

Alternative

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WORLD CITIZENSHIP, LIMITED

The most recent development related to the idea of a world community has come, logically enough, from Berlin — via Paris and the U. S. It is a movement for world citizenship sparked by the disillusionment of Germans with the catastrophe of two wars, and by the example of Garry Davis. Davis is a veteran of the U. S. Air Force who gave up his U. S. citizenship a year ago and more recently has been sitting on the doorstep of the U. N. in Paris, seeking recognition as a world citizen.

Advocates of world citizenship and world government make cogent arguments for one world and hold up their program as a panacea in a world of war-making nations. Their ranks are growing; their organizations span borderlines. All the "right people" endorse them and display their names on the letterheads. Legislators praise world community and pass pious resolutions; presidents and prime ministers make stirring speeches approving world government. Everyone is for it. "It is our hope, only then will war be impossible" — so they say. But nothing happens!

World Gov't., But -

The Gallup Poll shows that most of the citizens of Rhode Island are for world government, but all the good citizens of Rhode Island support rearmament for the United States. Prime Minister Nehru is for world government, but he is also for military conscription in India. He does something about military conscription. President Truman is for world government, but he is also for the Truman Doctrine, UMT, and storing atom bombs. He does something about the Truman Doctrine, UMT, and atom bombs.

Cord Meyer, Jr. is for world government; he even tries to do something about it. He makes speeches about it; he writes books about it; he is head of the United World Federalists. Further, Cord Meyer, Jr. understands the menace to world community that lies in nationalism and militarism. But what does he do about it? He regrets it — but goes along with it.

And here lies the dilemma of the would-be world citizens and their longed-for world community. They espouse a kind of revolution —

the superseding of the national state — but they fail to *act* like revolutionaries, i.e., like world citizens.

Nationalist Hangover

So tied are most of us to the outmoded thinking systems and action systems of our culture — our nation states — that we cannot bring ourselves to take the necessary first steps, to make the first break. We are held in thrall by the nation-state and its creed of violence.

Theorists and writers on world government are engrossed in showing that "a preponderance of force" would lie with a world government and therefore all would be well. They fail to exert sufficient insight to see that the real problems of a world government, world community, would not be a matter of who had or where was the greatest preponderance of organized violence. That is a problem, and a concept, of our present world and its national states. The problems of power and its uses would be very different in a healthy world community.

The dilemma is complex and the solutions are not easy. Therefore few will break through unless action accompanies words — and action at the right points. But this matter of action is at the very heart of the dilemma, for what are the acts necessary to get beyond the situation where "everyone" is for world community but nothing seems to get done about it?

The Heart of the Matter

The world citizen must act against the greatest enemy of world community — the national state. He must refuse to be conscripted, refuse to arm for war, refuse to go into the military forces, refuse to make or transport munitions or other armaments. If the supporter of world government does not take concrete actions to tie his movement down to the hard rock of reality, he will wake up one day to find his whole movement evaporated like a summer day's mirage. That will be the day war begins.

And to undertake the necessary actions, he

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Letters and articles are welcome. They should be kept brief, if for publication.

Letters

From the "Catholic Worker"

New York, N. Y.

Dear Friends:

Differences of opinion are inevitable and should be cleared up but I seriously doubt whether the purpose of *Alternative* is served by such indiscriminate and sweeping condemnations as are contained in Roy Finch's article in the November issue.

Thomas Merton, whom Roy Finch quotes, of his own will entered the Trappists and thereby agreed to submit to his religious superior. He did not have to enter the Trappists to be a Catholic and it is not accurate to cite his obligations as a member of the Order as being obligations incumbent on Catholics as such. Catholics have a general duty of obedience to the authority of the Church but not to the detailed obedience required of members of a religious order.

Contrast with Communism

Nor is Catholicism authoritarian in the same way as is the Communist party. Because the Church makes a distinction between the natural and the supernatural. And only in the latter sphere is authority the criterion of truth. In the natural sphere (philosophy, sociology, economics, etc.), the truth of a proposition depends upon the evidence adduced for it, it has no validity beyond that warranted by the facts. I suppose Roy does not accept transcendental values, but if he does or if for the sake of the argument he would concede they might exist, and if those transcendental values derived from a revealed religion then it seems but reasonable that such be accepted on authority. Since the truths of revealed religion cannot be proved by reason alone. So that if one believes in God and in Christ as God and in the Church as founded by Christ then one does indeed accept a religion based on authority. But Catholics differ from Communists in that the Communist accepts authority in the purely rational realm where the Catholic is free

to deny its validity. I realize that not all Catholics do so, that some are quite content to accept authority in political and economic realms but, unlike the Marxist (of the Stalinist variety) they could cease to do so and still remain Catholics in good standing. We here at the *Catholic Worker* have taken a consistently pacifist line for the fifteen years of our existence. We have also opposed fascism and particularly the regime of Francisco Franco which has been so popular in some Catholic circles. There is a great deal of difference in the outlook of the Basque hierarchy and the French hierarchy from that of Franco Spain. Are there such political and economic differences among Stalinists? No member of the Catholic hierarchy has questioned or is questioning our orthodoxy, there has been no question of excommunication, though of course they do not agree with us on everything. Could there be such like marked differences in the Stalinist party without a purge? I do not think so and it is a factor that Roy ignores.

It is quite true that Communism and Catholicism meet a psychological need that is not supplied by the various liberalisms. But it does not follow that because a system meets these needs it is therefore false. Individual adherence to any system or cause can in great part be explained in terms of normal or abnormal psychology and the libertarian is no more exempt from this than any other group. But to state that settles nothing. To say that acceptance of Christianity is evidence of intellectual inferiority or due necessarily to emotional immaturity is to posit an unprovable thesis.

Sincerely,

ROBERT LUDLOW

From Puerto Rico

Bayamon, Puerto Rico

To the Editors—

Americans have allowed themselves to believe that empire does not exist in Puerto Rico. We have done so without malice or conscious hypocrisy. But this does not excuse us. Nor does it help the Puerto Ricans, who suffer under American control.

According to the acts of the U. S. Congress, Puerto Rico has power of suggestion in government, but no power to act in any way contrary to the will of Washington. Federal control is absolute. There is no exception. To be frank, this is absolute tyranny.

After the Reign of Terror of the thirties, the Government had to devise a program to try to make the Puerto Rican people content with their lot. To do this it capitalized on the destitution wrought by forty years of American control. With federal funds — millions upon millions of dol-

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Libertarian Press, A Workers Co-operative, Glen Gardner, N. J.

A SUBSTITUTE FOR WAR

Satyagraha: The Power of Truth, by R. R. Diwakar*

I recommend this book to fellow Americans much the same way I would recommend a loaf of white bread to a person in desperate need of food. If no meat, vegetables, or even dark bread is available then it is better to eat this thin, airy substance than nothing at all. Americans are in desperate need of a substitute for war. Since there are few if any satisfactory books on the subject, it is important to read this relatively unsatisfactory one.

The fault is mainly the book's, not the subject's. The subject is non-violent resistance as practiced in India — and its inseparable twin, Truth-Force. The Indian movement has so much to say to us today that a lot of it gets said in this book, despite the limitations of the author's method.

For Veterans

How many veterans, for instance, who have come to hate and distrust war realize that there is a non-violent substitute for war which has an approach like this:

"Where there is a choice between cowardice and violence' says Gandhi, 'I advise violence . . . I cultivate the quiet courage of dying without killing. But to him who has not this courage, I advise that of killing and of being killed rather than of shamefully fleeing from danger. For he who runs away commits mental violence. He runs away because he has not the courage to be killed while he kills. But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness more manly than punishment'. What is predominant in Gandhi's mind is resistance at all costs. According to him, 'Resist not evil' should read 'Resist not evil with evil, but resist evil with good at all costs. But at any rate resist. Resistance is better than cowardly non-resistance.'"

Lacks Vivid Examples

The weakness of this particular book is that it lacks the concrete examples to get across to people the actual power of non-violence. Although it has a chapter entitled *Satyagraha in Action*, and another called "Techniques of *Satyagraha*", is never quite gets beyond the stage of being a sermon or a pious discourse. We almost have to take Diwakar's word that non-violent resistance has been in history what

he claims it is. In this respect, the present book is inferior to at least two old books which should be read by everyone who "would like to be a pacifist" if only he could be convinced that pacifism is a practical alternative to violence. These are *The Power of Non-Violence* by Richard Gregg and *The Conquest of Violence* by Bartolomey de Ligt.

Diwakar's inability to get beyond noble generalities is, by his own confession, contrary to the approach of Gandhi. Thus, he states, "Gandhi himself was a 'doer' par excellence. He had no use for ex cathedra preaching of lofty principles. He taught noble ideals by practising them."

An interesting point brought out by this book (with its Indian title) is that Gandhi rejected the original title given to his movement, that of "passive resistance," because he "felt ashamed of using an English word, which was neither easily understood nor used as current coin by our people."

In the United States we must free our growing movement not only of its reliance on strange Indian words (*Satyagraha*, *Ahimsa*, etc.), but also from its over usage of strange American words which are not used as current coin by our people.

Can it be a Mass Movement?

If anyone doubts that all this is worthwhile — in other words, if any one doubts that non-violent resistance can be practiced by a majority of ordinary Americans, he might consider these words from Diwakar's book:

"At this late period, it is idle to ask whether such an intricate and highly moral weapon as *Satyagraha* can be used by gross, illiterate, amorphous masses of men. It is both a matter of common knowledge and recorded history that it can thus be used. In addition to the South African campaign and those of Bardoli, Siddapur, Contai and Tamluk, *Satyagraha* on a nation-wide scale in India is a case in point. Is there anywhere else in the world a people so poor, so unlettered, so weak because of undernourishment, and so meek as the masses of India? And yet India has been the scene of mass *Satyagraha* launched on various occasions during the last twenty-five years."

For the Strong

"Nor can it be said absolutely that the strong and mighty who have weapons and can wield them will never turn to *Satyagraha*. If in India *Satyagraha* had been confined to 'the weak and meek Hindu' the story might have been different. But it captured the warlike Sikhs and in their hands it became a powerful weapon."

"The Western countries, with their more vigorous and active way of life may be able

* With an introduction by Clifford Manshardt; published by the Henry Regnery Company, also available through the War Resisters League Book Service, 5 Beekman Street, New York 7, N. Y.

SUBSTITUTE FOR WAR

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to develop the science of Satyagraha much more rapidly than India, the land of its birth."

A final caution. Although the editors of *Alternative* believe in non-violence as a substitute for war, and total brotherhood as a way of life, there are many specifics connected with non-violence as it grew up in India, which we consider irrelevant and even injurious to a healthy American movement.

One of these is the asceticism of Gandhi, with his insistence on teetotalism and celibacy. Another, more likely to be a danger in overfed, undisciplined United States is the Indian insistence on a rigid domination by a leader or small group of leaders. Thus, Diwakar states:

"Just as in a violent fight each private soldier is not expected to know what the general knows, so here we do not expect the masses to know what the organizer knows. It is sufficient if the masses have as much faith and discipline as soldiers in an army".

One of our main objections to army life — and to capitalism and Communism — is that they destroy the initiative and self-reliance of the individual. We can only build a new society — and new individuals — by methods which encourage individual self-development now.

DAVID DELLINGER

WORLD CITIZENSHIP LIMITED

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will find that to behave as a world citizen one's weapons must be non-violent, in fact and in spirit. For the world citizen will find that one can conquer violence only with *non-violence*, hatred with *love*, and untruth with *truth*. Non-violence, love, truth, world community depends upon these three for its health. And world community begins when *one man behaves now* like a world citizen.

ROY C. KEPLER

LETTER:

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lars each year — it developed a large-scale bureaucracy and a medium-scale public works program, designed to make the people think that economic improvement is being made. A new middle class developed, able to purchase refrigerators and automobiles but certain that freedom from poverty depends upon loyalty to the system. A little bit of land, illegally held for decades, was expropriated and given, in small lots, to some of the poor. A few cement houses for the poor appeared in very prominent spots. This has been developed enough to tease the hopes of the despairing, but most of the poor still live in tiny shacks made from scrap lumber. Public works programs boom during election year, and languish at other times.

The economic rationale currently used is to the effect that God is to blame for the poverty in Puerto Rico. He placed here too many mountains, not enough sugar land, and, above all, too many people! The planning board shifts its economic philosophy as Washington shifts its. A few years ago it was going to industrialize Puerto Rico by socialization. When socialized industries were frowned upon by Washington, it developed a scheme which looks liberal, on the surface, but actually serves to bribe American industrialists to exploit the people of Puerto Rico further than they already have. It is urging American industrialists to come here and operate factories. The biggest drawing card used is to propagandize low wages (one-third the wage scale of the states, whereas the cost of living here, item for item, is higher) In addition to this, the Government puts up the factory and grants 12-year tax exemption. It does not require superior intelligence to see who is going to be benefited by this system.

Despite all the propaganda in the American papers, absolutely nothing has been done permanently to improve the economic system in Puerto Rico. One reason why it has not been done is that it can not be done — within the colonial system.

A reader in Puerto Rico

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