is also guilty of playing a diplomatic game which has served the purposes of both the fascists and the imperialists—and has made possible the unleashing of the present terrible conflict.

All this means that the people cannot have, nor should they any longer have, confidence in any of the rulers or their political systems. Heads of state and military leaders of all stripes and tendencies change from one side to another, tear up treaties while signing new ones, serve now a republic, now a dictatorship, collaborate with those who made war on them yesterday, and reverse themselves again and again. They have done this so often and with such ease that their honor, sworn word, integrity and honesty now have no significance.

While the statesmen, the generals, the admirals and their ilk are permitted to play their petty, mad game, the ordinary people are paying the price. They are mobilized for the democracies, against democracies, for the fascists, against fascists. In Africa,

Asia and Europe the people are paying the price for these conflicts. They are getting their faces smashed in. The homes of ordinary people are being crushed, with women and children inside. And tomorrow it will be the people who will pay the price for reconstruction.

We call on all those who have chosen sides without thinking to open their eyes to the situation. German and Italian fascism, the products of world imperialism, are in their death throes. Anglo-American imperialism is being aided by all of the capitalist forces which are presently at bay. They are preparing for (1) an imperialist peace of the Versailles Treaty type, which will embody a new basis for future conflicts and their hopes for new advantages; (2) the stifling of any movement for workers' emancipation, with the help of the traitors and strivers of all countries; (3) a settling of accounts, whether or not this involves an amicable arrangement with the USSR.

As for the USSR, it aspires to be a state-capitalist world power, which, because of its despotism, will be as evil as private capitalism.

This will be the global order, unless the workers of the whole world unite from now on to plant the flag of social revolution in the chaos that surrounds us. What must we do to accomplish this? First, we need to utilize the natural tendency of the people toward continental unity through the federation of the countries of each continent. We need to develop ties of solidarity between the continents and give to these ties a functional form through the constitution of a true League of Peoples. It must not be simply a refurbished League of Nations, with its self-serving-interests. We need to make this League of Peoples into a truly economic, administrative and social regulator of the whole world organized for peace and against war, by creating bodies to serve it, such as an International Economic Council and an International Administrative and Social Council. But without doubt this can only be accomplished through a social revolution that is as global as the present war.

And to carry out this gigantic task the peoples must develop agreement, join together and struggle, to understand, act and strive toward the goal. In preparation, they must lay the foundations within their respective proletariats for a vast federalist movement that would at first

be continental in scope and, later, worldwide. They must be prepared to take into account the various concrete realities and possible development within each country, in order to plan their movement so that their own class organizations will bring to life the institutions through which the associated peoples will rule tomorrow.

By social revolution we mean the abolition of political power, of militarism, of gold as king, and of classes. By social revolution we also mean the complete and definitive freedom of speech, organization and action for everyone, the free availability of the means of production for all peoples, including access to jobs, products, education and security for all. By social revolution we mean power in the hands of everyone through libertarian syndicalist association, which would promote production in all countries and worldwide, thereby ensuring an equitable distribution of raw materials and finished products, including consumer goods. We also mean communitarian association, which would satisfy all consumption needs through the distribution of goods in the interest of all. By social revolution we also mean creating all of the social bodies capable of fostering full development and fulfillment of individuals in all areas. We also mean the guaranteeing of real social equality to all through the proper administration of a healthy and popular form of justice, based on conciliation and arbitration.

We need geographic association, uniting localities, regions and countries through permanent liaison bodies of the economic and administrative institutions, in order to better manage the interests on all levels of all peoples harmoniously associated and working together practically. For this to happen, the social revolution will have to be not only worldwide and, as much as possible, simultaneous in all countries, but it will also have to make way for an era of reason, socially-conscious science and freed labor.

We must make every effort. It doesn't mean fighting just against Hitler's fascism, but against all varieties of fascism, against all tyrannies, whether of the right, center or left, whether monarchist, democratic or socialist. No tyranny will emancipate labor, free the world or organize humanity on a truly new basis.

It's not a matter of talking about liberty, but living freely. It doesn't involve talking about fraternity, but living fraternally. We aren't struggling to inscribe words on a banner or to change the color of a flag. We are not speaking in abstract terms. We want to progress from perpetual war to perpetual peace, from human exploitation of human to social equality, from total or partial tyranny to complete freedom, from confusion to consciousness.

We don't agree to any compromises with anyone. We are not attached to any personality or party. We want the practical realization of the same social Idea that has been envisioned for nearly two hundred years by republicans, socialists, left labor unionists and libertarians. We are convinced that only the method we have described above can bring it into being. Today we come together in struggle; tomorrow we will work together toward this goal and make it a reality.

In order to best accomplish this task, we are looking for more people to join us.



## IV. Death To The Brutes

*Following is a complete translation of the anarchist poster titled "Death to The Brutes." One hundred fifty copies were printed in August, 1943; it was signed International Revolutionary Syndicalist Federation (F.I.S.R.).*

Proletarians! From East to West, from South to North, throughout the world, for three years, to a greater or lesser extent, you have been paying the price of the battle unleashed by your masters. Thousands of proletarians of all countries are dying, while men of finance, politics and war, brutes that they are, congratulate each other, giving speeches, sharing out the benefits, and dividing the wealth and privileges among themselves.

Remember, you veterans of the "war to end all wars," when you came home in 1918, still blood-stained from that infamous butchery which left ten million dead, twenty million injured, ten million permanently disabled, three million missing and millions of widows and orphans—then you said, and promised, NEVER AGAIN! Now, again, the military beasts have got their hands on you. All over the world, men are no longer men, they are serial numbers.

How long will this last? Until the proletarians of the whole world understand that they have only one enemy: their bosses. Until the proletarians of the whole world fraternize, unite and finally charge forward, armed with bayonets still wet with their brothers' blood, to stab in the ass all the governing and war-mongering charlatans.

Proletarians: In 1919 and in 1936 you shouted, "Death to The Brutes!" Now, in 1943, don't shout, ACT. Death to ALL of them, whether they wear the swastika, the red star, the Order of the Garter, the Lorraine Cross or the francisque.

LONG LIVE LIBERTY! LONG LIVE PEACE! LONG LIVE THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION!

## V. Some Further Notes on Left-Libertarian Opposition to War by Charlatan Stew, 1994

Anarchist and libertarian socialist opposition to capitalist war goes back to the beginning of the twentieth century. Even in the 1920s and '30s, with the rise of Fascism, many revolutionaries continued to believe that the anti-war arguments of the earlier period were far from outdated. They felt that it was still valid to assert that the enemy of the working class and revolutionaries in all countries was the bourgeoisie in all countries, whether it was "democratic" or "fascist." They continued to believe that it was necessary for revolutionaries to concentrate on social change within their own countries rather than on assisting one bourgeoisie against its rivals.

But the left was gravely split on the issue of war, both because of the rise of the USSR and the development of Fascism in a number of countries. Some leftists, including some anarchists and libertarian socialists, felt that it was necessary to ally themselves closely with the national bourgeoisies of various countries, no matter how distasteful, in order to fight Fascism. They argued that the proletariat and the revolutionary movements would be crushed and demoralized by Fascism, especially since they were substantially weakened by the splits and confusion caused by the Bolshevik takeover in Russia, the development of communist parties throughout the world and the consolidation of reformist socialist politics. This debate is discussed in the pamphlet *THIRD-CAMP INTERNATIONALISTS IN FRANCE DURING WORLD WAR II* by Ernest Rayner.

The debate was further confused by the position taken by those leftists who identified with Marxist-Leninist parties and the Soviet Union. In 1902, Hobson described the phenomenon of capitalist imperialism and Luxemburg and Hilferding later both elaborated with respect to capitalist-colonialist conquests and rivalries between nation-states. Their aim was to further understand the reasons for wars between nation-states despite the shared interests of different national bourgeoisies. But Lenin adopted this concept to simplistically distinguish between nation-states in order to justify some forms of nationalism while condemning others. He classified some states as "imperialist" and others as "anti-imperialist." According to Lenin, imperialism was to be understood as the ineluctable expression of the most advanced form of capitalism. Those nation-states which imposed colonial rule on others were imperialist and those nationalists in the colonies who fought for the establishment of their own nation-states and the local domination of their own bourgeoisies were designated as anti-imperialist, and worth supporting no matter how brutal the repression they inflicted on their own populations. It was this logic that led the Soviet Union to support the Chiang Kai-shek clique through the 1920s and beyond. For the Marxist-Leninists, the important issue was that the nationalist struggle helped to undermine the advanced capitalist countries and the international capitalist order.

This logic also led the Leninists to tolerate, and sometimes even cooperate with, both the Mussolini Fascists and the German Nazis before and even after their rise to power. The Fascists and Nazis were viewed as offering resistance to US, British, Japanese and especially French imperialism. The rulers of the USSR were frightened by the German Weimar Republic government's align-

ment with the Western imperialist states. They feared that it would result in aggression against the Soviet Union. Because they viewed the Nazis as opposing this alignment with the Western powers, they classified the Nazi political perspective as anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist. Only after the Nazi government signed a non-aggression pact with the Polish government in January, 1934 did the Soviet government and the Comintern begin speaking of cooperation with socialists and democrats in order to combat Fascism. This subject is discussed in further detail in *HITLER PREND LE POUVOIR (HITLER TAKES POWER)* by Georges Goriely; Brussels 1985, as well as in a number of books in English, including works by Gabriel Kolko, E.H. Carr and Howard Zinn.

But many libertarians understood Fascism as "an extreme form of capitalist authoritarianism," to use Emma Goldman's phrase. They understood that it was necessary to evaluate Fascism by the same standards and oppose it for the same reasons as those used to judge other forms of capitalism. These were the same standards which enabled them to comprehend that nationalism and authoritarianism in the Soviet Union led to consolidation rather than destruction of the class system and exploitation. It was all too painfully clear that authoritarian communist anti-Fascists and democratic capitalist anti-Fascists were both primarily interested in defeating political rivals, rather than in challenging the state system and nationalism as part of the system of elite domination. With this understanding many libertarians (including anarchists, anarcho-syndicalists, libertarian socialists and council communists) argued from the '20s on that it would do no good to make compromises in order to cooperate with groups diametrically opposed to libertarian goals. Eventually, if not immediately, such cooperation would make it impossible for libertarians to gain anything. Whatever gains would come from a victory over Fascism would be outweighed by the suffering of the ordinary people in the struggle, and the entrenchment of the capitalist system resulting from the victory of the authoritarian communists or democratic capitalists. The development of this perspective is very well discussed in *ANTI-PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNISM: The movement for workers' councils in Britain 1917-1945* by Mark Shipway.

The experiences of the mid-1930s, especially in the popular fronts of various countries and particularly in the Spanish Revolution, strengthened some peoples' belief in the necessity of all anti-Fascists working together. At the same time, it became even clearer to many that fruitful cooperation was only possible between people who shared long-term social goals. While many anarchists appreciated cooperating with libertarian socialists, council communists and a variety of other non-authoritarians, they came to understand that there were grave dangers for libertarians in cooperating with many liberal democrats and authoritarian socialists. In Spain the CNT-FAI was divided over this issue. The Friends of Durutti, which was founded after the death of this heroic anarchist fighter in the defense of Madrid against the Francoists, carried on his opposition to compromise-cooperation with state-oriented anti-Fascists. They believed that those anarchists and others who had set aside their revolutionary goals to help the bourgeois Spanish Republic defeat the Fascists had gained nothing. They had only succeeded in helping one faction of the bourgeoisie against another faction, and had gained no control over their own lives or society in this struggle. They had allowed themselves to be used and controlled by the "democratic" side, allied with the authoritarian communists. They had agreed to suspend their struggle for revolutionary change and had gained only a brutalization of life, and the strengthening of the state authority in opposition to the self-managed collectives, committees and other organizations of the ordinary people. For a further discussion of this, see *CLASS WAR ON THE HOME FRONT: Revolutionary opposition to the Second World War* by Wildcat Group; Manchester, UK, 1986.

By the late 1930s, many anti-authoritarians, including those around the Freedom Group and a number of other libertarian groups in England and Scotland, and individuals such as Emma Goldman, were even more convinced that anti-Fascist struggles carried out in traditional statist terms in order to satisfy the needs of cooperation with state-oriented groups could only lead to the strengthening of the state, of the worst aspects of nationalism and the capitalist system. They believed that it was necessary to simultaneously struggle against Fascism both domestically and internationally, and to fight for, and in such a way as to bring about, a real transformation of social life in a libertarian direction.

In an article published in May of 1938, Emma Goldman explained one of her major reasons for opposing libertarian cooperation with bourgeois elites fighting against Fascism in any future war. She asserted that Fascism was the product of the brutalized mentality produced by World War One, and there was no reason to expect that a second world war would not produce as ugly or an uglier product. The barbarity of the First World War, as perpetrated by all the states involved, had devastated all social and human values and exterminated all human beings who stood in the way of its goals. Goldman went on to say, "Fascism and National-Socialism and all the frightfulness they imply are the direct legacy of the last war. Their thirst for blood, their will to murder, their sadistic trend to the vilest deeds have found their innings in the world carnage. And so have their dupes whom the trenches and the battlefield have twisted out of human semblance. Brutalized and degraded, they have been caught in the blood-drunk obscene orgy of Fascism and National Socialism. For in these ranks alone, millions of war derelicts are finding an outlet for their accumulated hatred and vengeance for the forces that had driven them to the battlefield." In a letter to Ben Capes, an American comrade, on November 15, 1938, Goldman asserted that a second world war would certainly bring horrors on the battlefield and to the civil population. It would also generate new hatreds and discontents without solving any of the older social problems of the world's peoples. In later interviews, speeches and writings she continued to assert that the "democratic" states, in order to fight fascism, were adopting methods more and more like the Fascists, and that this process would be intensified by the war. To a Detroit journalist, on April 27, 1939, Goldman said, "in a war between modern democracies and the Fascist powers, I do not believe that it makes much difference for the people involved who wins. The only difference is the difference between being shot and being hanged ... Modern democracy is only Fascism in disguise. The liberties of the people are being constantly curtailed. The latest example is conscription in England. And, of course, the present preparation of another imperialistic war. The people always lose in such wars." Goldman felt that the only real hope for the majority of people in the world and for a real, decisive defeat of Fascism lay with the people in each country. If they could rise up and fight against their masters, such a war would be justified and moreover, would be the only way of avoiding future horrors and hatreds after another war. Rather than supporting the Allies against the Axis, she stated again and again that she believed that it was important for libertarians to support, and if possible participate in, resistance to authoritarian domination directly and in an uncompromising manner. On October 7, 1939, after the invasion of Poland by German and Soviet troops and the declarations of war by the British and French governments, Goldman wrote to Herbert Read, "My attitude in re the war is exactly the same as it was in 1917. I diverted from that stand only on behalf of the Spanish struggle because I believed it was in defense of the revolution. I have never thought that wars imposed on mankind by the powers that be for materialistic designs have or ever can do any good. But that does not mean that I do not stress the need of the extermination of Nazism. It seems to me, however, that must come from within Germany and by

the German people themselves. War, whoever will be victorious or vanquished, will only create a form of madness in the world. It is the same about the dictatorship in Russia. Its terrible power will never be broken and eradicated from Russian soil except by the people themselves.”

On November 6, 1939, Goldman wrote to an American friend that she was totally opposed to World War II. ”I do not have to tell you that almost anybody is better than that savage, Hitler. At the same time, there is no instance in the human struggle of the past that should warrant anybody, unless carried away by the war psychosis, to believe that Hitlerism can be abolished by another world conflagration. The last war was also for the purpose of eradicating war and for democracy. The very existence of Hitler, Mussolini and the other dictators should prove to thinking people that wars settle nothing.” For more information on Goldman’s position, see David Porter, editor, *VISION ON FIRE: Emma Goldman on the Spanish Revolution*; Commonground Press, 1983, from which the above quotes are taken.

Some on the left, including anarchists, libertarian socialists and council communists, who had opposed cooperating with any ruling class during World War I argued that the new conditions required new tactics. The workers’ movements had been crushed or badly weakened by the Fascist repression, and demoralized by the Stalinist and reformist compromises. It was impossible to tell, they argued, whether the Second World War would last long enough for workers and revolutionaries to develop the capacity to effectively rebel. A rapid victory by the Axis powers could, they argued, destroy social possibilities for many years to come.

For this reason, many libertarians joined the mainstream Resistance movement in France. Some anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists joined with people who had been members of the Workers and Peasants Socialist Party to work on publications in the left wing of the Resistance, including, in Paris, *NOTRE REVOLUTION*, which later became *NOS COMBATS* and finally *LIBERTES*, and in the South of France, the publication *L’INSURGE* and *LIBERER ET FEDERER*, which later merged. These publications avoided the chauvinistic language of the Stalinist and Gaullist Resistance literature and continually affirmed their commitment to a libertarian and socialist future after the defeat of Fascism.

Nevertheless, a wide variety of groups and individuals participated in resistance to Vichy and Nazi rule and sabotage of the Nazi war effort without joining the mainstream Resistance. They objected to cooperation with the right-wing bourgeois nationalists, Gaullists, liberal democratic capitalists and Stalinists who dominated it. Despite the possibilities for expressing some working-class revolutionary ideas in some of its publications, the Resistance was organized in hierarchical military fashion and did not allow for as much open debate as many libertarians felt necessary.

Many independent leftists, council communists, anarchists, and even Trotskyists decided to stay outside the mainstream Resistance so as to continue articulating and acting on their anti-patriotic, internationalist, anti-capitalist positions. They maintained their own organizations and publications, and cooperated with each other as well as with the mainstream Resistance when appropriate. And they continued to call for social revolution as the only real way of doing away with the Fascist danger. The German and Italian left communists, who had experienced Fascism and Nazism firsthand, maintained their independence, acting through their own groups and with others. Some of them, in cooperation with various other independent left communists, council communists, anarchists and Trotskyists, formed the Revolutionary Proletarian Group-Union of International Communists in France at the end of 1941. The members were of a number of different nationalities, French as well as German, Italian, Spanish and other exiles. Throughout the war they maintained their stance against all capitalists and their criticism of the war as yet another

struggle between imperialist state rivals, including the USSR. In 1943 they issued a manifesto calling upon the workers to transform the imperialist war into civil war against all capitalist governments and calling for an international republic of workers' councils. As immediate steps, they advocated and engaged in fraternization with German soldiers and workers so as to involve them in anti-war and anti-capitalist discussions, support of the economic demands of the workers against exploiters in all the belligerent countries, fighting against the deportation of workers to Germany, and the formation of revolutionary groups in the factories to work toward the organization of self-managed workers' militias and factory committees. A small group of Austrian left communists exiled in the South of France also engaged in these activities, particularly contacting disaffected German soldiers in France. A few thousand German troops were known to have deserted with support from such groups. Hundreds were caught and executed by the Nazi authorities.

Because of their uncompromising refusal to support either side in the conflict and their insistence on expressing criticism of the Allies, including the USSR, many internationalist revolutionaries were in peril from both sides. As in Spain, so in France, many who joined the Stalinist-led maquis disappeared without a trace or died by mysterious means.

Attempts after the war at working-class autonomy were crushed by the victorious state powers, with the help of the Stalinists and the liberal reformers. Information for these closing paragraphs comes from *THIRD-CAMP INTERNATIONALISTS IN FRANCE DURING WORLD WAR II*, a pamphlet by Ernest Rayner.

## VI. Capitalist Democracy—Why It Must Fail by Tor Cedervall

*One Big Union Monthly*, January, 1937

In Spain the C.N.T. has fought out the struggle against Fascism on the line that the capitalism that generated it must go. Their associates are coming to the same conclusion. "We cannot keep in capitalism, and at the same time keep out Fascism," says Tor Cedervall in this analysis.

In the world today we hear a great amount of talk and also some degree of organization about and around the issue dubbed "Democracy versus Fascism." Many liberal and humane-minded persons, as well as self-styled radicals, the world over are huddling under the banner of "Democracy" in horrified opposition to Fascism.

In the United States these people supported Roosevelt in the recent elections, side with the "Republic" of Spain, feel a dependent fondness for Great Britain as the fairy godmother of Democracy while she steps designedly into every "situation" with her celebrated "diplomacy," give varying degrees of approval of Soviet Russia, and reserve the hate their simple souls can generate for the black fascist regimes of Italy and Germany.

The philosophy of the out and out liberal of this conglomerate group is that while Fascism is a surly, horrible thing. Capitalism as such is very desirable and should be preserved, albeit improved from time to time.

The "radicals" of this democratic movement are in their hearts not content with Capitalism, but are so frightened by the prospects of Fascism that they are hysterically choosing the fatal Germanic policy of the "lesser evil." Throwing all pretense of radicalism to the winds, these people have crawled out of the dread and darkness of their social cyclone cellars to become the blatant champions of Capitalist Democracy.

The slogan of each group resolves itself into—keep Capitalism, but keep out Fascism!

This slogan, however, is historically incorrect; we cannot keep in Capitalism and at the same time keep out Fascism. Fascism is but the logical development, the irresistible outcome of the class antagonism of Capitalism.

Recent history is bearing this out inexorably. Several nations are already frankly fascist, many more are tending toward that direction. It is a steady albeit uneven, petrification of international capitalist society into the hardened forms of fascist death.

Why does fascism everywhere appear as the fated affinity of Capitalism? Why is it that capitalist "Democracy" cannot withstand the attacks of this monster?

It is because Democracy cannot be the theoretically ideal form of government under Capitalism and was not so conceived. The class nature of capitalist society makes this impossible. "Democracy" was the slogan and weapon for the overthrow of feudalism. It cannot be the slogan or the weapon for the frustration of fascism.

At the time of the classic overthrow of feudalism there was no thought of the "Capitalism" of today. All classes subject to the authority and parasitism of the aristocracy and its church—the

budding bourgeois, the equally budding "worker," and the peasant were united in a "people's front" against feudalism.

Because of the authoritative and caste character of feudalism and the intellectual repressiveness of its church, the intellectual and cultural chanticleers of the new day declared the invigorating doctrines of democracy. The "freedom of man" became the inspired rallying cry of the new social order. This, combined with the confused and muddled class interests of the various groups in the "people's front," none of which had formulated a clearly-defined political and economic policy for itself (and which would have been too weak alone to have imposed it if it had) made democracy the logical pattern of the new political forms.

However, that democracy is not the innate mate of Capitalism is clearly seen by the methods employed by Capitalism everywhere in its development. Where was democracy in the colonial policies and piracies of the democratic nations? Where was democracy in the United States which countenanced chattel slavery naked and unashamed until 1863? Where is democracy up until this day in the industries of Capitalism? Symptomatically defined, Fascism is force and violence. Has not Capitalism always practiced an incipient fascism at the point where its profits are produced?

As for the general domestic democratic forms of government, however, how has Capitalism managed? Ideally unsuited for it, Capitalism has nonetheless in some respects turned democracy into a very powerful aid for itself. Democracy has been of incalculable benefit to Capitalism in its development by serving as a smoke screen for its autocratic exploitation. It has with surprising efficiency served as a social control to combat the rebellion against the concentration process whereby the overwhelming majority of the populace has been reduced to "wage-slavery." Political freedom has obscured industrial serfdom.

In view of this very positive gain from democracy, the capitalist class has with more or less grace subjected itself to the expenses and inconveniences of democracy. Any dangers that might arise through it have been neatly evaded heretofore by outlay to politicians and political parties who have proved themselves very willing to safeguard the interests of the capitalist class and do its bidding with fawning servility.

However, as the relationships of Capitalism are becoming more thoroughly understood, as a pauperized proletariat (actually or relatively) is beginning to stand up in open defiance of its exploiting masters, as strikes and union organizations become larger, as the ballot box becomes fore-doomed to partial control and eventual capture by the numerically largest group in society—the working class, Democracy must go in order for Capitalism to continue to exist. The bed-rock principle of Capitalism, is the exploitation of the working class, and no group conscious of its subjection and determined to end it can be restrained except by large scale force. Fascism supplies that force—"Democracy" cannot, particularly when its political forms threaten to pass into the hands of the exploited through a "people's front." When the latter happens, or threatens to occur, or when faced by widespread labor unionism, Fascism will make its supreme bid for power, as in Germany and Spain, as it is preparing to do in France.

The phenomenon of Fascism is not always simple and uniform in its development. There is a great unevenness throughout the world that may serve to mislead the unwary into the belief that Capitalist Democracy can be preserved and a fascist coup d'état prevented. President Roosevelt, for example, is regarded in America as bulwark against Fascism. But, Fascism is still out of the saddle in Washington because Democracy is still under the control of the capitalism class. The "radical" reputation of the President has aroused the hopes of the yet confused American proletariat and its members thus remain at least temporarily quiescent under the rule of their



capitalist masters. It may be, too, that the "people's front" in France, timid and largely unwilling to introduce drastic changes, yet holding the confidence of a trusting proletariat, may still continue to serve largely the class interests of the employers without the necessity of a fascist coup for some time.

Is this the kind of democracy we want? A democracy that is suffered because it presides over an exploited and deluded people unaware of their real interests? Fascism will remain submerged only as long as "democracy" remains workable for the capitalist class; that is, as long as the workers remain content as a submerged and exploited class. 'Tis small glory in such democracy or the victories achieved in its name.

The Roman Holiday of Fascism can be thwarted not by hurling the pitiful shafts of a sham capitalist democracy against its iron legions. Only the grimly alert, courageous advance of an organization resolutely determined to root out Capitalism can be expected to "mop up" Fascism. Alternatives are few in dangerous situations. The working class has positively no "stake" in Capitalism; but, even if you fancy that you have, the world cannot eat its cake yet have it too. Preserve Capitalism, invite Fascism; build a cooperative commonwealth and smash Fascism. Out of this a new democracy shall arise—the industrial democracy of cooperative labor.

## VII. Anarchist Opposition to Japanese Militarism 1926-1937 by John Crump

*Bulletin of Anarchist Research*, 1991

The following is a paper which was read to the symposium on pre-war Japanese militarism at the annual conference of the British Association for Japanese Studies, meeting in Sheffield in April 1991. Although written for an academic audience, it might be of some interest to anarchists. Note that all Japanese names are given in the customary East Asian fashion. That is, family name followed by personal name.

To judge from the conventional accounts, one could be forgiven for believing that opposition to pre-war Japanese militarism was confined to the Communist Party of Japan and a handful of liberal critics of military aggression. For example, the Communist Party of Japan's official history states that 'it was only the Communist Party of Japan that upheld the banner of opposition to the war of aggression in China', to which it adds that 'the Tenno-system Government' was not only concentrating its attacks on the destruction of the Communist Party of Japan but also extending its hand of persecution to conscientious liberalists'.<sup>1</sup>

This paper demonstrates that the anarchists in pre-war Japan constituted another core of opposition to militarism until the state destroyed their movement in 1935/6. Moreover, anarchist anti-militarism was in several respects more coherent than either the Communist Party's or the liberals opposition to military expansion. The Communist Party's anti-militarism was flawed because of its alignment with a militarised and expansionist USSR, while the liberals were in the anomalous position of accepting capitalism but opposing its inevitable consequence the military defence of economic interests. By way of contrast, the anarchists' opposition to militarism was never compromised by alignment with any nation-state and was underpinned by a consistent rejection of capitalism. Of course, there were individual anarchists who succumbed to the nationalist fever and became apologists for Japan's military expansion, just as there were members of the Communist Party and liberals who ended up as turncoats. But the anarchist movement as a whole steadfastly opposed militarism, suffering unrelenting persecution and eventually being suppressed for doing so. This paper resurrects the largely forgotten history of anarchist opposition to militarism in prewar Japan.

Anarchist opposition to militarism has a long history in Japan. Kotoku Shusui, the father of Japanese anarchism, fearlessly campaigned against the Russo-Japanese War in the columns of the *Heimin Shinbun* throughout the life of that newspaper from 1903 to 1905 and Osugi Sakae was imprisoned in 1907 for having translated for the journal *Hikari* an anti-militarist article 'Aux Conscrits' which had first appeared in the French journal *l'Anarchie*. In this paper, however, I shall concentrate on the period extending from 1926 to 1937. 1926 was an important date in the history of Japanese anarchism for it was in that year that, for the first time, two nationwide federations were organised. One was the Black Youth League (*Kokushoku Seinen Renmei*) and the other the National Libertarian Federation of Labour Unions (*Zenkoku Rodo Kumiai Jiyu Rengokai*). 1937

marked not only the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War. By that year the anarchist movement had been all but destroyed, following the mass arrests which occurred from 1935 onwards and the prosecution and lengthy imprisonment of many activists. The Black Youth League published the journal Black Youth (Kokushoku Seinen) between April 1926 and February 1931 and the National Libertarian Federation of Labour Unions published Libertarian Federation (Jiyu Rengo)/ Libertarian Federation newspaper (Jiyu Rengo Shinbun) between June 1926 and February 1935. I shall illustrate my account of anarchist opposition to militarism principally by reference to these organisations and their journals, but this should not be taken as implying that anti-militarism was confined only to these sections of the anarchist movement. On the contrary, opposition to militarism flowed naturally from the anti-authoritarian principles of anarchism and therefore was a standpoint shared by all anarchists.

An article on "What To Do About War?", which was published in the Libertarian Federation Newspaper in November 1931 during the unfolding 'Manchurian Incident', is sufficiently representative of anarchist opposition to Japan's military expansion to make it worth quoting at length. One significant feature of this article was that it was purposely written in Esperanto to make it more accessible to non-Japanese readers. This in itself reveals the consistently internationalist nature of the anarchists' anti-militarism and their ambition to link up with those abroad who shared their anti-war convictions. The article read as follows:

What to do about war

The Japanese militarists have mobilised their army to China on the pretext 'For the peace of the Orient' or 'To defend the Japanese people in China'. They always use, whenever a state crisis occurs, such beautiful expressions as 'For Our fatherland' or 'For justice' and try to stir up the people's patriotism. But what is the fatherland? For whom does it exist? Never forget that all states exist only for the wealthy. It is the same with war. War brings injury or death to the young men of the poor, and hunger and cold to their aged parents and young brothers and sisters. But to the wealthy it brings enormous riches and honour.

The true cause of the mobilisation to China is none other than the ambition of the Japanese capitalist class and military to conquer Manchuria. Japan has its own Monroe doctrine. Japanese capitalism cannot develop, or even survive, without Manchuria. That is why its government is inclined to risk anything so as not to lose its many privileges in China. Therefore it has approved the enormous expense of the mobilisation, despite the fact that it is experiencing a deficit in the current year's income of the state treasury. American capital has flowed into China in larger and larger amounts. This represents an enormous menace to the Japanese capitalist class. In other words, now Japan is forced to oppose American capital in China. In fact, this is the direct cause of the mobilisation.

From another point of view, we can see that this incident is a drama written by the Japanese military as a militaristic demonstration to all pacifists, cosmopolitans and socialists within Japan, and to other countries in general, and China in particular. Even we Japanese have been surprised at the rapid mobilisation. How were they able to make preparations so rapidly? It is clear that the mobilisation was totally prepared for long ago. That is the drama. Did we say drama?! In this way the military have engineered the opportunity to demonstrate and establish their strength, which has been weakened of late by disarmament and pacifist public opinion. Of course, a secret agreement had been reached between the military and the capitalists, because they both belong to the ruling class.

In this situation, what must we do? The Communists say 'Defend and come to the aid of the Chinese revolution!' But who will benefit in China when Japanese power is totally eliminated from that country? It will be none other than the newly rising Chinese bourgeoisie and the capitalists of other countries. We must keenly observe and criticise all that takes place. In the face of war, we must not make the mistake which our comrade Kropotkin and others made during the World War. Of course, we opposed the mobilisation. But we found that merely one-sided opposition is a very feeble response. The sole method to eradicate war from our world is for us, acting as the popular masses, to reject it in all countries simultaneously. We must cease military production, refuse military service and disobey the officers. Complete international unity of the anarchists would signal our victory, not only economically but in the war against war.

## **ANARCHIST GROUPS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE! ABOLISH IMPERIALIST WAR!**

Analysis of this article reveals several distinctively anarchist features of the opposition to militarism which it expresses. First, the National Libertarian Federation of Labour Unions was not merely a critic of Japanese militarism. It recognised that all states are militaristic and used the opportunity provided by the specific instance of Japan's military aggression in China to denounce militarism as a general phenomenon. Second, the link between militarism and capitalism was established unambiguously. The 'Manchurian Incident' was not simply the action of military hot-heads. At root, their military ambitions expressed the imperative need of Japanese capitalism to secure dependable sources of raw materials and guaranteed markets for its industries. Third, the principal antagonism in China was shown to be the clash between American and Japanese capitalist interests. Democratic political structures did not prevent the USA from being every bit as aggressive in its defence of economic interests as was Japan with its Emperor system and unruly military. Fourth, the National Libertarian Federation of Labour Unions denounced the Communist Party's opportunistic support for the forces of national liberation in China. It was not the function of genuine anti-militarists to assist the Chinese bourgeoisie to come to power or to replace foreign military forces by home-grown warlords. Finally, effective opposition to militarism had to be based on action and not mere words. Anarchists were not interested either in parliamentary resolutions or campaigns in the bourgeois press against militarism. In the eyes of the National Libertarian Federation of Labour Unions the only force capable of defeating militarism was the peasants and workers acting internationally.

The ideas expressed in this article were in line with the stand against militarism taken by the National Libertarian Federation of Labour Unions and the Black Youth League throughout their existence. The importance the National Libertarian Federation of Labour Unions attached to opposing imperialist expansion was demonstrated in the programme adopted at its founding conference on 24 May 1926. The final clause of this programme read: 'We are opposed to imperialist aggression and we advocate the international solidarity of the working class'<sup>4</sup> The following year Tanaka Giichi became Prime Minister and, in pursuit of a belligerent foreign policy, Ordered a force of 2000 Japanese soldiers to advance from Manchuria into Shantung Province so as to block Chiang Kaishek's northern expedition, which aimed to unify China under the latter's control. In a prophetic article, which strongly denounced the dispatch of Japanese troops and called for solidarity between Chinese and Japanese workers, Black Youth argued that what was

under way in the Far East was 'preparation for the Second World War'. I The Black Youth League and the National Libertarian Federation of Labour Unions co-operated in jointly organising a movement against Japan's intervention in China.

It was concern about the danger of war in the Far East which caused the National Libertarian Federation of Labour Unions to make a serious error of judgment when it sent delegates to the Pan-Pacific Labour Union Conference held in Hankow in May 1927. One of the declared themes of this conference was 'Preventing a Pacific War' but, when the delegates of the National Libertarian Federation of Labour Unions arrived in Canton, the local anarchists made it clear that the Moscow-based Profintern (the union equivalent of the Comintern) was behind the conference. Nevertheless, the delegates pressed on to Hankow and took part in the conference, only to find themselves on the receiving end of the machinations of its Profintern organisers. After the return of its delegates to Japan, the National Libertarian Federation of Labour Unions engaged in self-criticism over its participation in the Hankow conference and the Black Youth League denounced the affair as 'a congress of Bolshevik intriguers'. 6

If the Pan-Pacific Labour Union Conference was 'a congress of Bolshevik intriguers', the various arms limitation conferences which occurred throughout the period under examination here were dismissed by the anarchists as conferences of capitalist intriguers. The naval arms limitation conference between the USA, Britain and Japan, which was held in Geneva during the summer of 1927 and ended in failure, was rejected as a fraud:

'Even without any expert knowledge, there can't be anybody stupid enough to believe that this arms limitation conference is a true arms limitation conference. Nothing reveals as clearly as this conference the ambition in the hearts of all the imperialists without exception.'

Another article which appeared in Libertarian Federation in December 1929 denounced the forthcoming London Naval Conference in similar terms. Far from being a conference which genuinely aimed to achieve its ostensible purpose of controlling naval armed forces, the newspaper characterised it as a "bargaining session between militarists." As for the League of Nations, which increasingly was drawn into the diplomatic controversies which accompanied Japan's expansionist moves in China, the National Libertarian Federation of Labour Unions had no illusions about its true nature. Known in Japanese as the 'International League' the anarchists dubbed the League of Nations the 'International Capitalist League' and considered it to be a mere 'mask for the ruling class' from which the workers and peasants could expect nothing. The so called 'peace' about which the League of Nations endlessly pontificated was merely what passed for peace under capitalism, and this was nothing more than 'waiting for a chance to make war'.

The anarchists did not mince their words in criticising Japan's armed forces and ran very considerable risks when they ridiculed the military's strutting pride and delusions of grandeur. The army was regularly described as a collection of 'idiots playing at war' or 'useless warmongers longing for war in the Far East'. 4 Where possible, the anarchists attempted to infiltrate the armed forces and promote disaffection. When the Japanese army occupied Jehol Province in Inner Mongolia in 1933, the Libertarian Federation Newspaper responded to the war crisis which this move precipitated by calling for an anti war struggle not only within the farming villages, factories and streets but within the military itself. 11 That the armed forces took such threats seriously is revealed by the frequency with which anarchists were arrested when military maneuvers were held. For example, the Libertarian Federation Newspaper announced in October 1930 that many anarchists in Kobe had been imprisoned for the duration of naval maneuvers held in the presence of the Emperor 13 and the following month there was a similar report from Okayama. 13

Less frequently, there were reports of anarchists within the armed forces being court-martialled for refusing to obey orders. 12 A further form of direct action against the military was the attempt to disrupt their supplies. The anarchists encouraged strikes in strategic locations such as Japan's munitions factories and tried to promote such strikes internationally as a practical means of stopping war."

If one were to identify the single most important principle which underlay the anarchists' struggle against militarism, it would have to be their conviction that 'war will not die out as long as the existing system continues', This was the headline to a lead article which appeared in the Libertarian Federation Newspaper in June 1929 and, as its subtitle added, 'the need for armaments is so as to defend the capitalists'. 16 From this conviction that capitalism was the cause of militarism flowed the anarchists' equally firm belief that only anarchism represented a real alternative to militarism. The anarchists did not doubt that there were others besides themselves who were disturbed by the power of the military. But, in the eyes of the anarchists, all other opponents of militarism, be they members of the Communist Party or liberal critics of military aggression, still adhered to capitalist patterns of social organisation, involving the state, authority and, indeed, the armed forces. Hence, from the standpoint of anarchism, such opponents of militarism bemoaned its consequences but remained wedded to its causes. Perhaps it is this uncompromising criticism, not merely of militarism, but equally of its conventional opponents, which accounts for the failure of most historiographical studies to mention the pre-war anarchist movement's anti-militarist struggle. After all, such historiographical studies have mainly been written by scholars whose own political sensibilities would be offended by the anarchists' forthright criticism of conventional, statist politics. Nevertheless, although the reasons for overlooking anarchist opposition to militarism might be understandable, it has to be said that any study of anti-militarism which fails to pay adequate attention to the anarchist movement does damage to historical truth. It is in an effort to redress the balance of truth that this short paper has been written.

#### References

1. Central Committee of CPJ, *The Fifty Years of the Communist Party of Japan* (Tokyo, 1973) pp. 54, 67.
2. John Crump. *The Origins of Socialist Thought in Japan* (London, 1983) p 284.
3. 'Kion Fari al Milito?' *Jiyu Rengo Shinbun* no. 64 (10 November 1931) p 4.
4. *Jiyu Rengo* no. 1 (5 June 1926) p. 7.
5. *Kokushoku Seinen* no. 10 (5 July 1927) p.4.
6. See *Jiyu Rengo* nos. 16 & 17 (September/October 1927) and *Kokushoku Seinen* nos 12 & 13 (September/October 1927).
7. *Jiyu Rengo* no. 15 (5 August 1927) p. 1
8. *Ibid.* no 42 (1 Decenber 1929) p. 1
9. *Ibid.* no 67 (17 Februivy 1932) p. 1
10. *Ibid.* no 37 (1 July 1929) p. 1.
11. *Ibid.* no.78 (10 March 1933) p.1
12. *Ibid.* no 52 (10 Ocober 1930) p. 3.
13. *Ibid.* no 53 (10 Novenber 1930) p. 3.
14. See, for example, *ibid.* no. 52 (10 October 1930) p. 4.
15. See *ibid.* no. 91 (5 June 1934) p. 1, no 92 (5 July 1934) p. 1 & no 93 (5 August 1934) p 3.
16. *Ibid.* no. 36 (1 June 1929) p. 1.

## VIII. Manifesto of the International Anarchist Conference, Paris, 15th, 16th, and 17th May 1948

*International Anarchist Bulletin*, No. 1, June, 1948

Two blocks of States stand facing each other, and war threatens. The hopes which the peoples founded on technical progress, material abundance and the unity of the world have been ruined.

Today nobody sees a way out of the uninterrupted succession of crises and wars. No one proposes any effective means of escaping the so-called historical fatalities.

Bourgeois democracy is bankrupt. Private capitalism has shown its incapacity to resolve its own contradictions.

State capitalism, under, the total form of Bolshevick dictatorships, of misleading "Labour" nationalisations, or of the reactionary demagogies of fascism, has shown itself to be the pitiless degradation of all human values.

Liberalism and totalitarianism chain us to an economy of war, where the whole of society serves the production of means of destruction.

A reconciliation between the two blocks which overwhelm the world would bring no salvation. The basis of agreement envisaged by Stilton on the 17th May is no other than the preparation in common of new slaughters.

None of the problems set by ruin, famine, social chaos, will be resolved by the eventual combination of the Marshall and Molotov plans. Under the pretext of economic and political reconstruction, these plans are instruments of imperialism

None of the spiritual forces which pretend to lead humanity according to the dictates of States, Churches and Parties, is today any longer capable of a useful role. All have floundered in the most brutal fanaticisms.

All the political, trade-union and religious organisations embodied in authority have become merely the machines of slavery. The peoples of Spain, Portugal, Greece, Latin America, groan under the yoke of Fuhrers which the "movement of liberation" conducted in the sense of the recent world war pretended to fight against. In the East, Palestine is on fire. China experiences an endless civil war. The Stalinised peoples are submitted to a police terror as bad as that which Hitlerism established. In the West, forces of the same kind seek to impose themselves on the Americanised peoples,

All that our generation has lived through is no other than an accumulation of evils, resulting from the very functioning of authoritarian society; from the crushing of the forces of liberty. And everything leads our thought back to the same fundamental problem: the construction of a society without States. It is the anarchist revolution of the peoples which, alone, can tear humanity away from the infernal cycle in which it has allowed itself to be enclosed.

Anarchy, the total affirmation of the free activity of the masses in organised indiscipline, is alone capable of breaking the power of the castes which direct the world to its loss.

Anarchy, spontaneous order in the workshop and in the city, is the sole means of rendering to the producers of all wealth and the creators of all values the immense fruitfulness of an unlimited field of experience, the enjoyment of the fruit of their efforts, and the possibility of orienting them always more consciously towards general solidarity.

Anarchy, principle of Organisation without dogmas or frontiers, is the sole road to peace.

The International Anarchist Conference of Paris salutes all fighters for liberty throughout the world, whose eyes turn to-day towards the reconstruction of the Anarchist International in the whole of Europe ravaged by the second world war: in Germany, Austria and Italy.

From all parts of the world, the studies of psychologists and the experience of educationalists put forward integral liberty as the sole way of individual and social progress,

From all parts of the world, there come to us the echoes of struggles of emancipation carried on by isolated individuals, by rank-and-file groups, or by organisations already solid. It is the renaissance of the only movement which has never changed in its affirmations: the international anarchist movement.

After a hundred years of application, the authoritarian conception of socialism has triumphed in the world to the point of having exhausted its possibilities and revealed of what it was capable. And it is to the libertarian conception that the future henceforward belongs. If humanity would live and grow, it will be by and towards Anarchy.

The Paris Conference, bringing, together delegates from every European horizon, has been above all the expression of that certainty, in a simultaneous affirmation of will and brotherhood above all frontiers.

The renewal of our movement rallies the young forces of the workers. It offers them encouraging perspectives of personal formation and social reconstruction, outside all the constraints which overpower them.

To work comrades! We have an ideal to live, chains to break, and a world to gain.

## OUR TASK

The International Anarchist Conference, held in Paris on the 15th, 16th and 17th of May 1948, gave a new proof of the continuity of the Anarchist Internationale, which was founded in Amsterdam in 1907. The Conference invited all Federations, Groups and isolated comrades and the whole anarchist press to make people realize the practical existence of the Internationale.

After examining the general situation—with an eye to the position of the anarchist organisations and groupings in Europe and in the whole world—the Conference has recognised the urgent necessity for an International commission of co-ordination. This commission is expected to prepare, as soon as possible and on the broadest possible basis, an Anarchist World Congress. The Congress will decide about the form of anarchist international relations in the future.

The Conference has worked out an international program and a provisional system of organised relations, namely the International Anarchist Co-ordination Commission (I.A.C.C.).

Besides the preparation of the International Congress, the tasks of the I.A.C.C. are stated as follows:

1. Issue regularly in various languages a bulletin acting as a liaison.



2. Establish a connection between separate federations, groups and militants, in order to realize solidarity in a practical way.

3. Constitute international records and see to the exchange of publications between different countries.

I.A.C.C. starts on task with a bulletin reduced to a mere detached sheet of paper—without any money or technical help, with a staff composed of comrades willing to help.

I.A.C.C. counts on all those who approve of its activity, to bring their contributions to information, propaganda, and financial support, in order to be able to fulfill the task it has been trusted with.

The international stamp "Pro-Congress" is on sale at the price of 10 fr. Write to the following address:

Robert JOULIN

145, quai de Valmy, Paris (10e)

(C.c.p. 55.61.76)

Correspondance and exchange of printed matters. Information. Solidarity. Write to the same address or to John OLDAY, 15 Orsett Ter. London W 2, England.

Let us hear from you and let us know what you need.

We shall send the International Bulletin (under cover, closed or open) to the comrades who will ask for it. We trust every comrade to act according to his possibilities and first and foremost to assure the re-distribution of every issue of the bulletin in every language.

## IX. "Freedom" and Freedom in 1945 by Herbert Read

"After the trial", from: "Freedom; Is it a crime?: the strange case of the three anarchists jailed at the Old Bailey, April 1945" Freedom Press Defence Committee, 1945.

At our last meeting I said that if our comrades were imprisoned, we who remained free would continue the struggle against the forces of repression now active in this country, against the political police, against every enemy of freedom. That struggle is now on. The weapons with which we can fight are limited: they are the very weapons which our authoritarian government is attempting to take away from us—our printing-press, our pamphlets, our right to speak and publish the truth that is within us. Limited as they are, these are nevertheless the only weapons we need to create such a volume of protest that press and parliament, the public at large will be compelled to listen to us. We shall not rest until our comrades are released, and even then we shall go on, to create such a consciousness of the existing danger to our common liberty, that the cause of it is for ever eliminated from our society.

It will not be an easy campaign. Among the many lessons which this episode has taught us, the most surprising to me has been the indifference of the so-called liberal press. There have been exceptions, and in particular I would like to mention the Manchester Guardian. But for the most part once they had exhausted the "news value" of the case in a sentence or two, the rest has been silence. Here was a clear threat to the liberty of the Press. Did the Press rise in righteous indignation? We have not heard a single note of complaint. This institution which boasts that it is the guardian of our national liberties was perhaps a little drunk with the prospects of a military victory: at any rate, it slept whilst the very liberties which they thought were being secured in Europe were filched from us here in the Old Bailey.

Then there is Parliament. We anarchists have never placed much faith in the dim inmates of that opium den, but we note that many of them talk frequently of liberty, inside the House and out. But what has Parliament done to defend our liberty in this case? We know well enough that all that gang talk endlessly about freedom, it is a nice, inspiring word—but they uphold its reality only so long as it does not threaten their private interests.

In these last few weeks more hypocrisy has been smeared over our daily and weekly papers than ever before in our history. If you can bring yourself to read the leading articles and commentaries in these periodicals, you will find the word "freedom" in almost every paragraph. You are told that we have just won the greatest war in history—for "freedom." You are asked to celebrate this glorious victory—"in the cause of freedom." You are even encouraged to get drunk for "freedom." We are not deceived. So long as our three comrades remain in prison, victory is an illusion, and the man who celebrates it is nothing but a mug.

We have met here to-night not to celebrate a victory, but to take counsel after a defeat. In the face of that defeat, I propose now briefly to reaffirm the beliefs for which our comrades have been persecuted and imprisoned. It would give me great pleasure to do this if only to show that we are

by no means intimidated by what has happened. The penalties of the Courts are only justified on the assumption that they deter others from repeating the alleged offence. We are not moved one inch from our course. All that legal pantomime at the Old Bailey was from every point of view a futile and costly farce. It has cost our side quite a lot: it must have cost the State more—several thousand pounds. There are the salaries of Inspector Whitehead and his agents for the three or four months they devoted to the case: there are the still larger salaries of the Attorney General and his assistants for the many days they devoted to the reading of War Commentary: the still larger salary of his lordship the judge, for the four days he spent listening to the case: and then the more modest wages of the ushers who tried to keep us out of the Court and of all the various clerks and bailiffs who filled the benches in the Court. Nor must we forget the wages of the policemen who inspected all our identity cards one day. That makes a pretty total, which might have been justified if the prisoners on trial had been gangsters or profiteers, murderers or swindlers.

But what in actual fact were the prisoners in the dock? They were men who held a certain belief, a theory of society, an ideal of civilization, and all they had done, the only crime with which they could be charged, was that they had incidentally taken steps to bring their beliefs to the attention of members of His Majesty's Forces.

What is this belief whose mere propagation constitutes a crime? I am going to tell you, in simple direct words, and what I shall say will amount to no more and no less than the substance of the beliefs for which our comrades are now suffering a sentence of imprisonment.

We begin with the central fact of WAR. We say that if our civilization is to survive—not this country nor that country, but the whole civilization of which we are members—war must be eliminated. War has now reached a stage of technical development which in future will involve, not merely the deaths of millions of human beings—men, women and children—but also the complete destruction of the material necessities of life: food, housing, communications, health. War will henceforth mean annihilation, not merely for the vanquished, but for all who engage in it.

We then analyse the causes of war, and this is where we begin to differ from other people who would also like to get rid of war. We say that modern war cannot be explained in terms of capitalism, of imperialism, of economics or of populations: it is a disease of civilization itself, something inherent in the very structure of modern society. In order to get rid of war, we must alter the structure of society.

But "to alter the structure of society" is merely a polite way of saying that a revolution will be essential, and it is for using this word "revolution" that our comrades are in prison. They would not have been put in prison if they had expressed a wish to alter "the structure of society"—which only shows what power is attributed to words when they become weapons.

But whatever we call the process, the choice before our civilization is clear: either revolution or annihilation. That is the unescapable conclusion which we anarchists have reached, and we claim that it is a rational, indeed a logical conclusion.

But what then does revolution imply? We say that the structural fault in our civilization which leads to war lies in the doctrine of national sovereignty, which requires for its expression and propagation the social organ known as the State. Modern wars are conducted by States, through their paid servants—the politicians, civil servants and armed forces. Wars do not, in our stage of development, break out naturally between peoples, and in spite of all the powers of persuasion which States can command and direct, the peoples remain largely indifferent to the issues

involved in State wars. Put in another way, we might say that modern wars are essentially ideological, and ideologies belong to classes, not to peoples. The peoples have no ideologies, anywhere. They have interests and prejudices, customs and superstitions: they may be selfish and egotistic, but everywhere and at all time their main purpose is to secure a living from the soil, or from the labours of their hands or brains: and they know that such a purpose is not furthered, but frustrated, by war. Lives, houses, cattle, tillage, material possessions of every kind—these are the common wealth of the people, however unevenly distributed that wealth may be. That kind of wealth is destroyed by war. What is not destroyed by war is another kind of wealth—gold, bonds, credits and other goods not made by labour: these may escape war, just as German Bonds will survive this war, or as Russian Imperial Bonds have escaped "the greatest revolution in history": but this kind of wealth does not belong to the people, but to the State and its servants, and, one must add, to its dupes.

Under defeat, a particular State may disintegrate. We have seen several States disintegrate during the past few years—France, Belgium, Italy, Greece, and now Germany. This, we say, provides a golden opportunity to make the necessary structural alterations in our social system. It is, in fact, a revolutionary situation, and in such a situation, when the State has revealed all its insubstantiality, and has vanished overnight, we must not let any body of gangsters or looters step out of the ruins and organize another State. That will only lead inevitably to another war and a worse war. In such a revolutionary situation, our comrades said, and I repeat, the armed forces have ceased to exist as instruments of a State: for the moment the nations have become peoples, people in arms. Let the nation remain a people in arms—stick to your arms, we say to such a people, rather than deliver them up to any gang which takes upon itself to speak in the name of a new State. If we are a people, all equal and all equally armed or disarmed, then we can get together and agree on a new form of society, a non-governmental society, in which nation will no longer be opposed to nation, State to State, but a society in which people will work together for the common good. When that reform has been accomplished, everywhere in the world, we can all throw away our arms, and live in peace ever after.

That is the doctrine which our comrades preached, for which they have been persecuted and imprisoned. You may not agree with it—you may not agree with Buddhism or Christianity, with communism or conservatism, but we do not, in this country, imprison people for being Buddhists or Christians, conservatists or communists. Why, then, in the name of all that is just and equitable, are these three anarchists deprived of their liberty?

Well, it is perhaps a simple miscarriage of justice, an anomaly of the law, some bad kind of joke played by the State jesters. That would be the most agreeable explanation to offer. But if that is not the right explanation, if our comrades have been imprisoned in the pursuance of a ruthless and determined policy, then the rights we believe we possess as citizens of this democratic country are at an end. There is no longer, in this land such a thing as the liberty of unlicensed printing for which Milton made his immortal and unanswerable plea: there is no longer any such thing as freedom of expression which ten generations of Englishmen have jealously guarded. These words are now a mockery, and either we have been duped slaves to accept such a breach of our traditional rights, or we resolve never to rest until they are restored. I cannot imagine what perfidy of mind has spread among our judiciary that it has so far forgotten its trust as to allow so great an abuse of justice under the excuse of war-time regulations—regulations which peace has now made obsolete. Some of these Regulations have just been abolished—the fascists have been set free, but our comrades remain in prison. These Regulations which were admitted under

protest at the time of their enactment, and only accepted in view of their temporary force, were designed, however illogically, to secure a victory in the cause of freedom. By all accounts, that victory has been won. But we are here to assert that the war which has been won on the Continent of Europe has been lost in this island of Britain, and we can have no joy in victory, nor ease from strife, until our comrades once more stand beside us as free men.

## **X. Additional Readings on States, War and Opposition, Charlatan Stew, 1994**

- THE ABANDONMENT OF THE JEWS by David S. Wyman (New York, 1988)
- "After Fifty Years: The Spanish Civil War" by Murray Bookchin (NEW POLITICS, Summer, 1986)
- THE AGE OF TRIAGE: Fear and hope in an overcrowded world by Richard L. Rubenstein (Boston, 1983)
- "American Business and Germany, 1930-1941" by Gabriel Kolko (WESTERN POLITICAL QUARTERLY, December, 1962, pp 713-28)
- THE AMERICAN COMMUNIST PARTY, A CRITICAL HISTORY by Irving Howe and Lewis Coser (NY, 1957)
- THE ANARCHIST COLLECTIVES: Workers' self-management in the Spanish Revolution 1936-1939 ed. Sam Dolgoff (New York, 1974)
- "Anarchists in the Second World War" (BLACK FLAG No. 199, July, 1990)
- ANTI-PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNISM: The movement for workers' councils in Britain, 1917-1945 by Mark Shipway (New York, 1988)
- "Anton Pannekoek and the Quest for Emancipatory Socialism" by John Gerber (NEW POLITICS No. 5, Summer, 1988, p 698-9)
- CLASS WAR ON THE HOME FRONT: Revolutionary opposition to the Second World War by Wildcat Group (Manchester, UK, 1986)
- THE CONTINUING APPEAL OF NATIONALISM by Fredy Perlman (Detroit, 1985)
- CRUSADE IN SPAIN by Jason Gurney (London, 1974)
- THE DECLINE OF SOCIALISM IN AMERICA 1912-1925 by James Weinstein (New Brunswick NJ, 1984)
- DURRUTI: The people armed by Abel Paz (Montreal, 1976)
- FASCISM/ANTI-FASCISM by Jean Barrot (Edmonton, Alberta, 1982)
- THE GRAND CAMOUFLAGE: The Communist conspiracy in the Spanish Civil War by Burnett Bolloten (New York, 1961)
- ITALY AFTER MUSSOLINI by John Hewetson (Boston, n.d.)
- "The Jealous State" by Richard Swift (NEW INTERNATIONALIST, Sept., 1991)
- THE LEFT AND WORLD WAR II: Selections from the anarchist journal WAR COMMENTARY 1939-1943 by Freedom Press (London, 1989)
- LESSONS OF THE SPANISH REVOLUTION by Vernon Richards (London, 1972)
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