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VIEWS AND COMMENTS

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Attention San Francisco Bay Area readers:

A branch of the Libertarian League is being formed in the Bay Area. Anyone interested in joining or in receiving notices of meetings and events please contact:

AL GRAHAM
137 Winfield St.
San Francisco
Phone: BA 4-0340

Report from Calif. Murder-Missile Base

Drenched Peace Pickets Defy Air Force Hoses

A group of drenched and bruised Peace Pickets bravely held their ground at the Vandenberg Air Force base murder-missile launching pads, Lompoc, Calif., Dec. 24, when the U.S. Air Force attempted to break up their protest demonstration with high pressure water hoses and other intimidation methods.

In the first hand report below, Alan Graham, one of the pickets and an IWW member, tells how "a professional Army went to pieces" when its brutal attack was met with non-violent direct action tactics.

Graham points to the irony of the situation—the attack upon the peaceful picketers in the shadow of the statue of the "Holy Family" which stands at the entrance to murder-missile base. He points significantly to the behavior of several of the soldiers with whom the pickets were able to fraternize.

Graham reports that the daily press has attempted to clamp a news black-out on the anti-war demonstration.

* * *

By ALAN GRAHAM
(Special to Industrial Worker)

Tuesday, (Dec. 23), a group composed of Bruce Benner and his wife, Mary Ann Myers, both members of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, pacifists, and independent socialists; Trent Brady, also an F.O.R. member, pacifist and independent socialist; Dick Pierce, a member of the Libertarian League who is a pacifist and thinks anarcho-syndicalism is the way out for a world which is one step from blowing itself up; and myself, a member of the Libertarian League and the Industrial Workers of the World, drove down from San Francisco to Lompoc, Calif., to protest, non-violently, the building of missile launching pads at Vandenberg Air Force Base.

We arrived at Lompoc about 7 o'clock and very shortly met the four Quakers who have been conducting a vigil outside the main gate.

Distribute Leaflets

Dick Pierce and myself went on to the main street to distribute IWW and anarchist literature to the townspeople. We were met with interest and no hostility. We returned to the Food Shop, where the rest were having coffee, and then the whole group got into the Volkswagen bus of Walt, one of the Quakers — a quiet, friendly, sturdy-built fellow.

The five of us from the Bay Area were determined to picket, but not obstruct, while the Quakers, except Walt, felt they should continue their vigil.

We all camped out in the town park that night and in the morning made picket posters with the following slogans:

"Humans Unite for Peace"
"End the Missile Race,
Not the Human Race"

and others of a similar tone.

We then proceeded on to the base. The three Quakers who felt they should vigil, continued to do so, while the rest of us began to picket.

Air Police Arrive

In about five minutes an Air Police car rolled up and one of the military cops asked to see our leader. Since I was standing at the front of the picket line, I told him we were leading ourselves and had no spokesman. He then asked if any of us planned to obstruct traffic. We all replied "No."

He then drove off, only to be followed in five minutes by a major or some officer who singled me out and asked to see our "boss." I informed him we had none, and he asked to see our spokesman or representative. I told him we were representing only ourselves individually.

The officer seemed struck dumb for a moment, then yelled, "I order you off the base." The picket line slowly moved on.

He then screamed, "obey my order," then a moment later shouted, "get out." When he saw no one was heeding his outburst, he jumped into his car and raced off.

Brass Shows Up

A few moments later a more elaborately costumed creature arrived and informed us the Marshal has been called and will be here soon to arrest us.

We kept up our silent picket line with each one of us walking, one at a time, over to the vigiling Quakers to give them the organizations and people we wanted notified at the time of our arrest.

In about ten minutes, Air Force fire trucks arrived and without warning or provocation cut loose with high pressure, freezing water. Traffic going to and from the base was slowed down to a virtual halt.

For some unknown reason, aside from the fact that he was the tallest, they selected Bruce Benner for the main target and aimed the hoses at his eyes and groin area.

At this time, one of the vigiling Quakers, Ben Webster, joined our shivering horde and was promptly hosed also.

After knocking Bruce down twice, they finally knocked him cold. His wife, with Trent and Dick, carried him off after a super-human effort, because all of the hoses were now going at full pressure on the group trying to remove Benner's limp body.

Tries to Cut Hose

The bitter irony of this event was that the three statues of the holy family were directly in back of the shivering picket line, and they too were looking pretty wet on this day before Christmas.

One of the two remaining vigiling Quakers rushed Bruce and his wife off to the doctor.

The main attention now was directed at sturdy, unshakable Walt, who never during the whole onslaught said a word or left his place in the picket line. The high pressure hoses finally knocked him down and he struggled to his knees to pray. All the hoses were now directed full-blast upon him.

I could no longer tolerate watching this and started to cut the high pressure hose with my pen knife. I was mobbed by the screaming, irate pawns of the State. In their haste to beat me, I got out unscratched with several of the air police suffering minor injuries at their own hands.

The highest rank officer told me I was under arrest and seemed very moved and shaken by the whole scene. He asked me in a soft and gentle voice to hand over my I.D. I informed him I would not cooperate. He then posted guard with me and went over to the checking office. He returned in a moment and said I was free to go and wished me good luck.

Appeal to Soldiers

Back on our picket line, I was informed that a new crew had come to work the hoses, and I found myself facing a young Negro lad with his hose ready to blast.

I yelled at him, "they hang your minority down South, are you going to obey your master and oppress another minority?"

The Negro lad aimed his hose at the ground and kept it there until an irate officer raced up to him and screamed that he fire at our heads. The Negro lad then fired once or twice way over our heads and continued to spray the ground.

Another chap on the new team refused to fire except for a blast at the ground every five minutes. A third hoser was completely apathetic.

Two sadist goons, however, continued to fire in anger. General Wade, who had been watching the whole affair with glee,

now had a look of abject unhappiness on his sour face.

Base traffic was completely at a halt. An officer was raving, trying to get the demoralized hosers back into the proper spirit, with no success.

All of a sudden, everything, except our sopped and half-drowned picket line, stopped.

Bruce and his wife now returned from the doctor and limped into the line to continue the protest.

The fire trucks moved away and we made new picket signs and continued our picketing until late afternoon.

Evaluation

We had stood our ground and in the case of the fearless Quakers, Ben Webster and Walt, never left the path of the picket line.

Certain things stand out to me in this protest. The first, how a group of people with mixed political and religious beliefs united so perfectly for a common purpose.

Another, how a group of people, students and school teachers with no military training or discipline other than self-discipline, held, while a professional Army went to pieces.

Last, but not least, I was remarkably impressed by those four Quakers who were so firm in their convictions and so staunch in their action.

I came out of this clash with the brutal forces of oppression, never before so firm in my anarchist philosophy, and convinced of our syndicalist and non-violent approach.

—ALAN GRAHAM
(IWW Card X323648)

Reprinted from THE INDUSTRIAL WORKER, Jan. 5, 1959

TRANSPORT BOYCOTTS

The moral bankruptcy of the international labor movement has for decades been responsible for oceans of woe and mountains of misery. The leaders are mostly pigs. A pig can't roar like a lion, but it will squeal and kick up some dust if properly goosed.

And so it came to pass that the International Transport Workers' Federation called upon its affiliates in 62 countries to join in a 4 day boycott against ships flying "flags of convenience." These latter are the flags of Honduras, Costa Rica, Liberia and Panama. Shipowners who have registered their vessels under these flags benefit from labor regulations and laws far below the standards of traditional maritime countries and where the shipowners benefit, the seaman suffers -- in his belly, on his back and in his pay.

In 58 countries, including the U.S., the boycott was largely successful. Longtime enemies like the presidents of the Seafarers' International Union and the National Maritime Union, worked in intimate cooperation, each attempting to outdo the other in organizational effectiveness. Unfortunately the overall effects of the boycott were seriously hampered by the almost complete lack of participation of the waterfront unions of France, Italy, Germany and Holland. The pigs who provide the "leadership" in these areas have not yet been made to squeal.

There will be more such international boycotts, each one of longer duration. Ultimately the workers of the world should have a totally effective transport boycott system; one that will not only assure the well-being of seamen working on the 1800 ships flying "flags of convenience,' but can be used to paralyze the economy and trade of governments abusing workers in the most vile manner.

For example, an effective transport boycott could deprive Saudi Arabia of her oil revenues to compel her to emancipate the 600,000 slaves in that state and to permit free labor organization. The same tactic could be applied against South Africa, the Dominican Republic or any other country where an authoritarian regime abuses humanity and denies workers' rights.

The voyage is long and there are no charts. It is difficult to navigate by stars seen with the heart rather than the eyes. But the ship is sailing --and she's a stout ship.

--J.M.

THE MORAL FACTOR

by Gaston Leval

In their concern with economic problems and new ways of human association, the Anarchist thinkers did not neglect ethical and moral questions. Shortly before his death Bakunin said to his friend Reichel, "If I recover a little of my health I should like to write about an ethics based on the principle of collectivism, without philosophical and religious phraseology."

The attention given to this problem varied with the different currents of Anarchist thought. For the Anarcho-Socialists, Proudhon and his disciples; for Bakunin and the collectivist school and for the now predominant Anarcho-Communist school whose leading theoretician and sociologist was Kropotkin, moral problems have al ays been of fundamental importance.

According to his scientific explanation of socialism, Marx himself would not have become a socialist if the evolution of capitalist economy did not infallibly lead him to it. The Anarcho-Socialists did not rebel because they as individuals suffered from the economic oppression of society (almost all our great figures could have lived a life free from economic worries if they had accepted the status quo). Their reasons for revolt were primarily moral and ethical. It matters not whether the economy of a society be semi-feudal, agrarian, industrial, artisan, small or great industry, capitalist or totalitarian. The elemental sense oj justice that resides in every noble human heart revolts against the exploitation of man by man. The establishment of economic equality is justified regardless of technical development or character of the economy.

In the individualist school of Anarchism two tendencies exist in respect to morality. One--of which Max Stirner has been the most illustrious representative, exalts the rebellion on the individual againsy society in the name of egoism, and, as a corollary defends "The Association of Egoists" in which only the interests of the individual is considered. Despite the many subtle interpretations which can be made in defense of this doctrine, it has no moral value.

Writes Stirner: "Away with all causes which are not my own!"

My cause, they say, should be, at least, "the good cause.' What is the good? What is the bad? I am my own cause. I am not good or bad. These are only words. The divine considers God, humanity considers man. My cause is neither divine nor human; it is not the truth nor the good, nor the just , nor the free, etc., it is *mine;* it is not general but unique. For me there is nothing outside of "I" (*The Ego and His Own,* Max Stirner). How different is the attitude of Bakunin who declared that we could not be free in the midst of Slaves and we must fight to free ourselves if we wish to enjoy liberty!

No wonder that in the international anarchist movement the disciples of Stirner had shown very little of the outstanding qualities that their egos were supposed to possess! Their ethic did not prevent them from satisfying their caprices in the same manner as the privileged satisfied their appetites.

Han Ryner represented the reverse of this tendency. For him, to be an individualist was, above all, to enoble oneself, to "sculpture his own 'I'", his own internal stature, disdaining all vile morality, to live beautifully, in accord with high ethical standards and the wisdom to detect and shun brutality and injustice.

Within the individualist current could be found Stirnerites -- who were Nietzcheans, and Nietzche could be used to justify anything by anyone, including Hitler. Then there were the Rynerians--the semi-Rynerians and the semi-Stirnerites and various gradations which changed according to the country and the times.

But most of the anarchists were and are increasingly of the socialistic Anarchist tendency. They place the social factor above the individual, not because they ignore the individual but because they know that the life of each person depends upon the way in which the life of all is organized. There can be no separate, isolated solution for every one of the two billion inhabitants of the planet.

The Anarcho-Socialist fights not only for himself but for humanity. He

continues the work of his enlightened forbears who, throughout the ages, have opened new roads. They have endured misunderstanding and persecution for advocating these noble principles. As voluntary instruments of destiny they have continued to be what they should be: in the words of the French poet, Albert Samain, "Torches of love, of confidence and of genius."

The morality of the Anarchists who obstinately persist in struggling for the liberation of mankind is wholly subjective. It is born in them and is part of them. It has its mysterious roots deep in the human senses. To live in and for humanity is essential and natural to them. To be a conscious particle of the universe together with the rest of humanity is to the highest degree the essence of their personalities.

The morality of the Libertarian who is in advance of his time is of the same quality as that of the atheist fighting religious intolerance, of the liberals fighting against despotism, of the Gracos fighting for greater economic justice. We do not mention the Christians whose inspirations are not human, since their ambition, a paradise for themselves, is the sole and supreme purpose of their earthly existence.

Kropotkin has attempted to give to ethics a biological base -- explaining ethics according to biology. Reacting against the religious interpretations which give ethics a divine origin, or against the speculative and metaphysical philosophers who conceived of ethics as something outside of and foreign to the human consciousness; Kropotkin affirmed that the practice of life in common, mutual aid in the animal and human species, constitutes the chief source of morality.

A strict and narrow interpretation of this concept can lead us to think that morality is a mechanical consequence of life, independent of the human will. But Kropotkin himself points out the need for affection, love, sympathy and social contacts. He shows how birds play games, give concerts, how monkeys play in groups, etc. He demonstrates that material necessity is not the only source of moral behavior. Morality has here a higher sense. It is an end in itself.

There is not, Kropotkin finds, any moral problem for an isolated individual, a hermit because morality, a - bove all, refers to relations between the individual and his associates. We must consider this debatable. This is true of humanity in general. Historically, and in the human species as well, morality is the result of collective life.

The necessity for mutual aid leads to mutual self respect and the benefits derived from contact and cooperation makes for a finer and happier society, thereby enriching both society and the individual.

But there is a higher concept of ethics which Kropotkin himself defended in his pamphlet, *Anarchist Morality*, a standard of morality which was innate in him and which guided his whole personal life. This morality is a personal one, an end in itself, elevating and ennobling the individual. This is what motivates us to be good, dignified, courteous, cultivated, making us worthy of our own high standards of conduct. We see this not only in the Anarchists, but in elevated men of all creeds and parties. They do not commit a low act merely because it would harm the collectivity or because they fear punishment, but because such an act would violate their conscience. Such a person does not lie, swindle, betray, maltreat a child or a woman because it would hurt him to do these things.

While in general the explanation of mutual aid and morality stems from collective life, we believe that there is some truth in the Categorical Imperative of Kant and in the position of Epectetus and Han Ryner. The error in their position is that it gives all morality a subjective origin and attributes to all of mankind qualities that are attained only by a few. Those who have a private standard of high moral conduct are few and an even lesser number would sacrifice themselves for humanity as a matter of conscience and for the love of their fellow humans.

These attributes are doubtless, in most instances the result of collective life. He who sacrifices his life or his liberty for the good of his fellow human beings is moved by sentiments born out of association with a host of other individuals.

But it is, of course, equally true that one may never fight for humanity and still be moral and live with dignity.

URGENT AND IMPORTANT!

Union of Bulgarian Anarchists in Exile

Paris
April 1, 1958

To all sections of the International Workingmen's Association, to all Federations and Anarchist groups all over the World, to all militant anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists:

Dear Comrades:

We have received from inside Bulgaria the terrible news of the death of Manol Vassev in the prison of Sliven. In transmitting this news to you we again call your attention to the desperate situation of our comrades in Bulgaria and the necessity and urgency for solidarity and action in this emergency.

The prolonged repressions have crushed almost all open resistance to the Stalinist dictatorship. All the leaders of the opposition parties have confessed their "sins" and publicly endorsed the regime. Some of them who endured tortures are now respectable and were chosen as deputies in the last elections. Nevertheless the greater part of them remain inwardly hostile to the dictatorship.

Many of our comrades refused to make humiliating declarations, like the politicians, but they have ceased all activity and manifestations against the regime. There remain however, a limited number of militants who do not and *cannot* concede defeat. Among them was our valiant and now departed comrade, Manol Vassev.

This open resistance by popular militants is of the greatest importance to us and to the Bulgarian people because it makes the Stalinist murderers extremely nervous. There is no doubt that the death of Vassev was in reality murder. His physical and moral resistance was tremendous, and his liberation after his imprisonment in Haskovo signified a victory over the regime, a profound joy, not only for our friends, but for all the workers, who expressed their friendship and admiration for his acts. It was a disastrous loss of prestige for the Communist Party.

We are certain that our comrades interned in the concentration camp of Bělěnè will also meet the same fate as Vassev. The Stalinists are prepared to liquidate the last remnants of the courageous and open resistance of the working class. We are faced with a terrible purge, comparable to what took place in Russia in 1936-37, when the last well-known comrades were forever silenced.

It is then encumbent on everyone, all over the world, to make a final, determined effort to save these comrades who are in grave danger. We are asking for more than material aid, which is insufficient. We ask for a campaign of protest which will be great enough to stay the hand of the executioners.

We leave to your choice the means and methods of protest and await your suggestions. In our opinion this campaign should include the following:

1. Letters of protest sent to Anton Yougov, President of the Council of Ministers of the Peoples Republic of Bulgaria in Sofia, stigmatising the crime committed against an anti-fascist and militant worker, devoted to the working class and demanding an investigation to establish responsibility for the crime; demanding the immediate liberation from the concentration camps and prisons of all anarchists, syndicalists and anti-fascists, among them Christo Kolev, Stefan Kotakov, Deltcho Vassilev, Dobri Ivanov , Kosta Karakostov, Yordan Kovatchev, etc. and the abolition of all concentration camps and the halting of all persecutions and repressions of progressive and anti-fascist people; authorization to the comrades mentioned above and all others who are considered as dangerous to the regime to *leave the country*.
2. Letters of sympathy addressed to the family of Manol Vassev, Bulgaria.
3. Meetings and demonstrations.
4. Articles in our press and in certain other publications giving a biographical resumè of Vassev and others as well as factual and background information about the repressions in Bulgaria. (This information we will be glad to supply)

We envisage a broad campaign in cooperation with other tendencies and

organizations who are concerned about the basic principles of human freedom. We will supply documentation of our charges and help in this campaign by publishing a special issue of our monthly review, *Our Road*, or a book.

We appeal to you not to underestimate any means of protest (such as the letter to Yougov). We assure you that the rulers of Bulgaria fear greatly these protests, the greater their number, the greater the chance that our comrades will be saved, for the rulers fear that the protests will spread beyond their control. The campaign must involve more and more organizations and individuals.

THE MARTYRDOM OF MANOL VASSEV

The first world war ended in catastrophe for Bulgaria. The soldiers and peasants in their majority, hungry and barefooted, remained three years in the trenches for a war which to them made no sense. They revolted, left the front and came to Sofia. King Ferdinand, who was of German extraction, was a stranger who governed over Bulgaria. He abdicated, leaving his throne to his son Boris. But the situation became increasingly revolutionary. A strike of railwaymen developed rapidly into a general strike.

In the fire of events, the Anarchist Communist Federation of Bulgaria was founded in July, 1919. At the same time unions of a libertarian orientation were born in the most important localities, beginning at Roussè on the Danube. The strike accompanied the birth of these unions, strikes that ended mostly in victory.

The Libertarian Militants and Syndicalists were mostly of the generation who took part in the war and endured all its disastrous consequences.

Yordan Sotirov was one of the most active militants of this generation and he was particularly active in union organization. A gifted orator, he possessed a simple and penetrating eloquence.

His speaking and organizing kept him busy on holidays, Sundays and nights. In the daytime he worked in a tobacco factory in his native city of Kustendil, where he was one of the most militant fighters for better conditions. His activity on and off the job made him among the best known figures in the Bulgarian labor movement.

In 1922, during the course of a strike which caused disorders in Kustendil, Yordan Sotirov was arrested for speaking in the Public Square and sentenced to 15 years in prison. He escaped and took the name of Manol Vassev, which belonged to a deceased refugee from Thrace. Vassev settled in Haskovo, in southern Bulgaria, where he continued to work in a tobacco factory. For 22 years he worked and carried on his militant activity, disregarding the risk of being identified by his real name and arrested.

A life of hard work and miserable pay caused strikes which ended in clashes with the authorities and jail for many workers, including Vassev. Without being identified, Vassev served time in jail, and was even drafted into the army a second time after having participated in the war under his true name.

The tobacco industry was one of the most important in Bulgaria and the capitalist exploitation was the most pitiless. It was an industry owned mostly by foreigners, who, in order to increase their profits, introduced a speed-up system known as "Tonga" *(something like the Taylor System of the efficiency experts here in the USA--ed.)* Manol Vassev was the first to expose the anti-working class nature of this scheme and published a pamphlet called *Tonga*, which became very popular. The strikes against this method of exploitation prevented the introduction of the "Tonga" and was one of the greatest victories of the Bulgarian working class under the pro-nazi regime.

The activity of Manol Vassev, to say nothing of his lectures at the people's university, organized around the town library, was not limited to the workers in his or other trades. He organized, together with other comrades, the National Federation of Farm Workers, which opposed the putsch of the fascists, one of whom is now in the Communist government as Minister of Electrification.

During the period of the German occupation Manol Vassev organized the resistance of the Department of Haskovo. On the day of the Liberation, at the head of an armed group, he attacked a barracks, disarmed the officers and saved the lives of many partisans who were trapped.

All these facts were well known to the people. Vassev was the object of spontaneous and general admiration. For many months his portrait was displayed in public places and hardly a single public meeting took place without his participation.

But this did not last long. On the tenth of March, 1945, he was arrested and interned for the first time in the Doupnitsa concentration camp where he remained for six months. Freed for a short time, he was again arrested and sent to the concentration camp of "Rossitsa" for 13 months.

When the Fifth Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party took place, thousands were arrested, among them Vassev. His third sentence was five years in prison. Upon leaving prison he was interned in Bèlènè concentration camp, where he found Christo Kolev, Stefan Kotakov, Dobri Ivanov, Deltcho Vassilev, Kosta Karakostov, an old agrarian and the lawyer Yordan Kovatchev and 300 other prisoners.

Freed after the death of Stalin, Manol Vassev was again arrested on the 4th of November, 1956, during the Hungarian Revolution. On the 18-19th of March he was condemned to one-and-a half years in prison. This time the trial was held publicly. Manol Vassev, who never concealed his thoughts and sentiments, expressed himself openly. He heard himself accused of "high treason and espionage in the service of the Americans". He arose and pronounced these words which will some day be graven on his tombstone: "It is not I who signed agreements with the Americans, nor did I kiss the skirt of the Queen of England." This counter-accusation upset the tranquility of the proceedings, confused the judges and the prosecutor did not dare to raise his head.

He was sent to the prison of Sliven. Him family awaited his approaching liberation, as did his friends, in and out of Bulgaria. Then, on March 16th, we received the following telegram:

"MANOL VASSEV DIED ON THE DAY BEFORE HIS LIBERATION AND WAS BURIED IN SLIVEN PRISON. HE WAS IN GOOD HEALTH AND HIS DEATH CAME AS A SHOCK. THERE CAN BE LITTLE DOUBT THAT HE WAS ASSASSINATED BY THE COMMUNISTS."

Walking the Brink Or Bet Your Life

It is a most exciting game,
The world is the rink--
And billions watch expectantly
While Dulles walks the brink.

To make the game more interesting
The stakes are rather high;
If he should chance to make a slip
TWO BILLION will die.

But then we know we're in the right.
And this should surely lull us--
For on our side, we have been told,
There's God and Mr. Dulles.

And if friend and foe should all be blown
To COEXISTENT dust
How comforting, though none will know--
Our cause, it was most just.

--D.B. Barron

(Quoted from Chi. Darrow Club newsletter, reprinted from THE INDUSTRIAL WORKER)

HOW THE STATE FUNCTIONS

WASHINGTON, Aug 14 (AP)--When the Japanese struck Pearl Harbor, John Linehan was a civilian employe of the U.S. Navy in the Philippines. He refused to surrender and took to the hills to join guerrillas harrassing the invaders.

Desperately ill after three years of fighting, he was carried down from the mountains strapped to poles, evacuated from the enemy-held islands by submarine, and finally returned to the U.S. on a war transport.

The government has insisted he should pay $554 for the boat ride. Now, according to The Government Standard, published by the American Federation of Government Employes, the Justice Department has told Linehan that if he doesn't pay up it will take him to court to collect.

Governor Faubus is all right in his place but would you want your daughter to marry him?

Views and Comments N°33 Jan. 1959

BOOK REVIEW

WE WHO WOULD NOT KILL
by Jim Peck
Lyle Stuart--1958
208 pages, hardcover, $3.00
(may be ordered from
Views and Comments)

This book is a straightforward account, in simple language, of the author's prison life as a conscientious objector during the Second World War. Peck lists books like Frank Haneghan's *Merchants of Death* and Remarque's *All Quiet On The Western Front* as having inspired him to become a pacifist.

Although in the beginning he had no contact with the organized anti-war movement, he wrote, reprinted and distributed at his own expense, anti-war literature. He also spoke at street meetings and to people wherever he could.

In a world where we are made to feel that the individual does not count and can do nothing, Jim Peck has proved the contrary. In a world where anyone who steps "out of line" and dares to defy the powers that be is regarded as "queer," the assertion of the rights and conscience of the isolated person --the non-conformist--takes on great significance.

To those who would explain away their own better impulses and failure to act by belittling the sincere and valiant action of others, by sneering about "martyr complexes," "compulsions" and other psychologic invectives, Jim Peck is healthily oblivious. He tells frankly that his own values are not that of his socialite mother and family. In the spirit of people like Peter Kropotkin, Louise Michel and Mahatma Ghandi, the sufferings of childhood attuned him to the sufferings of others, and instilled in him a burning hatred of injustice and a determination to do something about it.

The book describes the prison, the jailers and the life of the inmates. Here again, true o the example set by all those who have fought the "good fight," Jim Peck did not place himself above his fellow prisoners, and acted in solidarity with them. Naturally, he deals largely with the C.O.'s. They all had different reasons for their anti-war stand. Among them as on the outside could be found all kinds of viewpoints, from the most religious to the atheistic socialists and anarchists. It is very interesting to read how direct action tactics get results. Strikes, and slowdowns against bad food, prison tyranny, infringement of privileges, were frequent, and in all of them the C.O.'s took a big part. Especially inspiring was the courageous fight against Jim Crow in jail--a fight organized and won by Peck and his comrades. There is no dwelling on lurid details for the sake of shocking the reader. Yet one is well aware of the sufferings of the men in "solitary," in the concrete dungeon, of the great efforts it took to keep up the spirit and the will to carry on even when one's efforts were misunderstood by many of one's fellow-prisoners. The incident of how the red flag was unfurled outside the barred windows on labor's holiday, May first, is particularly inspiring. This was not the only instance of the courage and ingenuity of the C.O.'s. While in segregation and during a strike, they managed to print and circulate a newspaper!

Like all prison memoirs written in the grand tradition, *We Who Would Not Kill* leaves us with a renewed confidence in the dignity and nobility of man.

--*E.J.M.*

PIGS PAY FOR CROSS

The above is the title of a story appearing in the Pittsburgh Press, Sunday, Aug. 3, 1958. A rural mail carrier in Illinois has thought up a plan to have every farmer on his route raise one or more pigs and donate their sale price to raise a giant cross on Bald Knob Mountain in that state. Since the Federal government is paying farmers not to raise pigs there seems no sense in a farmer going to the trouble to raise a pig and sell him when all he has to do is add one or more pigs to his list of pigs he didn't raise and when the government pays him the additional money for the unraised pigs give it to the mailman.

--*The Liberal, Sept. 1958*

We Who Would Not Kill

By Jim Peck

Dear friend,

This book is a compelling and hard-hitting document, not written for the immature or squeemish, but for those who can take an adult and realistic view of prison life.

It is not a plea for pacifism nor any other "cause". It is the statement of a man's convictions. It is a conscientious objector's own story of his imprisonment during World War 2 and of what he did after release to try to avert a third world conflict.

Above all, it is the story of a person's uncompromising belief in man's ability to save himself. He professes no religion. He is associated with no political party. The pages of his book reveal his ceaseless search for a better life for all.

Sincerely,
Bayard Rustin
Bayard Rustin

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THE COP AND THE PEOPLE ON THE STREET by LL.B.

In the rising tension between the people and blind authority the cop represents the only answer the government knows for recession--repression On the street the citizen finds the cop constantly needling and interfering. His word is law regardless of circumstances.

On Washington's Birthday, in 1956, two Puerto Ricans, John Carcel and Lydiz Collazo, walked up and down carrying signs demanding the freeing of the political prisoners in Puerto Rico. A cop walked up and commanded them to go on the far side of the street. They refused. They were promptly thrown into the paddy wagon and driven off to jail.

The Magistrate found them guilty of disorderly conduct. No matter that picketing is supposed to be legal. No matter that these two were not blocking traffic or causing any disturbance. The mere refusal to obey a cop's order, even though the citizen was behaving legally, constituted disorderly conduct.

The Puerto Ricans appealed. The Appellate Part of Special Sessions in a two-to-one decision sustained the lower court. Finally the highest New York State tribunal, the Court of Appeals, heard the case in June, 1957. On July 3, 1957 that Court rendered an important ruling which has received surprisingly little attention. In a six-to-two decision the majority held that the mere refusal to obey a cop's order, when the citizen was acting legally, was not disorderly conduct. The conviction was erased. Eternal vigilance is still the price of liberty (People vs. Carcel, 3 N.Y. wd 327).

--*from CORRESPONDENCE, June, 1958*

LABOR AND AUTOMATION

The American labor movement is faced with a number of crucial problems which spring from technological developments on the one hand and on the other, the capacity or incapacity of the organized labor movement to meet them. There are, of course, other great issues: Statism, the all-out drive to weaken eventually eliminate or "integrate" the labor unions, nuclear warfare, etc. But all of these issues are inter-related. In discussing any one of them, we automatically involve the others. Now we shall dwell on how labor is meeting the challenge of automation.

This represents a revolutionary change in the method of production. It is bound to affect social life to an even greater degree than the industrial revolution of the last century. The method of production, however, only emphasizes the basic contradiction of the capitalist economic system. Despite the enormous production of useless and murderous war material, the rate of manufacture of consumer goods continues to exceed the rate of consumption. The goods are sorely needed but the economic system prevents them from being fully enjoyed by all of the world's peoples.

Automation is already having a disastrous effect on the American workers. Because of this, many hundreds of thousands of workers now out of work can expect to remain so. We learn from our contemporary, *News and Letters*, that of the 450,000 unemployed workers in the State of Michigan, 150,000 will be *permanently* unemployed.

The statistics on the connection between automation and unemployment are startling and disturbing:

The output of transportation equipment (autos, trucks, trailers, aircraft, etc.), went up 80% from 1948 to 1958, while the number of workers remained unchanged.

In the 10 years since 1948, general manufacturing output increased 35%; while number of workers has declined *6%. This means that the workers' productivity has soared more than 40%.*

Even the rapidly expanding chemical industry shows a drop of almost 2% in production workers since 1948, although output is up more than 80%.

For all non-durable goods, production is 31% higher *with nearly 6%* fewer *workers.*

Today, 11.9 million workers turn out 35% more *goods than 12.7 million workers did in 1948.*

(From *The Wall Street Journal* as quoted by *Solidarity*, organ of the United Auto Workers, eastern edition, Oct. 27, 1958)

The *New York Times* carries an article in which the retiring president of The New York Academy of Sciences predicts that automation and cheap nuclear energy will soon bring the 20 hour week. We agree that the 20 hour week is practical and necessary. But how "soon" it will come will depend on the action of the labor movement. Reduction of working hours and better conditions do not automatically follow improved technology. It took decades of struggle to win an 8 hour day and we have not appreciably reduced the hours of labor since the great strikes of the 1880s.

Why is it that the labor unions, instead of waging a determined strike movement for shorter hours, waste time, money and energy to help "friendly" politicians get good jobs? The fact that they do so implies that the politicians can help labor better than labor can help itself and that the strike and the boycott are outmoded. It would appear that they do not realize that it will take direct economic action to undo the disastrous legislation already enacted by the politicians whom they have helped elect.

There would have been no Taft-Hartley and other anti-labor laws if the unions had taken a firm stand--bringing economic pressure to bear where it could do the most good. Where such a policy was followed by the United Mine Workers it has been effective. Economic power is far more effective than parliamentary action ever could be.

We are told by a lot of people who should know better, that the recent "victory" of labor in defeating "right to work" laws and candidates in a few states justifies and should encourage unions to participate on an even greater scale in parliamentary action. This is an extremely dangerous illusion. Such laws could never get on the statute books, or at least could never be enforced if union men exercised their "Right *not* to work" with non-union men. Judging from past performances, politicians can go back on their word or pass "pro-labor" laws full of loopholes that are just as bad. Like other alleged gains, such laws will, in the long run, hurt labor because it will weaken, if not paralize the confidence of the workers in their own power. The initiative of the working class atrophies if it is not exercised.

A YOUTH'S COMMENTARY ON "DEMOCRACY" IN ACTION

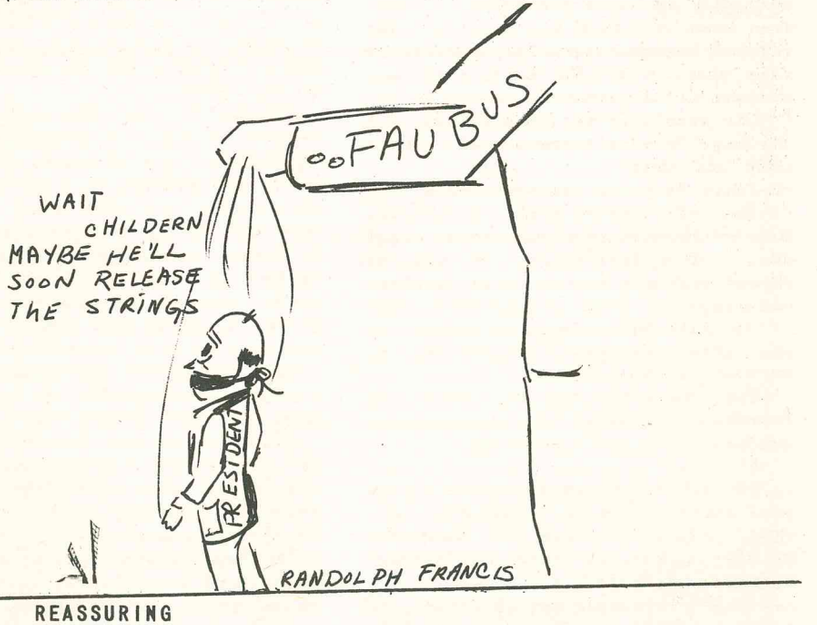
The following was written for *Views and Comments* by Randolph Francis, a 14 year old schoolboy from Brooklyn, who went on the recent Youth March for Integration to Washington, D.C.

I thought the Youth March was a wonderful sight. To be one of 10,000 youth of many races and creeds on the march --in hope of ending segregation in Arkansas and all the segregated schools down south.

Our destination was Lincoln Memorial, where we gathered. The leading speakers were: A. Philip Randolph, Jackie Robinson, Harry Belafonte, Mrs. Luther King and others.

The speech that interested me and many others was when Randolph told about how Harry Belafonte's committee of ten students went to call on the President. They were refused.

The Guard at the gate said, "that was impossible." Belafonte then asked for his Assistant. The Guard said that would be "impossible" too. It goes to show the President doesn't care what is happening in Arkansas.



REASSURING

Once a nuclear bomb has dropped in your area it is unlikely that there will ever be another in the district, says Dr. G.D. Kersley, consulting physician at the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases, Bath.

Writing in the British Medical Journal, he suggests that this is one "reassuring point which might be told the public to reduce panic during a nuclear war.

--Bath & Wilts Chronical and Herald

DELINQUENCY--BUT IS IT JUVENILE?

Children at play do many things: wonderful, nonsensical things; dangerous, foolhardy things; quiet, imaginative things. They imitate adults or they improvise, according to the mood of the moment and the limitations of environment.

Children usually want to share with adults the many impressions, imaginative concepts and factual happenings of their lives. They bubble over with the urge to communicate.

Adult reaction to childrens' spontaneity varies. Sometimes adults are indifferent. Sometimes they enter into the spirit of the occasion and communion is established. Sometimes they reprimand or punish the child. Seldom does the telling trigger a reaction which may cause tragedy and blight lives.

But such a thing did happen last month in Monroe, North Carolina.

A seven year old white girl who had been playing in a mixed group of children casually told her parents that she had kissed a negro boy. The boy is nine years old. The other negro boy who was in the group is eight.

The girl's father, enraged, went to the boys' home and threatened to kill them and their parents. Police took the boys to jail, for protection.

The boys were held in jail for six days without charges. During this time the girl's father and his friends threatened to kill them and lynch their parents.

The neighborhood where the boys live was terrorized. People were afraid to turn on lights at night. Women, including the boys' mother, stayed away from home at night for fear of being lynched.

After the mayor had reportedly promised the local NAACP head that the boys would be released if their mothers promised to take them away from Monroe, the boys were suddenly charged with attempted assault on females and sent to a training school for delinquent negro boys for an indefinite period of time. Neither the boys nor their mothers -- summoned to juvenile court hearing on ten minutes notice -- were represented by counsel.

The Superior Court clerk and acting juvenile judge who sentenced the boys declined to discuss the case and said:

"No harm has been done to the boys, and they are better off where they are. I wish you wouldn't print anything about it. We printed nothing here. Everybody is satisfied about how it came out. The mothers are satisfied and so is everybody else. Somebody must be trying to stir up race trouble by telling you about it."

At the time of the kissing incident the mayor of the town told newsmen that "such incidents are not tolerated here --whether involving white or colored at any age."

If the incident had occurred between children of the same race, if white had kissed white, if negro had kissed negro, instead of white kissing negro, would anyone have paid any attention to it at all?

The chances are, if the little white girl had said she kissed a little white boy, the parents would have smiled and considered it a cute incident.

Instead, the father of the girl called for, and expected to draw, blood. People not directly connected with the happening were set for a lynching or lynchings. And two boys, aged 8 and 9, were sent to reform school for indefinite stays. And the authorities hoped that nothing would be printed about it elsewhere, since nothing had been printed locally.

This could happen only where deep-seated race prejudice, race hatred exists. There where a person with dark skin is regarded as inferior, and dealt with accordingly. There, where a white female, woman or child, must not be contaminated, must not be sullied, by physical contact with one whose skin is dark.

The acting juvenile judge who sentenced the boys said no harm had been done them and everybody was satisfied at the outcome.

No harm done to boys of 8 and 9 in being hauled off to jail, in being held there for six days, in being sentenced to reform school for indeterminate sentences? No harm done by the terror they must have felt at the threats of killing and lynching?

Jails are penal institutions with a stench of their own. Being held there, even for one's own protection, would leave a mark on a child. "Training schools" for delinquent children still are reform schools, supposedly geared to straighten out the persistently anti-social child into a socially amenable being.

But these boys are not delinquents, they did not perform an anti-social act. They were charged with "attempted assault on females," with "molesting a white female." All the people directly involved in this incident are children. Only delinquent adults who reflect the sickness of their society could treat children in this way.

What of the little girl? Has any harm been done to her? Is it not probable that she will carry all her life a feeling of guilt for having set in motion this chain of events? And she was just being naturally spontaneous, bubbling over with the urge to communicate.

What lies behind the father's extreme reaction? What lies behind the reform school sentences? What beyond the desire to suppress news of the happening?

Behind them all lie nearly two hundred years of conditioning by institutions that regard the negro as an inferior being, institutions that divide the biological unity of mankind into inferior and superior races, institutions with one set of rules and values for whites, another for blacks.

Beyond these institutions are others, which warp all mankind. The institutions of law, organized religion, the authoritarian family, all based on the concept of man being a sinful creature, whose natural needs and desires must be repressed instead of on the concept of man's natural needs and desires being good and in need of satisfaction.

From these repressions and denials stems the warping of human personality which in turn gives rise to the institutions of exploitation and injustice which perpetuate the inhumanity of man toward man.

--D.H. (Cleveland)

THE NEEDLE

by Mann

Why don't we all chip in and buy Ike a golf course on Quemoy?

Reprinted from CORRESPONDENCE

THE DEGENERATION OF THE FRENCH SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

by Pierre Galmer

One of the best known French Socialists, Andrè Philip, had called the recent conduct of the French Socialist Party (affiliated to the Socialist International), a betrayal of Socialism. He referred especially to the party's position on Algeria and the Suez Canal fiasco. He accuses the party of renouncing not only its own declared program, but also of violating the humanistic and democratic traditions of the old labor movement.

While we are not now dealing with this aspect of the subject, it must be pointed out in passing that the present reactionary policies of the party which reached its most virulent form in 1956-58 are the result of a process of degeneration which set in many years ago. What interests us now is that when men like Philip, who is neither a Marxist nor a "leftist" in the accepted sense of these terms, and moderate socialists such as Charles Lussy and Edouard Dupreux have severed relations with the organization, then the degeneration of the Socialist Party must indeed be far advanced.

The crisis of the Socialist Party is not only ideological. When it comes on the theoretical plane its confusion and opportunism are on a par with those of its brother parties in the Socialist International, none of which have learned much from the tragic events of the past.

The French Socialist party has the same ideology as the others but differs from the Socialist parties of Scandinavia and Germany and the Labor parties of England and Belgium in its social composition. Its membership is essentially non-proletarian. The internal structure of the French S.P., its ideas and its interests all reflect this fact. While in other European countries the Socialist parties have tried(in a distorted way and for reasons of their own) to maintain close contact with the labor unions, French socialism has more and more estranged itself from the workers and their aspirations.

The party is not a workers' organization. Recent statistics prove it. Only about 20% of the member have a proletarian background. Most of its members are public officials, merchants, professional men and municipal employees. We put municipal employees in a special category because it has great bearing on the nature of the French Socialist Party. The thousands of French municipalities ("communes") are administered by Mayors and Municipal Councillors. A very large number of these communes have socialist officials, who control and decide the status of the municipal employees and other pepple who are indirectly dependent on their good will.

The officials and employees of the administration in Paris, for example, are an important section of the Socialist Party. The employees must follow the orders of the Socialist Mayor who will not tolerate any deviation from the party line. In another commune in North France, the Socialist Councillor agrees to deliver a majority vote on any issue to the General Secretary of the Party. He will not hesitate to severely punish any of his subordinates who resist his orders.

The French Socialist Party is essentially "municipalist." In the last congress of the party, General Secretary Guy Mollet defended the new electoral system of General De Gaulle's "Fifth Republic." Under this system the President of the Republic is elected by the "notables" who consist of village, municipal and provincial officials. Mollet declared that this was acceptable because there were "tens of thousands" of socialist "notables."

In the majority of French socialist municipalities, the Socialists hold posts by arrangement with right and center parties, who support the Socialists only because they do not want to see the Communists in control. This is the case in the Paris region. It is obvious that these parties expect the Socialists to pay for this support by fulfilling some of their demands even if these demands are harmful to the workers and involve violations of Socialist principles. Most Socialist activity revolves around these "bastions." The municipalities directed by Socialists and their allies are detrimental to any militant and independent Socialist action.

It has been said that the French Socialist Party, is, to a great extent, taking the place of the old "radical party" in the political life of France.

This is true with one main difference. The Socialist Party is not exclusively a party of "notables." There are rank and file members, old time veterans who are attached to the party for sentimental reasons. These people don't like the way things are going and are inclined to criticize the policies of the leadership.

It is necessary for the leadership to deal with non-conformists by severe disciplinary measures and the repression has attained extraordinary dimensions. The apparatus dominates everyone and everything. Real debate is prohibited and those who protest are expelled. The procedures long used in the Communist Party are now being applied by the Socialist Party leadership.

It has been Guy Mollet, the successor of Leon Blum as party General Secretary, who has gradually introduced these detestable practices. Loyalty to the Party has become loyalty to the directing elite. The climate of free discussion that prevailed under Leon Blum was replaced by a climate of constraint which has driven many of the old-timers and the youth out of the party. Guy Mollet is able to get away with these outrages because he is supported by the many thousands of S.P. members who depend on the party apparatus for their administrative and economic posts. They are hostile to the eternal non-conformists who are a threat to their security. The central apparatus of the party with all its subsidiaries are satellites of the General Secretary, who, by his "realism," his government influence and his power, assures their futures.

This constraint, this social transformation of the party socialists into an organism entirely devoted to its chief became apparent in 1956 when Guy Mollet became President of the Council. Mollet was then chief of Government and also General Secretary of the party. He cynically broke all his promises (especially in relation to Algeria), and silenced every dissenting voice. All opposition to the policy of the party was considered to be opposition to the State. The interests of the party were bound up with the interests of the State. "Those who don't like it," said Mollet, "can go and found another 'autonomous' socialist organization."

It would be false to assume that the workers, members of the party, are among those who are most hostile to the methods and policies of the party leadership. In many cases the contrary is true. For this attitude the communists are responsible. Experience with the Communists has left an indelible mark on many of the workers. They hate the communists so strongly that they prefer the reaction of Mollet to that of Moscow. Also they still respect Mollet because he fought against the Communists. It is tragic that the Socialist workers are suspicious of all *sincere* opposition to the Socialist betrayers, fearing that the oppositionists may be Communists.

The Socialist Party of France, by its structure, the quality of its leaders, the degree of its opportunism, cannot even be truly considered a reformist movement. Its will to reform the existing institutions is weak. Inside the party there is no serious desire to carry out comprehensive projects of reform and questions of principle and doctrine are ignored. Solidly installed in the numerous branches of the State and in certain sectors of the economy, the Socialist Party of France is a pillar of the present society. Its inability to initiate or carry out reforms only reflects this reality.

More than any other Socialist Party in Europe, it is incrusted in the political and economic apparatus of the State and far removed from the real life of the exploited and underprivileged masses. its attitude toward Algeria, colonialism in general, and a host of other problems, shows that the party is not even liberal in the true sense of the word, to say nothing of it being socialist.

* *

EDITORIAL NOTE:

The degeneration of French Socialism has its special features, as this article makes clear. All socialist parties, however, are headed in the same general direction. The principles and tactics of the socialist parties have been, are and will continue to be the root cause of their inevitable degeneration. Parliamentary political action, collaboration with the ruling class, the holding of State power, State worship in any form, corrupts the rulers and enslaves the ruled. True Socialism and Statism are incompatible and impossible. The existence of one means the death of the other.

A LETTER FROM ALGERIA

"Those who have given me proof of their confidence have done so freely, and not because they were in any way forced to do so....This is as clear as the light that bursts from the sky..."

--General De Gaulle, speech at Constantine, Algeria, March 10, 1958.

What do I think about the most recent events in Algeria? I can best illustrate my opinion by relating some incidents, whose truth I guarantee, leaving you to draw your own conclusions.

Here, for example, is a little place near Algiers. A young Arab comes to register for voting (on the plebiscite for the new constitution of General De Gaulle. A white ballot means YES and a blue-violet ballot means NO). The clerk tells him that he is already registered and shows him that his name is on the list. He also shows him that his father who has been dead for ten years, and his brother who is not yet 17 and too young to vote are also registered! When the young man protests, the impatient clerk yells, "Mind your own business. You came here to register. You are registered. Now get out of here." The bewildered young Arab leaves.

In the city of Algiers, an Arab named Mansour, who is a naturalized French citizen about 40 years old, is visited by officials and given a receipt to show that he has registered and is entitled to vote. Mansour protests that he has not yet registered and that he still has at least a week in which to do so. The officials explain that to save time they have registered him and have been told to deliver the receipt to him. Mansour refuses to accept this fraudulent receipt. The officials drop the receipt into his mail box and depart!

If, in most of the urban areas the election procedure was irregular, it was outrageous in the rural districts. This is how Abdelaziz voted. He is a typical Arab and his experience is typical of the general run of voters throughout Algeria. In the polling place at the town hall, the ballot box was under the control of an assistant to the head of the Special Delegation. The Special Delegation performed (usurped) all the functions of the Municipal Council which had been dissolved. The President of the Delegation, assisted by a rural policeman and a sergeant, has a little table on which there is a pile of white envelopes and white ballots. The blue-violet envelopes and ballots are on an adjoining table in a corner of the room. In the room are two armed soldiers. The President takes a white ballot and gives it to Abdelaziz together with his registration card. The policeman takes a white envelope and asks the voter to give him the ballot. The gendarme then takes the ballot and inserts it into the envelope and says to the voter: "This is how you should vote. Give your registration card to the sergeant and drop the envelope into yonder box." This is how Abdelaziz also voted YES!

The voter could, to be sure, have asked for a blue-violet ballot and it would have been given to him -- and he would then have been locked up in a cell. He would have had to be a man of unusual fortitude to resist the psychological slogans which the army blared over the radio and plastered over the country:

"HE WHO VOTES NO IS AN ENEMY. HE CAN BE IMPRISONED. BUT HE WHO WILL NOT VOTE DESERVES DEATH!"

* *

The above extracts from a letter sent to *La Révolucion Prolétarienne* (Paris, France, Nov. 1958) will not surprise anyone who has studied the electoral systems of different countries. This brazen fraud that goes under the name of "Democracy" in Algeria is equalled, if not surpassed in the "Workers' Fatherland," the "Soviet" Union, and its satellites, the "Peoples' Democratic Republics," as well as in the "Peoples' Republic of China." Nor is the situation much better in certain newly independent countries such as Ghana, Egypt and Tunisia.

In the older, established democracies, the inherent evils of "representative government" are camouflaged by the massive and insidious brainwashing techniques of mass persuasion. Every modern propaganda device, from kindergartens to colleges, from newspapers to radio and television, are used by the politicians and their scientific flunkies--the psychologists and others --to foster illusions and enslave the mind of man. There is an unbridgable chasm between the principle of Democracy, which means the widest freedom for everyone and the principle of the State, which means the unlimited freedom of the few to enslave the many.

Real democracy will be achieved only when the oppressed realize that every struggle for freedom involves a struggle against its natural enemy--the State. The power of the State contracts as the area of freedom expands, and the area of freedom contracts with every increase in the power of the State.

Manifesto of the Anarchist Federation of Mexico

TO THE WORKERS TO THE PEOPLE OF MEXICO

The Anarchist Federation of Mexico raises its most energetic protest in the matter of the recent actions taken by the governmental authorities against the heroic Mexican railway workers. In order to defend their undeniable right to be represented by those freely elected by the majority of the rank and file of their union, it has been necessary for these workers to go out on strike to demand from the Government and the Company, a just understanding that does not injure their dignity and their interests.

The Police and the Army have been mobilized with a great show of force, to evict the workers from their union halls and from their places of employment, the holding of the workers' meetings has been forcibly prevented, the most prominent leaders have been imprisoned, and every defenseless worker heard to protest has been brutally beaten.

Although supported by the great publicity apparatus of the reactionary press, backed up by the Chambers of Commerce and the corrupt union bureaucracy, and after having threatened to discharge all of the strikers, the Company has now sent out anguished appeals to the workers to report in -- to scab on their own strike. But the attitude of the workers has been so unanimous that the whole system of the National Railways has been paralyzed, demonstrating the complete solidarity among the railwaymen who are no longer willing to put up with the leaders who, having sold them out, are still being imposed upon them.

The aggression against the working class has been particularly scandalous and has been made extensive to all members of the Unions who have shown a greater revolutionary syndicalist consistency in their rejection of the leaders that betrayed their mission of defending those they were supposed to represent.

The telegraphists and the railway workers in general have given a magnificent example of unity and steadfastness in the defense of true revolutionary syndicalism, an example that should be followed in all other labor organizations that are today controlled by an imposed or treacherous leadership.

The strike is not only a legitimate weapon of the working class to seek wage increases, but it is something much more important -- it is the only means by which the proletariat can assure respect for its rights and its conquests. There is no right of Labor more worthy, more just, more irrevocable than the right to designate freely--without political or boss-class intervention--those it wishes to represent it in the defense of its interests.

To be a worker is no shame. Rather it is a source of pride not shared by any of those who live on the workers' backs, the parasites whose only "virtue" consists in living by the sweat of others. And the worker has a right to be respected not only as a producer but as a man as well.

It is you, workers of field and factory, who generously gave your blood for the triumph of the Mexican Revolu-

tion, of which the present regime claims to be heir, although today it tramples wantonly on your legitimate rights, supporting with its bayonets the corrupt leaders who have betrayed the movement of the workers and peasants.

This is the Government which -- against all justice and all right -- has attacked the democratic conquests of the working class which, through its efforts and sacrifices during the whole revolutionary period, made it possible for the regimes that grew out of the Revolution to reach their present state of political "legality." This leaves the workers but one recourse--the cessation of work as a protest against the arbitrary and illegal imposition of a rejected leadership.

The Fatherland is the people, and those who are truly anti-patriotic are those who have been bribed to facilitate and support the corruption into which have sunk most of the labor organizations, which, instead of defending the interests of the working people (subjected to the pitiless and voracious exploitation of both national and foreign capital), have forced them to resort to direct action to prevent the further eroding away of their rights by those claiming to be "patriots" but who feel no qualms as they watch the people suffer hunger and poverty.

The experiences of these struggles should not pass unnoticed by the working class of Mexico, which must fight for a labor movement independent of political control, capable of really defending the interests of the workers without any intervention by the political parties that have washed away the great social principles of the Mexican Revolution.

Workers, People of Mexico, let us support our brothers, the railway workers and telegraphists. Their victory will be the victory of all.

--Anarchist Federation of Mexico
Mexico, D.F., 5 August 1958

Cooperation: Block Clubs

The city of Detroit, a predominantly "home-owners" city has well over 300 "Block Clubs." Some in existence today are 20 to 30 years old. Others form for a particular project and disband when the goal is achieved.

Outwardly the block clubs concern themselves with questions regarding housing- proper rubbish disposal, housing laws, repairs on curbways, correct street signs, rerouting of truck routes, re-surfacing of hazardous streets. However, by also taking responsibility for sick funds, emergency funds in case of death in a family, their concern spills over into every aspect of human relations with one another. While the membership is necessarily fluid, changing as people move in and out of a neighborhood, block clubs are known for their informality, purposeful activity, and closeness among those working together.

There is a tremendous variety in block clubs. In middle class areas the tendency is to take group neighborhood responsibility for preventing commercial plants from entering the area., enforcing zoning laws. These people almost always work through city official councils and use representatives instead of participating directly. In contrast, working class areas, (and block clubs predominate in Negro neighborhoods) tend to use the block clubs more. These people have a real reason for their activity--to fight for playgrounds, use of vacant lots, traffic signs, protection of living quarters that could easily fall apart if not checked. Often there are campaigns to beautify the neighborhood with trees and grass through projects that involve school children, with special funds raised for those who cannot afford to buy their own grass seeds or shrubbery.

A meeting might range from 8 to 40 people, according to the agenda for the evening, but the activities decided on will generally be supported by the whole street. Meetings are announced through a simple mimeographed sheet placed in every mail box along the block, regardless of how long people have lived there.

There are no paid functionaries. Dues are usually a nominal $.25 collected at monthly meetings, but for specific instances, donations will be made on the spot. Block parties, selling dinners, teas, are commonplace methods of raising funds.

City officials admit that these organizations are always started by the people themselves, though they do not hesitate to use the facilities of the city departments. While they tend to prefer official status, these organizations stand on their own, all having their own constitutions and by-laws, keeping minutes, and challenging anything that appears an obstacle to their civic improvement.

What these people have to say about the building of homes, the integration of schools, factories and recreation, goes unsaid and unrecorded. From them could come the key to how people would like to see housing planned now and in the future.

--from CORRESPONDENCE, June, 1958

WHOSE PAYROLL IS HE ON, ANYWAY?

The singular weakness of the labor movement to act effectively despite its numerical strength is due to a lack of social vision. A deplorable example is the attitude of George Meany, President of the AFL-CIO. Meany acted as an "impartial" chairman in a clash between the Masters, Mates and Pilots Union and the shipowners' American Merchant Marine Institute. For this, he was severely castigated by an affiliate of the AFL-CIO, The Mechanics Educational Society of America. In its official organ, *MESA Educator* (Nov. 1958) we read:

...For a union officer to be anything but "impartially" in favor of the workers and "impartially" in favor of so powerful a body as the American Merchant Marine Institute is like forgetting what unionism is all about.... if an affiliate of the AFL-CIO is capable of striking the works of an employer, it gets down to the basic principle of free collective bargaining and the ability of the workers to concertedly apply the withdrawal of their labor effort in order to enforce their demands.

When an employer--who has never hesitated to use his full economic strength against unions, knows he is beaten and cries out against free collective bargaining, proposing a binding decision by an impartial arbitrator in its stead, we think it is neither fitting nor proper for the chief executive officer of organized labor in America, to allow his good office and his good name to be used as a fish hook to pull the boss out of the creek.

The issues in the contract are not important. What IS important is the very idea of placing a union, capable of conducting a successful strike, in a position of either forgoing its strike weapon or repudiating the President of the AFL-CIO.

...the harm done to the labor movement in general, by putting the blessing on arbitration as a substitute for a darn good strike cannot be estimated.

It is an axiom of the revolutionary labor movement that the problems of the world's workers will be solved when the institutions that create and perpetuate exploitation, injustice and slavery in any form will be abolished by the combined action of the oppressed. Without great sacrifices, protracted struggles, temporary setbacks as well as lasting gains, this goal will not be reached. The effectiveness of any labor movement depends upon accepting and applying these principles.

To what extent does the American labor movement meet these conditions? The answer is obvious.

With very few honorable exceptions, American unions and their misleaders accept and perpetuate the existing social order. They insist that democratic capitalism will, with their cooperation, solve all social and economic problems. This is the blind spot that prevents them from seeing and devising solutions to the issues now facing the country's workers.

Again it is time for the yearly financial report, and again we are heavily in debt. This year has seen the increase in cost of both the Libertarian Center and Views and Comments. and the decrease of our income. This was partially caused by the forced move of the Libertarian Center and partially by the recent increase in postal rates. Please donate whatever you can as often as you can. Thank You. --The Eds

What We Stand For

Two great power blocs struggle for world domination. Neither of these represents the true interests and welfare of Humanity. Their conflict threatens mankind with atomic destruction. Underlying both of these blocs are institutions that breed exploitation, inequality and oppression.

Without trying to legislate for the future we feel that we can indicate the general lines along which a solution to these problems can be found.

The exploitative societies of today must be replaced by a new libertarian world which will proclaim - Equal freedom for all in a free socialist society. "Freedom" without socialism leads to privilege and injustice; "Socialism" without freedom is totalitarian.

The monopoly of power which is the state must be replaced by a world-wide federation of free communities, labor councils and/or co-operatives operating according to the principles of free agreement. The government of men must be replaced by a functional society based on the administration of things.

Centralism, which means regimentation from the top down, must be replaced by federalism, which means co-operation from the bottom up.

THE LIBERTARIAN LEAGUE will not accept the old socio-political cliches, but will boldly explore new roads while examining anew the old movements, drawing from them all that which time and experience has proven to be valid.

LIBERTARIAN CENTER

86 East 10th St. (between Third and Fourth Aves.)
NEW YORK CITY

ROUND TABLE YOUTH DISCUSSIONS EVERY FRIDAY AT 8

Dinner and social on the third Saturday
of every month at 7:30 PM