

# VANGUARD

*"Not The Government Over Men, But The Administration Of Things"*

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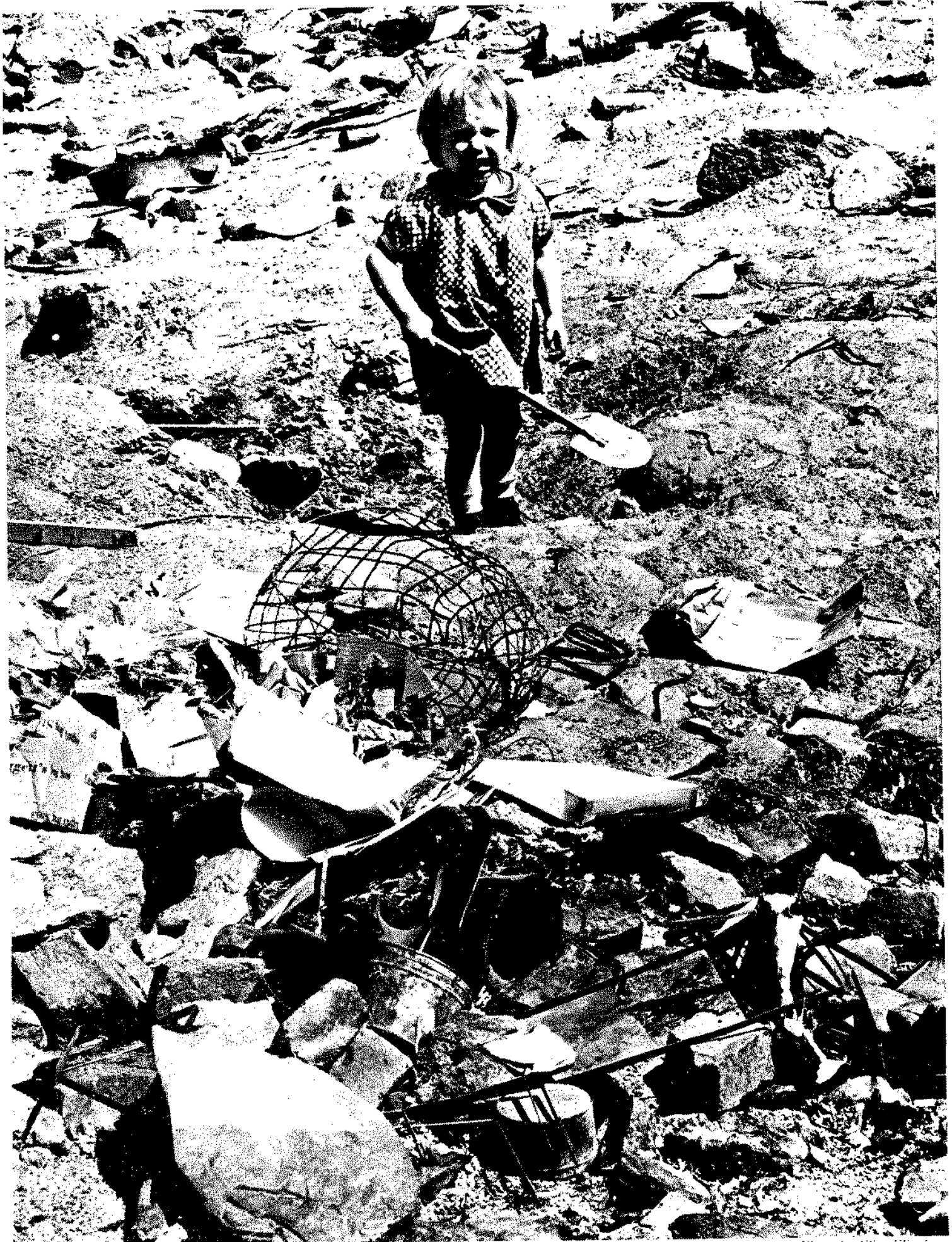
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## MARXISM AND SCIENCE

*(and other timely articles)*

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A LIBERTARIAN JOURNAL



DEPRESSION BABY

Photo by Eliot Elisofon  
Courtesy Better Times

# vanguard

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## EDITORIAL NOTES

### W.P.A.—POLITICAL PAWN

**A**T this moment almost a million workingmen and their families are faced once again with the grim grey specter of starvation. Living now on a subsistence level that has aged their wives and driven the bloom of youth from the cheeks of their children they are threatened with loss of the last thin bulwark between them and acute hunger . . . the W.P.A. is on the spot.

While the two main trends in American political life battle each other, only the W.P.A. worker, caught in between, suffers any damages. Under the Woodrum Bill now passed by the House of Representatives those workers who will still be left on the W.P.A. rolls after the axe falls will be forced to lower their living standards and work many more hours than the present W.P.A. allows; in addition they will be deprived of the right to register their disapproval of Administration actions in any way that might possibly have some effect. Roosevelt and the anti-New Dealers, both with their eyes on the 1940 election, are simply using the W.P.A. as a pawn, trying by "economy" to placate the Economic Royalists and at the same time provide the minimum of bread and circuses to keep the people in check.

In this situation the worker must keep his eyes open in order not to be misled into the channels of either political current and must insist on no compromise where his economic interests are concerned. He cannot even "temporarily" accept lower wages, increased hours or the loss of the weapons by which he maintains better working conditions.

The fighting spirit which the unemployed workers displayed at the beginning of the Roosevelt Administration must now be revived and amplified. At that time the demonstrations of the unemployed and the strikes of the trade unions brought some action from the powers that be. The natural militant instinct of the workers was permitted to enter economic channels by the leadership of the organizations of the unemployed. But this leadership is now in the hands of a clique that has been sold

(at a cheap price) to the political program of the New Deal. Even at the present critical juncture the leadership of the Worker's Alliance absolutely refuses to take any direct action to save the W.P.A., although the evidences of militant sentiments among tremendous number of W.P.A. workers everywhere stare the supine David Lassers and Herbert Benjamins in the face. It is improbable that even "outlaw" strikes, sit-ins, or hunger marches could move this Stalinist controlled political machine to any real action. But already there are vague stirrings among the membership of the Workers Alliance that give some hope of action without the leaders. If more W.P.A. workers would get together and, let us say, refuse to be investigated for pauper status or to be fingerprinted; if a movement could be started by W.P.A. workers to force their trade unions to demand (and strike for this if necessary) that their unemployed be given full time work at union wages either by the government or by private employers; if there was a serious demand on the part of organized labor (both employed and unemployed) to give all War funds to the unemployed; or if . . . and we could mention several dozen types of action that the unemployed could embark on . . . then they could not so easily be made pawns in a political dog-fight, then they might regain some of the self-respect and aggressiveness which ten years of being knocked about on relief have robbed them of.

Such tactics can give the unemployed worker a fighting tool to prevent the immediate starvation now threatening him. He can, thereby, also release himself from the stranglehold of the political machine which runs his own organizations. Gradually he can learn to build a new type of union, that will offer him a better incentive to organize and fight for industrial production for use—of the workers—and not for the profit of the few.

### SOCIALISM MUST BE FREE

The authoritarian Socialists have for more than a half century preached the theory of the automatic and in-

evitable development of Capitalism into Socialism. What were the essential pre-conditions of such a development according to the apostles of Marx? They were: (1) The trustification and development of industry to the highest degree. (2) This development will create a new class, the proletariat, whose fate under capitalism will inevitably lead to the growth of a huge movement for liberation. (3) That all the elements of a socialist social system will be developed by capitalism, i. e. mass-production, high degree of technical efficiency, a skilled and trained proletariat capable of running industry, etc. (4) A large and well disciplined political party, capable of taking over and revamping the capitalist state, and (5) a labor movement controlled and influenced by the political party. Given these prerequisites, a social upheaval would follow. The new regime would pass through a series of transitional stages under the guidance and control of the Socialist State, until such time as the State itself would likewise automatically wither away, leaving at last, a classless and stateless society. While the authoritarian socialists ridiculed the objections of their opponents to this thesis by calling them hopeless visionaries, utopians, and bunglers, they did not fail to reiterate *ad nauseam* that they were scientific, that they understood the basic laws of socialism and therefore were the only ones fit to lead the erring workers along the straight and narrow road to new social horizons.

Developments of the past quarter of a century have revealed to a startled and defeated proletariat that the theory of automatic development is utopian, visionary and dangerous. 1914 found the capitalist nations like England, Germany and France rotten ripe for socialism. They were highly developed industrially. They boasted strong and well organized and disciplined labor unions—and yet the world war which resulted from the bankruptcy of Capitalism likewise revealed the bankruptcy of the labor movement. The predictions of the scientific socialists failed to materialize. The colossal catastrophe of a demoralized labor movement was attributed to the opportunism and degeneracy of the social democratic movement. This fact alone is a tacit admission that ideas at critical moments play a decisive role in history, that the automatic development of socialism is no longer tenable, since it is dependent on the revolutionary ideas, training and capacities of the workers. Can it be seriously maintained by the so-called scientific socialists that Germany was not ripe for socialism; or that Fascism was inevitable? The literature of the various socialist parties and fractions is replete with polemics on who was responsible for Fascism in Germany. No one with the possible exception of the social democratic apologists, will maintain for an instant that Fascism is a necessary stage toward Socialism. On the contrary, it is heatedly and vehemently asserted, that Germany was ripe for socialism, but the labor movement failed to realize this fact and act accordingly. Judging from the Marxian criterion, Germany and not Spain should have offered the most determined resistance to Fascism. Yet it was from industrially and economically underdeveloped Spain that

the most heroic resistance to Fascism was encountered, and it was in Spain that the workers went far along the road to social revolution.

No responsible and informed writer on Spain would even think of denying the fact that, given the international solidarity that the Spanish Revolutionists were entitled to Spain and perhaps the rest of Europe would have experienced the social revolution.

All the above remarks are meant merely to illustrate the fact, that even under the most favorable objective conditions for far reaching social changes, victory is by no means assured. The authoritarian socialists have underestimated the decisive part played by revolutionary ideas, spirit, tactics and training as a factor in history.

This attitude on the part of the authoritarian socialists is not at all accidental; on the contrary it flows from a profound distrust in the creative capacity of the masses. Having accepted as an article of faith that only a highly concentrated state apparatus controlled by an autocratic political hierarchy can lead the workers to socialism, it follows that the workers themselves through their own mass organizations cannot do so. It is likewise evident from the above premise, that since all power must in the last analysis rest in the omnipotent state apparatus, liberty of action on the part of the workers is incompatible with the fundamental tenets of state socialism.

It is the refusal to recognize the far-reaching value of liberty as a great constructive tendency in shaping history, which explains the evolution of the counter-revolution in Russia. Regardless of the high degree of economic and technical development, regardless of the fact that private ownership has been abolished, that all social wealth is theoretically the property of the whole of the people; the creation of a super-state controlling all the social, political and economic life of the Russian people has resulted not in the building of Socialism but its distortion into something akin to Fascism.

It will doubtless be asserted by many "left" Marxists that Marxism does not at all underrate the importance of ideas and the need for a body of conscious revolutionists, a party. But this belated recognition of the fact that thinking has something to do with changing the world is inadequate, since they would use this democratic party machine for the purpose of "Conquering Power" which is another way of saying that they would still erect, a monstrous state apparatus during the so-called "transitional" stage.

The libertarians have always understood that "Socialism will be free or not at all." This explains the reason why free or libertarian Socialism calls for the abolition of the centralized state. In place of this institution which is in reality nothing less than the perpetuation of monopoly, and the negation of liberty, the libertarians propose the establishment of a system of society in which the people who do the work, the workers organizations will run society. Power will not be destroyed but will be diffused amongst all. In short, "Not the government over men but the administration of things." —S. W.

IT IS particularly important for us of the *Vanguard* to deal at some length with the latest of Mr. Max Nomad's literary offerings, (*Apostles of Revolution*, Little Brown, \$3.50). He has been a contributor to our pages and in semi-informed circles is frequently considered, if not a member of our organization, at least a sympathizer with our viewpoint. This erroneous conception we would like to dispel, once and for all; Mr. Nomad wears no man's collar!

In our efforts to scotch the myth of "Nomad the Libertarian" we apparently have not enlisted the aid of the editor of the influential Yiddish Libertarian weekly, the *Freie Arbeiter Stimme*, who saw fit recently to review the book without informing his readers that it contains some of the most slanderous polemics ever written against the great figures of Anarchist history.

*Apostles of Revolution* is, of course, simply a further elucidation of Mr. Nomad's oblique conception of historical trends and values. History thunders through the book; the "Apostles" live out their agonized lives; nations crumble; sceptors change hands, all to the accompaniment of the author's most acrid asides. When the smoke clears away we find that all the sound and fury add up very neatly to prove Mr. Nomad's favorite (and only) thesis, which serves him as *weltanschauung*, topic of conversation, and claim to fame.

For many readers of the *Vanguard* this singular thesis is so well known that it brings to mind the sounds that emanate from the throat of the gramophone when the needle inadvertently sticks in the groove of a well worn record. For new readers, of course, Mr. Nomad's pet theme may be as virginally bright and shiny as a newly minted Jefferson nickel. Reduced to its essence the argument runs something like this: "The inexorable logic of every revolutionary struggle necessarily results in the establishment of a new aristocracy, regardless of the democratic, communist, or anarchist ideas professed by its champions."

The pen portraits of the seven apostles: Marx, Bakunin, Blanqui, Most, Nechayev, Stalin and Makhno are intended to be object lessons proving that despite the professional ideological differences of these creatures of



MIKHAIL BAKUNIN

history, they are all in reality simply rivals in an avid quest for dictatorial rights either for their personal aggrandizement or in the interest of their sect or party, using the tortured bodies of the masses as rungs in the ladder that leads to the conquest of power.

Mr. Nomad does not claim originality for his thesis. He acknowledges his great debt to Wacław Machajski, the obscure Polish iconoclast who ended up as a clerk for the Soviet bureaucracy. One also finds large chunks of Machiavelli, and no small part of Roberto Michel, erstwhile Revolutionary Syndicalist, who (if my memory serves me correctly) accepted a berth in one of Il Duce's universities. Then too, Pareto, beloved of the Fascisti, has for years been using the same line as the backbone of his political theories.

I am not insinuating that Mr. Nomad is a Fascist; but let us assume for a moment that we believe as do Mr. Nomad and Signor Pareto, that in all revo-

lutionary struggle there emerges a new elite which assumes the place vacated by the recently deposed tyrant and proceeds in turn to live off the backs of the exploitables; we are convinced of this theory, therefore we have two choices, either to join the elite or submerge ourselves in the mass. What fools we would be to make the latter choice . . . convinced of the inevitability of the installation of a new elite the obvious course would be for us to try and be part of it. The "elite" for Machajski was the Russian State, for Michel and Pareto the Fascisti; who will be Mr. Nomad's elite?

But perhaps such a choice will not be necessary for despite the author's lucid, pyrotechnic style and claims to scholarship, we feel that he fails to prove his point.

In examining revolutionary doctrine it is necessary to contend with two main historical currents, the Marxist and Anarchist schools, sometimes differentiated as Statist and anti-Statist, or Authoritarian and Libertarian. In dealing with the Marxist school Mr. Nomad has fairly easy sledding; it can hardly be called pioneering of major proportions to "discover" that the Marxists intend to build their own State in the name of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" after the seizure of power by their vanguard political party. This is admitted by the informed

sectors of the Marxists, both Socialist and Communist, and does not lend itself to argument. We have no quarrel with the author when he chooses to deal with truisms, and if he elects to dissipate his energies in this peculiar fashion, it should be no one's concern but his own. However, Mr. Nomad envisions his theories as a complete system and must therefore include the Libertarian movement, as well as the Marxist, in his pattern.

In doing so he soon ran into difficulties, for he evidently found to his dismay that the main figures in the history of Anarchist thought did not fit into his beloved matrix without some rather too obvious manipulation. Nothing daunted, however, he simply promulgated another theory: those revolutionists who did not fit in with his "quest for power" theory, shall henceforth by definition not be considered as revolutionists at all but rather as naive children, impractical dreamers, romantics living in a world of marijuana fumes, and so having no bearing upon his original premise. You see, if you play games with Nomad, it is essential that you play by his rules and definitions. We find that he carefully omits from his pen portraits Kropotkin, Proudhon, Reclus, Newinhuies, Ferrer, Cafiero, Berneri, Durruti and a host of others without whose names the Anarchist roster appears singularly bare. These people in Mr. Nomad's scheme come under the heading of "mystics" rather than practical revolutionists; therefore in an examination of Anarchism we are asked to disregard Kropotkin and Proudhon, certainly two of the most important figures in Anarchist annals, and allow the author to base his judgments on Anarchism upon figures in whom he discerns more handily the Machiavellian taint.

In order to prove that the Libertarians, despite their protestations, are also interested in revolution solely to advance their own interests, Mr. Nomad, light as a feather, skips nimbly over the "mystics" and dishes up for our pleasure (?) the "practical" revolutionists: Sergei Nechayev, Johann Most, Nestor Makhno, and Mikhail Bakunin, hardly a representative selection, the only Anarchist theorist among them being Bakunin, the giant Russian firebrand.

But even if we grant him the right to pick his "typical" Anarchists with the most judicious care we still feel that he does not prove his theses.

Let us look at some of the testimony with which he hoped to indict the Anarchist movement.

Can the sins of Nechayev be visited with justice upon the head of Libertarian mores? This quite mad young fanatic is of a type common to many movements, so obsessed with the ideal as to become maniacs, brushing aside all human values, so that even murder becomes just an incident in their revolutionary blueprint. What identity was there between the ravings of Nechayev and the principles of Revolutionary Anarchism . . . are we to be held responsible for every mental unfortunate who elects to carry our flag?

Nestor Makhno was an heroic figure in the Russian

Civil War in the Ukraine: a semi-literate peasant boy lifted a few notches above the mass of Russian peasantry by his Anarchist ideal and a flair for military tactics. Why Mr. Nomad chooses to include him in his gallery is difficult to discover for he admits that Makhno might have become one of the most powerful figures in the Stalin military had he chosen to compromise with his principles. He preferred rather to die of consumption and alcohol under the roof of the Jewish Anarchist Federation in Paris. Where was his Machiavellian taint . . . the fact that he allowed his partisan troops to call him "Batko" (a term of endearment, the closest American equivalent being "Little Father")? Read carefully how Makhno's ideal translated itself into practical experiments with territory he won from the Whites in the Ukraine. It is particularly enlightening to compare the ethical make-up of this peasant Anarchist partisan with that of Leon Trotsky, the great tragedian of the Russian Revolution, whose meteoric path crossed Makhno's on several occasions. In bringing this little known figure to the attention of American readers the author renders a service of some importance. Apparently misconceptions are so general about Makhno that even the erudite Dr. Florinsky in a N. Y. Times book review of *Apostles of Revolution* speaks of him as "a drunken, coarse, and bloodthirsty Ukrainian mujik."

I also fail to see what Mr. Nomad hopes to prove with his Johann Most biography. He claims that had Most lived to see the Russian Revolution he would have become a Bolshevik. Not being gifted with the author's prophetic vision we have little liking for these unsupported airy generalizations. Certain things we *know* about Most, however; we know that he was dogmatic, a prima donna jealous of his control of the *Freiheit*; we know also that the editorship of the paper was no sinecure and that it was supported almost solely by Most's efforts, and that he died struggling to keep the paper alive. We know that he was imprudent, brutally frank, completely lacking in the diplomatic amenities. But it is also true, we think, that in the final analysis of the philosophy he represented, his personality should not be used to weight the scales in one direction or the other. The important point of course is that, despite his difficult temperament, Most never wrote a word commending dictatorship and devoted his life to the struggle for Libertarian principles.

Mr. Nomad is the dean of the "he beat his mother" school of history, a sort of infantilism which chooses to trace the course of history in the personal habits or sexual irregularities of some of the actors in the scene. Such gossip makes good lectures for Ladies Literary Societies but poor history. I suspect, with due humility to Mr. Nomad that it neither adds nor detracts a whit from Anarchist prestige that Most saw through the bottoms of too many bottles, or was publicly whipped by Emma Goldman for his unkind attitude toward the young Berkman.

Let us proceed to another of the would-be slave-holders, Mikhail Bakunin. It was he who first drew with broad

and sometimes erratic strokes the scaffolding upon which much of Modern Anarchism is erected. If he too was impregnated with a Napoleonic greed for world domination, then you *have* something to ponder over.

Mr. Nomad makes several accusations against Bakunin which coming from a less irresponsible observer would constitute a damning indictment. Poor Bakunin is accused of being the ideological sire of Lenin; of being, himself, a potential dictator whose ideas were in a large measure plagiarized from Blanqui, Marx and Mazzini. To cap it all we are informed that as his life was nearing its close he lost faith in his Anarchism and became a confirmed skeptic. (which would place him with Nomad—the most insidious innuendo of them all). Under Mr. Nomad's swift brush strokes Bakunin appears as some huge blundering moron tumbling his massive way through history. By inference, of course, his present day followers must be of the same stripe.

Let us examine Mr. Nomad's analysis with as much detail as space allows.

One of the first chapters in the Bakunin epic is titled "Anarchist Dictatorship" (Page 158). Mr. Nomad's chief source for this chapter is Bakunin's *Confession*, a document prepared under conditions that would make any other historian take it with a grain of salt. It was written, as we know, to placate a Tsarist despot who had Bakunin chained to the walls of a prison and slated for torture and death, a very ticklish position for Bakunin to be in. So he wrote this opus in an attempt to conciliate his royal jailer. Mr. Nomad prefers to take this document at its face value.

In addition he makes sure that the Anarchist movement gets the full blame for whatever sins Bakunin committed during this period (1848) by assuring us that Bakunin "considered himself" an Anarchist. As a matter of fact, nowhere in Bakunin's writings up to that time did he claim to be an Anarchist, except for a few sympathetic remarks about the libertarian views of Proudhon.

Mr. Nomad also accuses Bakunin of *concerning himself with the problem of the "Transitional Period"*. Here we can see most clearly the author's complete ignorance of the subject he is attempting to deal with. Only to the most stupid philistine is Anarchism viewed as a "Maximum Program," an "all-or-nothing" social adventure. The best minds of the Anarchist movement have bent their most tireless efforts towards dealing with just this problem. Bakunin's most important contributions lie exactly in this field and it is the question of the "Transition Period" which most clearly differentiates the Marxist and Anarchist schools. In the last issue of the *Vanguard* we dealt with this subject and said in part:

"There is no logical connection at all between the libertarian idea as such and the negation of transitional stages in its realization.

"Authority cannot be abolished by a single historic act: it can be uprooted and weeded out only in a long process of social transformations, re-education of the

great mass of humanity in the school of mutual aid and solidarity afforded by a socialized economy and a free political order . . . It is in the conception of the nature of this *necessary premise* (the transition period) for the peaceful evolution toward the ultimate ideal that the libertarians differ from the Marxist protagonists of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' . . . the libertarians reject as illogical and unscientific the Marxist idea of dictatorship leading toward liberty . . . instead of dictatorship as the political form of the transitional period, the libertarians advance the idea of a decentralized political order as the starting point of the new social development, an order in which authority is left to function in society but at the same time is hedged about by so many limitations and social controls as to make its gradual swallowing up by the newly emerging social relations a comparatively easy and painless process."

Perhaps Mr. Nomad needs to read the *Vanguard* with greater regularity and attention. At least it would keep him from repeating the crassest of his historical blunders.

Mr. Nomad comes to the conclusion that Bakunin was "a cross between Fascist and Communist dictator." This wild-eyed accusation is based on the fact that Bakunin on occasion, expressed contempt for the Jews. There is no denying that Bakunin apparently never quite threw off this prejudice deep grained in all the Russian nobility. In addition he was plagued for the greater part of his life by Marx, a Jew, Ulin, Marx's agent, another Jew, and by Marx's whole entourage, made up almost entirely of Jews, which of course, to a mind already biased, only added fuel to the fires. But Bakunin never dreamed of developing his prejudices into any sort of program or system, nor thought for a moment of persecuting anyone for his racial or religious beliefs. Marx, too, has writings on the "Jewish Problem" that sounds equally strange to us imbued with the modern liberal attitude. Yet only a man absorbed in an *idée fixe* would lay himself open to ridicule by accusing either of these great figures of being Fascists.

Mr. Nomad speaks in the footnote of page 169 of Bakunin's "Internationalist Anarchist Phase" and places it in 1872. There is some confusion here for previously Anarchism has been damned for Bakunin's actions in 1848.

On page 174 Mr. Nomad accuses Bakunin without offering the slightest proof of approving of a sort of "pro-Romanov Caesarism." We also get the impression that Bakunin prior to his stay in Italy occupied himself with a sort of childish sampling of first one theory then another, scuttling like a leaf from one enthusiasm to the next with each veering of the wind. Bakunin did have a philosophy even when a young man, which lacked explicitness because fundamentally he was a man of action and not a writer. But he was certainly a Socialist during this period and his various enthusiasms he viewed not as separate entities but as part of the Socialist whole.

On page 177 Mr. Nomad assures us that "as far as



the political structure is concerned, there is no difference of principle between the Anarchist gospel as preached by Bakunin, and the Socialist gospel according to Marx." Then what is all the fuss about . . . what split the First International . . . why in every country in the world are there two divergent streams of political thought claiming the adherence of the working class? It is all very simple to Mr. Nomad who sees the whole titanic struggle simply as a squabble of the Russian Bear and the German Lion for personal glory and power . . . In reality, Mr. Nomad is far from the truth as it is exactly around the divergent views of the revolutionary transition period that the great battle raged . . . the great clash of centralization vs. decentralization . . . functionalized administration of affairs opposed to the establishment of a new political caste, etc.

Mr. Nomad naively regards Bakunin's economic program of: Land to the Peasants; Socialization of Big Estates; Distribution through Cooperatives; Abolition of the right of Inheritance, etc., as identical with Lenin's State Socialist N.E.P. I suspect that even to the political neophyte this statement is obvious as pure nonsense and needs no refutation.

In teaming up Bakunin and Lenin, Mr. Nomad really goes to town with Bakunin's "conspiratorial" organization. Lenin's idea of a band of professional revolutionists trained to seize power when the opportunity presented itself was a theory swiped lock, stock and barrel from Blanqui with whom Bakunin was constantly at war. Bakunin never thought or wrote a line about the possibility of his organization's seizing power. He envisioned his comrades "diffused" among the various working class organizations in order to see to it that *nobody seized power*, and that it remained vested in the functional group where it belonged. This is a strange sort of Leninism indeed. However, comparisons come easy to our facile friend.

Mr. Nomad also drags in Bakunin's much touted "Secret Alliance" in the First International to prove his avid love for power. We challenge Mr. Nomad to prove that such an organization existed, which should be a simple matter for a self-confessed authority on secret societies. In reality this heinous "secret alliance" was only a group of people such as any man of Bakunin's stature would naturally gather around himself. They depended upon him for inspiration and information and communication among them was conducted largely through correspondence. When Bakunin stopped corresponding with them, the so-called "secret alliance" fell apart and no longer was a force for monopolizing world political power.

On page 193 we are informed that Bakunin went to Lyon in 1870 rather than to Paris because in Paris where Blanqui had great influence Bakunin could not be top dog. How simple. You see, history is just the clash of personalities. Bakunin could not "compete" with Blanqui.

Yet at the same time the Paris section of the First International was almost entirely Bakuninist! And if Blanqui was so strong why did Paris in 1871 institute a *Federated Commune*. Blanqui was consistently anti-Federalist . . . where did the idea spring from . . . from the Jacobins? Bakunin chose Lyon and not Paris because he saw the danger of a Parisian uprising that did not have the support of other French centers. Events soon proved his correctness on this point.

On page 200 we are informed that Bakunin paved the way for Machajski. Therefore we infer that it was his mission also to pave the way for Mr. Nomad who stems from Machajski. So perhaps Bakunin was of some account after all.

Mr. Nomad tells us that Bakunin lost heart toward the end, became a skeptic. He bases this statement upon Bakunin's sorrow at the lack of revolutionary enthusiasm among the masses of the period. Mr. Nomad does not realize that all public men struggling for an ideal have their moments of grief and loss of hope at particularly difficult periods. However this does not make them skeptics. Skepticism is a disease more common to hangers-on who stand always on the periphery of movements, the "objective" observers. Mr. Nomad admits that Bakunin, with one of his flashes of almost prophetic vision, foresaw the World War exactly forty years before the first guns began to rumble, and saw revolutions in the wake of the war, and hoped for a resurgence of militant activity.

Mr. Nomad defines things rather loosely: "Leninism was merely Bakuninism clothed in Marxist verbiage," and—again, "Bakuninism is simply Left-wing Marxism." We'll let the reader figure that one out.

Space does not allow for a more detailed study of Mr. Nomad's caricature of Bakunin. It should suffice to note that Nomad makes no detailed mention at all of such important documents as Bakunin's *Program of the International* and *State and Anarchy*. A glance at just these two works would convince any honest reader that Bakunin had other differences with Marx than the purely personal struggle for power. Even so small an effort on anyone's part would serve to dispel the confusion that surrounds the reputation of the great Anarchist figure. Mr. Nomad manages merely to add to the store of misinformation.

*Apostles of Revolution* is a sort of literary goulash of half digested truths, vulgar rumors, and sophomoric generalizations. It seems a pity that we find it necessary to deal with the book at such length in a serious journal where space is limited; but unfortunately there is always the danger in our country, where literature on revolutionary history is so meagre, that readers might be led to accept Mr. Nomad's fancies as scholarship. This would be deplorable.



**T**HE following article was published in the April edition of the magazine "Syndikalismen," the theoretical organ of the Anarcho-Syndicalists of Sweden.

*The views presented in this article are not those of a single individual but characterize to a great extent the opinions prevailing among the militants of our Swedish movement; which becomes evident when we compare the opinions expressed in this article with the resolution adopted at the Youth Congress of the Swedish Anarcho-Syndicalists held in April 1939 in Stockholm: the ideas presented by Hedin correspond with those held by the Swedish Youth Organization and by the great majority of the Swedish militants.*

*It is to be added that the author is a leading participant in the Swedish movement, having been for a number of years one of the editors of our daily paper in Stockholm, having also represented the S.A.C. at the various International congresses of the I. W. M. A.*

## CONSTRUCTIVE REVISIONISM

**T**HE violent changes in the political and social world situation, and the catastrophic defeats of the proletariat during the last decade make imperative a general discussion on the principles and tactics of the labor movement along revisionist lines. Notwithstanding that, fortunately, the movement of Revolutionary Syndicalism can hardly be held responsible for those defeats, retreats and capitulations, the general revisionist tendency makes itself also felt in the ranks of our movement. It is now being freely admitted by many revolutionary syndicalists that the old formulas and the old methods are insufficient, obsolete, and in many cases altogether false.

This revisionist frame of mind, notwithstanding that it manifests itself in most of the cases in a series of negations, should be regarded as of positive value, representing the will to live and to adapt one's self to new circumstances. But in order to be regarded seriously revisionism has to present a constructive and concrete criticism of definite concepts and methods; it has to give something new in place of that which it negates.

## VIOLENCE AND COMPULSION IN THE REVOLUTION

Revolutionary Syndicalism is an enemy of the State. It aims to defend the independence of the organization of producers against any attack, and it puts forth as its final aim a society without a State, carrying with it the immediate struggle for liberty as one of its basic methods.

Until now there was a general understanding as to these basic tenets of our movement. But as a rule it was not realized with sufficient clarity that this opposition to the State contains sundry elements differing from each other

in their origins and forms of manifestation. On one hand Revolutionary Syndicalism is the expression of a Libertarian tendency of a general humanistic character, aiming to render unnecessary and suppress all violence and compulsion as means of social relations, replacing them by general agreement; on the other hand Revolutionary Syndicalism, as a practical movement growing out of the class struggle, aims in the first place to weaken and then to liquidate, by the means of a revolution, by all kinds of violence and compulsion, whatever is opposed to the struggle of the great mass of producers.

Those two tendencies certainly coincide in many points, but nevertheless they are by no means identical. Both are of great value, having formed an integral part of the conceptions underlying the theory and practice of Revolutionary Syndicalism, but they will remain so only if each one of them is kept distinctly separate in order to fulfill its own proper task. Otherwise the theoretic confusion will inevitably lead to a confusion in practice.

The idea of a society without violence and compulsion is the extreme point of orientation for our activities. It is a goal which perhaps will never be realized in full, but which we must try to realize with an ever greater degree of approximation. It is the symbolic expression of the deepest motives and the most intimate impulse of our struggle. But this does not imply that the working class can already do away with all violence and compulsion during the proletarian revolution which has to be conceived in a realistic manner, as a drawn-out process, painful, and full of violence. On the contrary such hope lacks any basis in the practical experience which we have had.

The struggle following from Libertarian aims and principles is our means of orientation but it cannot be the practical consequence of our negation of the State. Revolutionary Syndicalists can by no means forego violence and compulsion during the Revolution, but they have to try to direct the activity of the revolutionary masses toward the destruction of the coercive power which is the enemy of the workers—that is the State—and moreover, to do everything possible in order to render superfluous and to prevent the rebirth of a new independent state power which will become the enemy of the workers. *The major task of Revolutionary Syndicalism should be to organize a regime under which the indispensable means of violence will be decided upon by the organization of producers and will be carried into practice by the workers themselves and under the control of their organizations.* This program is of a limited character but in turn it is quite within the means of our realization, and while this program does not preclude violence and coercion, it is nevertheless based upon the negation of the State since its realization would make impossible the new organization of any political institution having anything in common

with the historically known States. To sum up we may say that Revolutionary Syndicalism has before itself the task of revising and concretizing its theory of the State. This can certainly be done without sacrificing anything essential to our basic views. All it needs is a clearer differentiation between the ideal tendency and its political and social consequences in practice.

## NO SIMPLE FORMULA FOR REVOLUTIONARY WAR TACTICS

The Syndicalist position toward the problem of war is surely one of the most discussed and studied problems. Unfortunately one has to admit that the effect of all this labor has not been very comforting. The September weeks last year revealed a great deal of brutal resignation, disorientation and violent clashes of opinion within our own movement. (We must add however that this does not apply to the SAC.)

How did it come about that, in spite of all the discussions on this problem, we found ourselves distressfully confused at the moment when the serious problem of war became a burning issue of the day? There were several reasons for it but here we are going to concern ourselves with only one of them—one of the important although not the most important. The problem of War has until now been isolated from the underlying conceptions of Revolutionary Syndicalism. It was generally maintained that wars among the States are crimes against humanity, and against the working class especially. Starting with this fundamental position one had to find means by which proletarian action would prevent such wars.

Such ideas and tasks no doubt had relative importance. But they also had a drawback which is becoming more and more evident. *The struggle against war is not conceived with sufficient clarity as an integral and organic part of the class struggle of the proletariat.* What we have to keep in mind is that the "pacific" rivalry backed up by the power of armaments, the direct preparation of the war and the war itself are all various phases of the development of the capitalist State which conditions the struggle of the working class. The task of the labor movement does not consist in proclaiming in a doctrinaire manner "Peace at any Price," nor of course "War at any Price." Instead, all the energies of the workers should be directed toward two tasks. It is necessary to conserve and defend the ideological and political independence of the labor movement: this remains the fundamental task. And following from it, as its immediate consequence, is the necessity of making use of every phase of capitalist development in order to intensify the class struggle with the aim of bringing about the Social Revolution.

*How to go about these tasks should be determined in each case by particular circumstances.* In certain situations it is necessary to transform the instinctive opposition of the masses to war into revolutionary hatred for the governments who are organizing such wars. In other circumstances it is necessary to make use of the government's attempts to increase armaments and provoke war

under the slogan "for the defense of Democracies") for the purpose of intensifying the class struggle. In certain countries it is the duty of the working class to try to bring about peace by working toward the military defeat of its own government: this is true of the Fascist States. *But on the other hand, certain situations might present themselves in which the working class would have to become the most active and irreconcilable partisan of war.* The Republican and semi-Socialist Spain, and France in the war of 1871—after the downfall of the Emperor—are two instances exemplifying our statement. The working class in general should not reject any course which might offer the possibility of carrying out a proletarian revolution.

We realize that these conceptions will raise many doubts. They may be regarded as an attempt to go back upon the firm will to peace and as backsliding toward the vacillating ground of relativism and opportunism. But nevertheless we must look at these things with our eyes open! Could it be for instance the task of the labor movement of the so-called democratic countries to force its own government to make ever new concessions in the face of the ever-growing demands of the Fascist powers, thus unwittingly collaborating with the Fascist elements—and that solely because such concessions might save the apparent peace for another fleeting moment? That, of course, could hardly be the task of the labor movement. But it is here precisely that we have the implications of the principle "Peace at any Price."

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

*It is with the warmest feeling that we offer felicitations to Emma Goldman on the occasion of her 70th Birthday. We wish the great pioneer of our movement many more happy and*

JUNE

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27

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1869



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1939

*Emma Goldman*

*useful years. Comrades may telegraph personal greetings to E. G. Colton, 295 Vaughan Rd., Toronto, Canada.*

THE contradictions, the crises, and the catastrophes of modern capitalism brought forth a socialist revolutionary movement of the proletarian masses whose purpose is the materialization of *social justice*. In this struggle what is the special attitude of the libertarian revolutionists?

They oppose historical fatalism and emphasize their creative will to struggle towards the creation of a new social order; they are opposed to the thought, born out of exhausted slave mentality, that equality can be realized by force from above. Social justice can only come alive in freedom, and freedom can be deserved and obtained only if it is "conquered anew every day." The libertarian revolutionists therefore consider freedom not only as an end but also as a means; they propagate direct action in all its forms and warn against amalgamation of revolutionary aims with capitalist interests and existing political factors.

But the libertarian idea is no "ism" deriving from a salvationist doctrine "revealed" by some great personality. Anarchism gives no rules of conduct appropriate for all times—its only rule is the will to libertarian activity; creative construction from below; the resistance against dictatorship, against regimentation, against sapping the initiative of the people.

Neither is Revolutionary Syndicalism, in which many Anarchists see one of the most important means in the struggle for liberty, a mechanical recipe for the changing of human society. It is mainly a principle of the movement, of the struggle, a definite tendency of reconstruction. In no book is this formula laid down.

Proudhon and Bakunin, ardent lovers of freedom, and great haters of dictatorship, fought for various aspirations and experiments; they united with and parted from men of real or alleged similarity of opinions. They revised occasionally their own theories, they started from the beginning again, they learned continuously, and occasionally even contradicted themselves. They were men bound by formulas as little as were Gustav Landauer and Erich Muhsam in the Bavarian Revolution of 1919. They were libertarian revolutionists, they wanted only one thing, to be with the people and to try to teach them something of their libertarian ideal.

The struggle of the CNT-FAI\*, 1936-39 was also an attempt born of libertarian will and was defeated in the struggle against a world of internal and external enemies due to the passivity of the proletarian masses of Europe and the absence of a strong libertarian movement in non-Spanish countries.

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\* CNT — The Spanish anarcho-syndicalist national Confederation of Labor. FAI—The Iberian Anarchist Federation.

It is not our aim to determine whether the revolutionists of the CNT and the FAI remained faithful to the tenets of some ready made social recipes in the difficult struggle, in which they took upon themselves so much responsibility in their complicated social, political labors during the last three years. Popular movements, historical cataclysms, which put large masses in action are determined by such a great number of super-individual and objective factors that they have something of the power of forces of nature. A movement like that of the Spanish anti-Fascist people of 1936-39 must be understood from its conditions and underlying factors. These conditions were external (the victorious progress of Fascism in other countries and the defeatist attitude of the labor movement in all Europe) and internal (the co-existence of two numerically more or less equally strong labor organizations, the CNT and the UGT; the paucity of arms and the inevitable dependency on some foreign state for armaments). When one recognizes these underlying factors one must admit that the general line or the attitude of the CNT-FAI was correct, because no other would have been possible: renouncing of immediate realization of the Anarchist ideals; the attempt at understanding with the other Socialist trade union tendency; attempt at the creation and maintenance of an anti-Fascist unity with other political groups and even among various social classes.

In this connection it is certainly necessary to point out errors of omission and commission. The CNT-FAI unfortunately did not know Bolshevism as well as we foreign comrades. The CNT was less well organized than it should have been and hence the weakness it evidenced in relations with other anti-fascist groups and social forces. It was unfortunately too credulous and idealistic in relations with its allies. But this attitude does not dishonor it. Nevertheless, that which the CNT-FAI has done will prove to be a creative farce in the subsequent history of social struggles if we understand the positive core of the Spanish libertarian struggle and learn from it. Not only the magnificent impulse of the direct action of July 19, 1936 but also the political tendency of cooperation with other elements, the work of Social Reconstruction of 1936-39, are all rich teachings and have a great libertarian content.

In short the lessons from Spain can be summed up as follows. 1). Direct action is superior to parliamentary action. The July 19th was possible not in the country of the "so far advanced" Marxist German labor movement but in Spain inspired by Anarcho-Syndicalism.

2). Taking over of the means of production by the workers and their economic organizations is the real meaning of every struggle against Fascism and at the same time their only guarantee of an advance in the direction of Socialism and freedom. All attempts at a Socialism by

decrees, be it within bourgeois society or under "revolutionary party dictatorship" have failed so far as shown by the Weimar-Germany, Stalin-Russia, etc.

3). The economic labor organization is as a means of struggle and social reconstruction superior over the political party as direct action is superior to parliamentary action. The struggle against Fascism, the forming of militias and the popular army, and the continuation and reorganization of production became possible only because there was in Spain, a libertarian, revolutionary, constructive labor movement. The political parties played in these events only a parasitic role.

The lessons of the Spanish struggles are well recognized and in order to bring those lessons across to the masses of workers, peasant and intellectuals it is necessary to carry on an educational campaign dealing with the actual basis and aims of the Spanish anti-Fascist movement. Such a campaign should also be in the nature of propaganda for a new, libertarian, Socialism and for the rebirth of the labor movement in the spirit of direct action.

We need not be ashamed to admit that the Spanish struggle also brought certain insights to the Anarchist and the Revolutionary Syndicalist movement which must be taken account of in our struggle for the regeneration of the labor movement. I shall try here briefly to outline some of these lessons.

1). The Libertarian movement must learn to think "politically," that is, it has to adapt its daily demands to the level of the understanding of the masses, to what the masses themselves might practically want to achieve within the framework of given national and international relationships. Such partial demands and achievements of a social as well as political nature amply repay the revolutionary energies spent; the criterion of the worth of such demands lies only in their libertarian content, in the releasing of the active initiative of the people themselves, the ceaseless proclaiming of "the social revolution as the only cure" can only dull the fighting vigor of the masses, and very often it is only an excuse for sectarian isolation and lack of activity.

2). The formula of class struggle must be supplemented by the realization that *Socialism if it does not want to degenerate into a brutal dictatorship, is possible only as an alliance between workers, working peasants, and the working middle strata of the city as well as intellectuals.* The CNT was in this respect badly prepared and therefore it suffered quite a number of defeats, but the course it followed was correct. The great obstacle was that the anti-proletarian instinct of the petty-bourgeoisie was mobilized by Moscow and directed against the CNT. But in spite of that some cooperation with various social layers is necessary even now in the libertarian struggle, and more so on the morrow in socialist reconstruction. The CNT never collaborated with the "bourgeoisie"; the big bourgeoisie was expropriated and it disappeared. It stands to reason of course that cooperation between

workers and the middle classes does not mean that we have to fall upon the neck of the petty-bourgeois. The workers have to be alert, vigilant, astute. But anyone who wants to solve everything by the method of a mere struggle of the industrial proletariat is either a utopian or a partisan of dictatorship. It is pure nonsense to substitute the realization of freedom with the extermination of all other currents within the social movement. This is the line taken by some of our comrades.

The CNT-FAI made certain mistakes. Their social and political positions left much to be desired; their work abroad should have leaned much stronger upon the experience of foreign libertarian movements: all that is true. But the CNT-FAI did not go back upon their basic ideas, only the tactical means used by them were not sufficiently thought out because they had to face a situation which had not been foreseen. The CNT-FAI have a great advantage over the other radical movements: they are not sectarian but are as one with the great mass of the people whose needs and movements they express directly. Notwithstanding many weaknesses and shortcomings of the libertarian tactics in Spain, the proletariat of the world and the forces of all countries striving for freedom and social emancipation have much more to learn from such tactics than ground for criticism. And this goes for us too.

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## A LETTER FROM A SEAMAN

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To The Editor of Vanguard:

The art of rationalizing folly and treachery has been advanced another step by the dialectical geniuses who run the Stalinist dominated National Maritime Union. Joe Curran's stooges called off the recent N.M.U. oil tanker strike and ordered the men back on the ships because, they said, the strike had become a lockout and the best way to fight a lockout is from the inside. Fancy reasoning. . . . Now let us get a look at the facts behind the tale.

Last year's tanker agreement, was hailed as near perfect by union officials, who tried to pass off the preferential company hiring halls clause, (which was severely criticized by the membership) as a good *closed shop contract*. When the agreement went into effect the commissars put the skids on all militant action taken by crews who were dissatisfied and suspicious of its true value. Clarifications were constantly demanded by tanker crews, but no real adjustments were made. The principal demand was for union hall hiring, in place of the company office hiring halls of old.

High handed methods used in drawing up that agreement caused discontent with the N.M.U. negotiation policy. To avoid last year's embarrassment the Communists allowed elected representatives from tankers to compose a negotiating committee to present the demands of the seamen to the tanker operators. Standard Oil led with the first punch by announcing that all passes to union representatives to board vessels were cancelled, and other companies followed suit. When the draft of the proposed agreement, which called for the closed shop, union hall hiring, wage increase, and clarification of working rules was presented, the companies dismissed it in effect, and called the negotiating committee too irresponsible. With this the committee's only recourse was to recommend strike action.

The strike was enthusiastically endorsed by the members. Once

called, the strike received support on the Pacific Coast; and from the I.W.W. seamen as well as the S.I.U. From the very first many seamen realized that the strike was a rather lepid affair, though Curran's policy committee was daily assuring the men that over seventy ships were tied up, then proceeded to send seamen uptown to picket gasoline stations, requesting the public to boycott "hot" oil: good publicity, but a diversion from the central task. At the same time they allowed links to go freely to and from the struck ships! All action of freighter and passenger crews to strike ships using "hot" oil as fuel was discouraged. Cooperation in the form of job action by other unions was refused. This policy was thoroughly exposed by West Coast and I.W.W. seamen, who recommended direct action on all ships using "hot" oil. Moreover, nothing was done in the oil refineries or oil fields, where workers are organized in a C.I.O. union. The sacred contracts must be enforced!

With no one to guard struck ships the link crews sailed them and continue to do so. One or two small companies were forced to sign an agreement similar to last year's. The strike was a fizzle and a scapegoat had to be found.

The executive of the N.M.U. brought up non-Communist officials on charges of being agents of the ship owners to divert attention from the strike, although the real facts concerning some of them, especially Jerry King's group, had been thoroughly exposed many months ago by the Rank and File Pilot, Sailors Union of the Pacific, Marine Transport Workers Union, (I.W.W.), and M.F.O.W.W. of the Pacific. Naturally the Communists charged many honest unionists with dealing in phoney lay-outs to create more confusion and to cover up their false strike policy.

In the midst of this confusion the strike was called off. Many seamen know that the "commie" politicians were placed in a position of either striking all ships using "hot" oil, requesting the C.I.O. to strike the oil industry, thus embarrassing the Roosevelt administration with another general strike, or admitting defeat in calling the whole thing off.

Now these defeated strikers must look elsewhere for employment while 'links', many trained by the Maritime Commission, sail their ships.

A Deckhand.

## BAKUNIN IN ENGLISH

Readers of the *Vanguard* will welcome the news of the publication, for the first time in the English language, of the works of Michael Bakunin. The major writings of Bakunin were compiled, and arranged to form a systematic exposition of Bakunin's anarchist philosophy, by G. Maximov and are being published in book form by the Bakunin Publications Committee of Chicago, Illinois. The \$408.53 collected to date will not be sufficient for the book to appear, as scheduled, early this fall. You are urged to send contributions immediately to B. Yelensky, 3332 Potomac Ave., Chicago, Ill.

To aid in the collection of funds for this book the Vanguard Group of New York is starting a committee here. All those interested should write to us at once at 45 West 17th Street.

## NEW MASSES ETHICS

Allegedly a contridition by Jacques Maritain, French Catholic writer, a recent New Masses featured article on Anti-Semitism was in fact lifted without permission from a pamphlet issued by the National Conference of Jews and Christians and written by Maritain. Of special interest to the student of Stalinism is this: Maritain's anti-Stalinist statements contained in the pamphlet were simply deleted in the New Masses reprint.

## MR. LEWIS TOSSES A BOOMERANG

Within recent weeks a number of court actions have been taken against unions under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act to recover damages resulting from strikes, namely the Apex case in Philadelphia, the New England Truckers and the Republic Steel suit against the S.W.O.C. The Apex verdict of nearly three-quarters of a million dollars was not however the first of these attempts to bludgeon the unions into submission. We are sorry to say the John L. Lewis himself demonstrated to the capitalist class the efficacy of this nefarious method of legal persecution. Several months back a \$400,000 damage suit was filed by the United Electric Coal Company against the Progressive Mine Workers of America. The suit grew out of a controversy revolving around the company's Red Ray mine at Freeburg, Illinois. The employees at the mine were all Progressive miners, but the operator refused to sign a P.M.W.A. contract. He imported men to operate the shaft under a U.M.W.A. agreement whereupon the Progressive miners peacefully picketed the mine and stopped it from operating. No damage was done either to mine or property yet the company filed the damage suit against the P.M.W.A. charging loss of profits among other things. During the course of the trial Lewis' U.M.W.A. injected itself in the case as "a friend of the court" and assisted in the prosecution of the Progressive union. The union was fined \$17,000. The capitalists learn quickly John L.—legality is a double edged sword.

## FOR SERVICES RENDERED

Mike Quill's Transport Workers Union is praised in the annual stockholders' report of the Fifth Avenue Coach Company and the New York City Omnibus Corp.

"Intelligent," "sincere," "enlightened," and "progressive" are some of the adjectives applied by the labor-hating John A. Ritchie who found that although original wage demands were "excessive," they were subsequently "modified" because the "prosperity of one is wholly dependent upon the prosperity of the other."

At the same time Quill's boss, Lewis, charges Green with seeking and receiving "the aid, advice and counsel of representatives of the National Association of Manufacturers" to knife the Wagner act. Doesn't one hand know what the other is doing?

## BOOK REVIEW

### SCIENCE IN THE LIGHT OF MARXIST PHILOSOPHY

*The Marxist Philosophy and the Sciences*

by J. B. S. HALDANE

New York, 1939, Random House, 214 pp.

Professor J. B. S. Haldane, famous British scientist and one of the most recent converts to philosophical Marxism, tries in this small volume to give a Marxist interpretation of the sciences. In his preface, he remarks: "I have tried to apply Marxism to the scientific problems of my own day, as Engels did over many years and Lenin in 1908." The first chapter, accordingly, deals with some Marxist principles, such as pragmatism and materialism. Particular attention is paid by the author to the fundamentals of "dialectical materialism," to wit: the unity of opposites, the passage of quantity into quality, and the principle of the negation of negation, or, what is the same, transformation into the opposite. This introductory chapter presents, in a nutshell the main "working hypotheses," the spiritual tools, of philosophic Marxism.

In the following chapters—Mathematics and Cosmology,

(Continued on page 16)

# AN ANSWER TO KROPOTKIN

## HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

With this issue of the *Vanguard* we are instituting a new policy of running each month an important document or article from the archives of Anarchist theory and practice. We feel that it is most timely to start this series with the following article published in the *London Spur* in 1915 in criticism of Kropotkin's pro-ally stand on the War, which was based largely on the premise that Germany, or Kaiserism, was the cradle of reaction and presented a threat to human values, so great that it nullified all other considerations. Today as in 1915 the same questions pose themselves—with Fascism substituted for Kaiserism. Have the workers a fatherland? Is British Imperialism worth fighting for . . . and is Fascism the only alternative? We feel that many of the truths in the position of the *Spur* comrades should be truths for all Anarchists and that a reiteration of these fundamentals should be of great help in enabling us to resolve the great peril that is creeping up on us slowly but ineluctably.

## AN ANSWER TO KROPOTKIN— A STUDY IN FACT

THE Russian despotism is older, much older, than the present German State. It also is much older than the Prussian State, which has had such a terrible influence on the political and social development of Germany. Those who are at all acquainted with history, know that the Prussian State developed directly under the protection of Russian and French absolutism. The Dukes of Brandenburg—i.e., the predecessors of the Prussian Monarchy—were only paid servants of the French Feudalistic Monarchy; and the Prussian State was allowed to develop as a means of breaking the Austrian political power in Europe, a weapon in the hands of the French despots against the Hapsburg dynasty. The founders of the Prussian State were not allowed to have any political will of their own. They only were permitted to serve as tools in the hands of Russian and French despotism.

Opinions differ as to which state is the greatest menace to the development of freedom in Europe. To Kropotkin, the centre of reaction is Berlin—and he has complained that, unfortunately, he is too old to shoulder a gun to defend France against German Huns. Bebel made a similar declaration twelve years ago when he avowed that, were there a war between Russia and Germany, he would take a gun and march, shoulder to shoulder, with the German bourgeoisie against barbaric Russia. To him, the centre of reaction was no other place than Petersburg, and he had as many arguments to urge against Russia as Kropotkin has against Germany. Had Bebel had the opportunity of reading Kropotkin's *Terror in Russia* he would have many more undoubtedly. In his reasons, Bebel was as correct as Kropotkin; in his conclusions, as false. When Bebel said he would take up a gun and march with the German bourgeoisie against Russia, he denied, thereby, everything he had stated about the "proletarian class struggle." And when Kropotkin said, in his interview with the Russian lawyer, Azeff, "that the people of the Allies must all take an active part in the present war and come to the assistance of their respective governments," it was as complete a denial of the elementary Anarchist principles which he has expounded in such a brilliant way.

That the German Social Democratic Party regards the war from the same point of view as Kropotkin, but looks for the enemy in the opposite direction, is evidenced by the following quotation from *Vorwarts*:

"The victory over the Allies of Russia is only necessary be-

cause they are allied with Czarism. But that necessity exists only as long as England and France may hinder the destruction of Czarism. . . . We must not pursue, therefore, a policy which may prolong the enmity between Germany and the West European countries, i.e., Germany must not seize any territory nor interfere in the integrity and independence of other nationalities, as that would give Russia the opportunity of playing the part of conciliator in Europe, even should she be beaten. . . .

"If we will not be able to defeat Czarism, should the strategical exigency take the place of the political necessity, it may happen the present war will result in another 'Holy Alliance,' whatever the intention of the rulers might be. Instead of an Alliance of the civilized nations, Czarism will continue to hold its ruling power. . . . If it should prove to be the case, the present war has lost all its justification.

"No! This war must not be a means of usurpation and the building up of a new world-power in the place of the British and Russian world-power; but it must be the means of freeing all nations. Freedom from Muscovitism; freedom and independence for Poland and Finland; a free development for the great Russian nation herself, and the destruction of the unnatural alliance of two civilized nations with barbaric Czarism—this is the aim that called out the enthusiasm of the German people, and hence their readiness to make the necessary sacrifices."

The above view, no less than Kropotkin's, may be held by an ordinary radical citizen. It has nothing in common with Socialism, and less with Anarchism. In both cases, it seems to be forgotten that this war, like any in the past, is not in the interest of the so-called culture problems, but to advance certain economic and political ambitions; to extend the sphere of the power of the State and capitalism in the respective countries; particularly a competition of power between British and German capitalism. None of us know much of the secret intrigues of diplomacy. Hence we cannot say who is foremost in responsibility for the present catastrophe, but we know for certain that all governments have been participating in the secret intrigues and diplomacy of the finance kings. They have been preparing for this war for years, and none were surprised by the latest developments.

In his last work, *The Modern State*, in the chapter entitled, "The War," Kropotkin explicitly declares that the loan of £50,000,000 the Russian Government received from French capitalists in 1906, under the protection of the French Republic, was accepted for the purpose of crushing the revolution. Kropotkin details the enormous corruption in the French world of finance and ends with these sarcastic words:

"What a lucky incident it is! The Government of a big State is in danger! It has to suppress a Revolution! Such luck does not occur every day!"

But in his letter to Steffen, Kropotkin makes no mention of this disgraceful betrayal of the Russian revolutionaries by the Republican finance kings. Instead he says:

"Let us not forget, again, that when France advanced the loan to the Russian autocracy in 1906, it was because she felt that, if Russia was unable to reform her army after defeat in Manchuria, France would be torn to pieces by Germany, Austria, and Italy, who were allied against her."

We do not know the secret plans of the German Government, and we expect anything but good from her. But, with the best will in the world to believe what he says, we cannot see the least logic in Kropotkin's assertion. If Germany really meant

to destroy France and occupy Finland, etc., as Kropotkin states, the question is: "Why did she not seize the opportunity when the Russian army was paralyzed so completely after its defeat in Manchuria? Why did she make no attempt to realize her ambition? Just at that moment the German despot addressed to Nicholas the famous telegram: '*Russia's mourning is Germany's mourning.*'" It would have been so easy for it to have been Russia's mourning and Germany's joy!

No! There is no reason, whatever, to change our former attitude with regard to the State and Capitalism. If a revolution had broken out in France, and the Kaiser, with his armies, had attacked her in order to suppress it, then even we would have taken a gun in defence of France. Only in such circumstances can Socialists and Anarchists justify war. Every other war is only a curse to mankind, a hindrance to real progress, and an enemy to every development of freedom. Such is the present war. And as anarchists we still stand, to-day, for the same principles as Kropotkin formerly represented with us, and which we now represent without him and against him.

The whole civil press in Britain and France, the statesmen and politicians, use the same arguments as are employed now by Kropotkin. They all talk of the cultural meaning of this war, and condemn Germany for invading the neutrality of Belgium and for attacking France. But such disgraceful acts are not confined to the German State and the German "Huns." Those great statesmen know this only too well. The subordination of India and Egypt, and the attack on the Transvaal by Britain; the suppression of Morocco by France; the murderous conduct of Italy in Tripoli, etc., prove that the "Huns" do not live in Germany only.

We certainly condemn the brutal deeds of the German armies in Belgium, and our entire sympathy goes out to the innocent victims of the bestiality of militarism. Our sympathy goes out, also, to the unfortunate inhabitants of Galicia, East Prussia, etc., who suffer the same pain and are in a like helpless condition. They are, undoubtedly, no more responsible for the crimes of their respective governments than are the peasants and workers of Belgium. It is not because we stand for one or the other of the robbers that we tender our sympathy, but because we carry on a fight against the whole murderous system, and its brutal and tyrannical representatives in order to bring about a brighter and a better future for mankind.

Militarism may be developed more in Germany, but its spirit is everywhere the same. It is the spirit of barbarism, tyranny, and brutal force. Militarists like Kitchener and Roberts, Joffre and Favre, Moltke and Klück, belong to different nations, but are united through ideas and aims, and are, everywhere, the tools of reaction.

Kropotkin talks about the degradation of the German nation during the last forty years, and its thirst for war. According to him, every German is a born soldier, a wild savage who always is ready to spring upon his prey. Kropotkin sees no difference between the German State and the German people. If forty years could produce such a change in a nation, the question is: Then in what condition of decadence and degradation must the Russians be, who were brought up for centuries under the yoke of brutal despotism?

We do not deny the psychological influence of the military system on the spirit of the masses. We are not blind to the corrupting impression made by the pro-German agitation. Though we detest with all our heart this method of poisoning the minds of the people, we must say that Kropotkin's vision of the German people has no connection whatever with the reality. The Germans are no more warlike than any other people. On the contrary, they are inclined to be more peaceful than most other nations. The German Anarchists and Revolutionists find it

a hard fight to overcome the pacifism of their countrymen. Were the Germans more warlike, they would long since have overthrown their military yoke. This sounds paradoxical, perhaps, but those who are acquainted with Germany know this to be only too true.

Thousands of young men leave their fatherland every year, because they hate the barracks like poison. Thousands ruin their health and make cripples of themselves, for the same reason. If they should abolish compulsory service in Germany, not a single soldier would be left in the barracks. Had the German people had any say, we would have no war. The same is true of other nations, no doubt. This is really the tragedy, that the people allow themselves to be ruled by a handful of bandits!

True, the spirit that rules Germany, today, is one of hate, revenge, and murder. The same is true of Britain, Russia, and France. Let Kropotkin only glimpse at the mediaeval accusations against the Germans, with which the British press is filled daily. Let him give his own verdict about the pogrom-tactics of the Conservative press, and the brutal persecution of thousands of German workers and their families in this country, that cannot be justified on any grounds of exigency. Then let him tell us, if Germany alone is the home of degradation and decadence.

A few months ago, the word "Cossack" embodied with it, in this country, the idea of barbarism and brutality. Today, the Cossack is the hero of the whole English press. Men like Chesterton and Cunningham Grahame tell us of "the democratic spirit" in Russia, and Kropotkin's daughter idealises the Russian officer in the Liberal *Daily News*. And this change came about in a few weeks, not in forty years. Is this not a sign of decadence?

We will say nothing about Kropotkin's optimism over Russia's near future. But, if he thinks that, "the unity of all parties against the common enemy will make it impossible for that country to go back to its old autocracy," we sincerely hope that he will not find himself deceived. So far the Russian government has made no compromise with the progressives, but the revolutionaries have compromised with Czarism. Not only has the Russian despot not allowed the least freedom for the moment, but he has suppressed all hitherto existing liberties. For instance, the rights enjoyed by the Jewish people in those parts of Austria that Russia has captured. The Czar has made a few indefinite promises, that is all. Kropotkin knows best what value such "promises" have.

He opines that it is dangerous for a despot to play with revolution. We do not doubt the danger, but we know, also, that often despotism is victorious. The Prussian despot promised his people a constitution, if they would help him defeat Napoleon I. But when the people had driven off the French, the King forgot the constitution and became a member of the Holy Alliance. It is really dangerous for the despot to play with revolution. But it is much more dangerous for revolutionaries to play with despotism.

Kropotkin appeals to those who stand for the great principles written on the banner of the International. We stand for them: that is why we are against Kropotkin in the present crisis. The International taught us that the workers have their own interests, which are the same in all countries. It did not teach us that we had to march shoulder to shoulder with our governments, but to unite in the struggle against all government, against all forms of exploitation. On the banner of the International was *not* written: "Proletarians of all lands, *kill* each other!" But: "Proletarians of all lands, *unite!*" Kropotkin's attitude involves the bankruptcy of international solidarity. Of that he will convince himself when the war is over. But we stand firm and true to the old banner of Anarchism, against State and Capitalism, for the complete emancipation of the whole human race.



(Continued from page 13)

Quantum Theory and Chemistry, Biology, Psychology, Sociology—the author discusses the several sciences or, to be more precise, their newest generalizations and underlying theories, in the light of Marxist dialectics. Deeply steeped in the natural sciences, Professor Haldane approaches nearer than anybody else, of whom we can think at the moment, to an ideal of a concise and convincing formulation of the theories evolved in modern times by Einstein, Planck, Eddington and others. The author, with the help of the hypotheses of “dialmat” (as they call dialectical materialism in Soviet Russia) a tools and yard-sticks, measures and analyses the degree of correspondence between the newest scientific concepts on the one hand and the *objective* (that is, existing outside of our cognition) and ever-changing *reality* on the other hand.

Now, Prof. Haldane, following the lead of Prof. L. Hogben, points out that the development of mathematics should be studied in the light of historical materialism. True, all the sciences, historically, are related to the economic systems in which they developed and to the economic needs of the society in question. But in all sciences, and more especially in mathematics, there is present an element of so to speak intuitive or artistic invention, and this is a matter of individual creation. In this respect, mainly, the man of genius is uncommensurable with all the rest of the humans living under the same economic system. In all the sciences, for that matter, a solution of a hard problem is apt to gain additional value and permanence from the elegance, the wit and gracefulness with which the question in hand has been resolved.

This all-important aspect of the growth of sciences in relation to the past history of scientific methods is likely to be overlooked by all those who, travelling in the footsteps of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, insist on the priority of matter and call themselves “materialists.”

On the whole, the dialectical materialism fathered by Engels and made much of by Lenin, just as any other scientific hypothesis (as for instance Darwin's natural selection, etc.), should be freely applied to the reinterpretation of natural sciences. This is to be done, if not for any other valid reason, then simply in order to counteract and correct the bad effects of the previous illogical working hypotheses of scholasticism, Christian theology and so on.

The main danger comes from an entirely different consideration. Natural scientists, in the fulness of their joy at the new discovery, to wit, the fitness of dialectical materialism as the key to the progress of science, are likely to overlook the fundamental difference between physical and social sciences. In most cases, they transplant the working hypotheses of philosophical materialism and of Hegelian logic, together with the rest of Marxism, to fields which are far beyond the competence even of the most brilliant mathematicians, physicists, chemists, and biologists. Thus, in our case, J. B. S. Haldane stumbles at once as soon as he ventures out into the field of sociology, as instanced by this passage (p. 197):

I would merely point out that his (Marx) most important original contribution to economics is undoubtedly the theory of surplus value, the theory that the worker sells his labour power, for which he receives a wage; and that the surplus value which he does not receive in his wage is the difference between that wage and the value which he has added to the commodities by his work.

Now, has not the entire trend of modern technical development, of new forms of “robot” machinery, of unlimited productive efficiency of farm and factory, etc. made this Marxian concept of *surplus value*, if not obsolete, then disputable and highly controversial? The entire social economic philosophy of Karl Marx is, to say the least, behind the times. He imitated the

classical school in political economy (Adam Smith, David Ricardo, etc.) with their rigid and bloodless concepts of “economic man,” “economic motives,” “self-interest,” and so on. Just by a small trick, to wit: substituting “class for “man,” the Grand Old Man of Social-Democracy believed to have found the key to all the social processes, the solution of the age-old triangular problem: society — authority — freedom. What he achieved, however, was just this. He put one shaky abstraction in the place of another, and the new concept was still more problematic and nebulous than the old one. This, in the long run, was bound to create enormous mischief and the tragic confusion which are the curse of our times.

Few if any fail to realize nowadays that there are more aspects to the social-economic and socio-psychological problems than Marx, Engels and Lenin ever dreamt of. However, a wider and deeper sweep of imagination, in addition to enormous factual knowledge, and a fuller insight into human nature, than the one displayed by the new adepts in Marxian wisdom, Haldane and Holson, is necessary in order to build up an adequate social philosophy on a scientific basis. Such a system of scientific thought is expected to be in harmony both with the elusive, inscrutable human nature, in its individual and collective aspect, and with the highest aspirations, premonitions, and accomplishments of the human brain and brawn.

Dr. Herman Frank.

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