VIEWS AND COMMENTS

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CLEVELAND

LIBERTARIAN MEETINGS WILL BE HELD AT: 3705 West Park Road
(near Lorain and Triskett)
FRIDAY, Oct. 31 -- 8 P.M.
FRIDAY, Nov. 28 -- 8 P.M.
AND THEREAFTER ON THE LAST FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH AT THE SAME TIME.
A biography of Rudolf Rocker's long and remarkable career would encompass more than a half century in the history of the revolutionary movement. His autobiography alone (to say nothing of a mass of other material), consists of three volumes of almost 800 pages each. A comprehensive history of his life and an evaluation of his work and influence awaits future biographers. Here, we can only offer a very sketchy outline.

On Sept. 10, 1958, Rudolf Rocker died at the age of 86. He was born in Mainz, Germany, March 25, 1873. His father was a music typographer. When he was six years old his parents died and he spent his boyhood in a Catholic orphanage. Rudolf Naumma, his mother's brother, introduced him into the socialist movement. This was the time of Bismarck. The socialist movement was outlawed and functioned underground and imported its literature from abroad.

At the age of 14 he was apprenticed to bookbinders. As was the custom, the journeyman travelled throughout Europe working at his trade. Thus Rocker wandered throughout Europe afoot, absorbing and observing the customs and languages of various countries. During this time, he met and became friends with such outstanding libertarian thinkers and militant journalists as Kropotkin, Elisee Reclus, Errico Malatesta, Donela Nievenhuis, Luise Michelet and many others. Rocker was banished from revolutionary activity and lived in Paris from 1893 to 1895, broadening his libertarian concepts and contacts. Then he went to London and his trade. There he became active in the Jewish labor movement. Although he was a Non-Jew, he learned to speak and write Yiddish. He then became editor of two outstanding Yiddish publications: Arbeiter Freund, a weekly, and Gomulka, a theoretical and literary monthly to which leading libertarian thinkers contributed. He edited the papers until the outbreak of world war I. Then, for his opposition to the war, he was arrested and interned.

At the end of the war, he returned to Germany and became intensely active in the revolutionary movement. He helped organize the revolutionary syndicalist, the Workers' Union of Germany and helped publish the paper Der Syndikalist and Der Frier Arbeiter. In 1919 he took a major part in the reorganization of the International Workingmen's Association. When Hitler came to power, Rocker fled, leaving his five thousand volume library which the Nazis burned. He escaped with only the clothes on his back and the manuscript of his distinguished work, Nationalism and Culture.

Since then he has lived in the United States, devoting the rest of his life to writing and speaking. A bibliography of his books, pamphlets and articles would make a fair-sized volume. In addition to this he translated into Yiddish Kropotkin's "Words of a Rebel," Elisee Reclus' "Evolucion and Revolution" and many other works. He also did translations in other languages. His books include: Nationalism and Culture, The History of the Terrorist Movement in France, Francisco Ferrer and the Ferrer Institute, The Self-sacrifice of Youth, Johann Most, Michael Bakunin, The Tragedy of Spain, Pioneers of American Freedom, Behind Bars and Barbed Wire, and many, many others.

Very few of his works have appeared in English, although they have been translated into many other languages. The following political article, which, as far as we know, has never appeared in English, was one of three written in answer to the revisionist ideas of Dr. Maryson, a Jewish anarchist writer of that period. From the Yiddish we translate extracts from that article, which appeared in Gomulka, Dec., 1906. It illustrates Rocker's early views and it deals with a fundamental problem which has become even more acute with the passing of the years.

The best tribute that we can pay to his memory is to make more of his works known to the English speaking public.

The question of political action has been repeatedly discussed in anarchist circles. Nevertheless, we must continually deal with misunderstandings and false interpretations of our position on this point. In reality the anarchists were never opposed to political action since their ideal, anarchism, is a political doctrine. Their criticism has been directed only against a particular kind of political action, in order to arrive at a clearer conception, it is necessary to define what we mean by political action.

We have no objection to "politics" if it is understood in its original, etymological derivation.

The Greek word "polis" means city, community, association. A "politicus" is anyone who is concerned with the public affairs of the "polis." Although a strike is an economic act, it has at the same time a political character because it concerns and influences the life of the "polis," itself. The development of parliamentarianism and above all parliamentary tactics in the social movement, the meaning of "politics" has been limited so that most people think of politics as being only parliamentary action. But parliamentary action is only one particular form of general political action. It is only against this form of the anarchist directs his criticism. Our modern political parties are usually constructed the whole of political life within the narrow limits of parliaments. It is precisely parliamentary action that Comrade Maryson regards as the most important propaganda tactic for anarchism. Maryson tried to prove that parliamentary action is only a method, a way to reach a certain objective, which has nothing to do with the principles of anarchism. This is an unwarranted assumption. Principles and tactics are interwoven. We can easily understand why a liberal democrats participate in parliamentary action. There is an organic harmony between them and all other political parties. The social democrats most of the necessity of government. His opposition is only against the existing form of government.

He is not against the principle of government. This is why he strives always to capture political power. He considers the state as the only creator and defender of social life. He ignores direct action of individuals and groups and seeks to combat his opponent by the action of his representatives in parliament.

For the anarchist the problem is different. He is an opponent of every government, regardless of the form it takes and defender of social life. He does not strive but the abolition of governmental power. He cannot therefore be an agent or representative of governmental power, a wheel in the State chariot. Anarchism bases all its teachings on the free personality and the tactical expression of this teaching is individual initiative and direct action. The forms of anarchist tactics may vary according to the circumstances and the tactics of our enemies, but the struggle is itself the same.

As anarchists we know that modern parliamentarianism, the so-called representative system, is only a new form of the state. The place of the dictator is taken by the deputies. The results are the same. It is immaterial if the laws are made and imposed by one hundred or five hundred or a thousand persons. Experience demonstrates that legislation of parliamentary majorities can sometimes be just as harsh as that of a personal dictator. If the people in lands ruled by parliament enjoy more rights and freedoms than in despotic lands, it is because the government is better, but because the rulers were forced to adapt themselves to the demands of the masses. As soon as the masses become indifferent to the rights which they or their forerunners won through direct action, then even the most democratic government exposes the essence of our political and administrative nature common to all governments. It makes little difference who determines the fates of nation, whether it is an absolute king or a democratic republic. Proudhon was correct when he stated: "Parliament is nothing more than a king
with 600 heads." The anarchists want to make it impossible for one, ten, or a hundred people to rule and tyrannize over others by subjects and control their thoughts.

In working for the realization of these ideals we must never forget what is the real life source of every authoritarian power. The foundation of every government is not the police, army and other power institutions which protect the state system, but the ignorance, superstition and the respect of the masses for these institutions. These attitudes must be changed. If we ourselves participate in legislative or executive functions and become part of the mechanics of government, this work will be impossible.

In the past man could not conceive of a world without God. To him the center of all his feelings and conceptions was God. Upon this blind fanaticism the church built its power. The pioneers of free thought were forced to struggle bitterly and long against the established institutions to overcome the superstition of the masses for the church and other agencies. Direct attack was the only way to break the power of the church.

In the period of absolute monarchy, the king was revered almost as God. He and his court were the center of life. Everything revolved around him and his immediate entourage. At that time in society without a king meant for most people the end of the world. We know how much labor and sacrifice it took to bring down the absolutist superstition and to prove to people that the king is only an ordinary man, very often an inferior one at that; that his power rested on the ignorance of his subjects.

Now the great superstition is the worship and belief in the "king with the 600 heads." Parliamentaryism is the most terrible lie of our time. The people expect everything from the state and its laws. Parliament is regarded as the foundation of life. The people cannot conceive of how society can exist without statist executive and legislative institutions. Just as in the past man could not imagine a world without a God and without a King, the spiritual and cultural nontenities who play the part of anointed despots. The newspapers are full of parliamentary reports as if nothing existed in the world outside of the few selected candidates who are nominated by lawyers who regard themselves and are regarded by others as the lords of life. To destroy this superstition is our task. If we follow the advice of Dr. Marxson we would not weaken but support and sanction this superstition of the omnipotence of the all powerful parliamentary government, because we ourselves would be taking part in parliamentary action.

Don't tell me that the anarchist deputé will not be able to oppose position to ours on this or that problem in parliament, we would not be able to stop him. As a delegate to an ordinary gathering, we would just laugh at him, if he failed to represent us. He could do nothing to us. As deputy his personal will supernaces our joint decision. He could force us to accept his decision because he gives his vote for or against a particular piece of legislation. His personal will becomes a legal and constitutive fact. This is a fact that we observe every day. We know of social-democratic deputies who voted to send troops to crush a strike. Making strength then the police, accept the budget of a government and so forth. In actual fact you will not find a deputy who always carries in his pocket the interests of his electors. It is true that you can, in the next elections, pick another deputy if the first one did not carry out your decisions. But to accept a legislator who cannot correct the harm done by his predecessor and secondly, you would not have the slightest assurance that the second one will be any better than the first. Perhaps you will answer me that our candidate would after all be an anarchist and not a social-democrat. In this respect I am a sceptic. I do not believe that the name will change the fact. Anarchists are, after all, people and not angels and the fault lies not in whether a deputy calls himself an anarchist or a social-democrat, but in the fact that we ourselves give him the power to regulate our lives. And even if we were to elect the best anarchist candidate, it would not do away with the incontestable fact that we freed our fate in the hands of another person who will do with our trust what he pleases.

Whether an anarchist can or should participate in elections, I leave to the reader to decide for himself. As far as I am personally concerned, my opinion is that an anarchist should not participate in elections. If he did he would betray his anarchist principles and convictions.

It is not necessary to explain in detail the link between the lowest and dirtiest passions of the mob as in the election period and if a person cannot stoop to sewer politics he will have no right to an election. Idealism will never get him elected, for idealism and politics are two different things.

Comrade Marxson assures us that he does not want to compromise in any way. His opinion is that the anarchist deputy need never bypass the anarchist principles. But I ask him if he earnestly considered the peculiar role that our anarchist would have to play in the chambers of parliament and the kind of speech our delegate delivers to the voters in the electoral campaign? He would have to tell the voters that it is senseless to expect him from parliamentary politics to solve their problems and not to solve them in parliament, like all other governments, would be the political instruments of the ruling classes whose purpose is to perpetuate the economic and social slavery of the people. He would have to declare that he could do nothing for them and for this he deserves to be denied solidarity in parliament. As an anarchist, he would have to explain that the representative system is nothing more than a new form of political slavery. He would have to explain that no person can represent another. Just as another person cannot eat, drink and sleep for him, so he cannot do this for himself. This is why, dear voter, I ask you not to vote for me or any other candidate.

What impression would such a speech make? The candidate would be looked upon as a political clown who is not in his right mind. The proposal of Comrade Marxson to use the parliamentary tribune as a propaganda stage is by no means new.
This was the original position of the social-democracy. As early as 1887 the congress of the German socia-democrats in St. Gallen decided that social democratic deputies should not, under any circumstances, take part in the making of laws and should limit themselves to criticizing and making proposals. The socialist propaganda was the only place from which we can speak to the people and give our movement a practical importance. I think that this is a mistake. The majority of the people are not interested in politics. The number of those who take the trouble to read the parliamentary reports are very few. The agitation in the workshops, in exchange of the ruling classes. This is why the agenda carries the stamp of those classes.

I do not understand how it is that Comrade Maryson comes with his proposal at this time when anarchism is making good progress in most of the European countries. In France we have the revolutionary labor movement whose aims and tactics are closely linked with anarchist demands. They are against the wage system and against every government. They advocate the autonomy of the communes and declare that it is the great historic mission of the unions to organize the coming communist production and the political administration of every commune. They are anti-parliamentarist and for direct action. Their program notwithstanding, effective propagandists are outspoke anarchistic who influence the entire French labor movement. The same in true in French Switzerland, where the Holländische and the Social Revolution, to say nothing of Spain, whose labor movement had from the outset as anarchist character. Here is our place in the union, in the people. This is the field for our activity, where the work will be lost.

It is not true, Comrade Maryson, that only the parliament is possible to interest the people. Here is an example from the history of the first International Workingmen’s Association.” This powerful organization had within a short time united two million workers in its ranks, despite the fact that it rejected parliamentary action. Later, when Marx and Engels tried to introduce parliamentary action there came the split, and the International went under.

Let us consider that arbitrary power has seldom or never been introduced into any country at once. It must be introduced by slow degrees, and as it were by step by step, lest the people see its approach.

--Lord Chesterfield

The Mechanics Educational Society of America (MESSA) was an independent union of machine tool workers in the AFL-CIO on the condition that it would keep its autonomy. It still retains its military, its rank file control, its bargaining power, and its autonomy and its social idealism. In these respects, it is superior to any of the unions in the AFL-CIO. This is all to the good. But, in urging its members to vote for "labor's friends," we see the beginning of a trend which will nullify these positive values. The fact that they are long-range and far-reaching, and the effects of parliamentary action have been one of the main causes for the degeneration of many fine and upstanding unions. However, we are not here concerned with this serious problem, which we have dealt with and will continue to discuss in coming issues of View and these "big unions" to be built on the cruel disillusionments and shattered hopes and aspirations of thousands of captive and stolen workers, who have no idea who knows what and that so adversely affect their lives and the livelihood of their families? Is it the strategy of the AFL that their smaller brother union, the Kelvinator, will take care of their own members who were working in Grand Rapids, by a secret agreement with the employer, the Kelvinator appliance plant of the American Machine and Foundry? The agreement involved the moving of the Kelvinator plant (which was organized in the MESSA) from Detroit to Grand Rapids, Michigan. The Kelvinator now jurisdiction over the additional workers in the expanded Grand Rapids plant, the UAW made a secret two-year agreement which was in every respect worse than the old contract. It provided for a wage cut, worsened of working conditions and deprived the workers of many benefits that they had already won. The UAW agreed to this dirty deal on the condition that the corporation would move its plant within six months. The exact terms of the agreement that the UAW wants to help companies to compete with their more successful rivals—at the expense of the workers. The MESSA Executive Committee gives the engineers of this report: "Edward L. Cushman, college professor, so-called li-
of progress and militant rank and file unionism will unite and smash the reactionary forces within the AFL-CIO and rebuild it on new and different lines, or, failing that, leave the thieves to themselves and build a federation which will win the support of the masses of unorganized and mis-organized workers.

Although the MESA does not go as far as the last paragraph of an article about the social responsibilities of labor which appeared in the same issue of The Educa tor indicates serious thinking about the future of the labor movement. This is a healthy sign:

"If the labor movement rejects its responsibility to champion the cause of social progress if the labor movement persists in playing footsie with those dedicated to keeping the worker in his present status—then it will have waived its jurisdiction and any form of organization must come forward to carry out this necessary job."

The State and/or Society

The lives of men and of communities is a continual contest between the tradition of power, State and authority on the one hand, and on the other--communities, and mutual aid. The preponderance of one over the other is the measure of the degree of liberty or slavery in a nation. The Jewish philosopher Martin Buber, calls these two opposing traditions, the Political principle and the Social principle and he sees them as based on the State and on Society respectively. He also makes the very important observation that the strength of the one is equivalent to the weakness of the other, that there is certainly an inverse relation between them.

In the United States, the institutions, reinforced by the observations of anthropologists and sociologists, is of great importance for Anarchists. If we weaken the State, we must reinforce Society. The totalitarians know this very well and invariably seek to destroy the social institutions that they cannot dominate. The degree to which the social principle preponderates is called by Buber, the communal content of a society.

The Anarchist's effort to transform the daily struggle in the factories and on the land, in urging workers control of industry, in his demand for education from all religious, nationalistic and authoritarian dogmas, in encouraging spontaneous and voluntary local forms of social organization, in stimulating the quality and variety of human life, is strengthening the communal content of a society. In doing this he diminishing the sphere of the State, and of the authoritarian interests that the State protects.

Today, the Anarchist sees everywhere a massive society easily manipulated by political demagogues, who are indifferent or apathetic to the revolutionary alternatives. Our task in all aspects of life is to transform the society of masses into a mass of societies.

Colin Ward

FROM OUR PRESS ABROAD:

BARCELONA, SPAIN--A court martial tried 45 persons, among them nine women, for possession of arms and explosives and recruiting anarchist groups. Lazarro Anguera and Gines Moreno, accused of assassinating a police agent in March, 1956, were condemned to death. 16 were freed, and the others were sentenced as follows: 1 to 30 years, 3 to 6 years (among them a woman), one to 7 years, another to 6, another to 2 and 18 to from 3 to 6 months.

LISBON, PORTUGAL--The ministers of the Interior and Justice have issued new decrees increasing penalties for striking. Closing of industrial and commercial establishments, curtailment or suspension of work in any public service or any other economic activity without "legitimate" cause will be punished with prison. Those who help or initiate curtailment or suspension of work will be punished with penalties of from 2 to 8 years imprisonment.

Government is the outcome of conquest.

--Lester F. Ward (Pure Sociology)

IN THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY

The Story Of The Anarchist Red Cross by B. Yelenksy.
A. Berkman Aid Fund, Chicago, 96 pp., $2.50 (available from VIEWS AND COMMENTS)

Human beings make events and history. The record is there for the guidance of coming generations. Both are needed. The honest historian always tries to get information from original records, or from reliable people who witnessed or took part in the events themselves. All too often the actors in the drama of history leave no written record of the parts they played. Significant pieces in the historical puzzle are lost forever and the missing parts are filled in by outright lies or unintentional distortions. In either case a false picture is projected.

Our fellow worker, Boris Yelenksy, understood this and decided to set the record straight. With the help of his friends he has produced a provocative little book--In The Struggle For Equality. The title is well chosen. It describes the struggle and the part he played in it. Yelenksy tells about his fifty years of unceasing activity to help the victims of oppression and injustice. He dedicated his life and his hands to "the last things for Freedom, Humanism and Justice, to those who endeavored to help these fighters by applying the principle of mutual aid."

The book begins by sketching the history of the Russian Revolutionary movement and the part played by the Anarchists. Then Yelenksy gives the history of the Anarchist Red Cross which was founded in 1905.

In telling why a special Anarchist Relief Organization became necessary he calls attention to a neglected aspect of revolutionary history--the sabotage and discrimination of many socialist-democrats against their fellow-prisoners and in the outside relief organizations. Of the vast sums collected all over the world, from Czarist times up to the present, very little reached the Anarchist prisoners. Yelenksy quotes H. Weinsteim who was jailed in Czarist times for radical activity:

--S.D.
A Look At Latin America

Vice President Nixon’s disastrous trip through Latin America has focused public attention on that area in a way in which the recent dethroning of several dictators had failed to do. However, the real motives underlying the hatred which he encountered have been deliberately obscured in the indignant splutterings of editorial writers and politicians in this country.

The United States has always been about as popular in Latin America as England was in Africa and India, and for the same reasons. This country has always followed an imperialistic policy, both politically and economically, south of the border. It wasn’t so very long ago that U.S. Marines were fighting in Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and elsewhere to impose the will of U.S. big business on the recalcitrant peoples of those countries. The lesson wasn’t lost on the Latin Americans, and just in case they should tend to forget, they have the U.S. Government’s barefaced intervention in Guatemala to remind them again of this country’s real intentions toward them. And worse still, they have seen the United States sending dollars and guns for years to support dictators such as Batista in Cuba, to cite only the most notorious examples.

Thus Nixon, who was the symbol of U.S. imperialism when he traveled in Latin America, had to face some hard truths and some harder stones as those peoples gave vent to years of hatred for what this country has done to them. For to them the United States represents dictatorship and slavery, just as surely as Russia represents the same thing in her enslaved satellites. If the people of the United States don’t like to be hated and insulted, then they should put an end once and for all to the causes thereof.

A brief rundown on the present situation in a few Latin American countries will lead to a better understanding of the forces at work there. It must be said at the beginning, however, that the various putches, revolts and revolutions which often seem meaningless at a distance are no comic opera farce but an integral part of a bitter struggle in every country of Latin America against the forces of oppression which will not cease until these people enjoy a true freedom. These events are a tribute to the tough, freedom-loving spirit of all Latin America.

ARGENTINA

The overthrow of Dictator Juan Perón did not usher in a period of tranquility in that country. Quite to the contrary, it merely lifted the lid from an already discontented people. The regime which followed Perón does not have popular support, because the military-bourgeois forces which ousted him did so, not out of love for the people, but because Perón’s large-scale robbery was spoiling their own private thievery. The people did not defend Perón, but neither did they support those who opposed him. As soon as the rebels were in power they initiated a series of dictatorial, anti-labor measures of their own, and to break the resistance of democratic, independent unions, they strengthened the mammoth, bureaucratic Confederacion General de Trabajadores, Perón’s old labor front. The workers answered with a bitterly-fought dock strike sparked by the anarcho-syndicalist Federacion Obrera Regional Argentina, and local strikes in other parts of the country. Resistance to the present autocratic regime is also growing among the students, who have demonstrated on various occasions their solidarity with the workers.

CHILE

This country still suffers under the rule of a dictatorial government. The main resistance to this state of affairs comes from the Communist-dominated unions, but all positive efforts toward revolt are hobbled by the Communist Party’s customary anti-revolutionary tactics of opportunism and my-
stifcation.

**BOLIVIA**

A revolutionary situation still exists in this country which was led by a long series of events from an autocratic regime to its present weak, left-wing government. The militant miners in Bolivia's rich tin mines are armed and virtually control the country through their unions. However, the revolution lacks direction since the miners, all of whom are Indians who speak little or no Spanish, are inaccessible to any of the existing revolutionary and political groups. At the same time, international capitalism, headed by the United States, is attempting to strangle the revolution and restore the expropriated tin barons (Patino et al.) by boycotting Bolivian tin and restricting the country's economic credit abroad. Where this situation may lead has yet to be seen.

**PARAGUAY**

This unhappy land has been under dictator's boots during most of its history. The growing guerrilla and student resistance may indicate the dawn of a better day.

**VENEZUELA AND COLOMBIA**

The overthrow of dictator Rojas Pinilla and Perez Jimenez led to unstable provisional governments in both countries. It is as yet too early to tell what may develop, but one thing is clear; the hatred of both peoples for the United States. Only a few short months ago they saw their friends and relatives shot down with U.S. arms when they revolted against their respective dictators.

**PANAMA**

The assassination of strong-man Jose Antonio Remon in 1955 led to no change in the government, which is completely controlled by the U.S. to protect the Canal Zone.

**NICARAGUA**

The assassination of dictator Somora in 1956 likewise led to no change in the state of things in this strongly U.S.-backed dictatorship. His son is now dictator. Nevertheless, the heroic example of the martyred tyrannicide, Rigoberto Lopez, set another example for the enslaved peoples of the world. Incidentally a special team of surgeons dispatched by Eisenhower failed to patch up Somora, who died of bullet wounds inflicted by Lopez. A similar team of surgeons was sent to Panama to patch up Remon with identical results.

**GUATEMALA**

A highly unstable situation resulted from the assassination of dictator Castillo Armas, who had deposed President Arbenz Guzman in 1954 in a U.S. backed revolt. There was undoubtedly considerable Communist influence in the Arbenz regime, but Communist aid to Guatemala was restricted to propaganda. Reports in the U.S. press of Communist arms shipments were proven to be false when the Arbenz regime fell with the support of the United Fruit Company. The national motive behind Arbenz' fall was the extensive confiscations of United Fruit Company land which his government was distributing among the workers. The U.S. coup considerably strengthened the Communists in Guatemala and created a most unpleasant impression in the rest of Latin America, which now washed the word of U.S. military might backing up U.S. economic exploitation when its hegemony was threatened. Despite government decrees to 20,000 of the 100,000 people marched through the streets of the capital of Guatemala on May Day of this year.

**CUBA**

A highly complicated situation has developed with the revolt against Batista. In the opposition to the military dictatorship is, on the one hand, Fidel Castro's 26th of July movement, and on the other the Directorio Revolucionario, a coalition containing student representation through their organization, the F.E.U., and various union tendencies. Also among the anti-Batista forces are several splinter parties, such as ex-President Prio Socarras' Partido Revolucionario Cuba, and the Communist Party led by the opposition, the most powerful seems to be the 26th of July, which, as a strong guerrilla force in the Sierra Maestra in Oriente, is the only force which practically controls due to strong support among the peasants and workers and certain sectors of the middle class in the capital city. The city is totalitarian in nature and its leader, Castro, has all the earmarks of being just another political opportunist. For this reason has been unable to gain any mass support in the rest of Cuba, and particularly in Havana, where his groups nevertheless carry out terrorist activities. His militaries are mostly young workers and students disillusioned with the older groups. Both the Communists and the Catholics are trying to infiltrate this movement, the latter with some success. However, if Castro has no widespread popular support, the same is true of the other opposition groups. The bureaucracy of the Arbenz regime (C.T.C.) has been perverted by years of class collaboration and support of the Batista leadership. Therefore, those elements who now wish to overthrow the dictator find that they have no influence among the workers. This was demonstrated by the failure of the general strike called recently. In fact, the Cuban people as a whole are manifestly dissatisfied with their self-appointed leaders and are disillusioned by the uninterrupted series of betrayals as they have been subjected to in the past, and see no reason why they should shed their blood to overthrow Batista only to let another little politician climb into his place. However, despite large arms shipments from the U.S., the Batista government is so weak through a total lack of popular support that it may fall at any moment, as did Peron's paper regime. What will come afterwards is impossible to say, but it is certain that the Church's unconditional support of the bloodiest butcher of them all, Trujillo. But then, the Church is sure that he isn't going to fall for a long time. And he won't, if the "Black International" has anything to say about it.

---GWL

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

Government is not reason, it is not eloquence—it is force! Like fire, it is a dangerous servant and a fearful master.

—George Washington
The Binefar Collective

Fourth of a series on THE SPANISH COLLECTIVES:

(reprinted from RESISTANCE)

In the province of Huesca, the town of Binefar was beyond doubt the chief center of collectivization. The qualities of its CNT militants had established them as the guides for a district embracing 32 villages, 28 of them wholly or partly collectivized. In Binefar itself, 700 of the 800 peasant families belonged to the Collective. There was a sizable social movement in Binefar, despite the fact that the small local industries—mills, factories, clothing and shoe-making shops, foundries —form important repair shops, etc.—employed only a tenth of the 5,000 inhabitants. In the local CNT syndicate most of the members—white number had risen to 600 in the first years of the 1931 Republic—were peasants. There were economic facts to account for the peasant predominance. In the flat, open, Aragon nature is favorable, and irrigation well planned, but the land was distributed very unequally. Of the 2,000 hectares of productive land, on which hay, sugar beets, vegetables and olives were grown, all but 400 were held by big landowners. Only about 100 of the 600 members were able to make a living from their small plots, and the remainder had to work on the lands of the rich.

The syndicate, founded in 1917, had experienced the usual ups and downs, times of relative quiet, then persecution and suppression and imprisonment of militants. When the fascist threat appeared in July, 1936, our forces were still disorganized from the last persecution. Nevertheless, the CNT-FAI militants rose to meet the danger, and took the initiative in forming a revolutionary committee on July 18th. (The municipal authorities belonged to the Popular Front and did not like fascism, but they were characterized by their inability to act; two Popular Front representatives did serve, however, on the revolutionary committee.) Within two days the barracks where the Civil Guards had retreated in the first fighting were taken by assault, and our victorious comrades departed to help liberate other villages.

The fields of the big land-owners, who fled to Huesca at the first sign of the first revolution, had not yet been harvested. The revolutionary committee took possession of the res- pers and mowers, and summoned the peasants who had previously worked on these lands as laborers. The peasants decided they would work in the interest of the whole village. To organize the work they formed groups and elected delegates.

Later, after the harvest, industry was socialized, and eventually commerce was included.

The following are the rules the popular assembly of collectivists approved:

Art. 1. The work shall be carried on in groups of 10, each of which shall name its delegate. (Later modified to seven groups of 100 members, each with a delegate. They were to plan the work, and preserve harmony among the producers, and if necessary shall apply the sanctions voted by the assembly.)

Art. 2. The delegates shall furnish the agricultural commission a daily report on the work done.

Art. 3. The agricultural committee, consisting of one member from each branch of production, shall be named by the general assembly of the Community. The committee shall report monthly on consumption and production, and supply news about other Collectives and events in Spain and abroad.

Art. 5. Direction of labor for the Collective shall be elected by the general assembly of collectivists.

Art. 6. Each member shall have a receipt for the goods he brings to the Collective.

Art. 7. Each member shall have the same rights and duties. They shall not be compelled to join either union ((the socialist UGT or anarcho-syndicalist CNT)). All that is required is that they accept completely the decisions of the Collective.

Art. 8. The capital of the Collective is part of the collective property and may not be divided up. Food shall be rationed, a part being stored away against a bad year, and in the July, 1937.

Art. 9. When needed, as for urgent agricultural work, women may be required to work, and they shall do the work assigned to them. Rigorous control shall be applied to ensure that they contribute their productive effort for the common good.

Art. 10. No one shall work before the age of 15, or do heavy work before 16.

Art. 11. The general assembly shall determine the organization of the Collective, and arrange periodic elections of the administrative commission.

In Binefar the Collective was all-embracing. Despite its past influence and importance, the syndicate had almost no role: life won out over doctrine. This was really a municipal organization. As the Soviet was the typical organization of the Russian Revolution, so was the Collective the typical organization of the Spanish Revolution.

It was no longer a matter of fighting employers but of assuring production, and this meant planning and direction and calculation of local needs and exchange needs. Production and enjoyment of goods, labor and distribution of products, are inseparably connected; and they are influenced too by the method of distribution, the moral ideas behind it. Everything is linked as the gears in a machine. In Binefar industry and agriculture had a joint treasury, there was no spirit of craft-separation, no rivalry, no disparity of wages.

An administrative commission, composed of a president, a treasurer, a secretary and two councillors, supervised all and kept daily records. The work-group delegates were in constant touch with two comrades assigned to general supervision of work. Specialized sections—mechanics, metalurgists, masons, laborers, etc.—were individually to take up their particular problems. These groups, or their delegates, met with the administrative commission as was necessary. Industrial production was unified, with all men's clothes, all shoes, etc., henceforth being made in one shop.

In case of need the peasants' section could call upon industrial workers, including technicians, to work in the fields, and in the July, 1937, harvest, when labor was short because of war mobilization and it was necessary to save the wheat, the clothing workers formed special groups. In Binefar, the women comades were called to help on the farms. There were lists of married and of single women; the former, particularly, was called while the young women were called in turn by announcement of the town-crier on the preceding evening. To plant the beets, groups of young girls gathered at five in the morning and went off singing. Some would have preferred to stay home but they could do so only if they had old people or very young children to look after.

Each day the delegates of the various farm and industrial groups noted what was done, worked in each worker's booklet. In this way control was exercised over everyone, and violations could not be repeated without calling on public disapproval, or the necessary disciplinary measures.

Food and other goods were distributed in municipal stores. There were three, bread and oil cooperatives, one for dry goods, three dairy stores, three butcher shops, a hardware store and a furniture store.

Public health care and housing were free. Everything else was bought with wages in local currency. In Binefar, as in many other Communes, the wage scale varied with the number of persons in the family, on the principle that cost per head was less in large families. In Binefar the scale was 24 pesetas a week for a single person, 30 plus 3 pesetas for every child over 10 years old for a married couple. A household of three adults, one able to work, plus two children, got 45 pesetas; the maximum was 84 for a family of 11. The value of the local money did not fluctuate, as it did in other Communes, with the value of the official peseta.

Previously the average wage had been 7 pesetas a day, or 42 a week, but
of pay diminished as the number in the family increased, some families in which the state paid all the contribution agreed on a feigned separation in order to get more income. The case had already been looked into. In the circumstances, the shortage of houses made it out of the question.

The incident was minor, but there were others like it. The directors of the Collective had to face up to all these troubles, to touch-and-go food problems, to the anti-collectivist morality (UGT, Communist, etc.). It was impossible not to admire those men who gave themselves to the cause with abnegation, and knew how to get so much done in a short time and the best way.

--Gaston Leval--

Liberated Tunisia

In the article National Independence Is Not Enough (Views and Comments, Aug. 1958), we pointed out that the notion that national independence was synonymous with progress was a dangerous illusion. We tried to explain that it was a reactionary doctrine, a new theology, which perpetuates the greatest enemy of freedom and justice -- the region of the State.

To illustrate the point, we quoted the report of J.P. Finidori, one of the founders of the Tunisian General Confederation of Labor. His remarks have been confirmed by a dispatch from the correspondent of the New York Times, Thomas F. Brady, dated Sept. 11, 1958.

Space forbids the insertion of the whole dispatch. Here are some extracts:

TUNIS, Sept. 11 -- The liberal Tunisian newspaper L'Action Ion bowing today to pressure from the country's authoritarian, one-party regime and agreed to suspend publication after a final appearance next Sunday.

President Bourguiba, effectively the monarch of Tunisia, is understood to have taken the step after a document published last Sunday by L'Action declaring that prosecution of former Premier Tahar ben Amar under an ill-gotten gains law was a "false quarrel" that "diminishes Tunisia's stature at home and abroad."

The affair has deeply disturbed Tunisian liberals in that it imperils the solidarity in the face of external threats, and has only now justified the growing authoritarianism of the Bourguiba regime.

L'Action Ion, French-language newspaper edited by the "Young Turks" of the party, has been virtual gospel to the younger elements of the party because it has been the most outspoken and best read political newspaper published in nationalist North Africa. It has never attacked Mr. Bourguiba and indeed has generally given enthusiastic support to his policies, frequently urging vigor rather than moderation.

This should serve as a warning to all liberals, all young revolutionaries everywhere, who, in the interests of the historic sense of solidarity go back on their principles and support authoritarian practice. This misdirected idealism expedites dictatorship and tramples the liquidation of both the revolution and its misguided supporters.
What We Stand For

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

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

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

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

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

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

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