

# 9 NOVEMBER

The withering grass on the slope beside the house is snow under the moon full tonight in a clear sky cottoned here & there by clouds, pin-pointed by stars. I walk from one window to another, unwilling to leave the warmth of the fire, unwilling to lose this frail beauty: gentler than real snow.

The chill night air asserts itself beyond the zone of the hearth. I soon return to my chair. Rocking gently, I remember this peace is rarer far than any gem, this beauty common to all men — yet how few, of us who can, accept it now! how few, how few, are able to accept!

It is November, month of martyrs. Great are the chains, the blindfolds — greater now than when Parsons, Spies, Fischer, Engel, Lingg, died in Chicago, greater than when framed Joe Hill, the bitter singer, died, or when the Wobblies were shot down at Everett, than when mutilated Everest died, at last.

Freely given, freely, freely given, this radiance in the chill November air: this gentle radiance. Slowly I walk to each window in turn. — Can I accept this rare gift? — My heart is no longer at peace. It violently beats. The pulses press at the throat. I contemplate man's violence.

Jackson Mac Low 9-10 November 1946

### **Editorial**

AFTER MORE THAN THREE YEARS of recurrent threats of war, omens of depression, and warnings of militarism and dictatorship, people no longer take them seriously. People seemingly assume that things will go on the same forever, and the status quo seems highly satisfactory - full employment, high wages, "democratic" elections, peace. The leaders of labor, for example, had told their members that the Taft-Hartley Law would mean destruction of unions; the government has taught people to think of war or peace simply in terms of whether atomic bombs are falling; militarism has been made synonymous with outright dictatorship. No wonder, then, that people think all's well!

Yet if we analyze the real facts, the real meanings of current events, instead of accepting these simplifications, certain significant facts emerge:

Contrary to Wallace's boast, the "cold war" has not stopped. The Marshall Plan has stabilized and regularized one aspect of the cold war on the American side: but meanwhile the diplomatic battle for Berlin still rages, full-scale war continues in China, atomic bombs continue to be made, and the first men have been inducted into the new American conscript army. Simultaneously with the announcement that Gentleman's Agreement had been banned in Spain because it opposes anti-semitism, a high-ranking Congressman made overtures for military alliance with the one frankly fascist dictator surviving in Europe. Also part of the cold war, the French government carried on its war against the French miners, whose hunger is, on the other side, exploited by agents of Russia. Is this peace?

It is now clear that the "war scares" have been the deliberate creation of American politicians and newspaper publishers who have only to pull certain switches to provoke public hysteria. A crisis is created—as, for example, over Russia's routine seizure of Czechoslovakia, or over the Italian elections (in which the victory of the neo-fascist demo-christians was never in doubt)then it is abolished by a let-up in the headline-pressure, the people relax, and the same policies, the same provocations of war, the same preparations for war, go right on while the people sleep. (If we were not asleep we would surely be ashamed of our gullibility, but we have already forgotten it.)

In the meantime the American government has obtained its draft, its Marshall Plan and its armaments program—the real objectives of the molding of public opinion.

And what of the Taft-Hartley Law?

The unions are still here, and so far did the labor leaders mislead the workers in what they were to expect, that the latter never regained their equilibrium. (Surprisingly, resistance to signing non-Communist affidavits has come from certain labor leaders, not from the rank and file.) The labor leaders had talked hysterically about the coming destruction of unionism, made lurid parallels with Hitler, when what they should have said was this: Mr. Taft and Mr. Hartley and the NAM have nothing against unions or labor leaders: what they do want is to stop strikes, especially wildcats, to keep production going at high speed (unless they choose to slow it down to keep prices up), to see that unions don't take up grievances in the shop and that workers don't take

Now, after Truman's election victory,

the likelihood of repeal or amendment of the Taft-Hartley Law appears. "Fascism" has been defeated! - simply by voting the straight Democratic ticket! Perhaps, perhaps not. But the actual regimentation, the regimentation that matters, is regimentation of workers to the assembly line, to the union officials. It was this regimentation that the Taft-Hartley Law was designed to strengthen. Let us be level-headed about what we are to expect of the 81st Congress: not a Magna Carta for the workingman, but relaxation of those restrictions that hit the union officials (closed shop, etc.). Regardless of the Taft-Hartley Law, unions will continue to exist - what is important is the determination with which workers enforce their demands against the corporations, unions and government. A year and a half of the Taft-Hartley Law has accustomed workers to tighter regimentation; it has done its work.

And finally does it take a microscope to see militarism in America? Does a MacArthur have to become president for a thing to be identified for what it is? When a young Quaker boy in Maine is sentenced to two years in prison for refusing to register for the draft-is this not militarism? The government is working assiduously to keep resistance to the draft from publicityto talk the men out of resisting-for they know how unpopular this law is -but they cannot hide the plain enormity: that whoever the government deems eligible for the army must go into the army or be put in prison for as many as five years, if he is so unlucky as to be

Or what do we think of a news-item like this: "A secret police force, made up of amateur volunteers, is being created silently by President Truman's Secretary of Defense Forrestal. . . . A call has already gone out to hundreds of municipal police departments asking them to set up 'auxiliary' staffs to be used in case of 'riot, pestilence, invasion and insurrection.' . . What For-

restal wants is the creation of a Dept. of Internal Security which will operate under the Secretary of Defense as does the Army and Navy. It will act as a secret political police. It will have the power to declare martial law . . ." (Victor Riesel, N. Y. Post, Oct. 31, 1948.)

Let us, then, look at the facts clearly: a virtual state of war; repression of militant workers' action; real manifestations of militarism—these are phenomena which can happen-are happening and have happened-without great fanfare and blasting of trumpets. It seems very little, perhaps, when courts order men to tell Congressional Committees whether they are Communists, or go to jail; when a dozen men are going on trial for being leaders of the Communist Party; when Congress and Labor Board restrict workers' rights on the picket line; when militarism "merely" takes the form of permanent conscription and a great armaments program; when war wears merely the guise of aggressive imperialism.

Yet these are the real manifestations of real things—as such reality, and not as abstraction, war, militarism and regimentation must be opposed. We need clear thinking and understanding. We need clear understanding that if a man would combat militarism, he does not merely cry out against the menace of more direct military control of government, but he resists the draft, Workers gain nothing by merely protesting the Taft-Hartley Law-certainly nothing by trying to elect a different set of Congressmen-but only by violating the law, with full knowledge of the risks and full knowledge that the government came to recognize workers' rights to strike and picket in the first place only because workers violated the laws; not by following the hither-and-thither commands of union officials, but by following their own self-interests, and if it is not the union officials', well, it is time everyone understood that conflict, too.

And finally there is a less spectacular kind of "direct action"—not merely economic direct action or direct resistance—for we are lost if we are always on the defensive—but the direct action of trying to be free human beings, every minute of our lives—this is the direct action of anarchism.

#### RESISTANCE (formerly WHY?)

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# ANARCHISM

We invite comment and discussion from our readers on the following article.

IT HAS BEEN THE PURPOSE of Resistance to explain the fundamental ideas of anarchism — the ideas nearly all anarchists hold in common — and we have passed over many problems that seemed of merely theoretical or temporary interest in order to deal with more basic questions. This editorial policy has, however, led to some confusion and misunderstanding, so that it now seems important to set forth exactly what we think anarchism is, and what steps we believe are possible to put the philosophy into practice.

The point of view of a group is not easy to define when the group is a group of anarchists, of any school, who have an active interest in anarchist propaganda. Anarchism is the unifying idea of the group, but we define it very broadly - in keeping, we believe, with the best traditions of the movement. We do not believe that an anarchist can cooperate with or support a government, or support a war, because anarchism is primarily anti-authoritarian and anti-State; similarly, an anarchist cannot accept the authority of a religious institution. With these two exceptions, we cooperate fully with all those who call themselves anarchists. Anarchists are so few that we cannot afford sectarian divisions; we are sure that a healthy anarchist movement allows abundant freedom for discussion and propagation of all anarchist ideas, and that a single universally accepted doctrine would mean the end of anarchism.

It will not be simple, therefore, to sum up the viewpoint of the Resistance group; but we have reached agreement on a number of basic ideas.

## Anarchism as Philosophy and as Politics

After a century of unfulfilled hopes, it is fair to ask the question: What remains of anarchism? If it is incorrect to treat the past of anarchism as a single organic whole, it is nevertheless true that this past has been simplified into a tradition to which most anarchists hold. There is nothing inherently wrong with tradition; it may be the crystallizing of the best knowledge. But we feel that this tradition, upon examination, is found to be composed of two main elements, with one of which we are in complete agreement; about the other we are doubtful. The first is the basic philosophy of anarchism — the goals and values; the second may be called the politics" of anarchism — that is, the means by which anarchists have sought to achieve these goals and values. Let us hasten to add that we do not propose to discard this whole body of political thought; we propose to examine it and see what is still valid.

The practical action of the anarchists of the First International, and later of Kropotkin, Malatesta and their comrades, has been represented by the following analogy: The temper of the people is like a pan of milk sitting on a hot stove. The milk gets hotter and hotter, but there is no discernible change in its appearance — until, suddenly, it reaches its boiling point, and it boils over. With this perspective, anarchists believed that their main work was to encourage and give consciousness to the mass of the people, so that out of spontaneous revolutionary ferment a free society would come.

Let no one think that the analogy is ridiculous: a powerful logic could be mustered behind it. Nor let anyone imagine that it is unfair: for it comprehends essential points: the chronic misery and slavery of the people, the natural resentment, the inevitable breaking through of inhibitions and restraints, the

natural creative force of the people.

Today it is difficult to have confidence that the anger of the people is rising; and it is hard too to believe that this analogy expresses the manner in which freedom can be achieved. Reliance on the kind of social evolution the older anarchists anticipated runs, in the world today, dangerously close to a religious type of faith. If we count on a series of events that we actually have no right to expect, then we may be overlooking significant opportunities that older anarchists were unaware of or discarded because they felt they had a better and quicker solution.

Since we live in another century, since the nature of man and society has become better known, it is unavoidable that we should think our situation through again; if the earlier conclusions were wholly correct, we should have no difficulty arriving at them again.

Therefore we welcomed Herbert Read's effort more than a year ago to initiate such a discussion within the anarchist movement. We disagreed with many of his ideas, but we thought that Read made a number of important points: that anarchist ideas and theory have not evolved significantly beyond where Kropotkin's Mutual Aid left them half a century ago<sup>1</sup>; that a wide-open field for study and anarchist interpretation exists in psychology, anthropology, sociology, economics, etc. (Kropotkin, for example, seems to have been ignorant of 20th century science, especially psychology); that possibilities for action can be explored more intensively.

Many comrades, and one cannot blame them, recall the repeated demands for "revision" of anarchism in the direction of reformism, politicalism, governmentalism, labor unionism — that is to say, abandonment of the basic content of anarchism. The Russian Revolution, the successes of the Communists, and finally the Spanish Revolution, gave rise to a

<sup>1</sup> Why this assertion has been so vigorously denied by many comrades is difficult to understand. The most significant practical achievements of anarchists did not occur until 1936, in Spain; but the theoretical and practical ideas of anarchism — for good or bad — have not changed since Kropotkin, and this is in striking contrast to the rapid and complex evolution of anarchist ideas all through the 19th century.

whole series of efforts to reconcile anarchism with Marxism or Leninism. These experiences have led comrades to be fearful that such is the meaning of any questioning of established anarchist ideas. Such is not our purpose by any means. To stand by the basic ideas of anarchism — for we are sure they are sound — and to clearly judge our successes and our failures — this we consider a hard, honorable and anarchist task.

Despite the generally cool reaction to Read's article, there is in certain anarchist publications an earnest search for new ideas and methods; and it is encouraging to believe that this reflects a like spirit among many comrades.

#### The Positive Heritage

We have stated that we believe the basic goals and values of anarchism are sound. Let us be as fundamental as possible.

Anarchism is the one social philosophy that consistently aims at enabling individual men and women to achieve a maximum happiness — that is, maximum opportunity to secure their biological needs, to enjoy love and sociability, to create and learn. This stress on the individual and his well-being — as opposed to the abstractions ("society," "class," "security," "democracy") that are the goals of other social philosophies, is unique.

It is the anarchist idea, also, that freedom is the core of a society of healthy, happy human beings; that State and Government - that is, law; institutionalized violence; war; individual, group and class domination - are the antithesis of freedom and must be destroyed. We believe that people can (and sometimes have) lived in relatively non-authoritarian societies — we believe that anarchy, peace, successful work, and "human nature," are in full harmony. We believe, likewise, that freedom — that is, successful social revolution — can be achieved only by proceeding directly toward the ends desired: revolutions sustained by governmental authority cannot be libertarian, immediate reforms that strengthen the State are harmful, and the entire political conception of revolution formulated by the Marxists is false.

Anarchism is not, however, merely a theory of a future society. It is exact to say that we would be anarchists even if the social system could never be changed — and not from stubborness or blind faith, but from belief that anarchism is as true and practical for one man as for a million. We understand three general applications of anarchism:

1. Aside from everything else, anarchism is a "way of life." That is, it is intelligent for a person to rebel against this society and assert his individuality; to reject and resist the demands of social institutions; to behave like a free man; to try to preserve his existence, liberty and sanity in a world that threatens all three. In other words, the first, and primary, justification of anarchism is that by behaving anarchistically we serve our immediate self-interests and the immediate self-interests of our fellow human beings.

2. Because we are anarchists, we join in movements and actions that will improve existing conditions — to give people more to eat, to prevent the

worst forms of capitalist exploitation, to free people from prisons, to resist absolute tyranny, and so on.

3. But we recognize that within the existing society, no matter how much it is reformed by direct action or by paternalism, freedom and opportunity for people to realize their potentialities are always impossible. Therefore the achievement of a free society is a major objective.

All these ideas, it is fair to say, are part of the heritage of the older anarchists. With these ideas we are in the fullest agreement.

#### Ideas of Revolution

In respect to how a free society may be achieved, and in respect to the practical behavior of anarchists, we consider the judgment of the older anarchists to no longer be true.

In the beginning we suggested by an analogy the traditional view of revolution. More specifically, the basic assumptions of the "Bakuninists" of the First International, and the anarchist-communists and anarcho-syndicalists of a few years later, may be

summarized this way: Though they rejected Marxist determinism, they regarded social evolution as an established fact -"Thought is anarchistic, and toward anarchy moves history." The French Revolution, the recurring revolutionary uprisings, and the rise of conscious revolutionary movements, confirmed the view that the mass of the people, heretofore resigned to slavery, were coming alive. Not only were education and knowledge spreading, but the theory of mutual aid revealed ethical and altruistic instincts or sentiments among the mass of people; it was primarily the force of the State and the ignorance spread by the Church that suppressed these instincts and kept man in slavery. In economic conditions the lever for social change existed. Capitalism meant wage-slavery and misery that could not possibly be remedied by mere reforms. Mass propaganda was directed at stirring rebellion by workers and peasants against exploitation by capitalists and landlords. It was confidently expected that when the handiest remedies (unions, republicanism, etc.) proved futile, the people would revolt and, if sufficiently conscious of their own abilities, create a free society.

From the perspective of the present, however, it would almost seem that each of these axioms would have to be turned inside out for it to be true.

1. Social progress or social evolution, judged by anarchist criteria and not by technological or political criteria, is a myth. No consistent progress, in terms of human happiness, is visible; in fact, it is debatable whether any real progress has occurred in era of the State (now several thousand years old). Citizens of western civilization have probably been worse off, for several centuries, than members of most other communities and civilizations; and if these other people have been dragged down, too, it is the work of European and American man. The evolution of capitalism is in the direction of centralism and destruction: extreme industrialization, extreme scientific development, increasingly frequent and violent wars. In the 19th century strong counterforces seem still to have existed; the social forces that determine mass (that is, average) behavior are now against us.

2. The mass of the people is increasingly indifferent to radical ideas — indifferent even to thinking. Increasing centralism has caused living to be more and more regulated by impersonal social institutions, with the result of less and less personal and group initiative. Mechanical responses, and even apathy (indifference, for example, to the facts of war), are the result of this tendency and of mind-deadening education, propaganda and circuses; so that the man who worked 12 hours a day and went home to educate himself and read radical books, today works a 40-hour-week and does no such thing.

3. The armed force of the State, and religious superstitions, are less effective than the attitudes of people themselves — "slave psychology" and vested interests in the status quo — in perpetuating submission and slavery.

4. In America, economic reforms have been successful, and the very logic of the mass-production system has produced an unheard of economic standard of living for the mass of the people, while individual escape from the workingclass remains possible.

5. It is not at all certain that we would be able to live in a free society. In every crisis the human race resorts to mutual aid, but a free society, especially if it is to be so complex as ours, requires something different than herd behavior. It requires individual and group initiative that modern living has all but destroyed. Unless society is simplified, and people become much more self-assertive and independent, "workers' control of industry" or any similar arrangement would be another disguised form of bureaucracy and slavery.

6. Due weight must be given to economic factors, but it is evident that a thousand years of technological and economic revolutions have not altered the central social fact: slavery. During years of slavery, institutions and psychological traits conditioned by it have become a part of human culture and thought, and the true foundations of slavery: the tradition of authority; nationalism and patriotism; racism; institutionalized, politicalized religion; economic centralization and population concentrations; the authoritarian, paternalistic family; the Christian morality and sex codes; the worship of law — the list is a long one. As long as these factors remain unchanged, slavery can merely change its form.

Now it would be easy — and false — to pass from these conclusions to an extremely pessimistic view of man and society: that human nature has been permanently corrupted, that the idea of a free society is hopeless. We draw no such conclusions. We believe the potentialities remain: only they are more firmly blocked than we had imagined. Two main inferences are, we think, logical:

First, we must recognize the probability that we will live the rest of our lives in a society of slavery, regimentation and war. We can hope to make real progress against these conditions, but our philosophy and practice must emphasize those aspects of anarchism that are a guide to self-preservation in the broadcast sense of the term: survival, and preservation of human sentiments and best instincts. The personal and group aspects of anarchism have increased significance.

Second, we should accept the fact that the free society is right now a Utopian idea — not that it is impossible, for we believe it is possible, but we know no direct road to it. Social liberation will almost certainly be revolutionary, almost certainly violent; and since we aim at an anarchist society it would be foolish to reject the idea of revolution; on the road to freedom there will be barricades and heroism as in every social struggle. But the revolution is not imminent, and it is senseless to expend our lives in patient waiting or faithful dreams: senseless because the revolution of the future requires active preparation: not the preparation of conspiracy and storing of arms, but the preparation of undermining the institutions and habits of thought and action that inhibit release of the natural powers of men and women.

It is not the idea of revolution with which we find fault; it is the absence of a bridge between the present and the future: not the bridge of Marxian "transitional periods," but the bridge of direct anarchist action. The revolution as a "final conflict" exploding out of the condition of man is an illusion; revolutionary growth is necessarily the hardwon learning and practice of freedom.

### **Practical Applications**

We come then to the question, what is to be done. One point should be clarified. "Political" or revolutionary actions are commonly understood as power-struggles for greater or lesser objectives that is, a struggle of the mass of people against their rulers. Though we will be glad to gain concrete victories - we would be glad, for example, if resistance to the draft in America could be as effective as it was in Canada — we realize that we shall probably "lose" every struggle. But the social struggle of people against their rulers does not exist, and the central struggle now is for what we might call the psychological liberation of people from the ideas and habits of the existing social system. The chief criterion, therefore, is not "success" or "failure" according to the views of those who want "concrete results," but whether behavior and action tend toward realizing of a will to freedom among people a will without which social struggles and upheavals are blind and without meaning.

It is our belief that the process of developing a will to freedom among men and women is identical with the process of developing and maintaining our own sense of freedom and individuality under severe conditions.

#### I. Direct Action

A. Economic. We think that direct action by workers — well-established in the tradition of all radical movements — is still a valuable field of action. More human conditions of work for those who must work in factories and mines is a sound end in itself. More important, lessons in solidarity, mutual aid and self-reliance can be learned through action and association on the job. It is not the task of the anarchist worker to build up union organizations, or to reform them or create new unions: granted the psychology of workers and the nature of the masterslave society, bureaucracy and conservatism are the normal fate of workers' organizations. The job of the

anarchist is to influence and teach his fellow-workers, more by anarchist actions than by anarchist words, and to help create actual solidarity and self-reliance.

We do not accept, however, the anarcho-syndicalist concepts of the class struggle and revolutionary unions as the chief mechanisms of revolution. It is logical that anarchists should be active in unions, encouraging militancy and direct action; it is also natural that when anarchist ideas become wide-spread, organizations applying those principles to unionism should develop. In a concrete situation (though we cannot see its relevance in America) such unions may be of considerable educational value; but their severe limitations and potential dangers must never be forgotten.

B. Anti-Militarism. War and militarism are the main political facts of our time. Against them we can hardly hope for great success, and the chance that war may be prevented is slight. Nevertheless, whatever chance for success there is, justifies resistance. It is not general "propaganda against war" that matters, however, but outright individual opposition to war. By learning to act as individuals, to take a stand outside the State and against it, people learn what anarchism means; and they learn also the effective method of combatting the State.

(Related to war, and much discussed in the anarchist movement, are the questions of pacifism, revolutionary war, revolutionary violence, etc. On the question of pacifism the Resistance group has been unable to reach agreement. We have tried to find out if and when violence is, in concrete situations, more practical or not. All of us are opposed to all war and all militarized violence: a position most anarchists hold. A few members of the group consider themselves nearly pacifists, not in the sense of non-resistance or Gandhiism, but because they think strikes, sabotage, refusal to cooperate, and other non-violent tactics are more successful. The majority of the group disagrees, and feels that violence is sometimes inevitable and necessary.)

C. Among a number of other areas of direct action that could be mentioned, anti-racist action is perhaps the most important. How racist prejudices and practices interfere with human solidarity is obvious; how deep-rooted these prejudices are is not always realized, nor the fact that we have many opportunities to take direct action against them.

#### II. The Anarchist Movement

The importance of an anarchist movement is often not rightly understood. Among young American anarchists, individualist-inclined, suspicion and rejection of "movements" is common. Actually, the anarchist idea of a movement is something very different from Marxist concepts. A movement — an association or federation of groups of anarchists (the form is not so important as the active participation of individuals) — is the most important aspect of our activity. It is one of the main defenses of the individual against society, and potentially a powerful lever for building a different society.

As far as economic matters go, Americans are generally satisfied. (It may even be true that the most obvious problems can be solved within the present society: economic statism may solve unem-

ployment, American world domination may solve the problem of peace, and so on.) But something fundamental is missing in America, something only a free society can provide: basic human rewards and satisfactions, human happiness. To many this seems like merely an aesthetic criticism; but it is actually the feeling of emptiness and barrenness of modern living - the meaninglessness of the monetary, acquisitive, competitive values that American society alone favors and makes really possible, the discouragement and denial of the human values of association, love and creation - it is this feeling that makes rebels today. It is this feeling that is fraudulently exploited by religious groups; but the appeal of these groups indicates the basic uneasiness and dissatisfaction of people.

Our ideas are jutisfied, in the last analysis, by our belief that the State, economic slavery and other forms of illiberty must be abolished before we can have a society where association, love and creation will flourish as the natural condition of people. Per-

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#### POEM FOR AUGUST 29, 1948

What is the case?

My heart is pounding away

I see only gray shapes in the darkness
there's a noise in the house, baby's hoarse breath
and the midriff always anxious

and how to move simply in the variety of the morning and to get, such as we are, a little pleasure of desire to think up and sing something in my people's choir?

to forage for the thousands not quite dead and to pause for the overdue mourning for the millions dead

: these crowd upon us, close! no choice! no first or last in the immediate!

If we patient and firmly address what is real we may over the years move into adventurous peace.

Now why do they vex us with unnecessitites, inventing this stupidity again? this Jack-in-the-Box?

Say No! No! Friends, say No! No!

Those who think with their feelings will say No to the model of repression

and those who think by calculation will say No to the means that do not lead to any end.

Those who love for a reason turn away in abhorrence and those who love by love pass it by, they pass it by.

Creator Spirit, among the distraught trials and errors of our day by day O Joy, godly daughter of Elysium come, bless us with love and light.

> PAUL GOODMAN August, 1948

(Written on the occasion of a meeting to protest the draft, the day before registration began.)

# Resistance in the Factories

A TENDENCY HAS BEEN GROWING among radicals of late to reject mass industry as a fruitful field of work, and to turn toward the small community and the agricultural commune. Radical journals have carried standard articles on "The Hell of Factory Life", which have encouraged this tendency. It is not my present purpose to discuss the relative merits of the two approaches. I feel strongly, however, that not enough has been said in the radical press of the opportunities for constructive work in a shop situation. I want to make the point as forcefully as possible, through illustrations from my own experience, that in spite of the deteriorating effects of factory work, in spite of patriotism and political propaganda, in spite of the enervating effects of popular culture, and in spite of all the attempts of boss and union to crush it, the spark of resistance still smoulders among the workers.

During the past year, I was employed on the motor production line of Buick Motor Division of General Motors Corporation, in Flint, Mich. There were 14,000 workers in the plant, most of whom are members of the UAW-CIO. During most of this period, these 14,000 auto workers behaved as a welldisciplined industrial army. They reported for work on time, "got their production" for the most part, worked overtime when told to, and filed obediently to the unemployment compensation office when laid off. They registered for the draft at the proper time, signed the checkoff when told to by their union leaders, and respected Jim Crow. When their contract expired in the spring and their union officers appealed to them for a strike vote, they overwhelmingly voted "no strike," and they refused to aid their union brothers who were then striking Chrysler Corporation. On the surface, they were as slave-minded and shop-broken as the most optimistic plant supervisor or union bureaucrat could desire.

Yet sporadically, against all odds, the spirit of freedom and rebellion asserted itself. Never organized, usually abortive, always growing out of a concrete situation no longer tolerable, the flame flickered for a moment before it was snuffed out.

I. It's a hot, muggy June night. The men on the motor block line work stripped to the waist, gasping from the heat. A thick haze hangs over the machines, and you feel like a Sherman tank is sitting on your chest. A motor block on the big job (Buick Roadmaster) weighs 250 lbs., so you sweat and grunt sliding it into place for your operation, then shoving it on to the next man. The men have called the committeeman a dozen times and put in a grievance asking for fans, but there's no chance that they will be installed before the model change-over. (Sept., after the weather gets cool.)

The man on the heat treat job works next to a blast of hot air, and before "noon" (lunch time at 8:00 PM) he decides it's too much for him, and pleading sick, he punches out. After lunch the foreman asks another man to run the job. He gets the reply "If it's too hot for him, it's too hot for me."

He sends the man home for the rest of the night for refusing to obey a foreman's order. As the second man rings out, his buddies on the line yell "Hey, Bill, where ya goin'?" When the situation is explained to them, they tell the foreman "If its too hot for them, it's too hot for us. We'll work when we get fans." Altogether, twelve men on the big job punch out.

The company moves swiftly. The men with a good record get one weeks disciplinary layoff. Those with former "reprimands" get two weeks. The men on the small line are promised overtime if they will work on the big job, and they eagerly go over and scab on their militant union brothers, already making plans to spend that extra dough. Before the shift is over the line is running again, at perhaps 3/4 normal output.

The men who are laid off of course file a grievance, but the union is helpless. The contract specifically forbids "unauthorized" work stoppages. The union does agree to fight against doubling the penalty of some men, simply because they had previously broken some other company rule. They succeed in getting all layoffs reduced to one week. (I suspect this was deliberately planned by the company, so that the men would not get completely dissatisfied with the union.) Most of the workers in the plant agree that the men were wrong to walk off the job, and at least the union reduced some of the penalties. Perhaps some of the twelve feel that they were a little hot-headed, after thinking it over for a week without pay, and going home to face the ferocity of "the old lady."

II. Workers at the Chevrolet Flint Assembly Plant have to be constantly in their places alongside the moving line. If they want to leave the line to perform their natural functions, they must call a relief man to take their place. For a long time the company tried to keep down the payroll by refusing to hire enough relief men. Finally one morning someone brought in a large chamber pot and set it down beside the line. Everyone cooperated, and the foreman was temporarily bewildered, having no company rule handy on this particular subject. However, when the worker with the sense of humor was discovered, he was almost fired, until higher management reversed the decision and hired a few relief men

III. Hourly-rated workers at Buick are theoretically supposed to work from whistle to whistle, for the full eight hour shift. Nevertheless, production workers have an unofficial understanding that each job has a production quota, and that once a man "gets his production," his day's work is done. On the second shift, he can then sit around for the last hour or so and take it easy. On the day shift, he is supposed to look busy all the time, because there are more "big shots" around, but he is not expected to exceed his quota. If his actual work time is six hours, he's supposed to distribute the other two through the day so he doesn't appear to be loafing.

One lesson the auto workers have learned thoroughly is how to resist the speed-up. Generally when the company tries to increase production, they slow down so that they appear to be working hard for a full eight hours, but not a single piece more than their quota is turned out.

Just after the new GM contract was signed, providing for an 11c raise, the company tried to raise production in several departments throughout Buick. They asked the day shift on the cylinder head job for three more heads a shift. The men responded by slowing down, and fifteen minutes before quitting time they shut off their machines as usual, and went to wash up and change clothes, turning in their regular quota. The foreman was furious, and he told them that the next day they would either have to get those extra three heads out by 3:15, or they'd have to stay at their machines right up to the whistle at 3:30.

They followed his instructions to the letter: they stayed at their machines until 3:30, and then, turning in their old quota as always, they walked off the job leaving the machines running. They refused to clean them, or set them up for the night shift. This left the foreman with his hands full, to put it mildly, in the half hour before the second shift came on. The next day the men were told to "return" (they had never left it) to their former quota.

IV. I worked in the same department with a rather inarticulate young Negro from Alabama, at the time when the passage of the draft law was in the headlines. The guys began to ride him with "It won't be long before they get you," "When you going to register?" etc. Since his replies were evasive, and I took him for 24 or 25, I asked him one night if he had been in the army during the war. We had already discussed the Randolph committee, and he knew my attitude. He confided to me that he hadn't registered in the last draft. "And they never caught up with you?" I asked. "They never bothered me," was his answer. "I guess I was small fry."

fry."

V. A close friend of mine worked this summer at Continental Can, on a machine which theoretically turned out 165,000 tin cans in an eight-hour shift. The pace was terrific, and he found the only way to get a breather was to put a fold in the piece of tin he was feeding in such a way that it caused the machine to break down. While a machine repairman worked on it, he could rest.

Several new men who were just hired in were falling all over themselves to keep up. At lunch one day he asked a young worker what he was killing himself for. He agreed it was a pretty rough pace, but he didn't know what to do about it. He was afraid he might be fired if he didn't keep up. My friend showed him how to fold tin properly, and he went back to his job confident that he could have a rest period if he needed one.

VI. One of the most inspiring revolts I witnessed was on the Buick motor assembly line at quitting time one Friday afternoon. The company had waited until Friday morning to tell the men they were to work an hour overtime. Unfortunately for the company, they forgot that Friday is payday. They also forgot that quitting time Friday is the best time of the week for workers, since they can

look forward to freedom for the weekend.

On payday the wife is probably waiting at the gate to shake you down for the check. Perhaps you're going down to Detroit for a ball game, or downtown in Flint to buy the kids new shoes. Maybe you hurry off to help your brother-in-law lay a foundation for his new house. Anyway, when the boss tells you you've got to postpone these things and put an extra hour in, you tell him what to blow it out of. Maybe that check in your jeans makes you feel independent.

At any rate, twenty-three men walked out at 3:30, and that puts a hell of a hole in an assembly line. They had to send everybody home. The twenty-three got disciplinary layoffs of one week. The union told them "Can't you see — you've got our sympathee." It was more important to those men to assert their essential humanity; to make it clear that they could not be turned on and off at the bosses' will like a machine.

VII. For some strange reason the superintendent of the Buick warehouse plant got the crazy notion he wanted to stop the men from eating on the job. For years it had been standard practice for them to stop in mid-morning for a bottle of milk and a sandwich on company time. Anyone who has ever done hard physical labor knows that a bite to eat is all that stands between you and collapse at times. The food revives you and makes it possible to stick it out until lunch. And as one man told his foreman: "Everybody knows lunch time is for playing poker."

The men knew they couldn't win a grievance on this: the umpire would never uphold their right to eat on company time, if the boss wanted to make an issue of it. Faced with an intolerable working condition, 150 men walked out, and turned it into a power struggle, or "collective bargaining," as it is called in polite society.

The union officers were compelled by the contract to disclaim the walkout. They should have given the boys a big wink, and told them publicly to go back to work. If the men had refused to obey their union officers, and stuck it out, I'm sure they would have been back in a couple of days. The company was already putting out feelers, realizing the super had gone way out on a limb.

Instead the local officers broke the strike. They told the men they couldn't do anything for them until they returned to work, since this was a "wild-cat." After they returned, they would "negotiate." If they stayed out, the union would take no responsibility for what might happen. The militants who understood that the company never "negotiates" except when the workers withhold their labor power, shouted that there would be no UAW if it hadn't been for wildcats. But the weak sisters had been intimidated by the union leaders, and they voted to go back to work.

They were met at the plant gate the following morning by a squad of plant dicks and city cops, who were "maintaining order." Each worker was asked if he intended to obey the company rule about eating. Those who agreed were permitted to enter; those who hesitated were given two weeks off to think it over. Nine ringleaders were fired outright! These 150 men, the guts taken out of them by the capitulation of their union leaders, docilely permitted the company to divide the sheep from the

goats: "You go in," "You go home." I know of a family where one brother went in to work, while the other was given two weeks off!

This is typical of the sporadic, disorganized, abortive type of resistance which workers undertake. Such outbursts are flaring constantly, and the difference between their success and failure is to a large extent the presence or absence of a few people who can encourage it and help give it direction.

The role of the radical in a shop is "to fan the flames of discontent," sustain them, publicize them, and elevate them to a rational, conscious approach, rather than a blind outburst.

-BOB BONE

Editorial note: We wish to make it clear that we do not agree with the writer that work in the factories or development of rural communities are the only choices radicals can make.

# A Night at the Movies

YOU GO TO THE MOVIES on that night. Nothing much to do, and a movie is as good a place as any to kill a couple of hours. You go to a cheap neighborhood movie, the kids go there, and the young couples on cheap mid-week dates.

News of the World in Review. The words scream at you. And you only minding your business and here to see a comedy. Planes, speeches, rockets, big bombs, and . . . Oppenheimer, the man who put together the A-Bomb. "God damn the A-bomb!" you think, and slouch in your seat. The thin haggard man stares out at you, with sick, sick eyes. You straighten up in your seat. You stare. The words come at you, slowly, haltingly, something about control of the bomb, its vast potentialities for good and its . . . the end of civilization. All the stupid platitudes you heard and read about a million times. But you stare. It's not the words, but the face of the man. The sick wan face, the faltering lips, the nervous twitching fingers, the fear, the fear that seems to hide inside the narrow slits of his eyes.

"Can it be?" you think, sick at the stomach. The guilt and the fear, does he carry them inside, day in, day out. Does he realize the horrible plaything he has placed in the hands of the politicians and generals who posture before sick men and women? How horrible! How horrible, if even for a single instant reality breaks thru the crust of his physicists's brain.

The sports shots come on the screen, but the dull dead eyes haunt you and sneer at the skiers who come hurtling down the hill.

You stir. Restless, uneasy. "Geez, I hope they get

to the comedy."

The March of Time... THE COLD WAR. The cold war. The war of immobilized humanity, of zombies. It will be a cold war won't it? The war of dead humanity. They don't need an A-bomb for mass murder. They have the movies... they have America... they have the institutions. You see Frenchmen on the screen, peaked hungry faces and burning eyes. Trying to decide, they tell you in the film, between de Gaulle and Communism, between democracy and communism.

The alternative before mankind. The Choice. But only the dead can make the choice . . . for the living there is another choice . . . life . . . life! The men and women on the screen are so peaked and hungry. But the eyes are bright . . . perhaps . . . perhaps men live yet.

"Well, it's like this. They have too many people telling them what to do and they are all confused.

If they got together, instead of fighting each other and kicked out the communists, they could rebuild France and do like we do in America," a young intellectual jane, in the back, explaining to a nonintellectual joe.

"Yaa! but them Russians are smart and dangerous. We better give them their lumps before they start

a war," the man replies.

Your memory goes back . . . to other movies on other nights, when pictures of burning Japanese soldiers were flung on the screen and they clapped. Where are the dangerous Japs?

"Well, it's over," you think. You shake yourself. Maybe the comedy picture you came to see is next ...maybe...Rat-a-tat-tat! drums, fifes, bugles, and the flag, rippling gentle in the breeze.

"You might call this a flag waving picture," the sickly sweet voice says, ". . . and maybe it is. But then, don't let anyone kid you, we've got something

to wave a flag about."

And they show you what. Shots of America: fields and cities, towns and villages, Fifth Avenue, New York, a military parade, soldiers, sailors, Wacs and Waves, guns and planes and tanks and . . . and a little child in a soldiers uniform, standing at attention as the flag goes by. Applause! Applause! Applause!

Two year old soldiers, who knows? maybe that's

what we've got.
America!

America the Beautiful!

America . . .

They show you America: Steel, stone, brick and wood, hard, shiny, sanitary and cold, cold, like the war... the cold war that is, will be... and even hot blood will not run... it evaporates into radioactive particles.

The voice reminds you, "... yes, we've got a lot to be thankful for here in America . . . But there are some guys, gripers, crackpots, who are never satisfied. They always complain." Fadeout.

A thin querulous voice is heard, "Mind my words, young fella, you guys are on the wrong road. Can't you see things are going to the dogs. There's gonna be a depression, a war . . ."

You smile. How ridiculous that querulous voice is . . . that griper. Sure he speaks the truth, sure but can't he see how ridiculous the truth is in America . . . in the world. "Go away, Cassandra, go away. There's no room for you here. This is a lesson in history, American history, in ten, easy, fool-proof, visual shots. Go away, you fool." The sickly sweet voices comes back, ". . . see what I mean. Gripers.

We always had them. When the colonists came (action, camera, colonists) there were gripers and they too warned that things were going to the dogs. But no one paid them any attention." You smile again. This is so simple. Sure they paid no attention. They only sent Anne Hutchinson to Rhode Island.

Quickly, you see the progress of America, the westward expansion, the rapid growth of America. But how strange. No dead indians, no ravaged villages, no dust bowls. Big cars full of ore, but no dirty desolate coaltowns; big cities, but no hungry faces, no broken bodies and not the lonely steel like armors of the people who inhabit them. But the gripers griped. The useless ones, the gripers, the ones who were no good to a nation building the biggest industrial empire in the world. Who were the gripers you wonder . . . Paine, Thoreau, Garrison, Fuller . . .

The sickly sweet voice goes on: "It wasn't easy building America. We needed blood and sweat and courage, but our boys were ever ready to defend and fight for this their country, to defend our freedom." You see them defending the freedom in battles and wars . . . the Spanish American War, the Mexican War, the Civil War, the World War and then an airplane drops an "egg" for freedom. They wind up with the inevitable raising of the flag on Iwo Jima.

You laugh, jittery like. Surely nobody falls for this. Surely no one believes this crap anymore, not after... but the cold dead faces around you believe. They believe!

"Yes, you might call this a flag waving picture ... but then we have something to wave the flag about ... the best fed, best clothed, best of everything in the world." Shots of immobile faces of America. Young face, old, fat face, thin, white and Negro, soldiers, sailors, guns and tanks ... and the flag ... the flag waving in the breeze. Drums, trumpets, flags ... FINIS.

Can you laugh now? The comedy is on.

And yet, it works. It works.

Can't anyone see what is happening? Am I the only griper? Is everybody blind? or dead?

You look at the faces around you . . . tired, worn out, painted, sagging chins. This is it. This is the proud heritage of America. Look around you at the end product of progress, of civilization, of technical advances. Look around you at the scared, lonely, well fed, satisfied, artificial faces . . . scars, scars of what was man. They are the saviours of civilization.

To hell with civilization! Are there no humans

Sick, sick you go home. They are at it again. They are always at it, the liars, the liars who lie to the people. But the people are liars. They lie. They say they are satisfied. And hunger makes their faces vicious. They lie to satisfy the hunger of the stomach, for a car, for a house, but the hunger of their unsatisfied humanity gnaws at their innards. . . . and they hate, they kill.

And it frightens you.

And you know it is here. It has happened. Not the man on the white horse, but the machine State, the machine that kills bit by bit, that destroys, warps slowly until man is the machine and the machine is man and the cold war goes on.

America, America the Beautiful. Jungle of despair, of tattered hopes called rights and freedoms, of flying missiles, and the haunted eyes of Oppenheimer. You hear America singing as you go home from the movies, not the song that Whitman heard, but the wild and furious song of now, of the Big Machine, the machine-men and men-machines, the rockets, the generals, the refrigerators, the cars, the radios, the hungry, hungry men and women, well fed but starved, the cold war, the faltering lips, the haggard look of Oppenheimer . . . warning . . . three years after Hiroshima.

You want to sing this song that you hear America singing. In cold print without notes. Sing, sing that they may hear . . . that they may know.

The gripers . . . we had them all the time and never paid no heed, why should we hearken now? Laugh, laugh at the gripers. Hound them, deport them as you did in 1919, burn them in the chair as you did Sacco and Vanzetti. But better still show the world they are mad. Laugh, laugh at the gripers.

Go home, you who would sing. Spare yourself! Go back! Back to those who sing as you do, to those who feel with you and understand. There is no room for you in America . . . back to those who talk of Free Men, Free Societies, Free Communities!

Go! Seek out your fellow gripers. Act as if mad reality did not exist. Ignore the howling madness. Live freely . . . within yourself . . . in the community of your friends.

Back! Back to the cave . . . a refuge from the howling cyclone. Seek refuge! Survive!

Survive . . . that is what men and women of vision, men and women who think, who feel, that is what they have been reduced to.

Survive! . . . the injunction for Man to heed.

Survive? How? Where? Within the howling madness? Within the cave? Within the refuge in the desert?

Run, run, back to the cave. Run, hurry, run. But there is no cave . . . only reality.

Struggle then. Fight back . . . against the cyclone, against the cold fire of the cold war, against the dead cold men who make the Choice.

Survive! Struggle!

You walk quickly, anxious to reach home. You sit inside the house staring at fire that burns within the wood stove.

You swear never to go to the movies again.

And then, after a long meditation, you write an article.

And it all started as a peaceful night at the neighborhood movie.

—DD

Resistance Discussions

SIA Hall, 813 Broadway, N.Y.C. 3:30 p.m.

Nov. 27 Education of Children—Symposium Dec. 4 Pacifism—Roy Keppler & Dave Wieck

Discussions will continue through Dec. 18; a new series will begin in January



AFTER TWENTY-ONE YEARS we have at last a definitive study of *The Legacy of Sacco and Vanzetti.*¹ A professor of English and literature, G. Louis Joughin, conceived the idea of appraising the legacy of Sacco and Vanzetti to Americans: to literature, to politics and thought, to the law. The result is an exhaustive, documented study using all available scurce materials. Through it, the personalities of Sacco and Vanzetti emerge in probably the truest proportions yet achieved.

The book has certain defects: a perhaps overzealous objectivity2; the very lengthy legal analysis that leads to no new major conclusions; a want of complete acquaintance with anarchist ideas; an uncertain organization of some material. The approach to historical evidence is legalistic, and Joughin therefore misses the appreciation of Sacco and Vanzetti, and understanding of the origins and development of the case, that Sacco and Vanzetti's comrades know from experience, and that is not available to Joughin in study of written records. But it is useless to work over these points, for the objectivity of the book at least guarantees its factuality, and what is of account is that the book is honest, serious and thorough; a book that everyone ought to read.

In the winter of 1919-1920 two holdups occurred in the Boston area, at Bridgewater and South Baintree; in the latter two men were killed. Soon after, the anarchists Bartolomeo Vanzetti and Nicola Sacco were arrested on general suspicion. This was the period of the Palmer raids — the intense anti-radical and anti-foreigner persecution by the government after World War I. Sacco and Vanzetti were known anarchists, deportable under the law. Apparently,

1 The Legacy of Sacco and Vanzetti. By G. Louis Joughin and Edmund M. Morgan. Harcourt Brace & Co. \$6.514 pages, plus 66 pages of notes and bibliography. Morgan is responsible for the first section of the book, on the legal history of the case, but the total scheme and main non-legal conclusions are Joughin's.

the police found these two Italian anarchists good scapegoats for the unsolved crimes. Vanzetti was tried and convicted of the Bridgewater holdup, and both men were convicted and sentenced to death in the South Baintree killings.

The dual nature of the case — legal and political - was evident from the start. Evidence was flimsy, some of it dishonest, some perjured: "consciousness of guilt" because the men were armed when arrested and gave false answers (they feared arrest and the fate of their comrade Salsedo who had "fallen" to his death while in federal custody in New York); the usual untrustworthy eye-witness identifications: questionable ballistics evidence, etc. As Morgan demonstrates, the evidence presented at the murder trial was short of what the law demands (although it is well known that many men are convicted on no better evidence). What became more and more apparent as the case went on was that judge, jury and Massachusetts public took the guilt of the men for granted simply because they were immigrants, anarchists, and "draft-dodgers"; and as the defense amassed evidence for appeals, exposing perjury, insufficiency of evidence, and probability that the crime was committed by the Morelli gang, judge, Governor and Massachusetts public stubbornly clung to the logic of California in the Mooney case - guilty or not, they were worth killing. "Those anarchistic bastards" (Judge Thayer's phrase) summed up the attitude of the prosecution and the hundred per cent Americans — and of the committee, headed by President A. Lawrence Lowell of Harvard, that Governor Fuller, under the prodding of seven years of national and international agitation, finally appointed to determine whether the men were guilty and had justice. The Governor refused to intervene, and on August 23, 1927, the two men were electrocuted.

"The defendants had a trial according to all the forms of the law, but it was not a fair trial," Morgan concludes. Joughin, considering the broader evidence of innocence and guilt, finds the crime in contradiction to the philosophy and nature of Sacco and Vanzetti.

Now all this might be of only antiquarian interest except to anarchists and friends of the dead men. But as Joughin shows, "the case" had a tremendous influence on men's minds. The literature produced and influenced by the case is extensive and even impressive: Sinclair's Boston (Joughin gives it justice: a first adequate appreciation of Sinclair's understanding of Vanzetti and of the great popular appeal of the novel, Sinclair's best), Dos Passos' USA, Maxwell Anderson's Gods of Lightning and Winterset; Thurber and Nugent's The Male Animal, other plays, novels and much poetry — almost without exception sympathetic to the men. This first evaluation of this literature is penetrating, informative and good reading.

And finally, the case gave to history and literature two men who had been ordinary workers unknown to the world.

In the beginning, the men were depicted as poor Italian immigrants, ignorant of English, probably ignorant of all other things. The legend of the "poor shoemaker and poor fishmonger" still survives; the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Morgan, the law scholar, is indifferent to the guilt or innocence of the men, their character and their ideas; he obviously thinks little of Sacco, considers anarchist ideas foolish and ignorant; his sole interest is in a fair trial. Joughin is less narrow; though not an anarchist, he obviously has deep sympathy for the men, and considerable understanding of their ideas. But though he has grave doubts about this "sick" society, he accepts his collaborator's assumption of the justice of law, the right of society to kill men; he thinks deportation of "violent" anarchist correct, but not "philosophical anarchists". Says Vanzetti (quoted in the book): "It is now customary to speak of objectiveness — as of a great thing. Relatively understood, it is a good thing, absolutely it is trash."

anarchism of Sacco and Vanzetti is rarely taken seriously and to a great many the simple fact would be news that Sacco and Vanzetti were not mere "philosophical anarchists" but active workers in the Italian-language anarchist movement in America. (It would not be surprising to see Sacco and Vanzetti called "anarchists" in quotes, as the Chicago anarchists usually are).

But as the case developed and Vanzetti acquired mastery of English and wrote voluminous letters and many men and women made the trip to Dedham jail to visit the men, a new picture emerged. Publication of selected letters by the men strengthened the new picture; and Joughin now sheds new strong light on it. His portrait of Sacco is especially interesting:

Sacco is usually thought of as the lesser man, and this opinion is in part correct. He said and wrote less, and he does not seem to have won the affection of as many people as Vanzetti. But some qualification of this judgment is necessary . . . Sacco was a faithful and skillful worker; he was a useful member of society . . . a devoted husband and affectionate father. . . In all fairness, one should consider what Sacco's stature might be if he stood isolated from the richer and more complex personality of his fellow-prisoner . . .

His constant reiteration of a number of specific sentiments - love of flowers or affection for those close to him - makes it clear that he was a man of a few relatively simple beliefs to which he clung with passionate feeling. . . . Sacco remained through seven years a devoted and loving husband and father, keenly and intelligently sensitive to the position of his loved ones. . . . Vanzetti and Sacco remained friends although they were separated. and during the last five months — when prison regulation permitted them to be together — seem to have been even closer in spirit. . . . In view of the enormous strain, an explosion would have come about if the persons involved had not been fundamentally sound. And Sacco was very clearly at the center. If he had collapsed temperamentally, the whole circle would have been affected. . . . Nicola Sacco was not an intellectual man. He adopted a number of simple formulas - little more than propaganda slogans - and used them to explain his fate. . . . But in denying Sacco sophistication, it is very impportant to remember that he was sincere — and that he may have been right. The genuineness of his convictions is supported by the best kind of proof; he would not sign a petition which might conceivably have saved his life, he shook hands with [Gov.] Fuller but would not discuss the case, he preferred to die without any compromise between his

Joughin concludes by quoting Vanzetti's well-known tribute to his comrade, delivered to the judge:

Sacco is a heart, a faith, a character, a man; a man lover of nature and mankind. A man who gave all, who sacrifice all to the cause of Liberty and to his love for mankind; money, rest, mundain ambitions, his own wife, his children, himself and his own life. . . .

Vanzetti was a more complicated man, much better known, but not always fully appreciated by the

well-intentioned. He was not, Joughin shows, merely an illiterate man with poetical gifts for expressing simple thoughts. He was little school-educated, but he read tremendously and broadly: Malatesta, Galleani, Proudhon; Dante, Carducci, Leopardi; Marcus Aurelius, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Tagore; Renan, Anatole France. Joughin says:

Vanzetti was a man of delayed but substantial education who, under great hardship, was successful in developing his latent intellectual power. Furthermore, the mind with which he was gifted was of superior order, and used in such a way as to dispel the common belief that Vanzetti was just "another damn fool anarchist." On the contrary, the thinking of this immigrant fish peddler is distinguished for its scientific quality and its manifest self-discipline.

Joughin tries to systematize Vanzetti's philosophy - a difficult task, because Vanzetti was unable to do it and because many of his writings that may be more explicit and extensive (especially those in Italian) are not available at present. Obviously, Vanzetti did not differ essentially with the mainstream of Italian anarchism represented by Malatesta and Galleani - anti-organizational anarchistcommunism. But Vanzetti was exceptionally familiar with Proudhon and perhaps other antecedent anarchists; and he strove very hard to be original and to interpret and apply his own important experiences as a worker, a radical, an immigrant in a hostile country, a victim of the law. He accepted nothing on faith from any anarchist thinker; where he could not solve a problem himself he confessed his doubts. Vanzetti's writings are full of passages like these:

. . . words, only words, too many words are often a ridiculous anachronism and a discredit and a shame. But what can one do against the wall which bricks are made of — well, think of a metaphor.

This, because in such contingence words are not the echo of the action — first motion, then thought — but symptoms of want of will. Then words are but empty voices to cloak a consciousness of nothingness, echoes, pretentions of want and of nothingness — and worse of course, to an aim or an object, than silence, might fall eloquent silence.

To believe that hope, faith, optimism, confidence, are good to the individual, is part of the race wisdom; an historical experience.

rom things which are what and as they are, and not what and as we believe or hope them to be. So that wrong faith, absurd hope, unfounded optimism and confidence are or may be fatal or at least very deleterious to the individual, in spite of their real help to him as animators. For they mislead us and when we face evil, cannot help us.

I believe better, to try and look the reality straight in the face, eyes into eyes. The question is not to shift from barren reality by any dreams or auto-suggestion.... To destroy bad realities, to create good ones, lo! that makes gods out of men and women.

It is for such reasons that I indict all the new and all religions.

That anti-fascism has in itself, endemic, the fascism. It is as equivocous as that anti-clericalism which consists in fighting the clergy by revealing the priest's sins through pornographic expositions, and in a false, unilateral historical philosophy, which consists in a wrong and partisan interpretation of the churches history. Equivocous as that atheism that affirms itself with blasphemous bravados, with dogmatic criterion on the creation and on the universe, with a trumpetting ignorance of the human nature and a self-imposing simpleton philosophy.

Finally, let us listen to Joughin's literary judgment:

"Sacco usually shows no particular depth or sensitivity in his choice of words, and his sentences are either labored or primitive in form. When he does profoundly affect a reader, as in the letter to his son, his artistry is almost certainly unconscious; an overwhelming sincerity and pathos are revealed—but they are the qualities of a man and not a writer.

"Vanzetti, on the other hand, indubitably wrote literature. Within a relatively short time he extends the scope of his vocabulary and also enlarges his understanding of single words. He makes moderate progress in the idiomatic complexity of the language, and shows surprising vigor in the construction of imaginative phrases which lie between the domains of neutral speech and crystallized idion. However, it is Vanzetti's mastery of the English sentence which unquestionably establishes his right to a place among the creators of our literature. His

grammar is at times faulty, and his uncertain phonetic basis occasionally causes him trouble. But in cadence, in the total rhythmic force of English prose, Vanzetti comes very close to mastery. Put aside the substance of his remarks, abandon all prejudice or reasoned conviction as to his innocence or guilt. Hear only the quiet, even voice of the man as he speaks extemporaneously to the judge who was to sentence him to death;

"This is what I say: I would not wish to a dog or to a snake, to the most low or misfortunate creature of the earth — I would not wish to any of them what I have had to suffer for things that I am not guilty of. But my conviction is that I have suffered for things that I am guilty of. I am suffering because I am a radical and indeed I am a radical; I have suffered because I was as Italian, and indeed I am an Italian; I have suffered more for my family and for my beloved than for myself; but I am so convinced to be right that if you could execute me two times, and if I could be reborn two other times, I would live again to do what I had done already.

"I have finished. Thank you."

-DTW

Dear Sir:

My attention has been called to a letter from Ammon Hennacy in your current issue together with your editorial reply.

I do think you are doing a disservice to the radical in general and to anarchism by taking a dogmatic atheist stand. The dogmatic atheist is in the same psychological category as the religious fanatic. Essentially he has an intolerant and fascist mind, he is conditioned to liquidate those who believe in the existence of transcendental values.

One great obstacle is that once we grasp an idea we insist that it be applied all along the line with no consideration for different spheres. So traditional anarchists must reject all authority because they reject the authority of the State. They cannot see that, if one accepts a revealed religion, one does so on authority and to do otherwise would be ridiculous. Authority therefore has a value in the transcendental which it lacks in the purely rational realm. You, together with fascist minded Catholics, assert that if you accept authority in the one sphere you have to do so in the other. We simply reject that opinion as an oversimplification.

We believe that the centralized national State is an evil we should combat, that much we have in common with you. If there can be no cooperation it is because you (like the Marxists) insist on making atheism a plank in your program. Therefore you rule out vast numbers who you could only cooperate with if they surrendered their intellects to your dogmatisms. It would seem to me the sensible procedure to cooperate on those practical tasks before us and to learn a little tolerance.

Sincerely, Robert Ludlow

(Editor, The Catholic Worker)
We have no desire to engage in a
polemic with Ludlow, and in brief space
we can do no more than outline main



ideas, without proof; but we do want to make our thought about religion and the Catholic Worker movement perfectly clear.

Ludlow's characterization of us as "dogmatic atheists" is false. We are atheists but we think it is absurd to make a positive philosophy out of atheism. We ARE non-religious and convinced of the social harmfulness of religion, for the following reasons:

1. Religion tends to lead to appointment of authoritarian mediators, or interceders, between man and his supreme being or godly spirit. When a man submits to a "spiritual" authority, he surrenders freedom; the next step is to rob others of freedom by trying to impose this belief on them, especially children; and the final step is to create a powerful authoritarian social institution.

2. Religion makes an imaginary (or at best abstract) thing the chief concern of human behavior; man reduces himself to insignificance alongside his god. On the contrary, man himself should be his primary concern, we should be aggressively concerned with our own interests, and not seek first of all the welfare of a deity or spirit. It is true that a religious person may be an anarchist and a perfectly admirable individual (agnostic or religious persons have sometimes been members of the RESIST-ANCE group; Camillo Berneri, one of the outstanding men and writers of the Italian anarchist movement, was agnostic if not religious). What is socially harmful is not necessarily harmful in every individual. But "Catholic anarchist" is a contradiction in terms. And the religion of an anarchist, as of others, signifies inability to cope with human problems without creating or accepting myths. We do not consider ourselves superior to this inability, but we do feel able to recognize it.

3. Religious ethics (at its very best) diverts attention from our direct human interests: if there is a right ethics, it is founded in man's needs and desires. At best, Jesus is superfluous, at worst he leads to Christianity. The ethics of religions, moreover, tends always to abstraction and absolutism at variance with human needs.

4. Religion tends to oppose, obstruct and deny scientific knowledge. Since it is mostly untrue and a misrepresentation of reality, it denies an area of human knowledge. "Fundamentalists" would forbid even the teaching of evolution, but all religions are strongly antirationalist. Were religion really "true," we might have to adopt Bakunin's motto: "If God really existed, it would be necessary to abolish him." But we need not. We know (from anthropology and psychoanalysis) that anthropomorphic gods, an after-life, spirits, etc., are created by the specific facts of life in a culture, the specific problems in the life and growth of individuals. The Christian religion, for example, is shown to be a projection of our severely difficult family institutions (the authoritarian father, simultaneous loves and fears, the struggle with the parents' morality, the struggle for independence or to regain omnipotence, etc.). It is hardly credible that real social and philosophical truths should be come upon by such means.

5. Christian religion reflects and strengthens (if it was not originally partly responsible for) the anti-sexual morality of our culture. The severe anti-sexuality of Catholic theology and mo-

rals - even of Protestant theology and morals - stemming from the same roots as the Oedipus complex and the sexual neurosis, has been the cause of much human misery and is probably a strong conservative social force.

6. Religion consoles people with a social situation against which they should rebel. They are made apathetic to this intolerable situation not only by the hope of life-after-death, but also by false (i.e., derivative) satisfactions such as prayer, suffering, faith; what is needed is not the narcotic of religion, but pain and rebellion.

It has been objected that these criticisms hold against the "political role" of the Catholic Church or the "superstitions" of fundamentalists or Jehovah's Witnesses, but not against more sophisticated or purely mystical religions. This is partly true. However, if religion is cut down to the point where politics (a church) and supernaturalism are excluded, there is finally no god and no religion left - merely an ethical system or aesthetic point of view that the individual likes, and justifies or glorifies by use of socially accepted symbols. Toward such a mysticism or religion we do not feel hostile, though we do not agree with it. For some reason these people are unable to carry through a rejection of conventional ideas; their use of traditional religious vocabulary for ideas that really have no connection with it has the effect of strengthening religion as a social institution. "Mysticism" has this much point: positive atheism has often been mathematically rationalistic, to the extreme of denying the importance of emotion, quality, art, intangibles: however, we do not believe that a religion is necessary to achieve a sound balance between reason and nonrationalistic perceptions.

Ludlow, and some other religious people, claim that we are intolerant: they will recognize our right to disbelieve, so why will we not let religion alone?

We recognize absolutely the right to believe in god or religion. Ludlow's equation of his imaginary "dogmatic atheist" with "religious fanatic," "fascist

minded Catholics," "conditioned to liquidate etc.", is name-calling, or at best absurd analogy. We do not believe in suppression of religion — to do so would be to directly deny anarchism. We have confidence that education and a healthier society will finally eliminate the need for religion. But we would like to protect children from indoctrination with religion at an age when they are unable to defend themselves (NOT in order to indoctrinate them with atheism, however). We do claim the right to proclaim our disbelief, to remain aloof from promotions of the god-idea, and to attack its specific most dangerous concrete form, priest-ridden authoritarian churches.

Likewise, we consider it necessary to reject cooperation with religious groups - even in areas where we happen to agree - if the likely consequence is to strengthen a religious-political institution. In anti-conscription agitation, we have cooperated with Peacemakers, predominantly religious pacifists; some members of the RESISTANCE group may have happened to be on the same anti-draft picket line as Ludlow. But though we are glad to see resistance to conscription, and glad to see people advocate it (as the CATHOLIC WORK-ER has), we are sorry that this happens under the banner of religion - whether Catholic, Protestant or another. And where the Catholic Worker organization is concerned, the political danger is too grave to be covered over in united front. It is analogous to united front with the Communist Party.

As to the Catholic Worker movement, certain specific points must be made:

1. The Catholic Workers profess anticlericalism, but they continue to accept spiritual authority. Spiritual is a broad term, and it embraces theology, philosophy, morals - on all of which the Catholic Workers are thoroughly conservative if not reactionary. The Catholic Workers' independence on political issues is only mildly interesting, because paid functionaries of the Catholic Church (members of orders, etc.) mold their fundamental outlook; and attitudes toward morality and authority are unfortunately far more serious and fundamental to the social revolution than are attitudes on the draft and Franco.

2. The Catholic Workers maintain the traditional anti-sexual morality of the Catholic Church, and take it more seriously than most Catholics. What is in question is not the celibacy of monks, nuns or priests, but the universal denial of sex except as a function of marriage; and perhaps the worst consequence of Christianity through the centuries has been inculcation of an antisexual morality, with well-known psy-

3. Though this is more difficult to demonstrate, since not so explicit, it appears that the ideal society of the Catholic Workers is no more or less than medieval - i.e., the golden age of Christianity and priestdom. The Catholic Workers' anti-capitalism, anti-statism, anti-industrialism, pro-small community and pseudo-anarchism seem to boil down to just this: restoration of the human condition when god was the only con-

Nor can we forget that the Catholic Workers are a part of the greater Catholic Church organization (and could not ciety - the absence of "community,"

chological results.

cern of man.

survive without at least the toleration of the Church). They are a flourishing, growing sect. They flourish on the most conspicuous weakness of capitalist sothe absence of human feeling in a mechanical, money-driven civilization. They have an appeal, therefore, to elements the Catholic Church heretofore failed to touch; they appeal not to the lowest social strata, to the most ignorant, to enslaved women and cynical philosophers (as Caholicism traditionally has); but to the young, intelligent and rebellious, whom it keeps within the Church and whose rebelliousness it directs into Catholic channels. To see only the points of superficial agreement with these people, and ignore the serious dangers - not potential, but actual, existing, operative - of this movement, would surely be short-sighted.

# Anarchism

(Continued from page 6)

haps our strongest achievement and our strongest propaganda is a movement where these things exist, where people can find a refuge of sanity and health, where they can learn in practice what anarchism and an anarchist society are. To put it another way: It is much more important to be an anarchist, and live anarchistically, than to merely have anarchist

#### III. Education

Yet it is clearly not enough merely to act in concrete situations with people in the hope of helping them learn from action; and not enough for our

movement to constitute a kind of community of free men and women. If it is so difficult for most people to grasp and accept radical ideas, it is primarily because they have been too strongly conditioned by other factors. Mutual aid is a practical principle, easily enough learned; repudiation of authority, acceptance of individual responsibility and independence, are much harder; their lack in Spain by many even of those who were anarchists was one of the decisive causes of the defeat of the revolution.

Many anarchists have looked upon education as an attempt to sidestep the fundamental question of revolution. There has, of course, been a traditional division between "revolutionary anarchists" and "gradualist," "educational" anarchists. We accept neither extreme; we see that revolution does release

great strength; but we also see that it is not enough. An education that would make the young individual independent, capable of initiative and incapable of submission to authority, would be a revolutionary achievement.

Anarchists once put a great deal of effort into education, under the impetus of Ferrer's Modern Schools; many of the ideas were undoubtedly wrong, and to these the somewhat disappointing results may be attributed. A. S. Neill in England now provides an example for study of what is possible by applying more recent knowledge. Naturally, the State is very jealous of control of the young, and anarchist education would encounter trouble; yet the ferocity of the State's defense of its prerogatives over children is evidence of the significance of education.

But we believe it is necessary to go behind education in any formal sense, to the beginnings of the education of children: the family; and beyond the question of learning to the questions of morality

and authority in the family.

This subject has been treated superficially by most anarchist thinkers, ignored by many, seldom given the importance we believe it has. It has been assumed by some that freedom will "purify" marriage and the family; or that (as Marx said) capitalism has already destroyed the family; or that everything existing must be swept out - all this with very little regard to psychological or anthropological evidence. In practice, some anarchists have attempted to create completely new types of sexual, familial and moral relationships; others have merely (as anarchists) ignored the State, while accepting traditional customs. This is not merely a question of theories incidental to anarchism, as some have asserted: relationships between men and women, between adults and children, are the closest of all human relationships; their nature has profound influence on the individuals involved, and the way a person learns to react to these situations is carried over into more general social situations. Moralists and church people are wide awake to the crucial function of the family in morality, and of morality in social conservatism; it is time that we, on the opposite side, were equally alive.

Avoiding psychological jargon, here are some fairly definite facts: The character of the individual is usually well-established before he leaves childhood. A child whose spirit is broken by its parents is most often submissive to all forms of tyranny, while a child who has been raised in freedom will always rebel against any effort to impose authority. In most families a strict anti-sexual morality is imposed on children from a very early age, and the common results of repression of this basic human need are direct unhappiness, inability to achieve sexual satisfaction even when the permissible age is reached, and habits of submissiveness or aggression and sadism, depending on the particular circumstances (social phenomena that are usually called "atavistic," like the atrocities of the Nazis or a lynch mob, can be understood in this way). Likewise, the child normally produced by the present-day family has not been allowed to acquire a genuine independence such as will enable him or her to act in a lively and self-reliant fashion as an adult. It is not only in the prison of the oldfashioned father-authoritarian family that these disastrous events take place, but also in the reformatory of many a "progressive" family where the child is more subtly molded.

Attempts in Resistance to discuss some of these problems have caused some comrades to object that all this might or might not be true, but it has no connection with anarchism. However, we believe that the present state of "human nature" is largely responsible for the present state of human society, and that this "human nature" is formed in the early part of life when the family and morality and discipline (and not economic or political institutions) are the dominant facts in the life of the individual. If we want healthy, rational people, capable of being free, we shall have to create a childhood environment that allows and encourages people to develop their best natures.

This is truly one of the sorest points of society and most of the people in it; the violence of reactionaries against discussion of the family, sex and morality is matched by the violence of some anarchists. But it must be discussed. We have no facile solution. Nor do we wish to give the impression that this is the only useful line of approach: we are not so deterministic as to regard human beings solely as products of families. But if we can provide children with an atmosphere of freedom and love we shall have done much more than all our printed propaganda can.

#### The Perspective

Now, by itself none of these three major areas of action is enough; even taken together, they may not seem adequate to the objective of an anarchist society. But they are the best answer we know to the questions: What can we do right now to make our lives human and satisfying? In what ways can we work together for immediate gains? What can we do to lay the basis for future social change?

The perspective is less obviously optimistic than that of those who have a narrower faith in revolution as a dramatic historical event that will nullify centuries of slavery and a century of defeat. Yet in terms of what the anarchist movement has actually done and actually does, we believe we reject nothing of value; if a revolution arises, we are not afraid of it; what we propose now is to search openmindedly for the most effective actions.

At the same time we should like to encourage and maintain within the anarchist movement the spirit of intellectual freedom and undogmatism that is the great strength of anarchism-a freedom that will enable us always to improve upon our knowledge and our actions. Surely we are not in a position to assert that there exists a theory of anarchism (including our own) that answers the question: How are we to achieve freedom? It is a question of always approaching closer to an answer to this ques-

-- Resistance

#### To Our Readers:

This November-December issue of Resistance is the first since the July-August number, and only the fifth in 1948. The only explanation is the lack of money. We owe our previous printer for nearly a whole issue; he is willing to wait till we can pay him, but we have had to wait to accumulate the \$300 necessary for the new issue. From the response of our readers, we know they have responded to our "appeals" to the extent they can; we know we have many poor readers. We do not want to, and will not, make any more "appeals." Instead of following a monthly or bi-monthly schedule, Resistance will appear whenever we can raise enough money.

We wish to call our readers' attention to the fact that Resistance has a new secretary, D. Rogers, to whom all checks and money orders should be made payable from now on.

The new Resistance Press edition of Peter Kropotkin's classic pamphlet, An Appeal to the Young, is now available, at 10c a copy. This is a revised translation, with a new introduction, and a cover drawing by Jack deMoreland. Publication of An Appeal to the Young, like the previous Resistance Press pamphlet, Randolph Bourne's The State, has been made possible by voluntary contributions from comrades and groups. When sufficient funds are available (still necessarily mostly from voluntary contributions), we will print other pamphlets we have been planning.

We have received from Comrade Jules Scarceriaux of Los Angeles a translation of A. Prunier's article in Volontà of Naples, on Rudolf Rocker. Prunier says that anarchists have been silent too long out of deference to Rocker's past, and calls upon him to repudiate his pro-war stand in World War II. The Resistance group agrees fully with Prunier's criticism of Rocker, and believes that Rocker's positions on the war, imperialism, Germany and other issues in the last decade have been non-anarchist. However, since Rocker is no longer in contact with the anarchist movement in America, we do not feel that a discussion of his present views would be of in-

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terest to our readers. We thank Comrade Scarceriaux and the Man! group for sending us the translation.

We are sorry to state that our friend Jack deMoreland, who has done many covers and drawings for Resistance in the last year, is dead. The suicide of this artist and poet of genius provided the daily press with a subject for cheap sensationalism.

To those readers who received notice last spring that Resistance was to be transferred to San Francisco, we wish to announce that plans have changed, and the paper will remain in New York. San Francisco readers are reminded that the Friday nite discussions of the Libertarian Group at Golden Gate and Steiner are still continuing.

### The Anarchist Bookshelf

#### • THEORY

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ABC of Anarchism (Now and After abridged), by	
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The State, by Peter Kropotkin	25c
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ree and available on request are Randolph Bourne's "The tate," "War or Revolution" and "Freedom" from England.