ANARCHISM
A Documentary History Of Libertarian Ideas

VOLUME TWO
The Emergence Of The New Anarchism
(1939-1977)

Robert Graham, editor

*"Robert Graham is an outstanding scholar of anarchism and has made an
exceptionally simulating choice of texts ... An important event for anarchists."*
—David Goodway, Anarchist Historian, University of Leeds, UK

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Preface

THIS IS THE SECOND VOLUME OF WHAT IS now projected to be a three volume anthology of anarchist writings from ancient China to the present day. Volume 1, subtitled *From Anarchy to Anarchism (300CE-1939)*, begins with a Chinese Daoist text, "Neither Lord Nor Subject," from around 300 CE, and concludes with the positive accomplishments and defeat of the Spanish anarchists in the Spanish Revolution and Civil War (1936-1939). That defeat has sometimes been portrayed as the end of anarchism both as a living body of thought and as a movement. What I hope to show in this second volume, which covers the period roughly from 1939 to 1977, is the falsity of such a portrayal. Even before the remarkable resurgence of anarchistic movements and ideas during the 1960s, anarchism had begun to move in new and exciting directions, albeit without the mass base of support it had enjoyed previously in such varied places and times as France during its revolutionary upheavals in 1789, 1848 and 1871, in the development of revolutionary working class movements in Europe and Latin America, in liberation movements in Japan, Korea and China, and in the Russian Revolution and civil war, particularly in Ukraine.

When the Second World War began in 1939, the world's various anarchist movements were in eclipse, suppressed by Fascist, Communist, military and other government forces (Selections 2, 3 & 5). Even in those countries where a modicum of freedom of expression was tolerated, wartime censorship and persecution of anarchists for their anti-militarist activities made it difficult for anarchists to communicate and to organize. Nevertheless, anarchists in England and North America were able to continue publishing, and in the process began a transformation in anarchist ideas that has continued to the present day. In England, people like Herbert Read (Selections 1, 19 & 36), Marie Louise Berneri (Selections 4, 15 &

75), Alex Comfort (Selections 12 & 20), Ethel Mannin (Selection 14), and George Woodcock (Selection 69) wrote not only on more typical anarchist themes such as anti-militarism, war resistance, the State and revolution, but also about spontaneity, creativity, art, freedom of expression, technology, sexuality, utopia and personal liberation, themes that were again to come to the fore in the 1960s. In North America, Paul Goodman (Selections 17 & 37) and Dwight Macdonald (Selection 13) pursued similar lines of enquiry, arguing against hierarchical organization, mass society, consumer culture and technological domination. In Israel, Martin Buber, Gustav Landauer's friend and literary executor, sought to revive the "utopian" tradition in socialist thought exemplified by Landauer, Fourier, Proudhon and Kropotkin (Selection 16).

In Europe anarchists opposed both Fascism and Stalinist Communism, with predictable results. Many perished in concentration camps, others were imprisoned or died fighting in France, Italy, Spain and later in Eastern Europe, particularly in Bulgaria (Selection 7). As the Second World War came to a close, the anarchists sought to regroup but were relatively isolated as a result of their refusal to support either post-war imperialist power bloc, following Marie Louise Berneri's dictum, "Neither East Nor West!" (Selections 6, 8 & 10). In Asia, the pre-war anarchist movements in Japan, China and Korea (Selection 9) never really recovered, but in India Gandhi's movement for nonviolent revolution was continued by people like Vinoba Bhave and Jayaprakash Narayan (Selection 32), who advocated decentralized, relatively self-sufficient, egalitarian village communities based on human-scale technology, a vision similar to the communitarian anarchism of Kropotkin, Landauer, the "pure anarchists" of pre-war Japan and post-war anarchists like Paul Goodman.

Anarchism enjoyed a resurgence in the arts, with surrealists such as André Breton (Selection 23) and the Automatistes in Quebec (Selection 22) coming out in favour of "resplendent anarchy." In New York, Julian Beck, Judith Malina and the Living Theatre (Selection 24) pioneered new approaches to performance art, seeking to break down the barriers between artist, performer and audience in a manner consonant with anarchist ideals. Anarchists emphasized the need and value of living anarchistically in an authoritarian world, giving rise to communalist experiments and projects that sought to transform both the individual participants and the larger societies in which they lived. A decade before small-scale communes became popular among disaffected youth in the 1960s, David Dellinger (Selection 40) was writing

about them in the anarchist paper, *Resistance*, edited by David Thoreau Wieck, which sought to expand the various spheres of freedom in existing society as part of a broader project of social transformation (Selection 39).

These new developments in anarchist theory and practice were not welcomed by all anarchists. Some anarchists, such as the *Impulso* group in Italy, continued to look to the working class as the agent of revolutionary change and denounced anarchist advocates of personal liberation and cultural change as "pseudo-revolutionaries" (Selection 38). Whether advocates of revolutionary class struggle or more piecemeal social change, anarchists opposed post-war European colonialism (Selections 28, 29 & 31) and sought to turn opposition to war, conscription and nuclear weapons into opposition to capitalism and the nation-state through direct action and mass disobedience (Selections 30, 31, 33 & 34). Echoing Bakunin's critique a century earlier, Alex Comfort exposed the relationship between authoritarian power structures and criminality (Selection 26) and Geoffrey Ostergaard discussed the rise to power of the middle class intellectuals through the process of "managerial revolution" (Selection 27). This critique of the "new class" and their role in the rise of the "techno-bureaucracy" was to be considerably expanded in the subsequent analyses of Louis Mercier Vega (Selection 66), Nico Berti (Selection 67) and Noam Chomsky (Selection 68).

Herbert Read continued to advocate libertarian education through art (Selection 36), and Holley Cantine discussed the perversion of art and play in capitalist societies (Selection 21). The anarchist architect, Giancarlo de Carlo, emphasized the necessary role of the people themselves in rebuilding and designing their communities, and the uses of such direct action tactics as squatting and rent strikes in obtaining affordable housing (Selection 18).

To the surprise of many, including some anarchists, these various currents in anarchist thought resurfaced in the 1960s, when various movements, from the anti-war movements, to the student movements, the nascent ecology movement and movements for sexual, female, black and gay liberation, began to coalesce into new, broad based movements for social change that challenged the very basis of contemporary society. Murray Bookchin, drawing on the work of Herbert Read, argued for the necessary connection between anarchy and ecology (Selection 48). The Provos in Holland challenged the complacency, consumerism and regimentation of modern society using creative forms of direct action, such as placing free white bicycles around Amsterdam to undermine automobile culture (Selection 50). Daniel Guérin (Selection 49), Jacobo Prince (Selection 52), Diego Abad de Santillan (Selection 53), Nicolas Walter (Selection 54) and Noam Chomsky (Selection 55) brought to the attention of a

new generation the positive accomplishments and living legacy of the historic anar-chist movement. Some members of that new generation, such as the Cohn-Bendit brothers in France, translated these ideas into action during the May-June 1968 events in France, when a series of student strikes and workplace occupations almost brought down the government (Selection 51).

The May-June 1968 events in France revived interest in workers' self-management, or "autogestion," which Guérin traced back to Proudhon (Selection 49), and which vari-ous anarchists, particularly anarcho-syndicalists, had continued to advocate, some fa-vouring factory councils or committees' (Selection 59), others a combination of industrial, trade union, communal and regional organization (Selections 58, 60 & 61). Both Murray Bookchin (Selection 62) and Colin Ward (Selection 63) have sought to go be-yond these "forms of freedom," to embrace more expansive concepts of nonhierarchical community in which each person, regardless of his or her specific role (or lack thereof) in the production process, exercises effective control over his or her daily life.

The role of the state in the rise of hierarchical society and in the decline of communal self-regulation and mutual aid are considered by the anthropologist, Pierre Clastres (Selection 64), and by Michael Taylor (Selection 65). George Benello describes the "wasteland culture" that arises from our technological and organizational imperatives (Selection 44). George Woodcock discusses the role of the technology of time-keeping in the regimentation of society (Selection 69), and Paul Feyerabend launches a whole-scale attack on scientific reason and the hegemony of science in modern societies (Selection 71). Paul Goodman (Selection 70) and Ivan Illich (Selection 73) develop some criteria for evaluating technology, and Murray Bookchin sets forth his concept of "eco-technology," or "libertarian technics," in the context of his vision of an ecological society (Selection 74).

Volume 2 ends with a chapter on sexual and social revolution, beginning with Marie Louise Berneri's early analysis of Wilhelm Reich (Selection 75), whose ideas were extended by Daniel Guérin in his writings on gay liberation (Selection 76). Guérin sees social and sexual liberation as necessary to each other and as part of a broader process of liberatory social transformation. Paul Goodman discusses the "politics of being queer" (Selection 77), while Penny Kornegger (Selection 78) and Carol Ehrlich (Selection 79) connect the anarchist critique of domination to feminist critiques of male domination and heterosexuality.

Although I have striven to include in this anthology material going beyond the standard scope of other anthologies of anarchist writings, my focus has been

on the origin and development of anarchist ideas. This anthology was never intended to be a documentary history of the various anarchist movements around the world, an altogether different and gargantuan project. Anarchists have participated in and written about many events that are not specifically addressed in this anthology, but I hope that the ideas conveyed in the selections that I have included also convey the richness and diversity of anarchist thought, and suggest how anarchists would respond to any number of topics and issues.

Since the publication of Volume 1 in 2005, I have set up a web blog to provide additional commentary and selections that have not been included in the published volumes: www.robertgraham.wordpress.com. Readers are invited to contact me there with any comments or suggestions that they may have.

Acknowledgements

Introduction
Making Sense Of Anarchism

Davide Turcato works as a computational linguist in Vancouver, Canada, and has researched the history of anarchism for several years, mostly in association with Simon Fraser University. He is the editor of the projected multi-volume collected works of Errico Malatesta. Portions of this introduction have been taken from a paper presented at the Seventh European Social Science History Conference (ESSHC), held in Lisbon, Portugal, from 26 February to 1 March 2008.

IN THE EARLY 1960S GEORGE WOODCOCK claimed that 1939 marked "the real death in Spain of the anarchist movement." The later groups, periodicals, schools, and communities would "form only the ghost of the historical anarchist movement."[1] The claim would seem plausible, had it not been the standard analysis of anarchism since its beginning. For much historiography, anarchists have always been losers and necessarily so. Anarchism is described in turn as a dead, dying, or doomed ideology, depending on one's chronological scope. The historian's task becomes to explain why this could not but be otherwise.

Marxist historiography has followed a pattern established by Marx himself, who branded anarchism a form of sectarianism typical of early stages of the proletariat's development. Within this pattern, anarchism is always found on the losing side of the march of history. Hence, the master narrative of Marxist historiography of anarchism has typically been about its "end," "death," or "liquidation." For example, Italian anarchism allegedly died sometime between 1877 and 1891, though it meandered through the lowest classes until after World War II. In brief, thus goes the Marxist pattern: whatever the period in question, after an ephemeral burst of activity anarchism succumbed to the march of history right at the end of that period, lingering afterwards for an indefinite time, and often exhibiting a surprising vitality in its death struggle.[2]

The judgment of liberal historiography is tinged with condescension. A first obituary was issued in 1911 by Ernest Alfred Vizetelly, who acknowledged that anar-

chism deserved sympathy, but claimed that its excesses foredoomed it to an unsuccessful ending. Irving Louis Horowitz confirms that "anarchism was foredoomed to failure," for it is an absurd point of view. However, "its very absurdities and deficiencies" partly proceed from modern society: "the anarchists are a romantic, absurd breed that cannot, thank goodness, come to terms with some of the oppressive excesses of civilization." For Raymond Carr, anarchists were "moving in their sincerity," but "naïve to the point of self-destruction." Finally, for James Joll the history of anarchism illustrates its inconsistency and the impossibility of putting it into practice. Yet he concedes that anarchism has provided a standing threat to bourgeois complacency, concluding: "There have been few periods in human history when we have needed this more than we do today." In sum, and in contrast with Marxist historiography, which hastens to toll the knell for anarchism, liberal historiography wishes it a long life as a permanently unsuccessful movement.[3]

Obsolescence and irrationality as the fate of anarchism are combined in the influential analysis of Eric J. Hobsbawm in *Primitive Rebels*, written in 1959. Hobsbawm interprets anarchism as a millenarian movement. Abstract revolutionism and unconcern for practical politics meant, for Hobsbawm, that anarchism was not only irrational, but also unchanging. As Jerome Mintz notes, in Hobsbawm's book anarchist "attitudes and beliefs of 1903-5, 1918-20, 1933, and 1936 are lumped together or considered interchangeable." In turn, immutability is Hobsbawm's ground for extending his verdict from the past to the future, concluding that anarchism had a history of unrelieved failure and was bound to go down in the books with the prophets who, "though not unarmed, did not know what to do with their arms, and were defeated forever."[4]

The events of 1968 and the advent of the "new social history" changed the scenario. A renewed interest in anarchism generated numerous works that put this movement in a positive light, emphasizing anarchist adaptability to changing conditions. However, the attribution of irrationality has not disappeared, cropping up in less crude but equally serious ways. For example, Peter Marshall's encyclopedic *Demanding the Impossible* passionately argues for the relevance of anarchism, striving to rectify misconceptions, such as its association with terrorism. However, driven by such preoccupation, his discussion of anarchist violence ends up corroborating a few *pièces de résistance* of the irrationalist stereotype, as when he remarks that "at its most violent their action has typically not gone much beyond throwing up barricades or entering a village armed with rudimentary weapons," just as the millenarian stereotype would have it. A few examples concerning different periods and countries may further illustrate this point.[5]

Bruce C. Nelson's *Beyond the Martyrs* deals with the Haymarket affair, focusing not on "the trees," the martyred leadership, but on "the forest," the movement and its culture, which embedded the real movement's ideology. He argues that the "Chicago idea" is best understood not as anarchist, but as the expression of a tradition of artisan republicanism, recast in socialist terms. While Chicago's anarchism ended with Haymarket, Nelson concludes, the larger movement merged into the wider stream of American labour, thus constituting Haymarket's real legacy. In *Workers, Neighbors, and Citizens*, John Lear provides a similar narrative for Mexico City urban workers around the Mexican revolution, when they were organized by the anarchist Casa del Obrero Mundial. A related stream of research focuses on the notions of counter-culture and counter-community. In *Anarchist Ideas and Counter-Cultures in Britain, 1880–1914*, Matthew Thomas challenges the charge of irrelevance against British anarchism. By analysing anarchist counter-cultures concerning sexual relations, pedagogy, alternative communes, and labour, Thomas illustrates their impact on a wider political culture. In the process, he outlines a contrast between pragmatist possibilism and purist impossibilism. He argues that anarchists were effective to the extent that they compromised purism, thus constituting an "indictment of anarchism as an ideology." The move from the institutional to the cultural terrain is most marked in Richard D. Sonn's *Anarchism and Cultural Politics in Fin de Siècle France*. For Sonn, the anarchist subculture effectively interpreted the lower-class Parisian mentality and appealed to avant-garde artists. However, cultural ferment was in inverse relation to the anarchists' capacity to organize and promote their aims. Similarly, in *Paris and the Anarchists* Alexander Varias addresses the relation between anarchism and Parisian culture. He argues that the strength of Parisian anarchism was its diversity, which enabled it to address cultural concerns central to Parisian life. Yet diversity was also its weakness, for Paris was a city of contrasts, which anarchism mirrored.[6]

In their diversity, all such works emphasize the realism and effectiveness of anarchism. Yet effectiveness is not gauged by the anarchists' goals, but in contrast to them. For the labour movements studied by Nelson and Lear, as for the counter-cultures of Thomas, anarchist goals are ultimately regarded as a liability. As such, either they were practically, even if not nominally, disregarded by workers, or they eventually turned into a cumbersome hindrance. Realism, flexibility, expediency, and effectiveness are presented as incompatible with anarchist goals, which are looked upon as synonymous with purism and impossibilism. Similarly, for Sonn and Varias, the very diversity that enabled anarchists to grapple with current issues precluded them from successfully pursuing their ends.

From the perspective of rationality, in the sense of coherence between desires, beliefs, and behaviour, those who share Hobsbawm's judgment of "monu-

mental ineffectiveness," and those who seek to rescue anarchism from that charge are two sides of the same irrationalist coin, epitomized by the shared notion of anarchism as a necessary failure, or a permanently unsuccessful movement. The former take seriously the anarchists' stated ends and emphasize the inadequacy and futility of the means employed in their pursuit. The latter take seriously the anarchists' means, emphasizing their adaptability and effectiveness, but judge them by a different yardstick than the actors' stated goals, which tend to be regarded as a dead letter, at best, or a dead weight, at worst. In either case, rational understanding of how anarchists selected their means in the light of their own ends is wanting. One way or another, anarchism is made sense of by introducing an element of oddity, inconsequence, or irrationality at some point of the process, whether in the form of impossible aims, futile means, or absurd beliefs. Unfortunately, the attribution of irrationality has a negative impact on how historians go about their work. It is a shortcut that fosters facile explanations, in lieu of making sense of one's subject. Nothing is ever too odd or puzzling when irrationality is at hand as a suitable explanation. In brief, the attribution of irrationality makes for lower-standard historiography.

Irrationalist explanations are not peculiar to historiography, though. The attribution of irrationality has been widely debated in the social sciences. In particular, it has been forcefully questioned by theories that argue for rationality as a methodological principle rather than an empirical hypothesis. Such theories lend themselves to extention to the historiographical domain, thus offering an alternative to the irrationalist model. In particular, rationality is at the centre of a theory of interpretation most notably championed by the philosophers Willard V.O. Quine and Donald Davidson. The theory argues that a fundamental constraint for interpreting another person is to regard one as a rational agent. At the core of this theory is the methodological principle known as the "principle of charity," which Quine applies to the problem of translation. He maintains that "assertions startlingly false on the face of them are likely to turn on hidden differences of language" and argues that "one's interlocutor's silliness, beyond a certain point, is less likely than bad translation." The more absurd the imputed beliefs, the more suspicious a translation is.[7]

Davidson's starting point is that "neither language nor thinking can be fully explained in terms of the other, and neither has conceptual priority." In simultaneously delivering a theory of belief and a theory of meaning it is possible to attribute irrational thoughts and actions to an agent, but this imposes a burden on such attributions. "If we see a man pulling on both ends of a piece of string, we may decide… that he wants to

move the string in incompatible directions. Such an explanation would require elaborate backing. No problem arises if the explanation is that he wants to break the string." Davidson's key to the solution for simultaneously identifying the meanings, beliefs, and desires of an agent is a "policy of rational accommodation": "This policy calls on us to fit our own propositions… to the other person's words and attitudes in such a way as to render their speech and other behavior intelligible. This necessarily requires us to see others as much like ourselves in point of overall coherence and correctness." Davidson emphasizes that his policy is not one of many possible successful policies. Rather, "it is the only policy available if we want to understand other people."[8]

Much historiography of anarchism has headed in the opposite direction from a policy of rational accommodation. In contrast to Davidson's emphasis on the holistic interconnection of beliefs, desires, and the world, and his guideline of optimizing consistency and coherence with the truth, the analyses discussed above introduce, at one point or another, forms of detachment from reality, internal inconsistency, or inconsequential beliefs. Charity, in the sense of a rigorous methodological approach, is largely lacking in the historiography of anarchism. Understanding anarchism in its own terms means that whenever we understand it in terms that look odd or irrational, it is our understanding that must first be questioned. Both because of the intrinsic characteristics of its theory and tactics, and because it was frequently forced underground, anarchism had resources of a different kind from those of other movements. Thus, one must take unconventional approaches to conventional problems in order to rescue anarchism from its seeming oddity.

The gap between the appearance and reality of anarchism is well illustrated by the issue of organization. For example, if one were to study Italian anarchism through its organizations in the nearly four decades between the First International and World War I, one would find little to work on. A short-lived attempt at creating a party occurred in 1891. The next formal organization of national scope was formed in 1919. The history of Italian anarchism follows a cyclical pattern, made of outbreaks of revolt followed by periods of quiescence and then resurgences, similar to that which Hobsbawm identifies in Spain. Thus, even historians who have resisted the millenarian approach, such as Nunzio Pernicone, have remarked that the Italian movement seemed to be "locked in a vicious cycle of advance and retreat," in which every revival coincided with a new wave of repression that eradicated all that had been accomplished. Such pattern fosters a picture of powerlessness before repression and cyclical reappearances as if by spontaneous germination, thus lending itself to interpretations that identify discontinuity, spontaneism, and lack of organization as features of anarchism.[9]

However, a policy of rational accommodation may set the historian on the path of challenging appearances. On that path, one can find that the lack of formal organization does not mean that anarchists did not organize, but rather that they did not organize formally. Thus, the historian cannot look for congresses, party programs and party structures, but rather has to look at the dense network of links between individuals and groups to study how anarchism functioned collectively. In the sustained and multi-directional personal links between individuals and groups one can find the coordination and continuity that is usually looked for in the impersonal structure and fixed roles of formal organizations. Anarchists did organize, but the necessarily underground character of such organizational work makes it disappear from historical accounts. Agitations kindled by underground preparations surfaced under the appearance of spontaneous commotions of inflammable crowds, thus reinforcing the irrationalist stereotype. Likewise, the seeming disappearances of Italian anarchism are the fault of the historian, not of the movement, which had more continuities and organizational resources than analyses of national scope reveal. Italian anarchism was a transnational movement stretching around the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea. Its seeming entrances and exits on the Italian stage in fact correspond to shifts of initiative from the Italian territory to the transnational segment, especially in times of repression.[10]

The gap between appearance and reality is equally striking with respect to anarchists' ideas about organization. As Gerald Brenan remarked, "the real history of the Anarchist movement is contained not in books, but in its daily press and in the memories of living Anarchists."[11] Thus, looking at influential thinkers and books to trace the history of anarchist ideas may be misleading. For example, no notable book or pamphlet concerning organization can be found in the Italian anarchist literature up to World War I. Yet organization was the object of the most heated, divisive, and long-lasting controversy of Italian anarchism, carried out for decades in the press. The controversy had far-reaching ramifications, concerning especially participation in the labour movement. Furthermore, the Italian controversy significantly resembled that between collectivists and communists in Spain. In fact, the latter controversy also arose on tactical ground. As anarchist communist ideas penetrated Spain, the dissident elements became disciples of the new ideology, but theoretical divergences remained linked to organizational ones. By the 1890s the controversy had subsided in its theoretical component, but the tactical rift remained. In brief, tactics was not just an important but accessory component of the controversy in Spain, but rather its very core.[12]

In the end, and in contrast to the lack of concern for practical means posited by the millenarian interpretation, the anarchists' foremost preoccupation, in Italy as in Spain, was not about distant utopias but about the best means to be used here and now. Emphasizing such concern with organization implies a different outlook on anarchism. For example, it becomes problematic to look at Spain as an exceptional case, in which collectivism lingered longer than elsewhere. Instead, the same tactical issues were debated in Spain and elsewhere for decades. More generally, a radical change in categorizing anarchist currents is called for. Standard categorizations, based on such labels as individualism, collectivism, communism, and anarcho-syndicalism, often hide more than they reveal. In contrast, a partition based on organization and participation in the labour movement brings forth neglected affinities between Italian organizationalists, Spanish collectivists, and French syndicalists.

Despite its breadth, the anarchist debate on organization has gone largely unnoticed outside of anarchist circles. Yet it was a debate of great sophistication. In contrast to the crude stereotype of anarchists as rejecting organization out of hand, many ideas debated between organizationalists and anti-organizationalists have become common currency in the sociological literature, particularly through the work of Robert Michels, whose *Political Parties* has been defined as "one of the twentieth century's most influential books." Michels acknowledged that "anarchists were the first to insist upon the hierarchical and oligarchic consequences of party organization."[13] The question was not about organizing or not, but about formal organization. Anti-organizationalists opposed the conformity to rules induced by bureaucracy, a question whose importance and self-defeating implications were later recognized by sociologists like Robert K. Merton. The anti-organizationalists wanted to stop organization at the point where it would turn into bureaucracy. By focusing on the possibly authoritarian outcomes of anarchist organization, despite the intentions of the participants, the debate was about "the unintended consequences of purposive social action."

In another classic of the social sciences, Mancur Olson's *The Logic of Collective Action*, Olson argued that collective goods are not provided in large groups unless there is coercion or special incentives. Olson contrasted this position with the "anarchistic fallacy" of believing that "once the existing, repressive, exploitive state was overthrown, a new, voluntary, natural unity would somehow emerge to take its place." At the same time, he argued that small groups are more effective than large ones. In fact, this was the main argument of the anti-organizationalists. Olson also admitted that federal groups are an exception to the rule. Indeed, federation was the standard form of anarchist organization. Finally, Olson conceded, "even large groups that

work for a utopia could have a reason for acting as a group." Thus, somewhat unexpectedly, Olson willy-nilly vindicated the rationality of anarchist ideas about organization despite misrepresenting the reality of anarchism.[14]

The acknowledgment that an actor's rationality is a methodological assumption, rather than a hypothesis to be empirically tested, implies that the attribution of irrationality points more to the observer's shortcomings than to the actor's. When a professional historian like Perez Zagorin writes that "the disinterestedness and heroism of the best anarchist activists arouse our admiration, while at the same time their stupidity irritates and baffles us," he expresses a widespread feeling that goes a long way to explaining the sub-standard quality of much historiography of anarchism. The more unproblematically such claims are made, the more they speak to the "monumental ineffectiveness" of the historiography they represent.[15]

The resurgence of anarchism in the 1960s laid bare such ineffectiveness, forcing many historians to tone down the confidence of earlier claims. Hobsbawm called that revival "unexpected" and "surprising," as well as "unjustified"; and Woodcock issued a new edition of his book that, unlike the first, was "no longer a threnody."[16] Yet, in hindsight, later historians have resumed the pattern of anarchism as a permanently unsuccessful movement. Thus, for Varias, 1968 was the reappearance of a movement "destined to be divided, inconsistent, and without a single purpose," which therefore "could never be anything but a subculture."[17]

In the face of inadequate but obstinate analyses of anarchism in terms of discontinuity, spontaneism, cyclicity, and necessary doom, the anarchist resurgence of the 1960s can be made less surprising by a better understanding of the rationality of anarchism. At the heart of anarchist theory and tactics is the principle of coherence between ends and means, which is not a dogma, but proceeds from the pragmatic preoccupation of staying on the right path. Accordingly, anarchists do not look upon defeat as an unqualified failure. For them, the forsaking of anarchist principles is a greater failure than defeat. Again, in contrast to the irrationalist stereotype of anarchists as the quixotic champions of lost causes, such a stance is rationally motivated by reasons of expediency in the ultimate pursuit of anarchist goals.

The debate among anarchists about anti-militarism during World War I illustrates this point. In opposition to Kropotkin and others, who felt it was their duty to take a stand in the conflict, Errico Malatesta argued that whenever anarchists were powerless to act efficaciously to weaken the State and the capitalist class their duty was to "refuse any voluntary help to the cause of the enemy, and stand aside to save at least their principles—which means to save the future."[18] In contrast to the col-

lapse of the Second International over the war, the resilience of the majority of anarchists in upholding their principles and enduring their momentary powerlessness did save the future. Anti-militarism has thereafter become not only an unquestioned cornerstone of anarchism, but also a fundamental element of most radical movements.

The historical defeats of anarchism remain such. Still, while uncharitable historians have taken them to be unequivocal confirmations of the futility of anarchism, those defeats have laid the groundwork for later resurgences of anarchism, for in their defeats anarchists were awake to the need to save the future. In this light one can better make sense of anarchism between the 1940s and 1960s. Neither the defeat of the Spanish anarchists in 1939 marked the death of anarchism, nor did its revival in 1968 occur by spontaneous germination. Between those landmark years anarchists continued to elaborate their ideas. Elements of anarchist thought spread to many aspects of social and cultural life, from art to science and technology, to sexual relations. If anarchism was a ghost, it was a very vital one. Wherever anarchists were too few to make an impact as a mass movement they worked for the future, to hand over an unspoiled ideal to later generations. Discontinuity and spontaneism, doom and phoenix-like rebirths are complementary halves of irrationalist interpretations, which sever the link between the defeats and resurgences of anarchism. By illustrating the continuity of anarchist thought and action, the rich materials contained in this volume illuminate that link and help bridge the chasm separating irrationalist interpretations from an adequate understanding of anarchism.

In contrast to the stereotype of anarchism as an all-or-nothing doctrine, as early as 1899 Malatesta claimed: "it is not a matter of achieving anarchy today, tomorrow, or within ten centuries, but that we walk toward anarchy today, tomorrow, and always." That article aptly ends the first volume of this documentary history of libertarian ideas. The following chapters illustrate how anarchists have progressed along that path during the nearly four decades from 1939 to 1977. Notwithstanding the inclination of many historians to prophesy about the fate of anarchism, nobody knows whether or not anarchist ideas will eventually triumph. For anarchists, that will not depend on any immutable human nature, or any ineluctable line of march of history, but on the social actors' will to be driven by solidarity rather than egoism. In any case, though nobody can prophesy that anarchy will ever be fully realized, the richness, scope, and entrenchment of anarchist ideas illustrated by the present volume justify a more modest but well-founded forecast, which the four decades from 1977 to the present day have only begun to confirm: that anarchism is here to stay.

Davide Turcato, Vancouver, July 2008

NOTES

1. George Woodcock, *Anarchism* (1962; reprint, Harmondsworth, 1971), 443.

2. For an English-language example see Richard Hostetter, *The Italian Socialist Movement* (Princeton, 1958); Italian Marxist historians who have written about anarchism include Elio Conti, Luciano Cafagna, Franco Della Peruta, and Enzo Santarelli.

3. Ernest Alfred Vizetelly, *The Anarchists* (1911; reprint, New York, 1972), 299–300; Irving Louis Horowitz, ed., *The Anarchists* (New York, 1964; reprint, 1970), 588–9; Raymond Carr, "All or Nothing," *The New York Review of Books* 24, no. 16 (13 October 1977): 22; James Joll, *The Anarchists*, 2d ed. (1979; reprint, Cambridge, Mass., 1980), 257; James Joll, "Anarchism between Communism and Individualism," in *Anarchici e anarchia nel mondo contemporaneo* (Turin, 1971), 284.

4. E. J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels* (Manchester, 1959), 57–58, 92; Jerome R. Mintz, *The Anarchists of Casas Viejas* (Chicago, 1982), 271.

5. Peter Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible*, amended ed. (London, 1993), 629–630.

6. Bruce C. Nelson, *Beyond the Martyrs* (New Brunswick, 1988); John Lear, *Workers, Neighbors, and Citizens* (Lincoln, 2001); Matthew Thomas, *Anarchist Ideas and Counter-Cultures in Britain, 1880–1914* (Aldershot, 2005), 236–8; Richard D. Sonn, *Anarchism and Cultural Politics in Fin de Siècle France* (Lincoln, 1989); Alexander Varias, *Paris and the Anarchists* (New York, 1996).

7. Willard V.O. Quine, *Word and Object* (Cambridge, Mass., 1960; reprint, 1997) , 26–28, 57–59, 69.

8. Donald Davidson, *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation*, 2d ed. (Oxford, 2001), 144, 156, 159–160; *Problems of Rationality* (Oxford, 2004), 23–24.

9. Nunzio Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism, 1864–1892* (Princeton, 1993), 7.

10. Davide Turcato, "Italian Anarchism as a Transnational Movement, 1885–1915," *International Review of Social History* 52, no. 3 (December 2007).

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12. George Richard Esenwein, *Anarchist Ideology and the Working-Class Movement in Spain, 1868–1898* (Berkeley, 1989), 113, 134–5; Jordi Piqué i Padró, *Anarco-collectivisme i anarco-communisme* (Barcelona, 1989), 134–8.

13. Robert Michels, *Political Parties* (New York, 1962), 325.

14. Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965), 53-54, 62-63, 130-131, 161 n. 94. For further argument in support of the anarchist position, see Michael Taylor, "Anarchy, the State and Cooperation," Selection 65 in this volume.

15. Perez Zagorin, book review of *The Anarchists* by James Joll, *The Journal of Modern History* 38, no. 4 (December 1966).

16. E. J. Hobsbawm, *Revolutionaries* (New York, 1973), 90–91; George Woodcock, *Anarchism*, 2d ed. (Harmondsworth, 1986), 8.

17. Varias, 168.

18. E. Malatesta, "Anarchists Have Forgotten their Principles," *Freedom* (London) 28, no. 307 (November 1914), 85 (reprinted in *Anarchism: A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas, Volume One*, 286-289).

Chapter 1
Anti-Militarism, War & Revolution

By the Spring of 1939, the Spanish Revolution and Civil War was over (Volume 1, Chapter 23), with the Spanish anarchist movement being crushed by Franco's victorious fascist forces. It had been the largest and most successful anarchist movement in history. Thousands of Spanish workers and peasants participated in the anarchist social revolution in Spain which saw the collectivization of the fields, factories and workshops that had long been advocated by revolutionary anarchists such as Kropotkin (Volume 1, Selections 34 and 45), Bakunin (Volume 1, Selections 28 & 29), the anti-authoritarian sections of the First International (Volume 1, Selection 27), and the international anarcho-syndicalist movement (Volume 1, Chapter 12 and Selections 84, 95 & 114). A fatal combination of fascist violence, Communist treachery, international indifference and anarchist collaboration with the remnants of the Republican government had all contributed to the defeat. Anarchist movements in the rest of Europe, Asia and Latin America had already been smashed by an array of similar forces. Where they were able, anarchists continued to oppose the state war machines which brought about a world war in 1939, and to set forth anarchist alternatives to mass destruction.

1. Herbert Read: The Philosophy of Anarchism (1940)

Herbert Read (1893-1968), the English poet, writer and art critic who in his 1938 publication, Poetry and Anarchism (Volume 1, Selection 130), had declared himself in favour of anarchism, opposed the Second World War and continued to publish essays on art, education and anarchism. The following excerpts are taken from his 1940 pamphlet, The Philosophy of Anarchism *(London: Freedom Press), which influenced subsequent anarchists, including Murray Bookchin, particularly in relation to its emphasis on differentiation as a mark of progress and his organic conception of society as a self-regulating entity.*

THE CHARACTERISTIC POLITICAL ATTITUDE of today is not one of positive belief, but of despair. Nobody seriously believes in the social philosophies of the immediate past. There are a few people, but a diminishing number, who still believe that Marx-

ism, as an economic system, offers a coherent alternative to capitalism, and socialism has, indeed, triumphed in one country. But it has not changed the servile nature of human bondage. Man is everywhere still in chains. The motive of his activity remains economic, and this economic motive inevitably leads to the social inequalities from which he had hoped to escape. In face of this double failure, of capitalism and of socialism, the desperation of the masses has taken shape as fascism—a revolutionary but wholly negative movement which aims at establishing a selfish organization of power within the general chaos. In this political wilderness most people are lost, and if they do not give way to despair, they resort to a private world of prayer. But others persist in believing that a new world could be built if only we would abandon the economic concepts upon which both socialism and capitalism are based. To realize that new world we must prefer the values of freedom and equality above all other values—above personal wealth, technical power and nationalism. In the past this view has been held by the world's greatest seers, but their followers have been a numerically insignificant minority, especially in the political sphere, where their doctrine has been called anarchism. It may be a tactical mistake to try and restate the eternal truth under a name which is ambiguous—for what is "without ruler," the literal meaning of the word, is not necessarily "without order," the meaning often loosely ascribed to it. The sense of historical continuity, and a feeling for philosophical rectitude cannot, however, be compromised. Any vague or romantic associations which the word has acquired are incidental. The doctrine itself remains absolute and pure. There are thousands, if not millions, of people who instinctively hold these ideas, and who would accept the doctrine if it were made clear to them. A doctrine must be recognized by a common name. I know of no better name than Anarchism...

Let us begin by asking a very simple question: what is the measure of human progress? ...Progress is measured by the degree of differentiation within a society. If the individual is a unit in a corporate mass, his life is not merely brutish and short, but dull and mechanical. If the individual is a unit on his own, with space and potentiality for separate action, then he may be more subject to accident or chance, but at least he can expand and express himself. He can develop—develop in the only real meaning of the word—develop in consciousness of strength, vitality and joy...

You might think that it would be the natural desire of every man to develop as an independent personality, but this does not seem to be true. Because they are either economically or psychologically predisposed, there are many people who find safety in numbers, happiness in anonymity, and dignity in routine. They ask for nothing better than to be sheep under a shepherd, soldiers under a captain, slaves under a

tyrant. The few that must expand become the shepherds, the captains and leaders of these willing followers.

Such servile people exist by the million, but again I ask: What is our measure of progress? And again I answer that it is only to the degree that the slave is emancipated and the personality differentiated that we can speak of progress. The slave may be happy, but happiness is not enough... Progress is measured by richness and intensity of experience—by a wider and deeper apprehension of the significance and scope of human existence...

The worth of a civilization or a culture is not valued in the terms of its material wealth or military power, but by the quality and achievements of its representative individuals—its philosophers, its poets and its artists.

We might therefore express our definition of progress in a slightly more precise form. Progress, we might say, is the gradual establishment of a qualitative differentiation of the individuals within a society. In the long history of mankind the group is to be regarded as an expedient—an evolutionary aid. It is a means to security and economic well-being: it is essential to the establishment of a civilization. But the further step, by means of which a civilization is given its quality or culture, is only attained by a process of cellular division, in the course of which the individual is differentiated, made distinct from and independent of the parent group. The farther a society progresses, the more clearly the individual becomes the antithesis of the group...

Creeds and castes, and all forms of intellectual and emotional grouping, belong to the past. The future unit is the individual, a world in himself, self-contained and self-creative, freely giving and freely receiving, but essentially a free spirit...

Freud has shown one thing very clearly: that we only forget our infancy by burying it in the unconscious; and that the problems of this difficult period find their solution under a disguised form in adult life... the irrational devotion which a group will show to its leader is simply a transference of an emotional relationship which has been dissolved or repressed within the family circle. When we describe a king as "the Father of his People," the metaphor is an exact description of an unconscious symbolism. Moreover, we transfer to this figure-head all sorts of imaginary virtues which we ourselves would like to possess—it is the reverse process of the scapegoat, who is the recipient of our secret guilt.

Nietzsche, like the admirers of our contemporary dictators, did not sufficiently realize this distinction, and he is apt to praise as a superman a figure who is merely inflated with the unconscious desires of the group. The true superman is the man who holds himself aloof from the group—a fact which Nietzsche acknowledged on

other occasions. When an individual has become conscious, not merely of his "Eigentum," of his own closed circuit of desires and potentialities (at which stage he is an egoist), but also of the laws which govern his reactions to the group of which he is a member, then he is on the way to become that new type of human being which Nietzsche called the Superman.

The individual and the group—this is the relationship out of which spring all the complexities of our existence and the need for unravelling and simplifying them. Conscience itself is born of this relationship, and all those instincts of mutuality and sympathy which become codified in morals. Morality, as has often been pointed out, is antecedent to religion—it even exists in a rudimentary form among animals. Religion and politics follow, as attempts to define the instinctive conduct natural to the group, and finally you get the historical process only too well known to us, in which the institutions of religion and politics are captured by an individual or a class and turned against the group which they were designed to benefit. Man finds his instincts, already deformed by being defined, now altogether inhibited. The organic life of the group, a self-regulative life like the life of all organic entities, is stretched on the rigid frame of a code. It ceases to be life in any real sense, and only functions as convention, conformity and discipline.

There is a distinction to be made here between a discipline imposed on life, and the law which is inherent in life. My own early experiences in war led me to suspect the value of discipline, even in that sphere where it is so often regarded as the first essential for success. It was not discipline, but two qualities which I would call initiative and free association, that proved essential in the stress of action. These qualities are developed individually, and tend to be destroyed by the mechanical routine of the barrack square. As for the unconscious obedience which discipline and drill are supposed to inculcate, it breaks as easily as eggshell in the face of machine-guns and high explosives.

The law which is inherent in life is of an altogether different kind. We must admit "the singular fact," as Nietzsche called it, "that everything of the nature of freedom, elegance, boldness, dance, and masterly certainty, which exists or has existed, whether it be in thought itself, or in administration, or in speaking and persuading, in art just as in conduct, has only developed by the means of the tyranny of such arbitrary law; and in all seriousness, it is not at all improbable that precisely this is 'nature' and 'natural'." (*Beyond Good and Evil*, §188.) That 'nature' is penetrated throughout by 'law' is a fact which becomes clearer with every advance of science; and we need only criticize Nietzsche for calling such law 'arbitrary.' What is arbitrary

is not the law of nature, in whatever sphere it exists, but man's interpretation of it. The only necessity is to discover the true laws of nature and conduct our lives in accordance with them.

The most general law in nature is equity—the principle of balance and symmetry which guides the growth of forms along the lines of the greatest structural efficiency. It is the law which gives the leaf as well as the tree, the human body and the universe itself, an harmonious and functional shape, which is at the same time objective beauty. But when we use the expression: the law of equity, a curious paradox results. If we look up the dictionary definition of equity we find: "recourse to principles of justice to correct or supplement law." As so often, the words we use betray us: we have to confess, by using the word equity, that the common statute law which is the law imposed by the State is not necessarily the natural or just law; that there exist principles of justice which are superior to these man-made laws—principles of equality and fairness inherent in the natural order of the universe.

…[I]t is very necessary to distinguish between the laws of nature (which, to avoid confusion, we ought rather to call the laws of the physical universe) and that theory of a pristine state of nature which was made the basis of Rousseau's sentimental egalitarianism… modern anarchism… has its basis in the laws of nature rather than in the state of nature. It is based on analogies derived from the simplicity and harmony of universal physical laws, rather than on any assumptions of the natural goodness of human nature—and this is precisely where it begins to diverge fundamentally from democratic socialism, which goes back to Rousseau, the true founder of state socialism. Though state socialism may aim at giving to each according to his needs, or, as nowadays in Russia, according to his deserts, the abstract notion of equity is really quite foreign to its thought. *The tendency of modern socialism is to establish a vast system of statutory law against which there no longer exists a plea in equity. The object of anarchism, on the other hand, is to extend the principle of equity until it altogether supersedes statutory law…*

Admittedly a system of equity, no less than a system of law, implies a machinery for determining and administering its principles. I can imagine no society which does not embody some method of arbitration. But just as the judge in equity is supposed to appeal to universal principles of reason, and to ignore statutory law when it comes into conflict with these principles, so the arbiter in an anarchist community will appeal to these same principles, as determined by philosophy or common sense; and will do so unimpeded by all those legal and economic prejudices which the present organization of society entails…

The whole case for anarchism rests on a general assumption… that the right kind of society is an organic being not merely analogous to an organic being, but actually a living structure with appetites and digestions, instincts and passions, intelligence and reason. Just as an individual by a proper balance of these faculties can maintain himself in health, so a community can live naturally and freely, without the disease of crime. Crime is a symptom of social illness—of poverty, inequality and restriction. Rid the social body of these illnesses and you rid society of crime. Unless you can believe this, not as an ideal or fancy, but as a biological truth, you cannot be an anarchist. But if you do believe it, you must logically come to anarchism. Your only alternative is to be a skeptic and authoritarian—a person who has so little faith in the natural order that he will attempt to make the world conform to some artificial system of his own devising…

The main thing is to establish your principles—the principles of equality, of individual freedom, of workers' control. The community then aims at the establishment of these principles from the starting point of local needs and local conditions. That they must be established by revolutionary methods is perhaps inevitable. But in this connection I would like to revive the distinction made by Max Stirner between revolution and insurrection [Volume 1, Selection 11]. Revolution "consists in an overturning of conditions, of the established condition or status, the State or society, and is accordingly a political or social act." Insurrection "has for its unavoidable consequence a transformation of circumstances, yet does not start from it but from men's discontent with themselves, is not an armed rising, but a rising of individuals, a getting up, without regard to the arrangements that spring from it." Stirner carried the distinction farther, but the point I wish to make is that there is all the difference in the world between a movement that aims at an exchange of political institutions, which is the bourgeois socialist (Fabian) notion of a revolution; and a movement that aims at getting rid of these political institutions altogether. An insurrection, therefore, is directed against the State as such, and this aim will determine our tactics. It would obviously be a mistake to create the kind of machinery which, at the successful end of a revolution, would merely be taken over by the leaders of the revolution, who then assume the functions of a government…

What is required is a disposition of forces in depth, so that the vast resources of the workers can be organized in support of an attack on a vital spot. The State is just as vulnerable as a human being, and can be killed by the cutting of a single artery. But you must see that surgeons do not rush in to save the victim. You must work secretly and act swiftly: the event must be catastrophic. Tyranny, whether of a person or a

class, can never be destroyed in any other way. It was the Great Insurgent himself who said: "Be ye wise as serpents."

An insurrection is necessary for the simple reason that when it comes to the point, even your man of good will, if he is on the top, will not sacrifice his personal advantages to the general good. In the rapacious type of capitalism existing in this country and America, such personal advantages are the result of an exercise of low cunning hardly compatible with a sense of justice; or they are based on a callous speculation in finance which neither knows nor cares what human elements are involved in the abstract movement of market prices. For the last fifty years it has been obvious to anyone with an enquiring mind that the capitalist system has reached a stage in its development at which it can only continue under cover of imperial aggression—at which it can only extend its markets behind a barrage of high explosives. But even that realization—the realization that capitalism involves a human sacrifice beyond the lusts of Moloch—even that realization has not persuaded our rulers to humanize the social economy of nations. Nowhere—not even in Russia—have they abandoned the economic values upon which every society since the Middle Ages has vainly tried to base itself. It has only been proved, again and again, that on the question of spiritual values there can be no compromise. Half-measures have failed and now the inevitable catastrophe has overwhelmed us. Whether that catastrophe is the final paroxysm of a doomed system, leaving the world darker and more despairing than ever; or whether it is the prelude to a spontaneous and universal insurrection, will depend on a swift apprehension of the destiny that is upon us. Faith in the fundamental goodness of man; humility in the presence of natural law; reason and mutual aid—these are the qualities that can save us. But they must be unified and vitalized by an insurrectionary passion, a flame in which all virtues are tempered and clarified, and brought to their most effective strength.

2. Emma Goldman: The Individual, Society and the State (1940)

Emma Goldman went to Spain during the Revolution and Civil War to support the Spanish anarchists and acted as their international representative. While she disagreed with the decision to join the Republican government, she worked tirelessly to garner international support for the Spanish anarchists. By 1940, she was living in Toronto, Canada, continuing her campaign against fascism by raising money for the Spanish anarchists, and by fighting the deportation of a young Italian anarchist to fascist Italy. "The Individual, Society and the State," from which the following excerpts are taken, is one of the last essays she wrote before dying of a stroke in Toronto on May 14, 1940.

THE STATE, EVERY GOVERNMENT WHATEVER its form, character or colour—be it absolute or constitutional, monarchy or republic, Fascist, Nazi or Bolshevik—is by its very nature conservative, static, intolerant of change and opposed to it. Whatever changes it undergoes are always the result of pressure exerted upon it, pressure strong enough to compel the ruling powers to submit peaceably or otherwise, generally "otherwise"—that is, by revolution. Moreover, the inherent conservatism of government, of authority of any kind, unavoidably becomes reactionary. For two reasons: first, because it is in the nature of government not only to retain the power it has, but also to strengthen, widen and perpetuate it, nationally as well as internationally. The stronger authority grows, the greater the State and its power, the less it can tolerate a similar authority or political power along side of itself. The psychology of government demands that its influence and prestige constantly grow, at home and abroad, and it exploits every opportunity to increase it. This tendency is motivated by the financial and commercial interests back of the government, represented and served by it. The fundamental raison d'etre of every government to which, incidentally, historians of former days willfully shut their eyes, has become too obvious now even for professors to ignore.

The other factor which impels governments to become even more conservative and reactionary is their inherent distrust of the individual and fear of individuality. Our political and social scheme cannot afford to tolerate the individual and his constant quest for innovation. In "self-defence" the State therefore suppresses, persecutes, punishes and even deprives the individual of life. It is aided in this by every institution that stands for the preservation of the existing order. It resorts to every form of violence and force, and its efforts are supported by the "moral indignation" of the majority against the heretic, the social dissenter and the political rebel—the majority for centuries drilled in State worship, trained in discipline and obedience and subdued by the awe of authority in the home, the school, the church and the press.

The strongest bulwark of authority is uniformity; the least divergence from it is the greatest crime. The wholesale mechanization of modern life has increased uniformity a thousandfold. It is everywhere present, in habits, tastes, dress, thoughts and ideas. Its most concentrated dullness is "public opinion." Few have the courage to stand out against it. He who refuses to submit is at once labelled "queer," "different," and decried as a disturbing element in the comfortable stagnancy of modern life.

Perhaps even more than constituted authority, it is social uniformity and sameness that harass the individual most. His very "uniqueness," "separateness" and "differentiation" make him an alien, not only in his native place, but even in his own home....

In the true sense one's native land, with its background of tradition, early impressions, reminiscences and other things dear to one, is not enough to make sensitive human beings feel at home. A certain atmosphere of "belonging," the consciousness of being "at one" with the people and environment, is more essential to one's feeling of home. This holds good in relation to one's family, the smaller local circle, as well as the larger phase of the life and activities commonly called one's country. The individual whose vision encompasses the whole world often feels nowhere so hedged in and out of touch with his surroundings than in his native land.

In pre-war times the individual could at least escape national and family boredom. The whole world was open to his longings and his quests. Now the world has become a prison, and life continual solitary confinement. Especially is this true since the advent of dictatorship, right and left.

Friedrich Nietzsche called the State a cold monster. What would he have called the hideous beast in the garb of modern dictatorship? Not that government had ever allowed much scope to the individual; but the champions of the new State ideology do not grant even that much. "The individual is nothing," they declare, "it is the collectivity which counts." Nothing less than the complete surrender of the individual will satisfy the insatiable appetite of the new deity….

At present the individual is the pawn of the zealots of dictatorship and the equally obsessed zealots of "rugged individualism." The excuse of the former is its claim of a new objective. The latter does not even make a pretense of anything new. As a matter of fact "rugged individualism" has learned nothing and forgotten nothing. Under its guidance the brute struggle for physical existence is still kept up. Strange as it may seem, and utterly absurd as it is, the struggle for physical survival goes merrily on though the necessity for it has entirely disappeared. Indeed, the struggle is being continued apparently because there is no necessity for it. Does not so-called overproduction prove it? Is not the worldwide economic crisis an eloquent demonstration that the struggle for existence is being maintained by the blindness of "rugged individualism" at the risk of its own destruction?

One of the insane characteristics of this struggle is the complete negation of the relation of the producer to the things he produces. The average worker has no inner point of contact with the industry he is employed in, and he is a stranger to the process of production of which he is a mechanical part. Like any other cog of the machine, he is replaceable at any time by other similar depersonalized human beings.

The intellectual proletarian, though he foolishly thinks himself a free agent, is not much better off. He, too, has a little choice or self-direction, in his particular

métier as his brother who works with his hands. Material considerations and desire for greater social prestige are usually the deciding factors in the vocation of the intellectual. Added to it is the tendency to follow in the footsteps of family tradition, and become doctors, lawyers, teachers, engineers, etc. The groove requires less effort and personality. In consequence nearly everybody is out of place in our present scheme of things. The masses plod on, partly because their senses have been dulled by the deadly routine of work and because they must eke out an existence. This applies with even greater force to the political fabric of today. There is no place in its texture for free choice [or] independent thought and activity. There is a place only for voting and tax-paying puppets.

The interests of the State and those of the individual differ fundamentally and are antagonistic. The State and the political and economic institutions it supports can exist only by fashioning the individual to their particular purpose; training him to respect "law and order;" teaching him obedience, submission and unquestioning faith in the wisdom and justice of government; above all, loyal service and complete self-sacrifice when the State commands it, as in war. The State puts itself and its interests even above the claims of religion and of God. It punishes religious or conscientious scruples against [authority] because there is no individuality without liberty, and liberty is the greatest menace to authority.

The struggle of the individual against these tremendous odds is the more difficult—too often dangerous to life and limb—because it is not truth or falsehood which serves as the criterion of the opposition he meets. It is not the validity or usefulness of his thought or activity which rouses against him the forces of the State and of "public opinion." The persecution of the innovator and protestant has always been inspired by fear on the part of constituted authority of having its infallibility questioned and its power undermined.

Man's true liberation, individual and collective, lies in his emancipation from authority and from the belief in it. All human evolution has been a struggle in that direction and for that object. It is not invention and mechanics which constitute development. The ability to travel at the rate of 100 miles an hour is no evidence of being civilized. True civilization is to be measured by the individual, the unit of all social life; by his individuality and the extent to which it is free... to grow and expand unhindered by invasive and coercive authority.

Socially speaking, the criterion of civilization and culture is the degree of liberty and economic opportunity which the individual enjoys; of social and international unity and co-operation unrestricted by man-made laws and other artificial obstacles;

by the absence of privileged castes and by the reality of liberty and human dignity; in short, by the true emancipation of the individual.

Political absolutism has been abolished because men have realized in the course of time that absolute power is evil and destructive. But the same thing is true of all power, whether it be the power of privilege, of money, of the priest, of the politician or of so-called democracy. In its effect on individuality it matters little what the particular character of coercion is—whether it be as black as Fascism, as yellow as Nazism or as pretentiously red as Bolshevism. It is power that corrupts and degrades both master and slave and it makes no difference whether the power is wielded by an autocrat, by parliament or Soviets. More pernicious than the power of a dictator is that of a class; the most terrible—the tyranny of a majority.

The long process of history has taught man that division and strife mean death, and that unity and cooperation advance his cause, multiply his strength and further his welfare. The spirit of government has always worked against the social application of this vital lesson, except where it served the State and aided its own particular interests. It is this anti-progressive and anti-social spirit of the State and of the privileged castes back of it which has been responsible for the bitter struggle between man and man. The individual and ever larger groups of individuals are beginning to see beneath the surface of the established order of things. No longer are they so blinded as in the past by the glare and tinsel of the State idea, and of the "blessings" of "rugged individualism." Man is reaching out for the wider scope of human relations which liberty alone can give. For true liberty is not a mere scrap of paper called "constitution," "legal right" or "law." It is not an abstraction derived from the non-reality known as "the State." It is not the *negative* thing of being free *from* something, because with such freedom you may starve to death. Real freedom, true liberty is *positive*: it is freedom *to* something; it is the liberty to be, to do; in short, the liberty of actual and active opportunity.

That sort of liberty is not a gift: it is the natural right of man, of every human being. It cannot be given: it cannot be conferred by any law or government. The need of it, the longing for it, is inherent in the individual. Disobedience to every form of coercion is the instinctive expression of it. Rebellion and revolution are the more or less conscious attempt to achieve it. Those manifestations, individual and social, are fundamentally expressions of the values of man. That those values may be nurtured, the community must realize that its greatest and most lasting asset is the... individual.

3. The Romande Anarchist Federation: Coming to Grips with War (1939)

This manifesto from the Romande Anarchist Federation in Geneva, Switzerland, was issued soon after the commencement of the Second World War in September 1939. The Spanish Revolution and Civil War had ended in March 1939 with the defeat of the anarchists and republicans by Franco's fascist forces, armed and supported by the Nazi government in Germany and the Fascist government in Italy. The "bourgeois democracies," England and France, had imposed an arms embargo on Spain, while the Soviet Union used its provision of military supplies and equipment to help consolidate the power of the Spanish Communist Party, an insignificant force at the beginning of the Civil War. Both the bourgeois democracies and later the Soviet Union pursued policies of appeasement with Nazi Germany, while working class movements and parties outside of Spain failed to mount significant resistance to fascism, with a few notable exceptions, such as the 1934 February Uprising in Austria, which was defeated within a week. European anarchist movements were in eclipse, being forcibly suppressed in the Soviet Union, Italy, Portugal, Bulgaria, Germany and Spain, and outmanoeuvered by the Communists in other parts of Europe.

The "Communists" referred to here and elsewhere in this volume were members of the various Communist Parties affiliated with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (formerly the Bolshevik Party), not to be confused with the anarchist communists who opposed the Bolshevik dictatorship in Russia and were among the first of its many victims (see Volume 1, Chapter 8 and Chapter 18, selections 87-89).

The following translation has been provided by Charlatan Stew and is taken from their pamphlet, Anarchist Opposition to War *(1995).*

TO THE WORKERS: NO STATE, NO WAR
PERHAPS THE TRAGIC HOUR COULD HAVE been postponed, but there was no hope that it could have been avoided. In these days of feverish and agonizing anticipation, in the face of the frightful menace, the peoples of all nations remain irresolute. Their passivity has its roots in the consolidation of human societies into powerful and ever-more militarized states. The pretext for this consolidation has been the necessity of repressing violent individuals and groups. But what it has actually achieved is the most monstrous organization of violence and the compulsory education of everyone in destruction and murder. And that is one of the basic reasons why anarchists want to deprive the state of the armed force it perpetually uses to threaten all those subject to its power. Because citizens have renounced their most sacred rights, and are used by states as instruments of life and death, the world's fate is in the hands of a

few governments. The state machinery has been perfected to such a point that it is nearly impossible for an individual to escape.

OUR UTOPIA

Peace will only prevail through an anarchist organization of societies, one that no longer fosters fighting between groups for goals of enslavement and usurpation. Only when people seek within their own societies to practice mutual aid and promote well being and culture for everyone, when groups compete with each other only to attain more improvements in civilization—only then will there be peace.

This is criticized as utopian. But, accepting this criticism implies despairing of ever realizing a truly human life, and forces people to remain attached to the worst forms of degradation and death.

EVERYONE IS GUILTY

Workers: In saying that everyone is guilty, we're not speaking about the responsibility of the masters of all states. They have had the power to stop the massacres in China, Ethiopia and Spain, and have permitted them to proceed. What we are talking about is the guilt of those who have consented to be the instruments of such horror and infamy. In no country have we seen a broad movement of popular solidarity with all the victims, not even in those subject to Nazi military invasion.

At first, the British and French plutocrats were reassured by the triumphs of Mussolini and Hitler. But today they feel threatened, now that the two dictators are openly calling for armed imperialist expansion. The French and British governments are not opposed to the clearly warlike ideology; as a matter of fact, they themselves have been pursuing the most insane kind of arms race.

BOLSHEVISM AND FASCISM

The Russian Revolution changed proletarian thinking in a short period of time, demonstrating the possibility of insurrection and emancipation. Fascism, which also claims to be revolutionary, has restored the shaken faith of the bourgeoisie in its own strength and durability. Concessions to labour are finished, along with the kind of liberal perspective that supported labour's demands. In brief, Bolshevism gave confidence to the proletariat; Fascism gave it to the bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie has supported Fascism and Nazism in order to avoid anything that might cause it to suffer a resounding defeat or might even lead to a mass movement going beyond the capitalist order. That is why shocking and unprecedented concessions were made to Mussolini and Hitler, in stark contrast to the harsh limitations imposed on the preceding Italian and German governments.

THE THREAT OF WAR USED AS BLACKMAIL

The great powers' granting of such concessions led the Fascist-Axis powers to use the threat of war as blackmail. But this could not be prolonged indefinitely without the eventual outbreak of war…. Great Britain, in a departure from its traditional practice, pursued a policy which increased the strength and influence of its potential enemies. Moreover, class interest was placed above national, or even imperial interest. Patriotism in the strictest sense was left to the have-nots; the possessors of wealth were no longer interested in promoting it.

…ANOTHER ABSOLUTISM

Meanwhile, some people persisted in their faith in the Russian state—and even the worst disappointments didn't really cure them of it. Their faith wasn't shaken, even though the Bolshevik state rulers allied their government with the Mussolini regime from its very beginning; even when, the day after [Italian socialist Giacomo] Matteoti's assassination [June 10, 1924], the Russian ambassador threw a banquet for the Duce [Mussolini]; even though, during the Italian war against Ethiopia [1935-36], the U.S.S.R. was the main provider of grains and fuel to the Fascists; even when the U.S.S.R. gave the same kind of assistance to the Italian government during the Spanish civil war (while the Italian government aided the Spanish Fascists). Mussolini proclaimed in the Italian Chamber of Deputies that the Bolsheviks were magnificent teachers; and the Italian shipyards have continued to provide warships to the U.S.S.R.

As for Germany, the Communists there joined with the Nazis (before the latter's rise to power in 1933) more than once to fight against democracy. And once Hitler came to power, the [1922] Rapallo Treaty between the German and Soviet governments was maintained. Commercial agreements were expanded, and not one diplomatic incident marred the relationship between the two powers.

For the sake of appearances, the German and Italian governments formed an anti-Comintern pact, the real value of which we understand today.

STALIN AND SPAIN

We want to stress particularly Stalin's criminal duplicity with respect to Spain. While the Communists were denouncing the policy of non-intervention in Spain (advocated and practiced by the Western bourgeois democracies) as the worst kind of infamy, Soviet government representatives were participating in the Plymouth Committee in London [for non-intervention in Spain] and approving all of its decisions. This could only cause the greatest confusion among workers. Moreover, the Stalinist involvement in Spain resulted in the Republic's submission to Soviet tutelage and led to the

perpetration of the worst crimes—the plundering of the country, and the creation of the worst resentments and deepest divisions among the anti-Fascist resisters—behind the facade of unity…. When the history of the Spanish Revolution is written, it will clearly emerge that the worst betrayal suffered by the popular rising was at the hands of Moscow.

None of this diminishes in any way the heavy responsibility of the English and French governments in the defeat of the Spanish Republic.

AND IN CHINA AS WELL…

We should also remember that the first invasion of Chinese territory was undertaken by the Soviet government (before the Japanese invasion of 1931), in order to take possession of the Eastern Railroad. The influential Paris financial paper *Information* observed that the Russians had provided an excellent example, one the Japanese government could use in its turn.

The above summary establishes that the Russo-German pact [August 1939]—which obviously encouraged the Nazi regime to carry out its aggression against Poland—fits into the consistent Stalinist pursuit of two-faced policies and betrayals.

THE INACTIVE PROLETARIAT

Has the proletariat been equal to its task and its aspirations? No one could dare to answer yes.

Under the pretext of pacifism, proletarians have abstained from opposing the Fascist project, and have remained passive in the face of the gravest developments. There has been no pressure on governments, no direct action, no international solidarity.

The proletariat as a class has remained indifferent to all of the crimes, gloomily anticipating something, if not the worst, from a war that cannot be escaped. At the same time, it tolerates the very conditions that heighten the danger. Nothing has been gained by people saying, "we're not at all interested in China," "we're not concerned about the Ethiopians," or "Spain isn't worth risking a war over."

Nor was anyone concerned about Austria, Czechoslovakia, Albania, the Lithuanian seaport of Memel, Poland, etc. In fact, aggression in all of these places served to reinforce Fascist power and influence in the world—and war continued to loom as the final result.

Those who are inactive are always in the wrong. And this is especially true of the tens of millions of so-called conscious and organized people who have been inactive in the face of history's most significant events, developments that will shape the fate of humanity for decades to come. What happened? Is it possible that, as a result of

the tumultuous times, the workers had no plan of their own to elaborate and impose on their masters, the lords of state and industrial exploitation? The organized labour movement allowed itself to be absorbed by the state, submitted to its yoke, reduced to a passive instrument, counting for nothing as an international force.

We need to resist this actively; and we must not limit ourselves simply to negative responses.

THE MOST ESSENTIAL RIGHT

This year, as the 150th anniversary of the Declaration of the Rights of Man [during the French Revolution] is being celebrated, we anarchists demand an indispensable right, without which all other rights are mere illusions. Simply stated, no one should be required to kill others or to expose themselves to being killed.

Every individual's life belongs to him or her, and no one else can require that it be taken away. We honour those who have voluntarily sacrificed their lives for a great idea, in a struggle for liberty. But it is the worst kind of degradation, it is absolute slavery, to allow anyone else the monstrous right to dispose of the existence of others.

What else can be said about the soldier's obligation to kill? Human life has been earnestly declared sacred, especially after the execution of some tyrants, by the very people who then demand that we assassinate strangers—those guilty of nothing more than the inability to, or ignorance of how to, get out of military service—people just like ourselves.

This is the great dilemma posed by conscience, which all our spiritual pundits have avoided considering.

OUR TASK

In these terrible times, with the cannons already booming, as the carnage intensifies —workers! comrades!—we must resist becoming entangled in the ugly passions engendered by war. State violence has never been based on reason or humanitarian goals. We must remember now and forever that our enemy is our master, and that war has been planned and sought by masters, and masters must be eliminated to ensure a world at peace.

Where some have power over others, where some people exploit others, the result is rivalries, competition, ambitions, hatreds, usurpations, persecutions—which sooner or later must end in armed conflict.

Those who have so often insisted on effective power, on a government that really governs, on respect for authority, today they can see for themselves what these

are leading to. The worst kind of disorder is not anarchy, as they always claim, but war, which is the highest expression of authority.

Workers, we must not despair in the presence of such collective madness. The time may come when things will change, when people will see a glimmer of truth amidst the worst barbarity. We must cease allowing our actions to be shaped by events. We need to prepare ourselves to give events a new direction, to revive the sentiments of mutual aid, fairness and fraternity. Only then can we bring into being the kind of justice invoked by Michelet: "the justice that we call by its *'nom de guerre'*—Revolution."

4. Marie Louise Berneri: Constructive Policy versus Destructive War (1940-43)

Marie Louise Berneri (1918-1949) was an Italian born anarchist journalist and editor. In 1926, she and her family had to flee Italy, as her parents, Camillo and Giovanna Berneri, were prominent anarchists and vocal opponents of Mussolini's Fascist regime. She attended university in Paris and worked with Luis Mercier Vega before relocating to London, where she became very active in the English anarchist movement. She helped edit and contributed numerous articles to a series of anarchist papers, beginning with Spain and the World *(1937-39), then* War Commentary *(1939-45), then the revived Freedom, which she worked on until her untimely death in 1949. The following excerpts are from two articles originally published in War Commentary, later republished in her posthumous collection of articles,* Neither East Nor West *(London: Freedom Press, 1952; reprinted 1988).*

A CONSTRUCTIVE POLICY

WE ARE OFTEN ACCUSED OF LACKING a constructive policy. People grant that we have made a valuable analysis of the present situation, and that "our paper has a real value in pricking complacency and stimulating thought." But we are asked to put forward "practical" solutions for the struggle against fascism and capitalism.

Needless to say we do not accept the charges made against us. We admit that our readers will not find in our pages prescriptions for curing humanity from all the ills that beset it. What some of our readers obviously would like are slogans, manifestos, and programs which offer to the working-class in a few lines the means of achieving not only the end of fascism but also of bringing about the era of workers' happiness.

We refuse to adopt such recipe-programs because we are convinced that the present weakness of the working-class is due to the fact that every party, in order to gain popularity and power, has simplified its programs, reducing to ridiculous proportions the nature of the struggle that will bring freedom to the exploited.

Political slogans have become like patent medicine advertisements promising health, beauty, and happiness in exchange for a tablet of soap, or a cup of cocoa. Vote Labour, and everything will be all right! Pay your trade union dues and security will be assured! A workers' government will achieve the revolution. Write to your MP or to such-and-such a Minister, march through the streets in a disciplined manner, with a powerful band and shout till you're hoarse, and all your wishes (demands) will be granted!

That is what parties alleged to have a "realist" policy and holding in the greatest contempt the "anarchist Utopians" have been advocating for a quarter of a century whenever a difficulty arose. These remedies have proved useless against unemployment and fascism, Italian aggression in Abyssinia [Ethiopia], Anglo-French boycott of the Spanish revolutionaries, rearmament and war. And yet the same methods are again advanced to meet the problems created by the present situation.

The leit-motiv of left parties is that the workers should take as much control as they can of the government. This appears constructive enough. But it only means that Labour leaders will enter the Government by adopting the policy of the Right. For the workers it means sacrifices and the loss of every kind of liberty in order to secure the privilege of seeing "their" Ministers sitting on the Cabinet benches. No improvements are obtained and all official channels for making discontent heard are lost.

Another "practical" solution advocated by the Labour Party is to issue a declaration of war or peace aims. Apparently the world should know of our love of freedom and justice. May we "utopians" suggest to the editorial board of the [pro-Labour] *Daily Herald* that if the Labour Party is anxious to show the world how "democratic" we are, it could for instance refuse to be associated with a government which imprisons [Indian independence leader Jawaharlal] Nehru for four years (may we add that petitions, open letters, etc., etc., will not have the slightest effect?).

It is not by changing ministers—such guilty men!—or issuing declarations that fascism and capitalism will be conquered. The problem is more complex than that. We do not intend to add our voice to those who delude the workers that their "leaders" will get them out of the mess. The problems need a complete transformation in the present attitude of the working class. You cannot change the present régime while there is no revolutionary spirit, while the workers will not understand a few fundamental truths:

1. That workers and capitalists cannot have a common cause.

2. That imperialism is the prime cause of war, and the cause must be eradicated.

3. That governments, Tory and Labour, are always instruments of oppression, and that the workers must learn to do without them.

4. That parties seek power only for their own benefit—a small minority. Therefore all power must be seized and retained in the hands of syndicates which comprise the great majority of the men and women producers.

We cannot build until the working class gets rid of its illusions, its acceptance of bosses and faith in leaders. Our policy consists in educating it, in stimulating its class instinct, and teaching methods of struggle. It is a hard and long task, but to the people who prefer such expedient solutions as war, we would point out that the great world war which was to end war and safeguard democracy only produced fascism and another war; that this war will doubtless produce other wars, while leaving untouched the underlying problems of the workers. Our way of refusing to attempt the futile task of patching up a rotten world, but of striving to build a new one, is not only constructive but is also the *only* way out.

December 1940

THE PRICE OF WAR AND LIBERATION

British Bombing has brought death to many thousands of people in the past few weeks. At [the Allied summit meeting in] Quebec, politicians who provide themselves with shelters well out of reach of bombs, are planning to continue massive bombing as a means of carrying on the "war against fascism."

Hamburg, Milan, Genoa, Turin, are covered with ruins, their streets heaped with bodies and flowing with blood. "Hamburgizing" is coming into use as a new term for wholesale destruction of cities, and the mass murder of their populations through terrorist raids. The Press boasts of the R.A.F.'s power to carry such destruction to all the cities of Germany and Central Europe. It screamed with indignation when the Germans bombed churches and hospitals, but when the smell of carnage goes up from once beautiful and populous towns they find words of rejoicing. When the water mains were hit in Milan, and the centre of the city was flooded, they find it a subject for a joke. "Lake Milan" the clever journalist calls it. "What does it matter to him if "the water is flowing between the ruins and the debris of bombed buildings, and people living in the district were forced to remain in the wreckage of their homes for four days until the water subsided and they could get out…" "Lake Milan" is indeed a splendid joke. But while the journalists chuckle in the Fleet Street pubs, the hospitals and rescue squads are working day and night to try and palliate some of the pain and disfigurement, the hunger and exposure of the victims.

Our cartoonists also find wholesale destruction a matter for humorous comment. "Berlin is off the air, and will soon be off the map too!" But when the newspapers publish descriptions and photographs of the destruction and misery in Hamburg and Milan, the people of Clydeside and Coventry, Plymouth and the East End of London, will be reminded of the days and nights when their houses were bombed, when their relatives were killed or waited in the hospitals for their turn... When the papers talk gloatingly of the streams of refugees frantically pouring out of Hamburg with the remnants of their belongings on their backs, of the people of Milan "camping out under the trees," the people of England's bombed cities will remember their own attempts to get away from the night terror, will remember that when they streamed out of Plymouth into the countryside, they found the big houses of the rich closed to them, and they were left to wander without food or shelter.

For who suffers in the big industrial towns when they are bombed, if not the workers who have led lives of misery and toil just like the workers of Clydeside or Coventry? When the port of Naples is bombed, it is the thickly populated working class district which surrounds the harbour that suffers most. The bombs do not hit the sumptuous villas of rich Fascists which are scattered along the shores of the bay of Naples; they hit those high storied houses so crowded one on top of the other that the streets are no more than dark passages between them; houses where people live four or five in a room.

When German cities are bombed it is not the Nazi elite which suffers. They have deep and comfortable shelters just like the elite in this country. Their families have been evacuated to safe districts or to Switzerland. But the workers cannot escape. The city proletariat, the French, Dutch, Belgian, and Scandinavian workers are forced by Himmler's factory Gestapo to go on working in spite of the heavy bombing. For them escape is impossible.

Workers in British munition factories and aircraft factories are asked to rejoice at this wholesale destruction from which there is no escaping. Photographs, showing great heaps of ruins, are plastered all over the walls with the caption "This is your work." The ruling class wants them to be proud that they have helped to destroy working class families. For that is what they have done. They have helped their masters to stage massacres compared with which the destruction of Guernica [during the Spanish civil war], the bombing of Rotterdam and Warsaw look like playing at war. Such posters should outrage humanity, make them feel sick at the role capitalist society calls upon them to play.

The Italian workers have shown that, in spite of twenty years of fascist oppression, they knew better where their class interests lay. They have refused to be willing tools in the hands of the bosses. They have gone on strike, have sabotaged war industry, have cut telephone wires and disorganized transport. What is the answer of Democratic Britain to their struggle against fascism? Bombing and more bombing. The Allies have asked the Italian people to weaken Mussolini's war machine, and we now take advantage of their weakness to bomb them to bits.

Our politicians professed to want revolution in Europe to overthrow fascism. But it is now clearer than ever that what they are most afraid of is that fascism should be overthrown by popular revolt. They are terrified of revolution, terrified of "Anarchy." They want to establish "order," and as always they are prepared to wade through rivers of blood to secure their idea of order—order in which the workers accept their lot of poverty and pain with resignation.

How many times in the past have we heard that anarchism means bombs, that anarchists work for wholesale destruction? How many times has ruling class police repression been instituted because an anarchist has attempted to assassinate a single ruler or reactionary politician? But one single Hamburgizing raid kills more men and women and children than have been killed in the whole of history, true or invented, of anarchist bombs. The anarchist bombs were aimed at tyrants who were responsible for the misery of millions; ruling class bombs just kill thousands of workers indiscriminately.

"Disorder," "Anarchy," cried the bourgeois Press when single-handed resolutes like [the anarchists] Sbardelotto, Schirru and Lucetti tried to kill Mussolini... Now the same capitalists want to rub whole cities off the map of Europe; want to reduce whole populations to starvation, with its resulting scourge of epidemics and disease all over the world. This is the peace and order that they want to bring to the workers of the world with their bombs.
September 1943

5. Jean Sauliere (alias André Arru), Voline et al: Appeal to all Workers (1943)

After the commencement of the Second World War in September 1939, the situation facing European anarchists became even more grim. By 1941, the European continent was under the control of fascist forces. Anarchists who remained at large contributed to the underground resistance at great risk to themselves. The French anarchist movement had been suppressed by the French government at the commencement of the war, with anarchist publications being banned for undermining the war effort. Anarchists who were not con-

scripted became draft resisters, went underground, or were kept under police surveillance. The following pamphlet was circulated in 1943 by Jean René Sauliere (alias André Arru), Voline (Volume 1, Selections 87 and 116), and other anarchists in the Marseilles area in southern France in the name of the International Revolutionary Syndicalist Federation (FISR). They distributed anarchist literature, forged papers for Jews and political dissidents (Voline himself was Jewish), and hid people from the authorities. Anarchists who were arrested for these sorts of activities usually ended up in concentration camps, where many of them died. Sauliere was imprisoned in 1943 but was able to escape before being sent to one of the camps. He had been excluded from an earlier escape organized by the Communists because he was "anti-patriotic." The translation has been provided by Charlatan Stew and is taken from their pamphlet, Anarchist Opposition to War.

TO ALL INTELLECTUAL AND MANUAL WORKERS

AT A TIME WHEN HUMANITY, LED BY MADMEN, strivers and hypocrites, is collapsing under the repeated blows of greedy profiteers of all sorts, we are once again making a sincere appeal to all reasonable and practical individuals to try to avoid total destruction and to take advantage of the present chaos to turn their efforts toward a rational and humane form of social organization. It is undeniably the fault of all governments that the blood of workers has been flowing in torrents in all countries for three years. Although Hitler and Mussolini most directly provoked the conflict, others were also responsible, including international financiers. Industrial and financial trusts bankrolled the Italian Fascist movement and the German National Socialists from 1919 to 1930. They also funded the press in the various democratic and fascist countries to wage the bellicose campaigns that incited the strong and unending resentment in all countries from 1930 to 1939, which led to the present war. At the same time, they blocked any movement for the liberation of the working masses.

The present conflict is the doing of the money powers of each nation, powers that live internationally and exclusively off the exploitation of human beings by human beings. It is also the result of international competition, shady deals, and political rivalries between men and systems, as well as the result of the venality, weakness, hypocrisy and stupid recklessness of the politicians of the whole world. And we mean all of them. Secret diplomacy has been used ruthlessly in both London and Berlin, in Paris and Moscow, in both Washington and Tokyo.

Now yesterday's imperialists pose as liberators. The makers and peddlers of the Versailles Treaty, the inventors and wreckers of the League of Nations, the accomplices of Hindenburg and Dollfus, the stranglers of the Spanish Revolution, the fomenters of

the Mexican counter-revolutions, those who have supplied Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy—they claim to be bringing order to the world. But they have never wanted anything but disorder and the disunity of the nations of both hemispheres.

What do sordid English imperialism and ferocious American capitalism have to offer us? Quite simply, a return to "the pre-war situation," a return to the Versailles status quo or something like it, and the reconstruction of the League of Nations, the continuation of the exploitation of labour by capital, the bank as mistress of the world, gold as king, the thousand and one diplomatic combinations, the thousand and one political and financial combinations that we know so well. In sum, they are offering us the makings of another nice little world war in twenty-five or thirty years—if the people of the world are not capable of constituting a true League of Peoples which would guarantee peace and organize the world through social revolution everywhere.

On the other hand, what do the apostles of the "national revolution" have to offer us? They offer a revolution in reverse, which would throw humanity back to the darkest times of its existence, into an abyss of racial and religious fanaticism, a total slavery of the labouring masses and an absolute obliteration of the individual.

Then there is the USSR. Even though Stalin's republic has done away with private capital, it has not done away with class differences. There are still high functionaries, the military elite, privileged workers and, at the bottom, the people. What's more, we find it guilty of having suppressed every practice, appearance or idea of liberty. Unfortunately, the GPU [later the KGB] is quite the equal of the Gestapo; and, besides fascists, the concentration camps in Siberia also imprison socialists, Trotskyists, unionists and left libertarians. Unfortunately, the USSR is also guilty of playing a diplomatic game, which has served the purposes of both the fascists and the imperialists—and has made possible the unleashing of the present terrible conflict.

All this means that the people cannot have, nor should they any longer have, confidence in any of the rulers or their political systems. Heads of state and military leaders of all stripes and tendencies change from one side to another, tear up treaties while signing new ones, serve now a republic, now a dictatorship, collaborate with those who made war on them yesterday, and reverse themselves again and again. They have done this so often and with such ease that their honour, sworn word, integrity and honesty now have no significance.

While the statesmen, the generals, the admirals and their ilk are permitted to play their petty, mad game, the ordinary people are paying the price. They are mobilized for the democracies, against democracies, for the fascists, against fascists. In Af-

rica, Asia and Europe the people are paying the price for these conflicts. They are getting their faces smashed in. The homes of ordinary people are being crushed, with women and children inside. And tomorrow it will be the people who will pay the price for reconstruction.

We call on all those who have chosen sides without thinking to open their eyes to the situation. German and Italian fascism, the products of world imperialism, are in their death throes. Anglo-American imperialism is being aided by all of the capitalist forces, which are presently at bay. They are preparing for (1) an imperialist peace of the Versailles Treaty type, which will embody a new basis for future conflicts and their hopes for new advantages; (2) the stifling of any movement for workers' emancipation, with the help of the traitors and aspirants of all countries; (3) a settling of accounts, whether or not this involves an amicable arrangement with the USSR.

As for the USSR, it aspires to be a state-capitalist world power, which, because of its despotism, will be as evil as private capitalism.

This will be the global order, unless the workers of the whole world unite from now on to plant the flag of social revolution in the chaos that surrounds us. What must we do to accomplish this? First, we need to utilize the natural tendency of the people toward continental unity through the federation of the countries of each continent. We need to develop ties of solidarity between the continents and give to these ties a functional form through the constitution of a true League of Peoples. It must not be simply a refurbished League of Nations, with its self-serving-interests. We need to make this League of Peoples into a truly economic, administrative and social regulator of the whole world organized for peace and against war, by creating bodies to serve it, such as an International Economic Council and an International Administrative and Social Council. But without doubt this can only be accomplished through a social revolution that is as global as the present war.

And to carry out this gigantic task the peoples must develop agreement, join together and struggle, to understand, act and strive toward the goal. In preparation, they must lay the foundations within their respective proletariats for a vast federalist movement that would at first be continental in scope and, later, worldwide. They must be prepared to take into account the various concrete realities and possible development within each country, in order to plan their movement so that their own class organizations will bring to life the institutions through which the associated peoples will rule tomorrow.

By social revolution we mean the abolition of political power, of militarism, of gold as king, and of classes. By social revolution we also mean complete and de-

finitive freedom of speech, organization and action for everyone, the free avail-ability of the means of production for all peoples, including access to jobs, products, education and security for all. By social revolution we mean power in the hands of everyone through libertarian syndicalist association, which would promote production worldwide in all countries, thereby ensuring an equitable distribution of raw materials and finished products, including consumer goods. We also mean communitarian association, which would satisfy all consumption needs through the distribution of goods in the interests of all. By social revolu-tion we also mean creating all of the social bodies capable of fostering full devel-opment and fulfillment of individuals in all areas. We also mean the guaranteeing of real social equality to all through the proper administration of a healthy and popular form of justice, based on conciliation and arbitration.

We need geographic association, uniting localities, regions and countries through permanent liaison bodies of the economic and administrative institutions, in order to better manage the interests on all levels of all peoples harmoniously asso-ciated and working together practically. For this to happen, the social revolution will have to be not only worldwide and, as much as possible, simultaneous in all coun-tries, but it will also have to make way for an era of reason, socially conscious science and freed labour.

We must make every effort. It doesn't mean fighting just against Hitler's fas-cism, but against all varieties of fascism, against all tyrannies, whether of the right, center or left, whether monarchist, democratic or socialist. No tyranny will emanci-pate labour, free the world or organize humanity on a truly new basis.

It's not a matter of talking about liberty, but living freely. It doesn't involve talk-ing about fraternity, but living fraternally. We aren't struggling to inscribe words on a banner or to change the colour of a flag. We are not speaking in abstract terms. We want to progress from perpetual war to perpetual peace, from human exploitation of human to social equality, from total or partial tyranny to complete freedom, from confusion to consciousness.

We don't agree to any compromises with anyone. We are not attached to any personality or party. We want the practical realization of the same social idea that has been envisioned for nearly two hundred years by republicans, socialists, left la-bor unionists and libertarians. We are convinced that only the method we have de-scribed above can bring it into being. Today we come together in struggle; tomorrow we will work together toward this goal and make it a reality.

6. Italian Anarchist Federation: Act for Yourselves (1945)

The Italian anarchist movement had been suppressed by Mussolini's Fascist government in the early 1920s. Anarchists who were not imprisoned or murdered worked clandestinely to overthrow the fascist regime, including some failed assassination attempts on Mussolini himself. Despite initial Fascist "successes" in Ethiopa and Spain, the Fascist grip on power began to loosen when they suffered military defeat in North Africa. Allied forces invaded Sicily in July 1943. Mussolini was briefly imprisoned, but was rescued by the Nazis, re-establishing a puppet government in northern Italy. In 1945, after the collapse of Nazi forces in northern Italy, Mussolini attempted to flee the country but was captured and executed by partisan forces. Italy was in a shambles, devastated by war and occupation. The pre-war political parties began manoeuvring for influence and power in post-war Italy, with the U.S. backed and Church supported Christian Democratic Party ultimately becoming predominant. The following manifesto, translated by Paul Sharkey, was issued by the Italian Anarchist Federation (FAI) Congress in Carrara in September 1945.

APPEAL TO THE ITALIAN PEOPLE
WE ARE SHORT OF BREAD, SHORT OF RAILWAYS, roads and ships, we are short of schools and above all short of ideas and determination.

We are reduced to being a beggar people that cannot refuse alms even if they come with humiliation and disgrace attached.

Such is the measure of the destruction, wretchedness and servitude with which the unified Italian state that emerged in 1870 has concluded its work of championing the propertied and parasitical classes, against the wishes of the labouring people. The state socialists, deluded that they were serving the people whereas they were instead helping to tighten its fetters; the likes of Crispi, Giolitti and Mussolini, instruments of capitalism; the wars that held out to us the promise, first, of power and then of empire: what we are suffering today is the logical outcome of all that.

The monarchy, behind which the military, the clergy, the land owners and all the most backward-looking elements in our society line themselves up, arms gangs of professional soldiers instead of cleansing the atmosphere of the country of its decomposing corpse. The Church, in service of the politics of reaction, carries on preaching obedience. The contrast between North and South, cranked up by reactionaries in order to divide the people's forces, worsens. The political opportunists of every party carry on competing for power and honours in backstage intrigues among the nonsensical truce machine of National Liberation Committees that stymie the resumption of the political struggle. The officials of the Italian General Confederation

of Labour (CGIL), in which workers should stay lest they dissipate what little strength they possess in splits, peddles dreams to the workers so as to keep them quiet while the Government does nothing.

And the legions of generals and admirals still live off us after having bled us white, as the legions of unemployed are consigned to hunger, prostitution and black marketeering and are all too often reduced to banditry; and returning veterans are offered the unproductive state schemes cobbled together by the incompetents in Rome.

COMRADES

Reconstruction remains empty verbiage: the cliques running the economy as well as those presiding over cutural activity and those over politics have shown themselves to have no social conscience and to be incapable of devising a way out of the crisis and towards reconstruction. Which is why every day that passes brings fresh ills and the burden of this rotten world falls upon the worker, against the backdrop of military defeat which is tending to place our future in hock to the whims of the victorious Allies. The reconstituted FAI which operated secretly and waged a partisan war against the Nazis, carrying on the traditions of the Italian Anarchist Movement from which the purest fighters in the struggle for the emancipation of the working classs have sprung, addresses the workers in the blunt language which is the only sort that should be used between men.

We have no glib remedies to offer. We know that consruction is achievable not through the ballot but through determination, toil and direct action.

We know too that waiting for foreign governments to help is not the way to build and we look neither to the collectivized capitalism that prevails in America nor to the capitalized collectivism that prevails in Russia. We can see that the problem of the Mezzogiorno [South] resides entirely in the extreme misery of the workers, in the extreme inertia of the haves, in the gangsterism that seeps into and poisons everything, in the absence of local political life. And in the Mezzogiorno and in the North alike we see not only devastated factories and war-ruined fields but also production efforts and working methods deformed by corporatism, autarchy, State subsidies and State control. And the ordinary man and woman debased by the habits of discipline and obedience.

But we see too, and this is always true, that where there is a will there is a way.

So it is up to us workers! Let us unite not in the fictitious unity about which the politicians prate, but in the real unity that brings the peasant into contact with the teacher, the worker with the engineer, the erudite with the illiterate, man with

woman, the youngster with the elder. All united in freedom, each with a mind of his own whether the politicals like it or not.

WORKERS

That we are a young and a poor people we acknowledge. We have no mighty ideas. We have too many great tasks to undertake at home for us to let ourselves be distracted further by ventures abroad. And we are ready to carry out those tasks.

We want no more of armies gobbling up our lives and our hard-earned wealth. We want no more funding of churches, nor of their schools turning our children into slaves. We want to work. But we insist that the fruits of our toil and our sacrifices stay ours and not be passed on again to the haves and the parasites who have lorded it over us thus far.

The crisis is so serious that its deepest roots are being exposed to the light of day.

The leaders of the Socialist Party and Communist Party cite capitalist pre-eminence as the sole problem, the leaders of the Republican Party cite the monarchy. The Action Party leaders talk about justice and freedom. Numerous youth groups search anxiously for less partial truths. And the FAI, which neither has leaders nor looks for followers, seeing libertarian communism as its future, condemns the instrument wherein its sees the sum and seat of all the enemy forces: *the State.*

The Italian State is disintegrating. All the conservative forces are busy trying to rebuild it and are ready to endow it with new and more liberal constitutions. Before the workers they dangle the illusion that that might be the path to effective freedom, notwithstanding the telling lessons of the Russian revolution and Spanish revolution, both of them defeated by the rebirth of the State contrary to the will of the people.

The FAI says to you: comrade workman, comrade working woman, you need to think for yourselves and act for yourselves in concert with your comrades. Prepare yourselves for tough years of struggle and hard work. But insist that the struggle and the work remain under your control through free trade unions that see to it that each free community of toilers takes over direct management of factory and soil through countless local initiatives leading on to the free Commune.

Stand firm against the dream-weavers who dissuade you from fighting by asking you to delegate to them the power that should remain entirely with you. Resist the planters of hatred who would turn you against your own comrades from other regions and countries just to distract you from looking your real enemies in the face.

Forward! The people's direct action is the only social force capable of creation and it will raise upon the ruins of the unified State the new Italy to which we look forward: a

federation of free factories and free farms, new forms of cooperative labour in the context of free communes and free regions, with the entire people committed to peaceable toil, within the great worldwide family that, once it too has been freed from state and capitalist oppression, will finally banish the monster of war from the world.

The National Council of the FAI

(From Italino Rossi, *La Ripresa del Movimiento Anarchico Italiano e la propaganda orale dal 1943 al 1950* (Edizioni RL: Pistoia, 1981), pp. 162-164)

7. Bulgarian Anarchist Manifesto (1945)

The Bulgarian Anarchist Communist Federation (BACF) was formed in 1919. Its members promoted direct action and militant strike activity. In the face of increasing reaction, they encouraged people to arm themselves and set up combat groups. Many anarchist militants were arrested and shot. In March 1923, government troops opened fire on an anarchist mass protest against the assassinations. Twenty six anarchists were captured and summarily executed. Three months later the military backed a fascist coup d'état. Some 35,000 people died in the ensuing conflict. Surviving anarchists retreated to mountain areas where they formed partisan guerrilla groups to continue the struggle. From 1931 to 1934 there was a brief period of liberalization, followed by another fascist coup, after which Bulgaria became a fully fledged fascist dictatorship under the Italian model. During the war, Bulgaria was occupied by the Nazis and the situation became even worse. In September 1944, the dictatorship was overthrown, with the workers spontaneously forming factory and workplace committees. The Soviet Red Army occupied the country, installing a "popular front" style government that suppressed the revived anarchist movement, ultimately becoming a Soviet dominated one-party Communist state. Despite the renewed repression, the Bulgarian Anarchist Communist Federation was able to publish the following manifesto in 1945. Two years later, the anarchist movement was completely suppressed, with scores of anarchists sent to concentration camps, where many of them perished.

PLATFORM OF THE FEDERATION OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISTS OF BULGARIA, 1945
WE REJECT THE PRESENT SOCIAL SYSTEM OF State and capitalist centralization, as it is founded on the principle of the State which is contrary to the initiative and freedom of the people. Every form of power involves economic, political or spiritual privilege. Its application on an economic level is represented by private property, on a political level by the State, and on a spiritual level by religion. These three forms of power are linked. If you touch one, the others are changed and, inversely, if you keep one form of power, it will inevitably lead to the re-establishment of the other two. This is why we repudiate the very principle of power.

We are supporters of the abolition of private property, of the State and of religion, and of the total suppression of every form and institution of constraint and violence. We reject every teaching and every social, political and economic-political movement aimed at maintaining the State, private property, the church, and constraint and violence in social relations.

We repudiate fascism, which is a historic attempt to restore absolutism, autocracy and the strength of the political form of power with the aim of defending the economic and spiritual dominance of the privileged classes.

We reject political democracy, as it does not foresee the disappearance of the principle of power, and drives the masses to bewilderment by leading them, through lies and illusions, into fights which are against their interests, and corrupts them through the exercise of power and the maintaining of the appetite for domination. Political democracy, furthermore, shows that it is totally incapable of solving the great social problems and that it fosters chaos, contradictions and crime as a result of its social foundations based on the centralized State and capitalism.

We repudiate State socialism as it leads to State capitalism—the most monstrous form of economic exploitation and oppression, and of total domination of social and individual freedom.

We are for anarchist communism or free communism, which will replace private property with the complete socialization of lands, factories and mines, and of all goods and instruments of production. The State will be replaced by a federation of free communes regionally, provincially, nationally and internationally united. The church and religion will be replaced by a free individual moral and scientific vision.

Unlike all other socio-economic and political concepts and organizations, Anarchist Communism is federalist.

The new social organization that will replace the State will be built and run from the bottom upwards. All the inhabitants of any given village will form the local free commune, and all the local free communes will unite regionally, provincially, nationally and internationally in unions and federations and in a universal general social confederation.

The new organization of society's production will be formed by a close network of countless local agricultural enterprises, artisans, mines, industry, transport, etc., united on a regional, provincial, national and international level in production unions and federations as part of a general confederation of production.

Society's new organization of exchange, consumption and supply will likewise be represented by a dense and complex network of regional, provincial and national

organizations, unions and federations, grouped in a general confederation of exchange and consumption for satisfying the needs of all inhabitants.

All human social activity and all transport, communications, education, health care, and so on, will be organized in a similar fashion.

With this organizational system of all the functions of the various aspects of social life, there will be no place in society for the power of one individual over another or for the exploitation of one by another.

The basic principle of production and distribution for the building of the new social system will be: everyone will produce according to their possibilities and everyone will receive according to their needs.

The realization of this social ideal of equality, solidarity and freedom can only be brought about by the united workers and peasant masses, inspired by anarchist communism and organized into ideological, professional, exchange, consumption, cultural and educational groups.

Anarchist communism, in the course of repudiating the State, rejects the involvement of the workers in the administrative bodies and institutions of the State, in parliament and in any vote for the official management of the State.

As the sole means of efficient struggle, as a defence of the immediate interests of the working masses, and for the realization of the full ideal of humanity's freedom, anarchism recognizes only the direct action of the workers themselves, initiated by their economic organizations and expressed through strikes, sabotage, boycotts, general strikes, insurrections and the social revolution. In consequence, anarchism rejects all forms of organization and struggle by political parties, considering them sterile and ineffective, unable to respond to the goals and the immediate tasks and to the interests of the workers in the towns and villages. The true strength of the workers is in the economy and their economic organizations. Only there lies the terrain where capitalism can be undermined. Only there lies the true class struggle…

Organizational decisions within anarchist communist organizations are made unanimously, and not by majority. The decision of the majority is not binding on the minority; persuasion should always be sought. In practice, the minority generally rallies to the decision of the majority, which reserves the right to express the correctness of its position, once it has been demonstrated in fact. Thanks to this principle, which is widely applied within the anarchist movement, splits, enmities and arguments are rare.

However, within the mass economic organizations and the other organizations, decisions are taken by majority vote and are binding, as only in this way can

unity be achieved, unity that is absolutely indispensable in mass organizations. But in certain cases where there is profound disagreement, the minority may be freed from the obligation to apply a general decision, on condition that it does not prevent the execution of such a decision.

8. French Anarchist Federation: The Issues of the Day (1945)

Anarchists in France also regrouped after the war, denouncing the reformism of the now Communist dominated CGT (Confédération Générale du Travail) and seeking through social revolution to avoid future wars, both in Europe and its colonial possessions. The following resolutions from the fall 1945 congresses of the French Anarchist Federation have been translated by Paul Sharkey. The final resolution calls for the release of anarchist war resisters still remaining in French military prisons.

TRADE UNIONISM
GIVEN:

That the major currents competing for influence within the CGT have espoused a plainly reformist outlook.

That the watchwords of the trade union organizations are informed by collaboration with the capitalist State and the employers.

That politicians try to harness the workers' struggles for the advantage of their respective parties, heedless of the interests of the union membership.

That the predominance of mighty trade union groupings representing non-union interests… risk dragging our trade union organizations into a fresh ideological war in the wake of the imperialisms squabbling over the world's resources.

Have resolved to invite all workers to fight on the following basis:

On behalf of a trade unionism of DEMANDS AND CLASS STRUGGLE.

On behalf of an anti-militarist, secular trade unionism.

On behalf of a trade unionism independent of the parties.

On behalf of a trade unionism cleansed of career bureaucrats.

On behalf of a trade unionism opposed to all wars.

On behalf of a trade unionism striving for it real goal, as set out in the Charter of Amiens: abolition of the wage system and the employer [class] with an eye to achieving wholesale emancipation of all workers, with the general strike as its instrument. From the resistance and combat unit it constitutes today, the trade union will turn tomorrow into a group for production and distribution of an economy run by the workers themselves.

ANTI-MILITARISM

The Fédération Anarchiste is resolved to escalate the anti-militarist struggle.

It takes note: that in every land, no matter what the form of government, militarism is the finest tool in the armoury of the State machine when it comes to oppressing people.

That the very existence of an army creates mistrust in neighbouring states which thereafter make it their business to create a stronger one, thereby triggering the arms race that leads on inescapably to war.

That the very existence of an army is incompatible with the aims that the great Allied powers signatory to the Atlantic Charter purport to pursue.

That the existence of an army is incompatible with the internationalist spirit and revolutionary morality that must govern relations between peoples in the future.

That the existence of an army is, in terms of the burdens its imposes on the nation and the caste mentality that it creates in the military, incompatible with the aims of workers the world over: to set Man free by ending exploitation of him by a privileged minority.

As a result, the Fédération Anarchiste condemns all militarism of whatever hue and calls for the abolition of all militaristic forces.

THE COLONIAL QUESTION

…[A]narchists take vigorous exception to the colonialist methods of the various imperialisms.

They are outraged that, six months after the complete cessation [of the war] troops belonging to governments that signed on to the Atlantic Charter are still slaughtering peoples who have risen up in defence of their independence.

They denounce before the conscience of the world the game being played by liberal imperialists in search of raw materials and strategic bases who have no hesitation in stirring up trouble and making use of the legitimate aspirations of colonial peoples in an attempt to put one over on the competition.

On behalf of the populace overseas, anarchists demand the right to freedom, to work independently, the right to determine their own destiny outside of the clan rivalries by which the world is torn asunder today. It assures them of our solidarity in any struggle they might wage against the oppressiveness of all imperialism, no matter what mask it may don in order to disguise its voracity.

FREEDOM OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Cognisant that absolute freedom is a myth, but that life in society is no bar to freedom of the individual;

Noting that freedom of the individual and of expression—despite certain propaganda and appearances—are respected nowhere in the world;

The Fédération Anarchiste commits its militants to struggle with all their might against the root cause of this state of affairs, capitalism and its agent, the State.

The Fédération Anarchiste asks that no effort be spared in ensuring the triumph of libertarian federalism, the foundation of all freedom;

Invites its militants to respond everywhere and every time that there is a trespass —however slight—against freedom of the press, freedom of of assembly and freedom to work.

Speaks out against the spirit of nationalization that merely bolsters the powers of the State and calls for it to be replaced by a campaign of collectivization under the auspices of libertarian communes.

The Fédération Anarchiste exhorts all of its militants to combat the authority principle prevailing in Education.

Speaks out against schools that spread obscurantism and abdication from the struggle for emancipation and the State monopoly [on education]. It commits itself to using its propaganda to assist rationalist schooling and efforts made by our teacher comrades in respect of the emancipation of the child.

Bearing in mind existing circumstances and persuaded that we must opt for the lesser of two evils, the Fédération Anarchiste will assist the secular school by all of the means at its disposal—albeit temporarily and with reservations—in its battle against religious schooling.

THE GERMAN QUESTION

In keeping with their anti-militarist and internationalist ideals, anarchists declare that the German proletariat, as shackled now as it was twelve years ago, has been denied any chance of self-liberation and that it falls to the international proletariat to assist in that liberation;

That the workers the world over cannot forget that the spread of Nazism was only made possible by the economic straits into which world capitalism had thrust the German people;

That the very first victims of Hitler's repression in the German concentration camps were, first, German antifascist militants and, in particular, German anarchists, as soon as Nazism came to the fore in 1933.

That as a result a distinction must be drawn between the responsibility of the German people and the Hitler regime.

They denounce the manoeuvring of capitalism and worldwide imperialism which, under cover of reparations, are engaged in bare-faced exploitation: they will demonstrate—inside the trade unions and in their propaganda—that whereas Nazism placed the German people above other peoples, placing it beneath them would instead breathe new life into Nazism in a new guise.

They protest at the use of prisoner labour which can profit no one but the French employers and compete against the proletariat.

They ask the unions to press for the prisoners to be sent home, while they do not have an issue with employment of certain volunteer units such as the "SS," including all their officers, on dangerous undertakings such as mine-clearance.

Anarchists declare to French workers that the German workers too are class victims and that trade union freedoms and freedom of expression should be re-established in Germany. To the extent that the German people is to recover its freedom, it is going to be a factor for peace and peoples will not be required to endure a third world war.

THE QUESTION OF PEACE

The Fédération Anarchiste declares that the peace question can only be profitably considered in the light of the following facts:

Conflicts between individuals as well as between nations are the product of the capitalist, statist system. Education and in general every educational method employed by different powers are designed to predispose the population as a whole to embrace and defend such a regime.

The Fédération Anarchiste, while not countenancing violence as a principle, mindful that it should always be borne in mind that all exploitative regimes make it the instrument of oppression and conquest; that the economic and social liberation of peoples requires vigilant action on the part of the workers and that such action may well take the form of direct, revolutionary action by the masses, declares:

That wars (regardless of the reasons cited for dragging peoples into the waging of them) can only be eliminated insofar as capitalism and the State are destroyed in all their guises; that methods and education designed to eliminate the use of violence can only bear full fruit in a society cleansed of the germs of all warfare; that it is up to the people to determine their own fates and that they must cease looking to governments—of whatever political or religious hue—for the safeguarding of their interests and security and guarantees of freedom.

It is therefore important that in order to achieve these ends, crucial direct revolutionary action should be developed. In this regard, the workers' unions, by dint of the pressures they can bring to bear on the economy, should shoulder the preponderant role which is decisive in terms of the rapid internationalization of workers' struggles.

The Fédération Anarchiste states that war is not inevitable, that a disarmament of minds is a vital precondition for peace and human solidarity: that all war-mongering ideology, no matter what clothing it may wear, that is used as a pretext by the leaders who alone profit from international strife, must be rejected.

It asks all worker militants and pacifists to commit themselves thoughtfully to the path of revolution, countering warfare through the establishment of libertarian federalism; it calls upon the young—who would be the first casualties of a conflict—and invites them to join its ranks for the great fight for freedom.

AMNESTY

The Fédération Anarchiste:

Strenuously protests the retention in prison, a year after the liberation, and seven months on from the ending of hostilities in Europe, of militants detained since 1939. It notes that the war recently ended carries on as far as they are concerned.

Denounces to the workers the dereliction of parties professing to represent the proletariat which held recent congresses and lacked the gumption, in the course of those congresses, to demand an amnesty for the victims of courts martial, thereby jettisoning an old tradition that has helped those parties to prosper.

The Congress urges its militants, groups and regions never to forget those suffering in the military glasshouses in Eisse, Montluc and Nontrond. It urges them to broach with whatever audiences they can attract the matter of a total amnesty for military prisoners detained since 1939 and to work to make a reality of that amnesty.

Le Libertaire, December 20, 1945

9. Korean Anarchist Manifesto (1945)

The situation in Korea during the war had been particularly brutal. The Japanese occupiers kept Korean workers in a condition of virtual slave labour and Korean women were forced into sexual slavery. After Japan surrendered in August 1945, grass roots committees for the reconstruction of Korea sprang up all over the country, and peasant and workers' unions reappeared. Anarchists who had survived the war formed the League of Free Social Constructors in September 1945 to participate in this process of social regeneration, which was cut

short by the military occupation of the north by the Soviet Red Army, and of the south by U.S. armed forces. The USSR and the U.S. agreed to put Korea under "trusteeship" pending the creation of a national government. In the meantime, both the Communists in the north and the U.S. with its right wing allies in the south, including former members of the hated Japanese administration, stifled dissent. In 1948, each side set up its own "national" government, eventually leading to the Korean War, which lasted from 1950 to 1953. Despite the enormous cost, the death and destruction, Korea remained divided at the war's conclusion.

Some Korean anarchists had participated in the Korean Provisional Government in exile, with one of them, Yu Lim, holding a cabinet post. He returned to Korea following the formation of the League of Free Social Constructors. He persuaded the All Korean Anarchist Congress in April 1946 to form a political party, the Independent Labour-Farmer Party, arguing that:

> The situation in Korea is a very special one... the Korean people today have neither a free country nor even a free government. Therefore, without the ability to govern themselves, the very right to do so has been torn away from them, and they are about to fall under the rule of a foreign Trusteeship. Under such conditions, even anarchists are bound to respond to the urgent desire of the Korean people to build their own country and to set up their own government. Therefore, the anarchists must create their own political party, and play a positive part in building a new Korea. Should the anarchists stand by with folded arms doing nothing, Korea will surely fall into the hands of either the Stalinists to the north or the imperialistic compradore-capitalists to the south... Only we anarchists can ensure for Korea a future of freedom, liberation, unity and independence. That is precisely the reason why we must play a positive part in politics. And in order to do so, we anarchists must create a political party of our own to wage that struggle.

Other Korean anarchists rejected this proposal and instead formed the Autonomous Village League and the Autonomous Workers' League, which took a more consistently anarchist approach similar to this program previously adopted by the League of Free Social Constructors. As with the Chinese anarchists (Volume 1, Chapter 20), the Korean anarchists put particular emphasis on Kropotkin's principle of mutual aid (Volume 1, Selection 54).

DECLARATION AND PROGRAM OF THE LEAGUE OF FREE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTORS
WE HAVE COME FROM THE UNDERGROUND, shedding our disguises as we emerge into the light. With this declaration we sunder the chains of silence, proclaiming our principles to all the world. All people thirst for freedom. Equality is the fundamental condition of social life. And mutual aid is the guiding factor in human evolution.

Therefore, when this demand is not met, this condition not fulfilled, this basic factor distorted, society becomes corrupted and ruined.

Like it or not, we have fallen into the pit of this social ruin. When we, out of ignorance, overlooked these demands for freedom and equality in our own private interests, we forgot the principle of mutual aid, and our society took the first step along the road to impotence and corruption. For four centuries since Im Jin [known to the Japanese as Toyotomi Hideyoshi's 1772 unsuccessful expedition against Korea], the poisonous fang of Japanese aggression was pointed at our heart, and finally it came to plunder our lives and to suck our blood. With this, the dignity of the 30 million Korean people was trampled in the dust, and our long history of liberty came to an end.

Only by throwing out all the elements in our national ruins can we emerge from this pit of extinction to restore life to our people and our society, and set our history into motion once more. Therefore, not only must we overthrow Japanese imperialism, but also eradicate the internal evils of lack of freedom, inequality, and mutual antagonism. In their place we must lay a foundation of mutual aid, upon which to build a new society based on freedom and equality. No other method, and no other theory, will ensure the happiness and prosperity of our 30 million compatriots and their descendants forever more.

With the support of the people, we have begun to propagate and struggle for this program all over the country. However, even with the support of the people, we could not fight on three fronts at once. Yet neither could we shirk that struggle—against, on the one hand, Japanese imperialism, and on the other, feudal and local capitalist elements who collaborated with the Japanese, plus the sham-revolutionary advocates of dictatorship. In such conditions, it must be borne in mind, we sought to cooperate with all genuinely revolutionary nationalist groups of the left.

Looking back on the four-and-a-half centuries of our struggle, what sacrifices it has demanded from among the ranks of our comrades! Some have ended their days on the point of the enemy's sword, others on his gallows; still others have languished in his pitiless jails, until their souls departed to become unrequited ghosts. The sweat and blood of all these comrades, blood stained by the melancholy of life behind bars, will never be forgotten. Just as the three-headed enemy still remembers its hesitation and fear before our bayonets, so, on the other hand, the precious blood shed by the martyrs of our struggle gives new impetus to our army. Seeing our many front-line comrades scattered all over the country, we confidently call for positive participation in the imminent task of constructing a new Korea. At the same time, we

willingly assume the principal role. If not, would any others really seek to control and re-organize the wild gyrations of the power-hungry, and restore life and prosperity to the people disillusioned by their antics?

The struggle continues. Although the main enemy, Japanese imperialism, has fled in defeat, dark clouds hang over us still, like the trusteeship decision. Moreover, our two-headed internal enemy is not like the natural obstacles that inspire one with the thrill of a challenge; on the contrary, they forebode many bloody struggles in the future in the name of total liberation, and demand protracted efforts for complete national reconstruction. For the moment, therefore, we should put aside current affairs, and strengthen our solidarity for the fight. The blood of our martyrs flows in our veins, and the experiences it has lived through teach us this.

Let us hoist high our flag without hesitation. An entirely free, entirely egalitarian new Korea based on mutual aid will only be created from a free federation of autonomous units covering the whole country. In this new campaign we will open a united front with all revolutionary left-wing nationalist armies, until the day that self-reliance, independence and complete liberation are realized.

PROGRAM

1. We stand for the overthrow of all dictatorships, and for the creation of a genuinely free Korea.

2. We reject the market economy system, and propose a decentralized one based on diffuse local units.

3. We advocate realization of the ideal of "all the world one family" through the principle of mutual aid.

(Reprinted in *Libero International*, No. 3)

10. *International Anarchist Manifesto (1948)*

An International Anarchist Conference, with delegates from various parts of post-war Europe, was held in May 1948 in Paris. By this time Europe was divided into an eastern bloc, dominated by the Soviet Union, and a western bloc under U.S. influence. In 1947, Marie Louise Berneri had put forward the slogan, "Neither East nor West," arguing that

Russia's strength lies in the fact that her only opponents are as corrupted and ruthless as she is herself. As long as Socialist and other parties will fight Communism hiding behind America's skirts, they are bound to be defeated... Wars are inherent in totalitarian regimes, and therefore we de-

nounce totalitarianism wherever we find it. We have denounced it in America, in India, in Greece and Palestine. We have always advocated complete independence for British colonies; we have demanded the abolition of the armed forces; we have fought for the defence of civil liberties with all the strength at our command.

In reference to the Stalinist orchestrated show trials in Eastern Europe, which were used to consolidate Soviet power, Berneri wrote:

We shall denounce political trials, whether they are held in Washington or in Warsaw. When a government puts a man in jail for his political opinions, we do not ask the nationality of that government. We are always on the side of the victim of State tyranny. We hate war and have consistently fought against it and for that reason we fight State oppression wherever it occurs (Freedom, December, 1947).

True to her principles, Berneri had taken up the cause of Spanish Communists interned in England, despite the fact that Communists were likely responsible for the assassination of her father, the anarchist journalist and militant, Camillo Berneri, during the May Days in Barcelona in 1937.

Despite the vast destruction wrought throughout Europe and Asia during the Second World War, a new and even more menacing arms race had begun, with the Soviet Union striving to develop its own nuclear arsenal to match that of the United States, which had used atomic bombs against Japanese civilian populations in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. The Communists were fighting the Guomindang for control of China, the Arabs and Israelis were fighting over Palestine, and people in European colonies were fighting for independence. Anarchists found themselves in a tiny minority, refusing to support Soviet or U.S. imperialism, state control of industry (such as the "nationalization" program implemented by the post-war Labour government in England), or the replacement of the European colonial powers by indigenous elites in the name of "national liberation."

TWO BLOCS OF STATES STAND FACING EACH OTHER, and war threatens. The hopes that the peoples founded on technical progress, material abundance and the unity of the world have been ruined.

Today nobody sees a way out of the uninterrupted succession of crises and wars. No one proposes any effective means of escaping the so-called historical fatalities.

Bourgeois democracy is bankrupt. Private capitalism has shown its incapacity to resolve its own contradictions.

State capitalism, under the total form of Bolshevik dictatorships, of misleading "Labour" [Party] nationalizations, or of the reactionary demagogies of fascism, has shown itself to be the pitiless degradation of all human values.

Liberalism and totalitarianism chain us to an economy of war, where the whole of society serves the production of means of destruction.

A reconciliation between the two blocks which overwhelm the world would bring no salvation...

None of the problems created by ruin, famine and social chaos will be resolved by the eventual combination of the Marshall [U.S.] and Molotov [USSR] plans [for post-war reconstruction]. Under the pretext of economic and political reconstruction, these plans are instruments of imperialism.

None of the spiritual forces which pretend to lead humanity according to the dictates of States, Churches and Parties is today any longer capable of a useful role. All have floundered in the most brutal fanaticisms.

All the political, trade union and religious organizations embodied in authority have become merely the machines of slavery. The peoples of Spain, Portugal, Greece and Latin America groan under the yoke of Fuhrers which the "movement of liberation," conducted in the sense of the recent world war, pretended to fight against. In the East, Palestine is on fire. China experiences an endless civil war. The Stalinized peoples are submitted to a police terror as bad as that which Hitlerism established. In the West, forces of the same kind seek to impose themselves on the Americanized peoples.

All that our generation has lived through is no other than an accumulation of evils, resulting from the very functioning of authoritarian society, from the crushing of the forces of liberty. And everything leads our thought back to the same fundamental problem: the construction of a society without States. It is the anarchist revolution of the peoples which alone can tear humanity away from the infernal cycle in which it has allowed itself to be enclosed.

Anarchy, the total affirmation of the free activity of the masses in organized indiscipline, is alone capable of breaking the power of the castes that direct the world to its loss.

Anarchy, spontaneous order in the workshop and in the city, is the sole means of rendering to the producers of all wealth and the creators of all values the immense fruitfulness of an unlimited field of experience, the enjoyment of the fruit of their efforts, and the possibility of orienting them always more consciously towards general solidarity.

Anarchy, principle of organization without dogmas or frontiers, is the sole road to peace...

From all parts of the world, the studies of psychologists and the experience of educationalists put forward integral liberty as the sole way of individual and social progress.

From all parts of the world, there come to us the echoes of struggles of emancipation carried on by isolated individuals, by rank-and-file groups, or by organizations already solid. It is the renaissance of the only movement that has never changed in its affirmations: the international anarchist movement.

After a hundred years of application, the authoritarian conception of socialism has triumphed in the world to the point of having exhausted its possibilities, revealing that of which it was capable. And it is to the libertarian conception that the future henceforward belongs. If humanity would live and grow, it will be by and towards Anarchy.

International Anarchist Bulletin, No. 1, June 1948

11. Paul Goodman: Drawing the Line (1945)

Paul Goodman (1911-1972) was a poet, writer, psychologist and social critic who played an important role in revivifying anarchist theory following the Second World War. For years he wrote primarily for small circulation alternative press and anarchist reviews, but with the publication of his study of male adolescence in contemporary American society, Growing Up Absurd *(New York: Vintage, 1956), he began to reach a broader audience, becoming a notable public figure in the 1960s, and a significant influence on the New Left and the U.S. anti-war movement. The following excerpts are from his 1945 publication,* The May Pamphlet, *written at the close of the war and reprinted here with the kind permission of Sally Goodman and the Goodman estate. Different parts of it were published in a variety of anarchist and independent journals, such as* Why?, Holley Cantine and Dachine Rainer's Retort, *and Dwight and Nancy Macdonald's politics. It was reprinted in* Art and Social Nature *(New York: Vinco, 1946) and again in* Drawing the Line *(New York, E.P.Dutton, 1979), ed. Taylor Stoehr. Goodman's then advocacy of intelligent, carefully chosen illegal acts was in the context of the still on-going war, during which draft resisters were imprisoned and free speech circumscribed, and his own bisexuality. Homosexual acts were then (and still are in many countries and some U.S. states) illegal (on the relationship between Goodman's bisexuality and his anarchism, see Selection 77, "The Politics of Being Queer").*

REFLECTIONS ON DRAWING THE LINE

A FREE SOCIETY CANNOT BE THE SUBSTITUTION of a "new order" for the old order; it is the extension of spheres of free action until they make up most of the social life. (That such liberation is step by step does not mean, of course, that it can occur without revolutionary disruption, for in many spheres—e.g. war, economics, sexual education—any genuine liberation whatsoever involves a total change.)

In any present society, though much and even an increasing amount is coercive, nevertheless much is also free. If it were not so, it would be impossible for a conscientious libertarian to cooperate or live there at all; but in fact we are constantly "drawing the line" beyond which we refuse to cooperate. Especially in creative work, in episodes of passion and sentiment, and in spontaneous recreation, there are healthy spheres of nature and freedom: it is the spirit of these that we most often extrapolate to all acts of a utopian free society. But indeed, even the most corrupt and coercive functions of the present society draw on good natural power—the pity of it—otherwise the society could not survive for one moment; for free natural power is the only source of existence.

Thus, people are fed, though the means, the cost, and the productive relations are coercive; and the total war would be the end of us all were it not for the bravery and endurance of mankind.

Free action is to live in present society as though it were a natural society. This maxim has three consequences, three moments:

(1) In many spheres which in fact seem uncoerced, we exercise personal excellence and give mutual aid.

(2) In many spheres which in fact seem uncoerced, we have nevertheless been trapped into unnatural ways by the coercion that has formed us; for example we have become habituated to the American time-table and the standard of living, though these are unnatural and coercive through and through. Here the maxim demands that we first correct ourselves.

(3) Finally, there are those natural acts or abstentions which clash openly with the coercive laws: these are the "crimes" which it is beholden on a free man to commit, as his reasonable desire demands and as the occasion arises…

The libertarian is rather a millenarian than an utopian. He does not look forward to a future state of things which he tries to bring about by suspect means; but he draws now, so far as he can, on the natural force in him that is no different in kind from what it will be in a free society, except that there it will have more scope and be im-

measurably reinforced by mutual aid and fraternal conflict. *Merely by continuing to exist and act in nature and freedom, the libertarian wins the victory, establishes the society*; it is not necessary for him to be the victor *over* any one. When he creates, he wins; when he corrects his prejudices and habits he wins; when he resists and suffers, he wins. I say it this way in order to teach honest persons not to despond when it seems that their earnest and honest work is without "influence." The libertarian does not seek to influence groups but to act in the natural groups essential to him—for most human action is the action of groups. Consider if several million persons, quite apart from any "political" intention, did only natural work that gave them full joy! the system of exploitation would disperse like fog in a hot wind. But of what use is the action, really born of resentment, that is bent on correcting abuses yet never does a stroke of nature?

…Now I have been freely, even liberally, using the terms "nature," "natural," and their contraries to attribute value and disvalue, as: "natural and unnatural institutions." Do not these terms in this use lead to self-contradiction? for obviously the bad institutions as well as the good have come to be by natural process. A bad convention exists by natural causes; how are we to call it unnatural?

Let us consider the example of a language like English… Speech organs, need to communicate, the expression of feelings, the desire to identify by imitation: these give the potentiality of speaking some language or other; historical circumstances make the language in fact English. It is usual to call the historical language conventional, but surely it is a "natural convention," in that the convention of English is a means of making the power of speech into a living act. Here at once we have the clue of how we can speak of an "unnatural convention": *an unnatural convention is one that prevents a human power from becoming a living act*. Thus, English is becoming unnatural because of its use in advertising. The technique of advertising is to establish an automatic reflex response, and immediate connection between certain words and the behavior of paying out money: thus it debauches the words so that they no longer express felt need, nor communicate a likeness of affection between persons, continuous with the original imitation of parents, nor correspond to the desire for objects really experienced—all these functions of honest speech are shunted over by a successful advertisement. But these functions are the strongest and the creative power in speech. Therefore we can say that such a use of English prevents the power of speech from becoming a living act; it is unnatural…

The libertarian manifests the nature in him much more vehemently than we who have been trained to uniformity. His voice, gestures, and countenance express

the great range of experience from child to sage. When he hears the hypocrite orator use words that arouse disgust, the libertarian vomits in the crowd...

In the mixed society of coercion and nature, the characteristic act of libertarians is Drawing the Line, beyond which they cannot cooperate. All the heart-searching and purgatorial anxiety concerns this question, *Where to draw the line*? I'll say it bluntly: the anxiety goes far beyond reason... No particular drawn line will ever be defensible logically. But the right way from any line will prove itself more clearly step by step and blow by blow.

Yet to each person it seems to make all the difference where he draws the line! This is because just these details are the symbolic key to his repressed powers—and with each repression guilt for the acceptance of it. Thus one man will speak in their court but will not pay a tax; another will write a letter but will not move his feet; another is nauseated by innocent bread and fasts. Why are the drawn lines so odd and logically inconsistent? why are they maintained with such irrational stubbornness—precisely by libertarian people who are usually so amiable and easy-smiling? The actions of nature are by no means inconsistent; they are sequences of even rather simple causes; following the probabilities does not lead one astray but to see one's way more clearly. But the fact is that each of us has been unconsciously coerced by our training and acceptance; the inner conflicts now begin to appear, in the details of drawing the line, and all the fear, guilt, and rage. Let us draw our lines and have this out!

A free man would have no such problems; he would not have finally to draw a line in their absurd conditions which he has disdained from the very beginning. The truth is that he would regard coercive sanctions as no different from the other destructive forces of brute nature, to be prudently avoided.

A free man, so long as he creates and goes by his clear and distinct ideas, can easily maintain in his soul many apparent contradictions; he is sure they will iron out; a loose system is the best system. But woe if at the same time he is persuaded into mere prejudices and coerced into mere habits: then one day he will have the agony of drawing the line.

Well! there is a boyish joke that I like to tell. Tom says to Jerry: "Do you want to fight? Cross that line!" and Jerry does. "Now," cries Tom, "you're on *my* side!"

We draw the line in their conditions; we proceed on our conditions.

May 1945

ON TREASON AGAINST NATURAL SOCIETIES

We speak of the Society, with a capital S, as "against the interests of Society," as tho it were a unitary thing, more than the loose confederation of lesser societies which also admittedly exist. The unanimity of behavior in the industrial, economic, military, educational, and mass-entertained Society certainly justifies the usage. Some philosophers call the Society "inorganic," meaning that many of the mores, e.g. traffic congestion, are too remote from biological functions and impede them; but in the classical sense of organism, namely that the least parts mutually cause each other, the Society is more organic than societies have ever been; every action, especially the absurd ones, can be shown to have social causes and to be a social necessity. Disease is no less organic than health.

Yet in some of the strongest meanings of social unity, the Society is almost chaotic; one such is the unanimity of moral judgments in the most important personal issues. Thus, ought a girl to be a virgin at marriage? Is there a single standard for husband and wife? Is theft within the law permissible? Is patriotism ridiculous?—It would be possible to collect millions of votes on either side of such questions. I have made a practice of asking various persons what would be their attitude to receiving an incestuous brother and sister as overnight guests, and on this issue got many diverse replies! the universal confusion and toleration in such matters is itself a sign of social unanimity: namely, that people have agreed to divorce (and disregard) intimate personal concerns and opinions from the public ritual that exerts social pressure. The resulting uniformity of dress, behavior, desire is at the same time intense and bloodless; and there is no longer such a thing as earnest speech.

Now with regard to the legal penalty for crimes, like theft, bigamy, incest, treason, murder, no such confusion and toleration exists. Once the case is brought to court, there is little diversity of judgment and punishment. Yet obviously the lack of moral pressure keeps many cases out of court, for there is no scandal; adultery, for example, is a crime that is never brought to court. Does not this put the criminal law in an extraordinary position, and reduce the work of juries—which ought to express the strength of social opinion—to the merely logical function of judging evidence, which a judge could do better?

But the discrepancy between the moral and the legal judgment of crime reveals the following situation: On the one hand the people, distracted by their time-table and their commodities, are increasingly less concerned with the passional temptations that lead to crime; these are suppressed, sophisticatedly understood rather than felt, partially abreacted by press and movies; they do not seem diabolic; the easy

toleration of the idea goes with the total repression of the wish. But on the other hand, the brute existence of any society whatever always in fact depends on the personal behavior of each soul, and of a coercive society on instinctual repression. Therefore the Law is inflexible and unsophisticated. It is as though *the Society knows the repressions that make its existence possible, but to the members of the Society this knowledge has become unconscious. In this way is achieved the maximum of coercion by the easiest means.* The separation of personal and political and of moral and legal is a sign that to be coerced has become second nature. Thus it is that people are "protected from the cradle to the grave!"

Many (I believe most) of the so-called crimes are really free acts whose repression causes our timidity; natural society has a far shorter list of crimes. But on the contrary, *there is now an important class of acts that are really crimes and yet are judged indifferent or with approval by law and morals both. Acts which lead to unconcerned behavior are crimes. The separation of natural concern and institutional behavior is not only the sign of coercion, but is positively destructive of natural societies.* Let me give an obvious example.

Describing a bombed area and a horror-hospital in Germany, a Sergeant writes: "In modern war there are crimes not criminals. In modern society there is evil but there is no devil. Murder has been mechanized and rendered impersonal. The foul deed of bloody hands belongs to a bygone era when man could commit his own sins... Here, as in many other cases, the guilt belonged to the machine. Somewhere in the apparatus of bureaucracy, memoranda, and clean efficient directives, a crime has been committed." These have become familiar observations: the lofty bombardier is not a killer, just as the capitalist trapped in the market does not willingly deal slow death, etc. The system and now the machine itself! are guilty. Shall we bring into court the tri-motor aeroplane?

...The crime that these persons—we all in our degree—are committing happens to be the most heinous in jurisprudence: it is a crime worse than murder. It is Treason. Treason against our natural societies so far as they exist.

Not all commit Treason to our natural societies in the same degree; some are more the principals, some more the accomplices. But it is ridiculous to say that the crime cannot be imputed or that any one commits it without intent and in ignorance. For every one knows the moments in which he conforms against his nature, in which he suppresses his best spontaneous impulse, and cowardly takes leave of his heart. The steps which he takes to habituation and unconsciousness are crimes which entail every subsequent evil of enslavement and mass-murder. The murder cannot be directly imputed, the Sergeant is right; but the continuing treason must be imputed. (Why is he *still* a Sergeant?)

…We conform to institutions that up to a certain point give great natural satis-factions, food, learning, and fellowship—then suddenly we find that terrible crimes are committed and we are somehow the agents. And some of us can even remember when it was that we compromised, were unwisely prudent, dismissed to another time a deeper satisfaction than convenient, and obeyed against our better judgment.

It is said the system is guilty, but the system is its members coerced into the sys-tem. It is also true that the system itself exercises the coercion.

Thus: a man works in a vast factory with an elaborate division of labor. He performs a repetitive operation in itself senseless. Naturally this work is irksome and he has many impulses to "go fishing," not to get up when the alarm-clock rings, to find a more interesting job, to join with some other machinists in start-ing a small machine-shop and try out certain ideas, to live in the country, etc. But against these impulses he meets in the factory itself and from his fellow workers (quite apart from home pressures) the following plausible arguments: that they must band together in that factory and as that factory, and in that industry and as that industry, to fight for "better working conditions," which mean more pay, shorter hours, accident insurance, etc.; and the more militant organizers will even demonstrate that by this means they can ultimately get control of all indus-try and smash the profit-system. None of this quite answers the original irk of the work itself; but good! he commits himself to this program. Now, however, since no one has native wit enough to decide for a vast factory and industry, and all in-dustry, what to demand and when to demand it, and what means are effective, our man must look to others for direction concerning his own felt dissatisfaction. He fights for more pay when perhaps he does not primarily care about improving his standard of living but wants to accomplish something of his own between the cradle and the grave; he fights for seniority, when in fact he does not want the job, etc., etc. The issues of the fight are now determined by vast, distant forces; the union itself is a vast structure and it is tied to the whole existing Society. Next he finds that he is committed not to strike at all, but to help manufacture machines of war. The machines are then "guilty"!

…A very young adolescent, as is usual enough, has sexual relations with his playfellows, partly satisfying their dreams of the girls, partly drawing on true ho-mosexual desires that go back to earlier narcissism and mother-identifications of childhood. But because of what they have been taught in their parochial school and the common words of insult whose meaning they now first grasp, all these boys are ashamed of their acts; their pleasures are suppressed and in their stead

appear fistfights and violence. The youth grows up, soon marries. Now there is conscription for a far-off war, whose issues are dubious and certainly not part of his immediate awareness and reaction. But his natural desire to oppose the conscription is met by the strong attractiveness of getting away from the wife he is a little tired of, back to the free company of the boys in camp; away from the fatherly role of too great responsibility, back to the dependence on a paternal sergeant. The camp life, drawing always on a repressed but finally thinly disguised sexuality, cements the strongest bonds of fellowship amongst the soldiers. Yet any overt sexual satisfaction amongst them is out of the question: instead the pairs of buddies pick up prostitutes together, copulate with them in the same room, and exchange boasts of prowess. Next this violent homosexuality, so near the surface but always repressed and thereby gathering tension, turns into a violent sadism against the enemy: it is all knives and guns and bayonets, and raining bombs on towns, and driving home one's lust in the guise of anger to fuck the Japs.

What a hard thing it is to impute the crime of treason against natural society to these men who do not even consciously know what their impulse is. They know as boys; shall we blame boys? And even the adults, priests, and teachers who invidiously prevent the boys' antics, do it out of unconscious envy and resentment. But they at least could know better, or why are they teachers?

It is horrifying, though not useless, thus to impute treason to the particular persons and to trace the institutional crimes, which are but symptoms and results, back to the incidents of coercion and acceptance. The guilty ones turn out to be little children and dear parents, earnest radicals, teachers unconscious of their intent, and even ancestors who are dead. Thank God the libertarian does not need to think of punishments, for he knows—following Socrates of old—that the punishment of injustice is to be what one is. The persons who separate themselves from nature have to live every minute of their lives without the power, joy, and freedom of nature. And we, who apparently suffer grave sanctions from such persons, betray on our faces that we are drawing on forces of nature...

We see that in fact everybody who still has life and energy is continually manifesting some natural force and is today facing an unnatural coercion. And now, in some apparently trivial issue that nevertheless is a key, he *draws the line!* The next step for him to take is not obscure or difficult, it presents itself at once; it is even forcibly presented by the Society! Will he not soon develop, in contrast to the habit of coercion, a *habit* of freedom? And positive natural acts bloom like

the flowers—Brothers! the slave within the heart is dead, there's nothing more to slay—can you not hear, already love is finding means; around the world are whispering creative voices and bravery blooms like the flowers.

May 1945

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A TOUCHSTONE FOR THE LIBERTARIAN PROGRAM

The political program of libertarians is necessarily negative, for positive goods are achieved by other forces than (coercive) political institutions. And the opposition program varies with the oppressions and restrictions. Libertarians must not fall into the trap of wasting force by still opposing what authority no longer proposes, while failing to see the new kinds of exploitation. The mass press and radio of the democracies are masters at stealing liberal thunder; what are the words and acts that can expose this verbiage, which is often indeed well meant? Thus, the industrial authority does not exercise the same forms of oppression when there is a technology of surplus as it used when there was a technology of scarcity. In scarcity, the chief means of profit for the exploiters consisted in the depression of the workers' standard of living to reproductive subsistence; in surplus, the problem is sometimes rather to compel and control an artificial "high" standard of living that will clear the shelves. This is again pure authoritarian compulsion, but exercised especially by psychological means, advertising, education, and rousing the spirit of emulation. The result is that men find themselves even more enslaved in their time, choice, invention, spontaneity, and culture than in the black days of want, when at least a man's misery was uncontaminated and might produce a natural reaction. Given a surplus of goods and mass media of misinformation, it is possible for authority to cushion all crises and allow "freedom of expression" (or even encourage it as a safety-valve) to a small eccentric press.

I should like to suggest a kind of touchstone for the right libertarian program in a period like the present when the corporate integration of the economy, morals, tastes, and information of the society is so tight: I mean when the press, the movies, etc., themselves commodities, generate an increasing flow of commodities. The touchstone is this: *to advocate a large number of precisely those acts and words for which persons are in fact thrown into jail* ... We must proceed on the assumption that the coercive society knows well which acts are a threat to it and which are not; acts which in fact rouse a coercive reaction have libertarian force; those which, tho once coerced, are now tolerated, are likely to be stolen thunder that is not neutral but in fact coercive in its effects. Thus, it is no longer the case that the man who publicly speaks for

the organized bargaining power of labor is jailed; on the contrary he is approved. But this is not because organized labor has grown so strong as to compel its toleration (if it were this strong it could compel much more). It is simply because, as every libertarian knows, the organization of labor is a means of social control; higher wages are a means of profit… and it is increasingly convenient for labor to regard itself as a "participant" in the general corporation of production and consumption. On the contrary, the man who advocates a wildcat strike is thrown into jail, but not merely because the demands are dangerous to profits, but that he disrupts the ordered system, the due process. Again: the man who advocates (advertises or displays) moral vices that fit well into the commodity system is an agent of society; but the man who advocates (exemplifies) pleasures outside the system of exchange or that undermine the social discipline, is frowned on and jailed—thus, one may not steal, copulate in the park, or encourage the sexuality of children.

Concerning the "crimes" that are actually punished, the libertarian must ask himself which of these is detrimental to any society, including even a more natural non-coercive society in which discipline is somewhat but not so deeply and widely grounded in (reasonable) successful repression; which "crimes," on the contrary, are precisely the acts that would undermine the present coercive structure? I think that the list of the former would be small indeed—an obvious instance is murder. With regard to the latter, many beautiful opportunities could be found for libertarian action. What I urge is not that the libertarian at once bestir himself to commit such "crimes"—I do not think, by the way, that our small numbers would inconveniently crowd the jails—but that he at once loosen his own "discipline" and prejudice against these acts. For most of us do not realize how broadly and deeply the coercive relations in which we have been born and bred have disciplined us to the continuation of these coercive relations. Once his judgment is freed, then with regard to such "crimes" the libertarian must act as he should in every case whatsoever: if something seems true to his nature, important and necessary for himself and his fellows at the present moment, let him do it with a moral good-will and joy. Let him avoid the coercive consequences with natural prudence, not by frustration and timid denial of what is the case; for our acts of liberty are our strongest propaganda.

It is often cited as an example of the barbarity of America that here no distinction is made between "political prisoners" and "common criminals," that the political prisoner is degraded to the level of the criminal; yet in fact the "common criminal" has, although usually by the failure of repression and but rarely by reason and in full consciousness, committed a political crime.

...[A]t present it is exactly the aim of all the organs of publicity, entertainment, and education so to form the personality that a man performs by his subjective personal choice just what is objectively advantageous for the coercive corporation, of which further he feels himself to be a part. Because of their use of the terms "free personality," "personal spontaneity," "personal participation," the hogwash of psychologists like [Eric] Fromm and [Karen] Horney has won the praise of even such an excellent anarchist as Herbert Read; yet it is not hard to show that their psychology has as its aim to produce a unanimity of spirit in the perfected form of the present social system, with its monster factories, streamlined satisfactions, and distant representative government. This kind of subjective personality is an effect of coercion, acting in the unconscious; it is not a causal principle of freedom. Going back to Rousseau, let me suggest the substitution of the word "natural," meaning those drives and forces, on both the animal and human level, which at present act themselves out in defiance of the conventions that we and our friends all agree to be outmoded and no longer "natural conventions," but which in a free society will be the motors of individual excellence and mutual aid.

To sum up: the greater part of what are now called crimes are nature. Even libertarians acquiesce in these prejudices because their "free personalities" have been coercively formed and are subject to unconscious coercion. The internal repression of spontaneous natural forces is today more than ever, in our era of time-tables and standardized pleasure, the chief means of dispiritment and coercion. Let us work not to express our "selves" but the nature in us. Refuse to participate in coercive or merely conventional groups, symbols, and behavior. The freedom of the individual is the expression of the natural animal and social groups to which he in fact belongs. Re-examine the "crimes" which seem proper to yourself and see which are indeed not crimes but the natural behavior of natural groups.

May 1945

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REVOLUTION, SOCIOLATRY AND WAR

Sociolatry is the concern felt by masses alienated from their deep natures for the smooth functioning of the industrial machine from which they believe they can get a higher standard of living. The revolutionary tension of the people is absorbed and sublimated by the interesting standard of living; but this standard is not physiological (which would be potentially revolutionary) nor is it principally economic, a standard of comfort and luxury (which would slow down the machine by breeding idleness, dilettantism, and eccentricity); it is a sociological standard energized by

emulation and advertising, and cementing a sense of unanimity among the alienated. All men have—not the same human nature—but the same commodities…

On the part of the political elite: sociolatry is the agreement of the majority of the bourgeoisie to become rentiers of the industrial corporation in whose workings they do not interfere; and the promotion of the more dynamic bourgeoisie to high-salaried, prestigious, and powerful places at the controls of the machine. Sociolatry is therefore the psychology of state-capitalism and state-socialism…

The "standard of living" and the present use of the machinery of production may rouse our disgust, but it is an ethical disgust; it is not the fierce need to act roused by general biological misery. We may therefore act in a more piecemeal, educational, and thorogoing way. The results of such action will also be lasting and worthwhile if we have grown into our freedom rather than driven each other into it. Our attack on the industrial system can be many-sided and often indirect, to make it crash of its own weight rather than by frontal attack…

Nor is it the case that the absence of tension and despair makes it impossible to awaken revolutionary feeling. For we know that the society we want is universally present in the heart, tho now generally submerged: it can be brought into existence piecemeal, power by power, everywhere: and as soon as it appears in act, the sociolatry becomes worthless, ridiculous, disgusting by comparison. There is no doubt that, once awakened, the natural powers of men are immeasurably stronger than these alien institutions (which are indeed only the pale sublimations of natural powers).

On the one hand, the kind of critique that my friends and I express: a selective attitude toward the technology, not without peasant features, is itself a product of our surplus technology; on the other hand, we touch precisely the vulnerable point of the system.

Then, as opposed to the radical programs that already presuppose the great state and corporative structure, and the present social institutions in the perfected form of the Sociolatry, we must—in small groups—draw the line and at once begin action directly satisfactory to our deep nature. (a) It is essential that our program can, with courage and mutual encouragement and mutual aid, be put into effect by our own effort, to a degree at once and progressively more and more, without recourse to distant party or union decisions. (b) The groups must be small, because mutual aid is our common human nature mainly with respect to those with whom we deal face to face. (c) Our action must be aimed not, as utopians, at a future establishment; but (as millenarians, so to speak) at fraternal arrangements today, progressively incorporating more and more of the social functions into our free society.

1. It is treasonable to free society not to work at a job that realizes our human powers and transcends the inhuman subdivision of labor. It is a matter of guilt—this is a harsh saying—to exhaust your time of day in the usual work in office and factories, merely for wages. The aim of economy is not the efficient production of commodities, but cooperative jobs themselves worth doing, with the workers' full understanding of the machines and processes, releasing the industrial inventiveness that is in each man. (Nor is it the case, *if we have regard to the whole output of social labor*, that modern technical efficiency requires, or is indeed compatible with, the huge present concentrations of machinery beyond the understanding and control of small groups of workers.)

2. We must re-assess our standard of living and see what parts are really useful for subsistence and humane well-being, and which are slavery to the emulation, emotional security, and inferiority roused by exploitative institutions and coercive advertising. The question is not one of the quantity of goods (the fact that we swamp ourselves with household furnishings is likely due to psychic causes too deep for us to alter), but that the goods that make up the "standard of living" are stamped with alien values.

3. We must allow, and encourage, the sexual satisfaction of the young, both adolescents and small children, in order to free them from anxious submissiveness to authority. It is probably impossible to prevent our own neurotic prejudices from influencing small children, but we can at least make opportunity for the sexual gratification of adolescents. This is essential in order to prevent the patterns of coercion and authority from re-emerging no matter what the political change has been.

4. In small groups we must exercise direct political initiative in community problems of personal concern to ourselves (housing, community-plan, education, etc.) The constructive decisions of intimate concern to us cannot be delegated to representative government and bureaucracy. Further, even if the Government really represented the interests of the constituents, it is still the case that political initiative is itself the noble and integrating act of every man. In government, as in economic production, what is superficially efficient is not efficient in the long run.

5. Living in the midst of an alienated way of life, we must mutually analyze and purge our souls until we no longer regard as guilty or conspiratorial such illegal acts as spring from common human nature. (Needless to say, I am here referring

to ethical discussions not amateur psychoanalyses.) With regard to committing such "crimes," we must exercise prudence not of inhibition but such prudence as a sane man exercises in a madhouse. On the other hand, we must see that many acts commonly regarded as legal and even meritorious are treason against our natural society, *if they involve us in situations where we cease to have personal responsibility and concern for the consequences*.

6. We must progressively abstain from whatever is connected with the war.

I am sensible that this program seems to demand very great initiative, courage, effort, and social invention; yet if once, looking about at our situation whatever it is, we *draw a line* (wherever we draw it!), can we not at once proceed? Those of us who have already been living in a more reasonable way do not find these minimal points too difficult; can those who have all their lives taken on the habits (if not the ideas) of the alienated society, expect not to make drastic changes? If we are to have peace, it is necessary to wage the peace. Otherwise, when their war comes, we also must hold ourselves responsible for it…

The emergency that faces sociolatry and state-socialism is the War, and we know that this catastrophe of theirs must overwhelm us all. Is it a necessity of their system? Must one not assume, and can one not observe, that beneath the acceptance and mechanical, unspontaneous pleasure in the current social satisfactions there is a deep hatred for these satisfactions that makes men willing to rush off to armies and to toy with the idea of loosing explosive bombs? (To put this another way: In a famous passage Freud pathetically justifies competitive capitalism as a means of releasing aggression without physical destruction. Now if, under improved economic arrangements of full-employment and non-competitive profits, this means of release is thwarted, how will the general aggression find an outlet—if the aggression itself is not moderated by small-scale fraternal competition, mutual aid, and instinctual gratification?)

…[W]e see on all sides an ill-concealed—concealed only to those who are expressing it—hatred for the social satisfactions. The most refined champions of our civilized arena, namely the technicians and practical scientists, seem almost the most inspired to feverish cooperative activity if once it has in it the promise of violence. Further, the people as a whole can the more cheerfully rush to the destruction of what they have and what they are, because, inspired to it en masse and suggesting it to one another, they release one another from the guilty restraint that each would feel by himself.

The behavior of the Americans during the last interbellum was terribly signifi-
cant. On the one hand, people were almost unanimously opposed to the coming war;
there was even a certain amount of successful pacifist agitation (such as the barring
of military training from many colleges). On the other hand, one economic and politi-
cal action after another was committed that led directly to a world-wide war; and
these acts were acquiesced in by the people despite the clear, demonstrative, and
thousand times reiterated warnings from many quarters that the acts were heading
towards a general war. It is absurd to claim that such warnings did not get a hearing,
for the point is: why did they not? To me it seems that the public behavior was ex-
actly that of a person in the face of a danger that he consciously wants to flee, but he
is paralyzed because unconsciously he wants to embrace it.

But alas! This social violence that wants, not to destroy mankind, but only to get
back to natural institutions, cannot be healthy, because it will in fact destroy us.

We others had better wage our peace and bring them quickly into our camp.
October 1945
(First published in *politics*, December 1945)

12. Alex Comfort: Peace and Disobedience (1946)

Today Alex Comfort (1920-2000) is best known for his popular sex guide, The Joy of Sex.
*Few of the readers of that book would know that during the 1940s he was an anarchist paci-
fist war resister, as well as a noted poet and novelist. His anarchism was rooted in the notion
of individual resistance and disobedience to what he, as a medically trained doctor and scien-
tist, regarded as the mass insanity of war. The following excerpts are reprinted from his 1946
pamphlet,* Peace and Disobedience, *originally published as a Peace News Pamphlet, later
reprinted in* Against Power and Death: The Anarchist Articles and Pamphlets of Alex
Comfort *(London: Freedom Press, 1994), ed. David Goodway. It is reprinted here with the
kind permission of Nicholas Comfort and the Comfort estate.*

THOSE WHO TOOK THEIR STAND AGAINST the war because they believed in human
liberty and responsibility and recognized the utter irrelevance of military victory in a
conflict of such a character, were opposed with the argument that the road not only
to personal survival but to international amity and national self-realization lay
through this conflict, that individual disobedience was impotent against organized
repression—that even if we were walking on corpses, at least we were walking to-
wards the comity of nations.

Every one of those predictions has proved false. We are confronted with a cer-
tainty of renewed war even more imminent than it was in 1935, with a world equally

divided between rapacious and mendacious gangs, with the knowledge that the technique and conception of the repressive state must be fought all over again at the level of personal resistance where it is vulnerable, by those individual and personal methods of disobedience which are the only weapons effective against it, the only revolutionary ideology which does not carry in itself the seeds of a post-revolutionary tyranny. The democratic allies have disgraced themselves more completely in the sight of historical libertarianism than any coalition which ever uttered a pretension or broke a promise. They have reduced indiscriminate bombardment to a fine art. They have replaced famine, destruction and repression with repression, destruction and famine. They have repeated in detail actions which differ only from those of the fascists in that we are responsible for them. They have debased the currency of humanity to an even lower level than have the fascists themselves, because they have debased it in the name of human liberation. Fascism was the conscious and voluntary adoption of that irrationalism which lies at the root of all irresponsible societies, and the practice of that irrationalism is no less inevitable because we choose to repudiate it. The savagery of the Japanese towards their prisoners was in itself a less serious social phenomenon than the savagery of the Allies towards the population of Japan, for if the first was the product of the zoo, the second, like Belsen and Maidenek [Nazi death camps], was the product of the lunatic asylum…

The conclusion of the anarchist theory of history [that] barbarism must be resisted by individual disobedience, and that all other forms of resistance to it are self-defeating, has been vindicated in every occupied country…

It has been ably argued by [George] Orwell and others that the military techniques and weapons of a period tend to dictate its social structure—the longbow and the hand grenade make for libertarianism; the atom bomb and the aeroplane, weapons which cannot be manufactured by a body smaller than a state, for a tyrannical order, because of the relative concentration of the power of making and using them in the hands of the rulers. It has been argued that against tyranny equipped with nuclear energy no resistance is possible. Orwell foresees a stable order of tyranny based on these weapons. But it is an essential feature of the new ways of war that they are indiscriminate, and can be used only against a community—they are weapons with few ideological possibilities. Armed revolution cannot succeed, but armed revolution, being based upon power, has never succeeded in producing anything but tyranny. The very states which are able to make and use atomic weapons are singularly vulnerable, by their very complexity, to the attacks of individual disobedience, and the events of the war have proved abundantly that the weapons at the disposal of tyr-

anny against individual recalcitrants are precisely what they were in 2000 BC—terrorism, mass execution, political police, propaganda. The contentions of anarchism have been strengthened, not weakened, by the advent of new weapons.

It seems that the forcible destruction of centralized power, the chief preoccupation of other generations of libertarian thought, is becoming less and less our responsibility. Those institutions now constitute a far more serious threat to themselves than any revolutionary movement. The history of libertarianism is the history of alternation between the fear of stable tyranny which must be subverted and the conviction that tyrannies contain the matter of their own violent end. It is perfectly true that no society since the fall of Rome has contained so much historically explosive material. Megalopolitan government is utterly irresponsible, it displays an irrevocable tendency to war, and its cities are increasingly indefensible. Its irresponsibility runs parallel with its lack of cohesion, its militarism with its vulnerability. In such an order war ceases to be a means of upholding the status quo—the new feature of war in the last fifty years is that it tends to subvert all existing social organizations, to sweep away its makers rather than to maintain their power...

We have three duties: to resist, to educate and to establish and encourage mutual aid communities. By these means we may make possible survival if western society collapses, the ability to resist if tyranny succeeds it, and the readiness of the people if reform can be gained by compromise. Resistance and disobedience are still the only forces able to cope with barbarism, and so long as we do not practice them we are unarmed.

Against this background, we are faced with the prospect of conscription. That means that our own war has not yet begun. We have seen it begun, tentatively and haltingly but bravely, by the resistance movements of all countries. We have one enemy, irresponsible government, against which we are committed to a perpetual and unrelenting maquis. Every government that intends war is as much our enemy as ever the Germans were… Wars are not deplorable accidents produced by the perfidy of degenerate nations—they are the results of calculated policy: we will set them outside the bounds of calculation. Atrocities are not only the work of sadists—your friends and relatives who butchered the whole of Hamburg were not sadists—they are the result of obedience, an obedience which forgets its humanity. We will not accept that obedience. The safeguard of peace is not a vast army, but an unreliable public, a public that will fill the streets and empty the factories at the word War, that will learn and accept the lesson of resistance. The way to stop atrocities is to refuse to participate in them.

The weapon of irresponsibility today, the weapon that has characterized the collapse of every megalopolitan military state, is military conscription, the final impudence of the demand that men should put their bodies and consciences in hands that they may not question, and over which they have no control. The maquis fights for a cause which he can lose but cannot vitiate—it cannot be taken from him: the soldier fights for a cause which, because it lies outside his hands, is forfeit from the day that he obeys. We will be the maquisards of the peace; not by violence but by disobedience, not by terrorism but by humanity we will utterly destroy the conscription upon which the military plans of Great Powers are based. We will see that when next they attempt to make this structure bear their weight, it will precipitate the adventurers into the filth where they deserve to be.

The relevance of pacifism has never stood higher, if we wish it. Political leaders have never looked smaller or more despicable in the eyes of the world public than the brawlers and oil-hunters of the 'United Nations' sitting and manoeuvring for position among the ruins and starvation which they have created, a policyless caucus of tyrants who lack even the stature of tyranny. The atomic bomb has brought home to increasing numbers of the public at large that tyranny is not a greater evil than war, because war itself is an instrument of tyranny on the largest scale. The will to resist is there—it is essential that the conception of a pacifism of personal objection, directed to the salvaging of one's own conscience, should be replaced by a pacifism able to canalize and provide support for the ordinary man's resistance to the destruction of his own rights and life—the resistance which makes conscription necessary...

It is possible that resistance to war will lead us to the necessity of resistance to a tyranny other than that of our own government, which will be costly and destructive. But we can accept it in the knowledge that the results of such a resistance are historically permanent, and that its cost in life and suffering would be infinitely less than that of a renewed national war.

Objection is not enough. The objector, particularly the religious objector, is politically irrelevant because he is chiefly interested in safeguarding his own conscientious objection to one aspect of state irresponsibility. You do not want objection, you want resistance, personal and national, organized and individual, ready to adopt every means short of violence to destroy and render useless the whole mechanism of conscription. It is not enough to secure the immunity and the support of religious believers and a politically conscious minority. The opposition of the ordinary man to military service must be canalized. He will not stand up against the machinery of governments and penalties, with the knowledge that his wife and children are hostages,

unless he has the consciousness of that powerful, if invisible, support which the European resistance movements gave to the unpolitical man in his opposition to the Germans. Men will defy conscription in defence of their own lives and homes, against military adventurers, *if they know that there is someone to support them*. They will act out of an intuitive and thoroughly unpatriotic love of freedom, the sentiment which makes conscription necessary in the first place. The answer to conscription, in England and in every country of the world, is a resistance movement which does not confine itself to anarchists or Quakers, and which asks few political credentials of its members. We have no right to ask whether a man is a draft-dodger or a high-minded idealist—he has the right to reject conscription, and we must uphold that right. The time for public protest is running out—it is no good protesting against men like Himmler, Harris or the American race fanatics: they must be resisted. It is by taking the offensive that pacifism will become politically relevant. It seems to me that we have been too long intoxicated by the semblance of a democracy which we knew to be unreal. It is weighted and we cannot win, but we continue to pay lip-service to it. The organizers of conscription are as much our enemies as a foreign invader, and deserve no better treatment. The political relevance of pacifism lies in its willingness to substitute resistance for objection, and it seems to me that the time for such substitution is riper from one day to the next.

Peace News Pamphlet, 1946

13. Dwight Macdonald: The Root is Man (1946)

In the 1940s, Dwight Macdonald (1905-1982) and his wife Nancy published the independent left review, politics, *which included contributions from such writers as Albert Camus, Victor Serge, Paul Goodman, George Woodcock, Simone Weil, Jean-Paul Sartre, Mary McCarthy, Marshal McLuhan, Simone de Beauvoir, Bruno Bettleheim and C. Wright Mills. Macdonald had been a Communist supporter in the 1930s, later joining the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Macdonald quickly aligned himself with the dissidents in the SWP who questioned Trotsky's critical support of the Soviet Union as a "degenerated" workers' state, arguing that it was a bureaucratic dictatorship. When Macdonald argued for "skepticism towards all theories, governments and social systems," sounding a lot like an anarchist, Trotsky denounced him as a traitor. Macdonald soon left the SWP to follow his own political path. In 1946, he published* The Root is Man, *in which he not only criticized orthodox Marxism for its scientific pretensions but modern science itself, making a definitive break with Marxism and its 19th century notions of progress.*

THE BRUTALITY AND IRRATIONALITY OF Western social institutions has reached a pitch which would have seemed incredible a short generation ago; our lives have come to be dominated by warfare of a ferocity and on a scale unprecedented in history; horrors have been committed by the governments of civilized nations which could hardly have been improved on by Attila: the extermination of the Jewish people by the Nazis; the vast forced-labor camps of the Soviet Union; our own saturation bombing of German cities and the "atomization" of the residents of Hiroshima and Nagasaki...

Nowhere is there visible a party of any size which even aspires—let alone has the power to do so—to shatter the institutions, beginning with the national State, whose blind workings are bringing on the next war. All we have on the Left is still that banal and hopeless clash of two unsatisfactory alternatives: the totalitarian heirs of Bolshevism, and those sapless sons of ineffectual fathers, the liblabs and the socialists...

It will not do to lay the chief blame for this collapse on Stalinist "betrayal" or even on the overwhelming amount of military force in the hands of the Big Three [the USA, the USSR and the UK]. What has happened is that the traditional aspirations which the dominant Marxian ideology has implanted in the masses of Europe have come to coincide to a dangerous degree with the interests of their rulers, so that the tribunes of the people find themselves in the absurd and demoralizing position of demanding what will be granted anyway. They have no vocabulary with which to ask for the things which are today really in the interests of the oppressed—and which will *not* be granted from above.

The social systems of the victorious powers are developing a common tendency towards a planned, State-controlled economy which considers the citizen a cell in the social organism and thus at once the ward of the State, entitled to a job and to average living standards in exchange for his usefulness in production or the armed forces, and also the State's docile instrument who could no more rebel than a cell could develop independently of the total organism. If this latter *does* happen, modern political theory agrees with biology in calling the result cancer, which must be cut out lest the organism die. The Organic State is directed towards one great end: to assert effectively against competing States its own nationalistic interests, which means preparation for World War III. All this is a matter of common knowledge in upper-class circles in the USA, the USSR and other big powers, although, for obvious reasons, it is not discussed in public.

Now, with such a society developing, what kind of demands do the tribunes of the people put forth today? Do they proclaim a new Rights of Man? Do they turn paci-

fist, denounce war as the greatest of evils, insist on immediate disarmament, begin-
ning with their own country, expose the fraudulent character of World War II? Do
they agitate for greater freedom of the press and opinion? Do they push toward de-
centralization of industry until its scale becomes human, regardless of the effects on
munitions production? Do they take up arms against the growing power of the State?
Do they fight against the growth of nationalism?

These are, of course, rhetorical questions. The reformist movements like the
British Labour Party and our own labour unions are apathetic on such issues. The
Communists are not apathetic; they are intensely hostile. What kind of aims do both
liblabs and Communists actually have? They want Full Production, Nationalization,
Planning, and above all Security of both the Social and the National varieties. There is
nothing in these demands incompatible with the interest of the ruling class in orga-
nizing a strong nation to compete militarily with other nations. There are antago-
nisms, it is true, sharp and sometimes bloody battles. But these clashes are on
secondary issues; they do not affect the trend towards war and social regimentation.
For the struggle is not over a new kind of society, but over who is to dominate the ex-
isting society, the Old Guard or the Tribunes of the People. It is becoming increas-
ingly difficult to distinguish the "Right" from the "Left" wing.

The reason for this confusion is basically simple: the historical process to which
the Left has traditionally looked for progress in a desirable direction has been going
on but the result is often not progress but the reverse. The liberals put their faith in
social and economic reforms; these are being made, but often go hand in hand with
moral barbarism. The Marxists looked to the expropriation of the bourgeoisie; this is
taking place, but new and in many ways even more oppressive rulers are replacing
the old ones. We are all in the position of a man going upstairs who thinks there is an-
other step, and finds there is not. We are off balance…

Everywhere today we see the class struggle *inside* nations yielding to struggle
between nations, so that the main conflict nowadays is between peoples and not be-
tween exploiters and exploited. If history *has* indeed a motor—which I doubt, just as
I doubt the existence of History with a capital "H"—then the motor is war, not revolu-
tion. Everywhere "national unity" is weakening the class struggle: politically, it mod-
erates class conflicts by emphasizing the common national enemy; economically, it
makes concessions to the masses in return for their support in war making. In Russia,
where Hitler's "national socialism" has been realized far more completely than it ever
was in Germany, the political control of the rulers over the ruled is so complete that

the economic concessions are the most trifling, the gap between the living standards of the masses and their exploiters is the widest.

Marxists will retort that revolutionary class struggle inside each nation is the way to weaken the present supernationalism that is leading us to a third world war. I would agree that it is certainly an important method, but this simply raises the question of WHY there is so little class struggle today, WHY the masses follow their leaders to war with such docility...

The more war becomes dominant, the more the ruling classes can monopolize continually—not just in time of actual hostilities—the most powerful ideological weapon they have ever grasped: the appeal for "unity" of the whole nation against a threat from outside. This weapon is powerful psychologically, because it plays on very deep fears and in-group loyalties. It is also powerful in rational terms, because it is perfectly true that national defeat is catastrophic for *all* classes, not just for the ruling class. Thus the strongest appeal of the Nazis in the terrible final year of the war was their picture of what the consequences of defeat would be for the German people; and now we see—and doubtless the Germans see even better—that the Nazis were quite right in all their predictions...

Now that the national State has become the great menace, and war and foreign policy the great issue, the "realistic" attitude that has always distinguished Marx and his followers on these matters has become quite unrealistic (if one's aim is not effective war making or the furtherance of nationalistic ambitions). The Anarchists' uncompromising rejection of the State, the subject of Marxian sneers for its "absolutist" and "Utopian" character, makes much better sense in the present era than the Marxian relativist and historical approach. The pacifists also seem to be more realistic than the Marxists both in their under standing of modern war and also in their attempts to do something about it...

The bomb that vaporized Hiroshima less than a year ago also leveled—though some of us don't seem yet aware of it— the whole structure of Progressive assumptions on which liberal and socialist theory has been built up for two centuries. For now, for the first time in history, humanity faces the possibility that its own activity may result in the destruction not of some people or some part of the world, but of all people and the whole world for all time. The end may come through radioactive substances which will poison the atmosphere, or through a chain reaction ripping apart the earth's crust, releasing the molten rock in the interior. Most scientists say that *at the present stage of development* of atomic energy this it not possible (though others say it is). But no one can say definitely what will happen in another decade or two of

Atomic Progress. Scientific progress has reached its "end," and the "end" is turning out to be the end (without quotes) of man himself.

What becomes of the chief argument of Progressives—that out of present evil will come future good—if we now confront the possibility that there may not *be* a future? In that once popular expression of the Progressive ideology of the last century, Winwood Reade's *The Martyrdom of Man*, the author writes: "I give to universal history a strange but true title: 'The Martyrdom of Man.' In each generation, the human race has been tortured that their children might profit by their woes. Our own prosperity is founded on the agonies of the past. Is it therefore unjust that we should also suffer for the benefit of those who are to come?" And what a future Reade saw rising out of the agonies of the present! He expected scientific progress to enable man to travel among the stars, to manufacture his own suns and solar systems, to conquer death itself. The progress has not failed, but it has brought universal death; instead of manufacturing new solar systems, man seems more likely to destroy his own little globe. And our sufferings, far from being for the benefit of those who are to come, are more likely to remove the first condition of their coming: the existence of an inhabited earth.

It is the materialistic Reade who today appears grotesquely metaphysical in his assumptions. So, too, Engels: "The process of replacing some 500,000 Russian landowners and some 80 million peasants by a new class of bourgeois landed proprietors cannot be carried out except under the most fearful sufferings and convulsions. But history is about the most cruel of goddesses, and she drives her triumphal car over heaps of corpses, not only in war but also in 'peaceful' economic development. And we men and women are unfortunately so stupid that we can never pluck up courage to a real progress unless urged to it by sufferings almost out of proportion... There is no great historical evil without a compensating historical progress." (Letters to Danielson, Feb. 24 and Oct. 17, 1893.) So long as there was an indefinite future before us, this kind of Progressive metaphysics had at least the appearance of reasonability. No one could prove, after all, that after several centuries or even several millennia of sufferings, detours, and "temporary regressions," history would not finally lead humanity to the promised kingdom. It was thus logical—how sensible is another matter—to view the present in terms of the future. But now that we confront the actual, scientific possibility of The End being written to human history and at a not so distant date, the concept of the future, so powerful an element in traditional socialist thought, loses for us its validity. This bitter enlightenment, if from it we can learn to live in the here and now, may offer us the one possible escape from our fate…

It is not difficult to sketch out the kind of society we need to rescue modern man from his present alienation. It would be one whose only aim, justification and principle would be the full development of each individual, and the removal of all social bars to his complete and immediate satisfaction in his work, his leisure, his sex life and all other aspects of his nature. (To remove all social bars does not, of course, mean to remove all bars; complete happiness and satisfaction is probably impossible in any society and would be dull even if possible; regardless of the excellence of social institutions, there will always be, for example, persons who are in love with others who aren't in love with them.) This can only be done if each individual understands what he is doing and has the power, within the limitations of his own personality and of our common human imperfection, to act exactly as he thinks best for himself. This in turn depends on people entering into direct personal relationships with each other, which in turn means that the political and economic units of society (workshops, exchange of goods, political institutions) are small enough to allow the participants to understand them and to make their individual influence felt. If effective wars cannot be fought by groups the size of New England town meetings, and I take it they cannot, this is one more reason for giving up war (rather than the town meeting). If automobiles cannot be made efficiently by small factories, then let us make them inefficiently. If scientific research would be hampered in a small-unit society then let us by all means hamper it.

…[T]he traditional Progressive approach, taking History as the starting-point and thinking in terms of mass political parties, bases itself on this same alienation of man which it thinks it is combating. It puts the individual into the same powerless, alienated role vis-à-vis the party or the trade union as the manipulators of the modern State do, except that the slogans are different. The current failure of the European masses to get excited about socialist slogans and programs indicates that the masses are, as Rosa Luxemburg constantly and rightly insisted, much smarter and more "advanced" than their intellectual leaders. The brutal fact is that the man in the street everywhere is quite simply bored with socialism, as expounded by the Socialist, Stalinist, and Trotskyist epigones of Marx, that he suspects it is just a lot of stale platitudes which either have no particular meaning (Socialists, Trotskyists, British Labour Party), or else a sinister one (Stalinists). Above all, he feels that there is no interest in it for *him* as an individual human being—that he is as powerless and manipulated vis-à-vis his socialist mass-organization as he is towards his capitalistic employers and their social and legal institutions.

Here is observable a curious and unexpected (to Progressives) link between the masses and those dissident intellectuals here and there who are beginning to show a distrust of the old Marxian verities and to cast about for some firmer ground. Each party, in its own way, has come to find the old slogans and axioms either treacherous or boring—mostly the latter. Boring because they give no promise of leading to that which they proclaim, and meanwhile still further alienate man from his true and spontaneous nature.

From all this one thing seems to follow: we must reduce political action to a modest, unpretentious, personal level—one that is real in the sense that it satisfies, here and now, the psychological needs, and the ethical values of the particular persons taking part in it. We must begin way at the bottom again, with small groups of individuals in various countries, grouped around certain principles and feelings they have in common. These should probably not be physically isolated communities as was the case in the 19th century since this shuts one off from the common experience of one's fellowmen. They should probably consist of individuals—*families*, rather—who live and make their living in the everyday world but who come together often enough and intimately enough to form a *psychological* (as against a geographical) community The purpose of such groups would be twofold. Within itself, the group would exist so that its members could come to know each other as fully as possible as human beings (the difficulty of such knowledge of others in modern society is a chief source of evil), to exchange ideas and discuss as fully as possible what is "on their minds" (not only the atomic bomb but also the perils of child-rearing), and in general to learn the difficult art of living with other people. The group's purpose toward the outside world would be to take certain actions together (as, against Jim Crow in this country, or to further pacifism), to support individuals whether members of the group or not who stand up for the common ideals, and to preach those ideals—or, if you prefer, make propaganda—by word and by deed, in the varied everyday contacts of the group members with their fellow men (as, trade union meetings, parent-teacher associations, committees for "worthy causes," cocktail parties, etc.).

The ideas which these groups would advance, by word and deed, would probably run along something like the following lines:

1. The dominance of war and the development of weapons atrocious beyond all past imagination make pacifism, in my opinion, a sine-qua-non of any Radical movement. The first great principle would, therefore, be that killing and hurting others is wrong, always and absolutely, and that no member of the group will use such methods or let himself be drafted to do so.

2. Coercion of the individual, whether by the State or by a revolutionary party is also wrong in principle, and will be opposed with sabotage, ridicule, evasion, argument, or simple refusal to submit to authority—as circumstances may require. Our model here would be the old I.W.W. rather than the Marxist Internationals.

3. All ideologies which require the sacrifice of the present in favour of the future will be looked on with suspicion. People should be happy and should satisfy their spontaneous needs here and now. If people don't enjoy what they are doing, they shouldn't do it. (This includes the activities of the group.) This point is a leaning, a *prejudice* rather than a principle; that is, the extent to which it is acted on would be relative to other things.

4. Socialism is primarily an ethical matter. The number of people who want it at any given moment has nothing to do with its validity for the individual who makes it his value. What *he* does, furthermore, is considered to be just as "real" as what History does.

5. Members of the groups would get into the habit, discouraged by the Progressive frame of mind, of acting here and now, on however tiny a scale, for their beliefs. They would do as the handful of British and American scientists did who just refused, as individuals and without any general support, to make atomic bombs; not as Albert Einstein and other eminent scientists are now doing—raising money for an educational campaign to show the public how horrible The Bomb is, while they continue to cooperate with General Groves in making more and bigger bombs.

6. They will think in human, not class terms. This means they will free themselves from the Marxian fetishism of the masses, preferring to be able to speak modest meaningful truths to a small audience rather than grandiose empty formulae to a big one. This also means for the moment turning to the intelligentsia as one's main supporters, collaborators and audience, on the assumption that what we are looking for represents so drastic a break with past traditions of thinking and behaving that at this early stage only a few crackpots and eccentrics (i.e., intellectuals) will understand what we're talking about, or care about it at all. We may console ourselves that all new social movements, including Marxism, have begun this way: with a few intellectuals rather than at the mass level…

During the late war, those of us who opposed it were told by Progressives who supported it that our position was absurd because we couldn't "do anything" about it; that is, we couldn't stop the war. They felt that they were at least acting in accordance with their convictions; that is, they were helping bring about an Allied victory. This criticism, however, reveals an incomprehension of the nature of modern social organization: there is no place in the orderly, bureaucratized workings of a first-class power today for individual emotion, will, choice, or action. As the late Dr. Goebbels well expressed it: "Moods and emotions, the so-called 'morale' of the population, matters little. What matters is that they should preserve their bearing… Expressions such as patriotism and enthusiasm are quite out of place. The German people simply do their duty, that's all…"

To Marx's "fetishism of commodities" I would counterpoise our modern fetishism—that of the masses. The more Progressive one's thinking, the more one assumes that the test of the goodness of a political program is how wide a popular appeal it makes. I venture to assert, for the present time at least, the contrary: that, as in art and letters, communicability to a large audience is in inverse ratio to the excellence of a political approach. This is not a good thing: as in art, it is a deforming, crippling factor. Nor is it an eternal rule: in the past, the ideas of a tiny minority, sometimes almost reduced to the vanishing-point of one individual, have slowly come to take hold on more and more of their fellow men; and we may hope that our own ideas may do likewise. But such, it seems to me, is our situation today, whether we like it or not. To attempt to propagate political ideas on a mass scale today results in either corrupting them or draining them of all emotional force and intellectual meaning. The very media by which one must communicate with a large audience—the radio, the popular press, the movies—are infected; the language and symbols of mass communication are infected…

As it is with communication, so is it with political organization. The two traditional Marxian approaches to organization are those of the Second and the Third International. The former puts its faith in mass parties, tied in with the great trade unions; the latter, in a disciplined, centralized, closely organized corps of "professional revolutionaries" which will lead masses in revolutionary situations. Superficially, it would seem that the vast scale of modern society calls for mass parties to master it, while the centralized power of the modern State can be countered only by an equally centralized and closely organized revolutionary party. But the fact seems to be just the contrary: the State can crush such groups, whether organized mass parties or as Bolshevik elite corps, the moment they show signs of becoming serious threats, precisely because they fight the State on its own grounds, they *compete* with

the State. The totalization of State power today means that only something on a different plane can cope with it, something which fights the State from a vantage point which the State's weapons can reach only with difficulty. Perhaps the most effective means of countering violence, for example, is non-violence, which throws the enemy off balance ("moral jujitsu" someone [Richard Gregg, Selection 36] has called it) and confuses his human agents, all the more so because it appeals to traitorous elements in their own hearts.

All this means that individual actions, based on moral convictions, have greater force today than they had two generations ago. As an English correspondent wrote me recently: "The main reason for Conscientious Objection is undoubtedly that it does make a personal feeling have weight. In the present world, the slightest sign of individual revolt assumes a weight out of all proportion to its real value." Thus in drafting men into that totalitarian society, the U.S. Army, the examiners often rejected any one who stated openly that he did not *want* to enter the Army and felt he would be unhappy there. We may assume this action was not due to sympathy, but rather to the fact that, as practical men, the examiners knew that such a one would "make trouble" and that the smooth running of the vast mechanism could be thrown out by the presence of such a gritty particle precisely because of the machine's delicately-geared hugeness.

Another conclusion is that group action against The Enemy is most effective when it is most spontaneous and loosest in organization. The opposition of the romantic clubs of German youth ("Edelweiss," "Black Pirates") was perhaps more damaging to the Nazis than that of the old parties and unions. So, too, World-over Press reports that a recently discovered secret list of British leaders to be liquidated by the Nazis after the invasion of England gave top priority not to trade unionists nor to leftwing political leaders but to well-known pacifists.

What seems necessary is thus to encourage attitudes of disrespect, skepticism, ridicule towards the State and all authority, rather than to build up a competing authority. It is the difference between a frontal attack all along the line and swift flanking jabs at points where The Enemy is weakest, between large-scale organized warfare and guerrilla operations. Marxists go in for the former: the Bolsheviks emphasize discipline and unity in order to match that of The Enemy; the reformists try to outweigh The Enemy's power by shepherding great masses of voters and trade unionists into the scales. But the status quo is too powerful to be overthrown by such tactics; and, even worse, they show a disturbing tendency to lead one over to the side of The Enemy…

Granted that individual actions can never overthrow the status quo, and also that even spontaneous mass rebellion will be fruitless unless it has some kind of conscious program and also unless certain elementary steps of coordination and organization are taken. But today we confront this situation: the masses just do not act towards what most of the readers of this magazine would recognize as some fundamental betterment of society. The only way, at present, of so *acting* (as against just "making the record" for the muse of Marxian history by resolutions and manifestoes "against imperialist war," "for the international proletarian revolution," etc.) seems to be through symbolic individual actions, based on one person's insistence on his own values, and through the creation of small fraternal groups which will support such actions, keep alive a sense of our ultimate goals, and both act as a leavening in the dough of mass society and attract more and more of the alienated and frustrated members of that society. These individual stands have two advantages over the activities of those who pretend that mass action is now possible:

(1) They make a dramatic appeal to people, the appeal of the individual who is bold enough and serious enough to stand alone, if necessary against the enormous power of The State; this encourages others to resist a little more than they would otherwise in *their* everyday life, and also preserves the living seeds of protest and rebellion from which later on bigger things may grow.

(2) They at least preserve the revolutionary vitality and principles of the few individuals who make such stands, while the mass-actionists become, if they stick by their principles, deadened and corrupted personally by their constant submission in their own personal behaviour to the standards of The Enemy—and much more corrupted than the simple bourgeois who feels himself at one with those standards (anyone who has been through the Trotskyist movement, for example, as I have, knows that in respect to decent personal behaviour, truthfulness, and respect for dissident opinion, the "comrades" are generally much inferior to the average stockbroker). On the other hand, if they compromise with principles in order to establish contact with the masses, they simply become part of The Enemy's forces, as is the case with the British Labour Party and the French Socialists. Marxists always sneer at the idea of individual action and individual responsibility on the grounds that we are simply interested in "saving our own souls." But what is so terrible about that? Isn't it better to save one's soul than to lose it? (And NOT to "gain the whole world," either!)

The first step towards a new concept of political action (and political morality) is for each person to decide what he thinks is right, what satisfies *him*, what *he* wants. And then to examine with scientific method the environment to figure out how to get it—or, if he can't get it, to see how much he can get without compromising his personal values. Self-ishness must be restored to respectability in our scheme of political values. Not that the individual exists apart from his fellow men, in Max Stirner's sense. I agree with Marx and Proudhon that the individual must define himself partly in his social relations. But the point is to make these real *human* relations and not abstract concepts of class or history. It has often been observed that nations—and, I might add, classes, even the proletariat—have a lower standard of ethical behavior than individuals do. Even if all legal constraints were removed, I take it we can assume that few people would devote themselves exclusively to murder or would constantly lie to their friends and families; yet the most respected leaders of present societies, the military men and the political chieftains, in their public capacities become specialists in lying and murder. Always, of course, with the largest aims, "for the good of humanity…"

Technological progress, the organization from the top of human life (what Max Weber calls "rationalization"), the overconfidence of the past two centuries in scientific method—these have led us, literally, into a dead end. Their trend is now clear: atomic warfare, bureaucratic collectivism, "the crystallization of social activity into an objective power above us, growing out of our control, thwarting our expectations, bringing to naught our calculations…" [Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*]. To try to fight this trend, as the Progressives of all sides do, with the same forces that have brought it about appears absurd to me. We must emphasize the emotions, the imagination, the moral feelings, the primacy of the individual human being, must restore the balance that has been broken by hypertrophy of science in the last two centuries. The root is man, here and not there, now and not then.

Chapter 2
The Will To Dream

14. Ethel Mannin: The Will to Dream (1944)

Ethel Mannin (1900-1985) was a novelist, biographer, travel writer, memoirist and author of children's books and political essays. As a pacifist anarchist she worked with Emma Goldman in England to solicit support for the Spanish anarchists during the Revolution and Civil War. The following excerpts are taken from the conclusion to her book, Bread and Roses: An Utopian Survey and Blue-Print *(London: MacDonald & Co., 1944), in which she sets forth an ecological vision in opposition to the prevailing and destructive industrial organization of society. The need for a transvaluation of values was something Emma Goldman had also emphasized (Volume 1, Selection 89).*

IF WE ARE AGREED THAT PROGRESS IS THE realization of our Utopias [Oscar Wilde, Volume 1, Selection 61] the problem remains—how to set about this realization. It is not to be achieved through any political party, or any leadership. The world has had a surfeit of political parties and leaders. The need is not for politicians and leaders, but for a change in the heart of man. Given the will to it the Utopian dream could be realized; there could be that world in which men, whatever language they spoke, whatever colour their skins, whatever their religions, were brothers in the true sense, racially united in their common humanity, acknowledging one race only—the human race; a world in which all things were in common, each giving to society according to his ability and taking according to his need; a world in which there was no buying or selling, no useless toil, no exploitation of the many by the privileged few; a world in which human beings lived according to the natural law of mutual aid, in a stateless, moneyless, and co-operative society; a world of true liberty, equality and fraternity.

There could be such a world if humanity wanted it enough. If this present civilization, rapidly destroying itself through mechanical force, the machine, accelerated beyond all control, finally collapsed amid its smoking ruins, it might be that those

who survived, purged beyond all imagining by their sufferings, would be given the vision of a new world, a new way of life—new as on the first dawn when God looked upon the world and saw that it was good. Nothing less will serve.

The need… is for the complete transvaluation of values in all spheres, social, moral, economic, industrial, agricultural. That our present economics are the economics of the mad-house is clear, and that we are draining the good earth of its fertility, creating deserts, by taking from it without returning, denying the natural cycle of life…

Utopia has nothing to do with reform; Utopia is the new heaven and the new earth; it does not spring from any political party or system, but from the dream in the heart of man; a revolution in the human mind. By all means let us sanction this and that reform—provided it is not one step forward and two back. Whether or not we can sanction political revolution depends on whether or not we are prepared to sanction violence as a means to an end. But it is clear that Utopia cannot proceed from violence. The history of bloody revolution everywhere is the history of failure. Revolution there must be, the 'complete change, turning upside down, great reversal of conditions, fundamental reconstruction,' of the dictionary definition of the word, but people are not to be bludgeoned into it; only what is achieved through the great upsurge of the human spirit, out of the impassioned desire of the multitude, endures; what is imposed by force has no roots, and cannot last. There is no realization of Utopia without the change of values, and no change of values without change of heart—spiritual revolution. Utopia can be founded only on man's love for man; on love and cooperation; not on hate and the seizing of material power. When one section of the community triumphs over another it is only a matter of time before the section from whom power has been wrested reasserts itself—in the same way that it is only a matter of time before a conquered nation rises once more to power, and to say that history repeats itself is only another way of saying that wars beget wars.

This is not to deny the importance of the day to day struggles—the struggle of oppressed peoples against imperialism, of workers against capitalist exploitation. To suggest that subject peoples should wait, passively, for imperialist governments to experience a change of heart, repent of their sins, and hand over the keys of the kingdom, is manifestly absurd. Ceaselessly the demand for freedom must go up, the doctrine of justice be preached. The masses, the world over, do not have to seize power, since it is by their toil that the wheels go round and the earth brings forth; this is their power; their strength lies in their realization of it. With the withdrawal of their co-operation the whole machinery of the social system ceases to function, and the power of politicians breaks, eventually, under the pressure of the moral force of pub-

lic opinion. No general strike, no rioting, was necessary on the part of the British working classes in 1920 to break the government's intention of intervention against the revolutionaries in Soviet Russia; the government was defeated by the great weight of opinion of the common people who poured out into the public squares and into meeting-places in mass protest. The shameful Hoare-Laval pact during the Abyssinian war [fascist Italy's invasion of Ethiopia] was similarly defeated by the great weight of popular opinion against it. The power of moral force has not yet been fully tried out, though in India one old, frail man [Gandhi] has demonstrated its potentialities—as the Early Christians demonstrated the potentialities of co-operative living according to the law of love.

The change of heart requisite for the realization of millennium is not, ultimately, a matter of conversion from one idea to another, but of the collapse—from exhaustion—of existing systems. Civilizations rise and fall; the machine accelerates to the point at which it blows itself up. Out of the ensuing chaos emerges the morning-star; there breaks upon the world a new day, with new ideas, new values—new vision. So long as there exists the system of society based on private profit, so long will there be injustice and exploitation—the hard heart, that is to say the commercial heart, the imperialist heart, with its lust for power, and all that that connotes of the domination of man by man. Within such a system the heart is not to be changed. But systems become outworn and new conceptions develop. Eventually we do not have to convert the imperialist and the capitalist and the militarist because they cease to be. There are tides in the affairs of men that wash away systems and civilizations.

And the tide is rising in the world today, though few realize it, and Nature herself is taking a hand in the process. The earth the source of all life, is losing its fertility; Nature is being revenged for the profligacy of Man, 'the most extravagant accelerator of waste the world has ever endured,' as the eminent American professor, F. H. King, wrote in his great work, *Farmers of Forty Centuries in China, Korea and Japan*. He adds that Man's 'withering blight has fallen upon every living thing within his reach, himself not excepted.' In his *Cleanliness and Godliness*, Mr. Reginald Reynolds, indicts 'an evil and adulterating generation,' declaring, with bitter truth, that 'of all the things that posterity will remember about us, for nothing will it so justly condemn our age as for our profligacy. They will say of us in time to come that we wasted human labour in unemployment, and human life in war; that we willingly destroyed food on the preposterous excuse that it was necessary to maintain its price; that is to say, to make it more dear to our own pockets; that we *killed time* because we did not know how to live; that we debilitated our constitutions by destroying vitamins, in-

venting elaborate methods of ruining every decent thing that was eatable; and that we destroyed the soil itself by this same mania for *waste'*...

What it all amounts to is that *Man mast find a new way of living or perish*. The dominating forces of our world today are Money and the Machine; they are responsible for our over-industrialization and our wars, and between the non-productiveness of the one, and the destructiveness of the other, what chance has civilization? Our only chance of survival lies in recognition of the danger—of the rising tide—and restoration of those basic values which acknowledge the earth as the only real wealth, and its fertility as 'the substratum of all that is living.'

The fertility of the earth is being destroyed through the commercialization of agriculture, which demands intensive production, quick returns on outlay. It means that the whole source of Man's existence is slowly returning to dust, through the ascendancy of money—because the values of our civilization are the urban values of the stock exchange and the marketplace, and therefore none of the steps in the right direction advocated by the Planners, and the reformers in general, can be anything but continual readjustments in a losing struggle for survival—the make shifts by which a system fundamentally anti-life is kept going…

So long as Man continues to exploit the soil for profit he sows the seeds of his own destruction, not merely because Nature becomes his enemy, responding to his machines and his chemicals by the withdrawal of fertility, the dusty answer of an ultimate desert barrenness, but because his whole attitude to life is debased; his gods become Money and Power, and wars and unemployment and useless toil become his inevitable portion.

That twentieth-century human beings, with all their imperfections, can live an ordered, cooperative life, free of centralized government, has been demonstrated by the Catalonian experiment during the Spanish Civil War; a beginning was even made with the abolition of money. Groups of people in all countries, throughout the ages, from the Early Christians down to present-day communities, have shown by example what can be achieved through cooperative living. Utopias cannot exist islanded in a non-Utopian world, but these experiments indicate what is possible given the will to the dream.

London, December, 1943—May, 1944

15. Marie Louise Berneri: Journey Through Utopia (1949)

Marie Louise Berneri's Journey Through Utopia *was her posthumously published survey and critical analysis of utopian visions from Plato's* Republic *to the modern dystopias of Eugeny Zamyatin (*We*) and Aldous Huxley (*Brave New World*). But, as George Woodcock notes in his Forward to the book, it is "much more than a mere compilation and criticism of Utopias, for it does in fact bring out in a striking way the close and fateful relationship between Utopian thought and social reality." The following excerpts are taken from Berneri's Introduction (originally published in 1950 by Routledge and Kegan Paul; subsequently republished by Freedom Press).*

OUR AGE IS AN AGE OF COMPROMISES, of half-measures, of the lesser evil. Visionaries are derided or despised, and "practical men" rule our lives. We no longer seek radical solutions to the evils of society, but reforms; we no longer try to abolish war, but to avoid it for a period of a few years; we do not try to abolish crime, but are contented with criminal reforms; we do not try to abolish starvation, but to set up world-wide charitable organizations. At a time when man is so concerned with what is practicable and capable of immediate realization, it might be a salutary exercise to turn to men who have dreamt of Utopias, who have rejected everything which did not comply with their ideal of perfection.

We shall often feel humble as we read of these ideal states and cities, for we shall realize the modesty of our claims, and the poverty of our vision. Zeno advocated internationalism. Plato recognized the equality of men and women, Thomas More saw clearly the relationship between poverty and crime which is denied by men even today. At the beginning of the seventeenth century Campanella advocated a working day of four hours, and the German scholar Andreae talked of attractive work and put forward a system of education which could still serve as a model today.

We shall find private property condemned, money and wages considered immoral or irrational, human solidarity admitted as an obvious fact. All these ideas which could be considered daring today were then put forward with a confidence which shows that though they were not generally accepted, they must have been nevertheless readily understood. In the late seventeenth and the eighteenth century we find even more startling and bold ideas concerning religion, sexual relations, the nature of government and of the law. We are so accustomed to thinking that progressive movements begin with the nineteenth century that we shall be surprised to find that the degeneration of utopian thought begins then. Utopias, as a rule, become timid; private property and money are often judged necessary; men must consider

themselves happy if they work eight hours a day, and there is rarely any question of their work being attractive. Women are placed under the tutelage of their husbands, and children under that of the father. But before utopias became contaminated by the "realist" spirit of our time, they flourished with a variety and richness which may well make us doubt the validity of our claim to have achieved some measure of social progress.

This is not to say that all utopias have been revolutionary and progressive: the majority of them have been both, but few have been entirely revolutionary. Utopian writers were revolutionary when they advocated a community of goods at a time when private property was held to be sacred, the right of every individual to eat when beggars were hanged, the equality of women when these were considered little better than slaves, the dignity of manual work when it was regarded and made a degrading occupation, the right of every child to a happy childhood and good education when this was reserved for the sons of the nobles and the rich. All this has contributed to make the word "Utopia" synonymous with a happy, desirable form of society. Utopia, in this respect, represents mankind's dream of happiness, its secret longing for the Golden Age, or, as others saw it, for its lost Paradise.

But that dream often had its dark places. There were slaves in Plato's *Republic* and in More's *Utopia*; there were mass murders of Helots in the Sparta of Lycurgus; and wars, executions, strict discipline, religious intolerance, are often found beside the most enlightened institutions. These aspects, which have often been overlooked by the apologists of utopias, result from the authoritarian conception on which many utopias were built, and are absent from those which aim at achieving complete freedom.

Two main trends manifest themselves in utopian thought throughout the ages. One seeks the happiness of mankind through material well-being, the sinking of man's individuality into the group, and the greatness of the State. The other, while demanding a certain degree of material comfort, considers that happiness is the result of the free expression of man's personality and must not be sacrificed to an arbitrary moral code or to the interests of the State...

The authoritarian utopias have aimed at giving shepherds, captains and tyrants to the people, whether under the name of *guardians*, *phylarchs*, or *samurai*.

These utopias were progressive in as much as they wished to abolish economic inequalities, but they replaced the old economic slavery by a new one: men ceased to be the slaves of their masters or employers, to become the slaves of the Nation and the State. The power of the State is sometimes based on moral and military power, as in Plato's *Republic*, on religion, as in Andreae's *Christianopolis*, or on the ownership of

the means of production and distribution as in most of the utopias of the nineteenth century. But the result is always the same: the individual is obliged to follow a code of laws or of moral behaviour artificially created for him.

The contradictions inherent in most utopias are due to this authoritarian approach. The builders of utopias claimed to give freedom to the people, but freedom which is given ceases to be freedom. Diderot was one of the few utopian writers who denied himself even the right to decree that "each should do as he wills"; but the majority of the builders of utopias are determined to remain the masters in their imaginary commonwealths. While they claim to give freedom they issue a detailed code which must be strictly followed. There are the lawgivers, the kings, the magistrates, the priests, the presidents of national assemblies in their utopias; and yet, after they have decreed, codified, ordered marriages, imprisonments and executions, they still claim that the people are free to do what they like. It is only too apparent that Campanella imagined himself to be the Great Metaphysician in his *City of the Sun*, Bacon a father of his Salomon's House, and Cabet the lawgiver of his Icaria. When they have the wit of Thomas More they could express their secret longing with much humour: "You cannot think how elated I am," he wrote to his friend Erasmus, "how I have grown in stature and hold my head higher; so constantly do I imagine myself in the part of sovereign of Utopia; in fact I fancy I am walking with the crown of corn-ears upon my head, wearing a Franciscan cloak, and carrying the corn sheaf as a sceptre, attended by a great throng of the people of Amaurote"…

Another contradiction of authoritarian utopias consists in asserting that their laws follow the order of nature when in fact their code has been arbitrarily constituted. Utopian writers, instead of trying to discover the laws of nature, preferred to invent them, or found them in the "archives of ancient prudence." For some of them, like Mably or Morelly, the code of nature was that of Sparta, and instead of basing their utopias on living communities and on men as they have known them, they built them on abstract conceptions. This is responsible for the artificial atmosphere prevalent in most utopias: Utopian men are uniform creatures with identical wants and reactions and deprived of emotions and passions, for these would be the expression of individuality. This uniformity is reflected in every aspect of utopian life, from the clothes to the timetable, from moral behaviour to intellectual interests. As H. G. Wells has pointed out: "In almost every Utopia—except, perhaps, Morris's *News from Nowhere*—one sees handsome but characterless buildings, symmetrical and perfect cultivations, and a multitude of people, healthy, happy, beautifully dressed, but without any personal distinction whatever. Too often the prospect resembles the key to

one of those large pictures of coronations, royal weddings, parliaments, conferences and gatherings in Victorian times, in which, instead of a face, each figure bears a neat oval with its index number legibly inscribed."

The setting of the utopia is equally artificial. To the uniformed nation must correspond a uniform country or city. The authoritarian love of symmetry causes utopians to suppress mountains or rivers, and even to imagine perfectly round islands and perfectly straight rivers.

"In the utopia of the National State (says Lewis Mumford) there are no natural regions; and the equally natural grouping of people in towns, villages and cities, which, as Aristotle points out, is perhaps the chief distinction between man and the other animals, is tolerated only upon the fiction that the State hands over to these groups a portion of its omnipotent authority, or 'sovereignty' as it is called, and permits them to exercise a corporate life. Unfortunately for this beautiful myth, which generations of lawyers and statesmen have laboured to build up, cities existed long before states—there was a Rome on the Tiber long before there was a Roman Imperium—and the gracious permission of the state is simply a perfunctory seal upon the accomplished fact...

"Instead of recognizing natural regions and natural groups of people, the utopia of nationalism establishes by the surveyor's line a certain realm called national territory, and makes all the inhabitants of this territory the members of a single, indivisible group, the nation, which is supposed to be prior in claim and superior in power to all other groups. This is the only social formation which is officially recognized within the national utopia. What is common to all the inhabitants of this territory is thought to be of far greater importance than any of the things that bind men together in particular civic or industrial groups."

This uniformity is maintained by a strong national State. Private property is abolished in Utopia, not merely to establish equality among the citizens or because of its corrupting influence, but because it presents a danger to the unity of the State. The attitude towards the family is also determined by the desire to maintain a unified State. Many utopias remain in the Platonic tradition and abolish the family together with monogamous marriage, while others follow Thomas More and advocate the patriarchal family, monogamous marriage and the bringing up and education of children within the fold of the family. A third group effect a compromise by retaining family institutions but entrusting the education of the children to the State.

When Utopias want to abolish the family it is much for the same reasons as they want to abolish property. The family is considered as encouraging selfish instincts

and as having therefore a disintegrating influence on the community. On the other hand the advocates of the family see in it the basis for a stable State, the indispensable cell, the training ground for the virtues of obedience and loyalty required by the State. They rightly believe that the authoritarian family, far from presenting a danger by inculcating individualist tendencies in the children, accustoms them, on the contrary, to respect the authority of the father; they will later obey just as unquestioningly the orders of the State.

A strong State necessitates a ruling class or caste holding power over the rest of the people, and, while builders of ideal commonwealths took great care that property should not corrupt or disunite this ruling class, they did not see, as a rule, the danger of the love of power corrupting and dividing the rulers and oppressing the people. Plato was the chief offender in this respect. His Guardians were entrusted with all the power in the city, while Plutarch was aware of the abuses which could be carried out by the Spartans, but offered no remedy. Thomas More put forward a new conception: that of a State representing all the citizens, except for a small number of slaves. His régime was what we would call democratic; that is to say, power was exercised by the representatives of the people. But these representatives had the power of administrating the laws rather than framing them, since all the major laws had been given to the country by a law-giver. The State therefore administered a code of laws which the community had not made. Furthermore, in view of the centralized nature of that State, the laws are the same for every citizen and every section of the community, and do not take into account varying personal factors. For this reason, some utopian writers, like Gerrard Winstanley [Volume 1, Selection 3], were opposed to the community delegating its power to a central body, for fear that it would in fact lose its liberty, and wanted it to retain its autonomous government. Gabriel de Foigny and Diderot went even further by abolishing governments altogether.

The existence of the State also necessitates two codes of moral behaviour, for the State not only divides people into classes but also divides humanity into nations. Loyalty to the State often demands the negation of the feelings of solidarity and mutual aid which naturally exist between men. The State imposes a certain code of behaviour governing the relations between the citizens of the commonwealth and another governing the relations between the citizens and the slaves or the "barbarians." All that is forbidden in relations between equals is allowed towards those who are considered inferior beings. The utopian citizen is gentle and courteous towards his peers but cruel to his slaves; he loves peace at home but carries out the most ruthless wars abroad. All the utopias which follow in Plato's footsteps admit this duality

in man. That this duality exists in society as we know it is true enough, but it may seem curious that it should not have been eliminated in a "perfect society." The universalist ideal of Zeno who, in his *Republic*, proclaimed the brotherhood of men of all nations, has rarely been adopted by utopian writers. The majority of utopias accept war as an inevitable part of their system, as indeed it must be, for the existence of a national State always gives birth to wars.

The authoritarian Utopian State does not allow of any personality strong and independent enough to conceive of change or revolt. Since the utopian institutions are considered as perfect, it goes without saying that they cannot be capable of improvement. The Utopian State is essentially static and does not allow its citizens to fight or even to dream of a better utopia.

This crushing of man's personality often takes a truly totalitarian character. It is the law-giver or the Government which decides the plan of cities and houses; these plans are prepared according to the most rational principles and the best technical knowledge, but they are not the organic expression of the community. A house, like a city, may be made of lifeless materials, but it should embody the spirit of those who build it. In the same way utopian uniforms may be more comfortable and attractive than ordinary clothes, but they do not allow for the expression of one's individuality.

The Utopian State is even more ferocious in its suppression of the freedom of the artist. The poet, the painter, the sculptor must all become the servants and propaganda agents of the State. They are forbidden individual expression either on aesthetic or moral grounds, but the real aim is to crush any manifestation of freedom. Most utopias would fail the "test of art" suggested by Herbert Read:

"Plato, as is too often and too complacently recalled, banished the poet from his Republic. But that Republic was a deceptive model of perfection. It might be realized by some dictator, but it could only function as a machine functions—mechanically. And machines function mechanically only because they are made of dead inorganic materials. If you want to express the difference between an organic progressive society and a static totalitarian régime, you can do so in one word: this word *art*. Only on condition that the artist is allowed to function freely can society embody those ideals of liberty and intellectual development which to most of us seem the only worthy sanctions of life."

The Utopias which pass this test are those which oppose to the conception of the centralized State that of a federation of free communities, where the individual can express his personality without being submitted to the censure of an artificial code, where freedom is not an abstract word but manifests itself concretely in work,

whether that of the painter or of the mason. These utopias are not concerned with the dead structure of the organization of society, but with the ideals on which a better society can be built. The anti-authoritarian utopias are less numerous, and exerted a lesser influence than the others, because they did not present a ready-made plan but daring, unorthodox ideas; because they demanded each of us to be "unique" and not one among many.

When the utopia points to an ideal life without becoming a plan, that is, a lifeless machine applied to living matter, it truly becomes the realization of progress.

16. Martin Buber: Paths in Utopia (1949)

Martin Buber (1878-1965), the Jewish philosopher and writer, was a close friend of Gustav Landauer (Volume 1, Selections 40, 49, 79 & 111), the German anarchist socialist who advocated the creation of socialist communities in opposition to the modern state and capitalism. In Paths in Utopia *(London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949; reprint: Syracuse University Press, 1996), Buber sought to rescue the visionary communitarian socialism of people like Fourier, Proudhon, Kropotkin and Landauer from the disdain for so-called "utopian socialism" fostered by both Marxists and supporters of the status quo. Although not strictly speaking an anarchist, since Buber, as with the later Proudhon (Volume 1, Selection 18), was willing to assign the state a limited role, his call for "a rebirth of the commune" and his vision of a socialist commonwealth as a "community of communities" was very much in the spirit of Landauer. The following excerpts are reprinted with the kind permission of the Belkin Agency and Martin Buber's literary estate.*

FOR THE LAST THREE DECADES WE HAVE felt that we were living in the initial phases of the greatest crisis humanity has ever known. It grows increasingly clear to us that the tremendous happenings of the past years, too, can be understood only as symptoms of this crisis. It is not merely the crisis of one economic and social system being superseded by another, more or less ready to take its place; rather all systems, old and new, are equally involved in the crisis. What is in question, therefore, is nothing less than man's whole existence in the world.

Ages ago, far beyond our calculation, this creature "Man" set out on his journey; from the point of view of Nature a well-nigh incomprehensible anomaly; from the point of view of the spirit an incarnation hardly less incomprehensible, perhaps unique; from the point of view of both a being whose very essence it was to be threatened with disaster every instant, both from within and without, exposed to deeper and deeper crises. During the ages of his earthly journey man has multiplied what he likes to call his "power over Nature" in increasingly rapid tempo, and he has borne

what he likes to call the "creations of his spirit" from triumph to triumph. But at the same time he has felt more and more profoundly, as one crisis succeeded another, how fragile all his glories are; and in moments of clairvoyance he has come to realize that in spite of everything he likes to call "progress" he is not travelling along the high-road at all, but is picking his precarious way along a narrow ledge between two abysses. The graver the crisis becomes the more earnest and consciously responsible is the knowledge demanded of us; for although what is demanded is a deed, only that deed which is born of knowledge will help to overcome the crisis. In a time of great crisis, it is not enough to look back to the immediate past in order to bring the enigma of the present nearer to solution: we have to bring the stage of the journey we have now reached face to face with its beginnings, so far as we can picture them.

The essential thing among all those things which once helped man to emerge from Nature and, notwithstanding his feebleness as a natural being, to assert himself —more essential even than the making of a "technical" world out of things expressly formed for the purpose—was this: that he banded together with his own kind for protection and hunting, food gathering and work; and did so in such a way that from the very beginning and thereafter to an increasing degree he faced the others as more or less independent entities and communicated with them as such, addressing and being addressed by them in that manner. This creation of a "social" world out of persons at once mutually dependent and independent differed in kind from all similar undertakings on the part of animals, just as the technical work of man differed in kind from all the animals' works. Apes, too, make use of some stick they happen to have found, as a lever, a digging-tool or a weapon; but that is an affair of chance only: they cannot conceive and produce a tool as an object constituted so and not otherwise and having an existence of its own. And again, many of the insects live in societies built upon a strict division of labour; but it is just this division of labour that governs absolutely their relations with one another; they are all as it were tools; only, their own society is the thing that makes use of them for its "instinctive" purposes; there is no improvisation, no degree, however modest, of mutual independence, no possibility of "free" regard for one another, and thus no person-to-person relationship. Just as the specific technical creations of man mean the conferring of independence on things, so his specific social creation means the conferring of independence on beings of his own kind. It is in the light of this specifically human idiosyncrasy that we have to interpret man's journey with all its ups and downs, and so also the point we have reached on this journey, our great and particular crisis.

In the evolution of mankind hitherto this, then, is the line that predominates: the forming and re-forming of communities on the basis of growing personal independence, their mutual recognition and collaboration on that basis. The two most important steps that the man of early times took on the road to human society can be established with some certainty. The first is that inside the individual clan each individual, through an extremely primitive form of division of labour, was recognized and utilized in his special capacity, so that the clan increasingly took on the character of an ever-renewed association of persons each the vehicle of a different function. The second is that different clans would, under certain conditions, band together in quest of food and for campaigns, and consolidated their mutual help as customs and laws that took firmer and firmer root; so that as once between individuals, so now between communities people discerned and acknowledged differences of nature and function. Wherever genuine human society has since developed it has always been on this same basis of functional autonomy, mutual recognition and mutual responsibility, whether individual or collective. Power-centres of various kinds have split off, organizing and guaranteeing the common order and security of all; but to the political sphere in the stricter sense, the State with its police-system and its bureaucracy, there was always opposed the organic, functionally organized society as such, a great society built up of various societies, the great society in which men lived and worked, competed with one another and helped one another; and in each of the big and little societies composing it, in each of these communes and communities the individual human being, despite all the difficulties and conflicts, felt himself at home as once in the clan, felt himself approved and affirmed in his functional independence and responsibility.

All this changed more and more as the centralistic political principle subordinated the de-centralistic social principle. The crucial thing here was not that the State, particularly in its more or less totalitarian forms, weakened and gradually displaced the free associations, but that the political principle with all its centralistic features percolated into the associations themselves, modifying their structure and their whole inner life, and thus politicized society to an ever-increasing extent. Society's assimilation in the State was accelerated by the fact that, as a result of modern industrial development and its ordered chaos, involving the struggle of all against all for access to raw materials and for a larger share of the world-market, there grew up, in place of the old struggles between States, struggles between whole societies. The individual society, feeling itself threatened not only by its neighbours' lust for aggression but also by things in general, knew no way of salvation save in complete sub-

mission to the principle of centralized power; and, in the democratic forms of society no less than in its totalitarian forms, it made this its guiding principle. Everywhere the only thing of importance was the minute organization of power, the unquestioning observance of slogans, the saturation of the whole of society with the real or supposed interests of the State. Concurrently with this there is an internal development. In the monstrous confusion of modern life, only thinly disguised by the reliable functioning of the economic and State-apparatus, the individual clings desperately to the collectivity. The little society in which he was embedded cannot help him; only the great collectivities, so he thinks, can do that, and he is all too willing to let himself be deprived of personal responsibility: he only wants to obey. And the most valuable of all goods—the life between man and man—gets lost in the process; the autonomous relationships become meaningless, personal relationships wither; and the very spirit of man hires itself out as a functionary. The personal human being ceases to be the living member of a social body and becomes a cog in the "collective" machine. Just as his degenerate technology is causing man to lose the feel of good work and proportion, so the degrading social life he leads is causing him to lose the feel of community —just when he is so full of the illusion of living in perfect devotion to his community.

A crisis of this kind cannot be overcome by struggling back to an earlier stage of the journey, but only by trying to master the problems as they are, without minimizing them. There is no going back for us, we have to go through with it. But we shall only get through if we know *where* we want to go.

We must begin, obviously, with the establishment of a vital peace which will deprive the political principle of its supremacy over the social principle. And this primary objective cannot in its turn be reached by any devices of political organization, but only by the resolute will of all peoples to cultivate the territories and raw materials of our planet and govern its inhabitants, *together*. At this point, however, we are threatened by a danger greater than all the previous ones: the danger of a gigantic centralization of power covering the whole planet and devouring all free community. Everything depends on not handing the work of planetary management over to the political principle.

Common management is only possible as socialistic management. But if the fatal question for contemporary man is: Can he or can he not decide in favour of, and educate himself up to, a common socialistic economy? then the propriety of the question lies in an inquiry into Socialism itself: what sort of Socialism is it to be, under whose aegis the common economy of man is to come about, if at all?

The ambiguity of the terms we are employing is greater here than anywhere else. People say, for instance, that Socialism is the passing of the control of the means of production out of the hands of the entrepreneurs into the hands of the collectivity; but again, it all depends on what you mean by "collectivity." If it is what we generally call the "State," that is to say, an institution in which a virtually unorganized mass allows its affairs to be conducted by "representation," as they call it, then the chief change in a socialistic society will be this: that the workers will feel themselves represented by the holders of power. But what is representation? Does not the worst defect of modern society lie precisely in everybody letting himself be represented ad libitum? And in a "socialistic" society will there not, on top of this passive political representation, be added a passive economic representation, so that, with everybody letting himself be represented by everybody else, we reach a state of practically unlimited representation and hence, ultimately, the reign of practically unlimited centralist accumulation of power? But the more a human group lets itself be represented in the management of its common affairs, and the more it lets itself be represented from outside, the less communal life there is in it and the more impoverished it becomes as a community. For Community—not the primitive sort, but the sort possible and appropriate to modern man—declares itself primarily in the common and active management of what it has in common, and without this it cannot exist.

The primary aspiration of all history is a genuine community of human beings —genuine because it is *community all through*. A community that failed to base itself on the actual and communal life of big and little groups living and working together, and on their mutual relationships, would be fictitious and counterfeit. Hence everything depends on whether the collectivity into whose hands the control of the means of production passes will facilitate and promote in its very structure and in all its institutions the genuine common life of the various groups composing it—on whether, in fact, these groups themselves become proper foci of the productive process; therefore on whether the masses are so organized in their separate organizations (the various "communities") as to be as powerful as the common economy of man permits; therefore on whether centralist representation only goes as far as the new order of things absolutely demands...

Wherever historical destiny had brought a group of men together in a common fold, there was room for the growth of a genuine community; and there was no need of an altar to the city deity in the midst when the citizens knew they were united round—and by—the Nameless. A living togetherness, constantly renewing itself was already there, and all that needed strengthening was the immediacy of relationships.

In the happiest instances common affairs were deliberated and decided not through representatives but in gatherings in the market and the unity that was felt in public permeated all personal contacts. The danger of seclusion might hang over the community, but the communal spirit banished it; for here this spirit flourished as nowhere else and broke windows for itself in the narrow walls, with a large view of people, mankind and the world.

All this, I may be told, has gone irrevocably and forever. The modern city has no agora and the modern man has no time for negotiations of which his elected representatives can very well relieve him. The pressure of numbers and the forms of organization have destroyed any real togetherness. Work forges other personal links than does leisure, sport again others than politics, the day is cleanly divided and the soul too. These links are material ones; though we follow our common interests and tendencies together, we have no use for "immediacy." The collectivity is not a warm, friendly gathering but a great link-up of economic and political forces inimical to the play of romantic fancies, only understandable in terms of quantity, expressing itself in actions and effects—a thing which the individual has to belong to with no intimacies of any kind but all the time conscious of his energetic contribution. Any "unions" that resist the inevitable trend of events must disappear. There is still the family, of course, which, as a domestic community, seems to demand and guarantee a modicum of communal life; but it too will either emerge from the crisis in which it is involved, as an association for a common purpose, or else it will perish.

Faced with this medley of correct premises and absurd conclusions I declare in favour of a rebirth of the commune. A rebirth—not a bringing back. It cannot in fact be brought back, although I sometimes think that every touch of helpful neighbourliness in the apartment-house, every wave of warmer comradeship in the lulls and "knock-offs" that occur even in the most perfectly "rationalized" factory, means an addition to the world's community-content; and although a rightly constituted village commune sometimes strikes me as being a more real thing than a parliament… it cannot be brought back. Yet whether a rebirth of the commune will ensue from the "water and spirit" of the social transformation that is imminent—on this, it seems to me, hangs the whole fate of the human race. An organic commonwealth—and only such commonwealths can join together to form a shapely and articulated race of men—will never build itself up out of individuals but only out of small and ever smaller communities: a nation is a community to the degree that it is a community of communities. If the family does not emerge from the crisis which today has all the appearance of a disintegration, purified and renewed, then the State will be nothing

more than a machine stoked with the bodies of generations of men. The community that would be capable of such a renewal exists only as a residue. If I speak of its re-birth I am not thinking of a permanent world-situation but an altered one. By the new communes—they might equally well be called the new Co-operatives—I mean the subjects of a changed economy: the collectives into whose hands the control of the means of production is to pass. Once again, everything depends on whether they will be ready.

The essential thing, however, is that the process of community-building shall run all through the relations of the communes with one another. Only a community of communities merits the title of Commonwealth...

The era of advanced Capitalism has broken down the structure of society. The society which preceded it was composed of different societies; it was complex, and pluralistic in structure. This is what gave it its peculiar social vitality and enabled it to resist the totalitarian tendencies inherent in the pre-revolutionary centralistic State, though many elements were very much weakened in their autonomous life. This re-sistance was broken by the policy of the French Revolution, which was directed against the special rights of all free associations. Thereafter centralism in its new, capitalistic form succeeded where the old had failed: in atomizing society. Exercising control over the machines and, with their help, over the whole society, Capitalism wants to deal only with individuals; and the modern State aids and abets it by pro-gressively dispossessing groups of their autonomy. The militant organizations which the proletariat erected against Capitalism—Trades Unions in the economic sphere and the Party in the political—are unable in the nature of things to counteract this process of dissolution, since they have no access to the life of society itself and its foundations: production and consumption. Even the transfer of capital to the State is powerless to modify the social structure, even when the State establishes a network of compulsory associations, which, having no autonomous life, are unfitted to be-come the cells of a new socialist society.

From this point of view the heart and soul of the Co-operative Movement is to be found in the trend of a society towards structural renewal, the re-acquisition, in new tec-tonic forms, of the internal social relationships, the establishment of a new *consociatio consociationum*. It is... a fundamental error to view this trend as romantic or utopian merely because in its early stages it had romantic reminiscences and utopian fantasies. At bottom it is thoroughly topical and constructive; that is to say, it aims at changes which, in the given circumstances and with the means at its disposal, are feasible. And, psychologically speaking, it is based on one of the eternal human needs, even though

this need has often been forcibly suppressed or rendered insensible: the need of man to feel his own house as a room in some greater, all-embracing structure in which he is at home, to feel that the other inhabitants of it with whom he lives and works are all acknowledging and confirming his individual existence. An association based on community of views and aspirations alone cannot satisfy this need; the only thing that can do that is an association which makes for communal living. But here the co-operative organization of production or consumption proves, each in its own way, inadequate, because both touch the individual only at a certain point and do not mould his actual life. On account of their merely partial or functional character all such organizations are equally unfitted to act as cells of a new society. Both these partial forms have undergone vigorous development, but the Consumer Co-operatives only in highly bureaucratic forms and the Producer Co-operatives in highly specialized forms: they are less able to embrace the whole life of society today than ever. The consciousness of this fact is leading to the synthetic form: the Full Co-operative. By far the most powerful effort in this direction is the Village Commune, where communal living is based on the amalgamation of production and consumption, production being understood not exclusively as agriculture alone but as the organic union of agriculture with industry and with the handicrafts as well...

The socialistic task can only be accomplished to the degree that the new Village Commune, combining the various forms of production and uniting production and consumption, exerts a structural influence on the amorphous urban society. The influence will only make itself felt to the full if, and to the extent that, further technological developments facilitate and actually require the decentralization of industry; but even now a pervasive force is latent in the modern communal village, and it may spread to the towns. It must be emphasized again that the tendency we are dealing with is constructive and topical: it would be romantic and utopian to want to destroy the towns, as once it was romantic and utopian to want to destroy the machines, but it is constructive and topical to try to transform the town organically in the closest possible alliance with technological developments and to turn it into an aggregate composed of smaller units.

17. Paul & Percival Goodman: Communitas (1947)

In Communitas—Means of Livelihood and Ways of Life *(New York: Random House, 1947), Paul Goodman and his brother, the architect Percival Goodman, present three community paradigms for the post-war United States, which the Goodmans regarded even then as a post-scarcity society of surplus technology and economic abundance. The first paradigm, "A City of Efficient Consumption," similar, as the Goodmans noted, to contemporary New York, is based on capitalist economic assumptions, providing "an analysis of how men can be as efficiently wasteful as possible." The third paradigm, "Planned Security with Minimum Regulation," proposes a dual economy, with compulsory but limited participation in a government controlled subsistence economy, with people then having significant free time to participate in an unregulated economy for luxuries and other non-subsistence items. The second paradigm, "A New Community: the Elimination of the Difference between Production and Consumption," from which the following excerpts are taken, updates Kropotkin's vision in* Fields, Factories and Workshops *(Volume 1, Selection 34) of a decentralized, ecological society of cooperative production similar to the communitarian socialism of Gustav Landauer and Martin Buber (reprinted here with the kind permission of Sally and Naomi Goodman and Paul and Percival Goodman's respective estates).*

MEN LIKE TO MAKE THINGS, TO HANDLE the materials and see them take shape and come out as desired, and they are proud of the products. And men like to work and be useful, for work has a rhythm and springs from spontaneous feelings just like play, and to be useful makes people feel right. Productive work is a kind of creation, it is an extension of human personality into nature. But it is also true that the private or state capitalist relations of production, and machine industry as it now exists under whatever system, have so far destroyed the instinctive pleasures of work that economic work is what all ordinary men dislike. (Yet unemployment is dreaded, and people who don't like their work don't know what to do with their leisure.) In capitalist or state-socialist economies, efficiency is measured by profits and expansion rather than by handling the means. Mass production, analyzing the acts of labor into small steps and distributing the products far from home, destroys the sense of creating anything. Rhythm, neatness, style belong to the machine rather than to the man.

The division of economy into production and consumption as two opposite poles means that we are far from the conditions in which work could be a way of life. A way of life requires merging the means in the end, and work would have to be thought of as a continuous process of satisfying activity, satisfying in itself and satisfying in its useful end. Such considerations have led many moralist-economists to

want to turn back the clock to conditions of handicraft in a limited society, where the relations of guilds and small markets allow the master craftsmen a say and a hand in every phase of production, distribution, and consumption. Can we achieve the same values with modern technology, a national economy, and a democratic society? With this aim, let us reanalyze efficiency and machine production.

Characteristic of American offices and factories is the severe discipline with regard to punctuality. (In some states the law requires time clocks, to protect labor and calculate the insurance.) Now no doubt in many cases where workers cooperate in teams, where business is timed by the mails, where machines use a temporary source of power, being on time and on the same time as everybody else is essential to efficiency. But by and large it would make little difference at what hour each man's work began and ended, so long as the job itself was done. Often the work could be done at home or on the premises indifferently, or part here part there. Yet this laxity is never allowed, except in the typical instances of hack-writing or commercial art—typical because these workers have an uneasy relation to the economy in any case. (There is a lovely story of how William Faulkner asked MGM if he could work at home, and when they said, "Of course," he went back to Oxford, Mississippi.)

Punctuality is demanded not primarily for efficiency but for the discipline itself. Discipline is necessary because the work is onerous; perhaps it makes the idea of working even more onerous, but it makes the work itself much more tolerable, for it is a structure, a decision. Discipline establishes the work in an impersonal secondary environment where, once one has gotten out of bed early in the morning, the rest easily follows. Regulation of time, separation from the personal environment: these are signs that work is not a way of life; they are the methods by which, for better or worse, work that cannot be energized directly by personal concern can get done, unconfused by personal concern. In the Garden City plans, they "quarantined the technology" from the homes; more generally, we quarantine the work from the homes. But it is even truer to say that we quarantine the homes from the work. For instance, it is calamitous for a man's wife or children to visit him at work; this privilege is reserved for the highest bosses.

REANALYZING PRODUCTION

In planning a region of satisfying industrial work, we therefore take account of four main principles:

1. A closer relation of the personal and productive environments, making punctuality reasonable instead of disciplinary, and introducing phases of home and

small-shop production; and vice versa, finding appropriate technical uses for personal relations that have come to be considered unproductive.

2. A role for all workers in all stages of the production of the product; for experienced workers a voice and hand in the design of the product and the design and operation of the machines; and for all a political voice on the basis of what they know best, their specific industry, in the national economy.

3. A schedule of work designed on psychological and moral as well as technical grounds, to give the most well-rounded employment to each person, in a diversified environment. Even in technology and economics, the men are ends as well as means.

4. Relatively small units with relative self-sufficiency, so that each community can enter into a larger whole with solidarity and independence of viewpoint.

These principles are mutually interdependent.

1. To undo the present separation of work and home environments, we can proceed both ways: (a) Return certain parts of production to home-shops or near home; and (b) Introduce domestic work and certain productive family-relations, which are now not considered part of the economy at all, into the style and relations of the larger economy.

(a) Think of the present proliferation of machine-tools. It could once be said that the sewing machine was the only widely distributed productive machine; but now, especially because of the last war, the idea of thousands of small machine shops, powered by electricity, has became familiar; and small power-tools are a best-selling commodity. In general, the change from coal and steam to electricity and oil has relaxed one of the greatest causes for concentration of machinery around a single driving-shaft.

(b) [Ralph] Borsodi, going back to the economics of Aristotle, has proved, often with hilarious realism, that home production, such as cooking, cleaning, mending, and entertaining has a formidable economic, though not cash, value. The problem is to lighten and enrich home production by the technical means and some of the expert attitudes of public production, but without destroying its individuality.

But the chief part of finding a satisfactory productive life in homes and families consists in the analysis of personal relations and conditions: e.g., the productive cooperation of man and wife as it exists on farms, or the productive capabilities of children and old folk, now economically excluded. This involves sentimental and moral prob-

lems of extreme depth and delicacy that could only be solved by the experiments of integrated communities.

2. A chief cause of the absurdity of industrial work is that each machine worker is acquainted with only a few processes, not the whole order of production. And the thousands of products are distributed he knows not how or where. Efficiency is organized from above by expert managers who first analyze production into its simple processes, then synthesize these into combinations built into the machines, then arrange the logistics of supplies, etc., and then assign the jobs.

As against this efficiency organized from above, we must try to give this function to the workers. This is feasible only if the workers have a total grasp of all the operations. There must be a school of industry, academic and not immediately productive, connected with the factory. Now let us distinguish apprentices and graduates. To the apprentices, along with their schooling, is assigned the more monotonous work; to the graduates, the executive and coordinating work, the fine work, the finishing touches. The masterpiece that graduates an apprentice is a new invention, method, or other practical contribution advancing the industry. The masters are teachers, and as part of their job hold free discussions looking to basic changes.

Such a setup detracts greatly from the schedule of continuous production; but it is a question whether it would not prove more efficient in the long run to have the men working for themselves and having a say in the distribution. By this we do not mean merely economic democracy or socialist ownership. These are necessary checks but are not the political meaning of industrialism as such. What is needed is the organization of economic democracy on the basis of the productive units, where each unit, relying on its own expertness and the bargaining power of what it has to offer, cooperates with the whole of society. This is syndicalism, simply an industrial town meeting. To guarantee the independent power of each productive unit, it must have a relative regional self-sufficiency; this is the union of farm and factory.

3. Machine work in its present form is often stultifying, not a "way of life." The remedy is to assign work on psychological and moral as well as technical and economic grounds. The object is to provide a well-rounded employment. Work can be divided as team work and individual work, or physical work and intellectual work. And industries can be combined in a neighborhood to give the right variety. For instance, cast glass, blown glass, and optical instruments; or more generally, industry and agriculture, and factory and domestic work. Probably most important, but difficult to conjure with, is the division in terms of faculties and powers, routine and initiation, obeying and commanding.

The problem is to envisage a well-rounded schedule of jobs for each man, and to arrange the buildings and the farms so that the schedule is feasible.

4. The integration of factory and farm brings us to the idea of regionalism and regional relative autonomy. These are the following main parts:

(a) Diversified farming as the basis of self-subsistence and, therefore, small urban centers (200,000).

(b) A number of mutually dependent industrial centers, so that an important part of the national economy is firmly controlled. (The thought is always to have freedom secured by real power.)

(c) These industries developed around regional resources of field, mine, and power.

Diversified farmers can be independent, and small farms have therefore always been a basis of social stability, though not necessarily of peasant conservatism. On the other hand, for the machines now desirable, the farmer needs cash and links himself with the larger economy of the town.

The political problem of the industrial worker is the reverse, since every industry is completely dependent on the national economy, for both materials and distribution. But by regional interdependence of industries and the close integration of factory and farm work—factory workers taking over in the fields at peak seasons, farmers doing factory work in the winter; town people, especially children, living in the country; farmers domestically making small parts for the factories—the industrial region as a whole can secure for itself independent bargaining power in the national whole.

The general sign of this federal system is the distinction of the local regional market from the national market. In transport, the local market is served by foot, bicycle, cart, and car; the national market by plane and trailer-truck.

(Now all of this—decentralized units, double markets, the selection of industries on political and psychological as well as economic and technical grounds—all this seems a strange and roundabout way of achieving an integrated national economy, when at present this unity already exists with a tightness that leaves nothing to be desired, and an efficiency that is even excessive. But we are aiming at a different standard of efficiency, one in which invention will flourish and the job will be its own incentive; and most important, at the highest and nearest ideals of external life: liberty, responsibility, self-esteem as a workman, and initiative. Compared with these aims the present system has nothing to offer us.)

18. Giancarlo de Carlo: Rebuilding Community (1948)

Giancarlo de Carlo (1919-2005) was a renowned Italian architect active in the Italian anti-fascist resistance and the post-war Italian anarchist movement. He advocated a kind of "participatory architecture" in which the architect works with users and inhabitants in creating plans and designs. He founded the journal, Spazio e Società *(1978-2000), as a global forum for discussing urbanism and the built environment, and the International Laboratory for Architecture and Design (ILAUD, 1974-2004). Toward the end of his life he said that his architecture was impregnated with the anarchist ideal of "active freedom," of accomplishing things "without exploiting our power"(interview with Grégoire Allix, M. De Carlo: "L'architecture du star-system ne parle pas aux gens" [Mr. De Carlo: "The architecture of the star-system does not speak to people"], Le Monde, April 27, 2004). The following excerpts, translated by Colin Ward, are taken from an article by de Carlo originally published in the Italian anarchist monthly,* Volontà. *Ward's translation appeared in* Freedom, *the English anarchist paper, in June 1948. For more on de Carlo, see Benedict Zucchi,* Giancarlo de Carlo *(Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1992) and John McKean,* Giancarlo de Carlo: Layered Places *(Stuttgart: Edition Axel Menges, 2004).*

THE HOUSING PROBLEM IS AT THE ROOT of the crisis of contemporary society… It is enough to go around Italy, visiting towns and villages… seeing the places where men are born, multiply and die, and the houses they live in, to realize that our whole social body is in a state of decomposition, and that only the most radical and energetic remedies can cure it…

Overcrowding prevents the dwelling from fulfilling its principal function, it ceases to be an environment where fruitful human relationships can unfold, and becomes a dangerous instrument of physical and moral degradation, a vehicle of sickness and death.

The average infant mortality rate in Italy in 1946 was 169 per 1,000, while in France where the housing situation is slightly better, it was 110 per thousand…

At Naples, in an enquiry made between 1935 and 1941, of 8,431 children visited 16.8% were found to be suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis, and 11% from non-pulmonary afflictions. In 69% of the cases, the home consisted of a single earth-floored room, in 70% of the cases, the invalid slept in the same room as the family, frequently in the same bed.

At Milan, of 100 families with a T.B. sufferer, 76 live in one or two rooms.

These figures will be enough, since there is no space for more, to show that the house of today is a peril to human life. But there is one more important fact to be un-

derlined—the fact that in Italy 33 in every 100 working class dwellings are over-crowded compared with 8 in every 100 middle and upper class houses.

This is nothing new. The homes of the poor today are little different from those of the slaves of the third century B.C. or from those of the plebians in Imperial Rome. It is a phenomenon which coincides with moments of crisis in the will of man, and with the weakening of his resistance to the State.

The weakening of the sense of independence strengthens the authority of the State. The impulse for direct action declines, regimentation and the bureaucratic spirit triumph, education becomes purely quantitative, culture and art are separated from life, life itself is departmentalized and is thinned out into the channels of abstraction. At the same time the town loses its natural function of physical and spiritual regeneration and becomes a malignant organism, persecuting man in his decadence.

The situation today is no new phenomenon but it is worse than ever before, because its effects are more extensive, more dreadful, and, in view of the advances in technique which could be available for us, more absurd. Yet the social organs of today, capitalism and the State, are able to do nothing to resolve this desperate crisis. New materials, new construction processes are of no avail as long as the principles of privilege and authority prevail.

Capitalism is not building, and cannot build, houses for the underprivileged classes because that sort of investment doesn't guarantee a good return… private capital is invested only in upper-class housing and in those types of building that guarantee a good income (blocks of offices, luxury shops, cinemas, etc.), and the poor are forced to find shelter in old and unhygienic buildings, causing still more overcrowding with all its consequences…

The State does nothing, and can do nothing, to alter this situation. For the State is the principle of authority—an abstraction masquerading as something real, and can have no contact with the one concrete reality—man himself, whom it treats and manipulates as though *he* were just an abstraction.

The home is an organism in direct relationship to man. It is his external environment, his affirmation in space. Thus the home cannot have any relationship to the State that recognizes man not as an individual but as a number, a fraction of some greater number.

Every time that the State has taken upon itself these relationships, the results have been disastrous. We could look back into history in order to demonstrate the truth of this—we could describe the city under the ferocious autocratic States of ancient Egypt, of Imperial Rome, of the French monarchy—but it suffices to think of any Italian town today… public housing is so limited and costs so much that it can-

not be occupied by the people for whom it was intended. It is, moreover, ugly and badly built, for it is not constructed for human beings as they really are, but for the abstract men conceived by the State.

Municipal housing means today those squalid barracks that monotonously line the perimeter of our towns, where people are so miserably encaged. They do not solve the housing problem in either quantity or quality, but they are the greatest contribution that the State can make.

The housing problem cannot be solved from above. It is a problem *of the people*, and it will not be solved, nor even boldly faced, except by the concrete will and action of the people themselves, so it will be useful to examine the validity and the limits of the types of direct action for houses that have so far been seen—building co-operatives, illegal occupation of empty houses, and housing strikes.

The building co-operative is certainly an effective means of producing houses at low cost and a valuable experience for the tenants in the forms of collective action. These co-operatives, of which many have arisen since the war, are generally constituted with the object of giving work to a certain number of building operatives and of putting apartments on the market at a competitive rent compared with the municipal undertakings—made possible because of their more efficient internal organization and by a fairer allocation of the proceeds. But although they are an interesting example of collective action, and certainly solve part of the unemployment problem, they can do little to remedy the basic housing problem, since the primary aim is to provide work, not houses, and since the work is undertaken according to the fluctuations of the competitive market.

The tenants' co-operatives, which are far less frequently met with, aim at providing housing for a certain number of the homeless: the purchase of buildings at current prices and their organization as housing. If we exclude joint ownership (which is not co-operation, but merely a form of divided proprietorship, limited to the wealthier, and devoid of any social significance), this type of co-operative can only exist with the help of strong external financial aid. And the solution is certainly not, as has been suggested in some quarters, the direct co-operative building of houses by the tenants who will eventually occupy them. This may be an educative example of direct action, but it is hardly a practical method and yields very few concrete results. The house of today is costly because of the expense of traditional building methods, which have not been brought up to date by modern productive technics. Direct production on the part of the tenants, generally untrained in building crafts and not given adequate tools and material, usually results in poor workmanship and relatively high costs.

The solution lies in setting up building collectives and tenants' collectives combined in a communal program of action (while acting in the present social structure), with a joint financial mechanism. We cannot count on the State's financial assistance… or the type of initiative that comes from political action and which sooner or later reveals its pitfalls, tying the co-operatives to the interests of the financiers. For this reason the financing must also be autonomous, arising from local circumstances, based as far as possible on the mutual aid of the members of the collective, contributing in money, in hours of work, in produce, and demanding assistance from those who at present have in their hands the wealth that properly belongs to the community, and forcing the municipalities to provide freely or at low cost the necessary sites and basic construction materials.

Another form of direct action is the illegal occupation of uninhabited dwellings. The most important examples occurred in England, soon after the 1914-18 war and again after the last war, with the "Squatters" movement which has given its name to action of this sort in many lands. "Squatting" in reality, consists not only in the invasion of empty houses or buildings which could be used for housing, but also in the systematic and organized refusal to accept eviction orders issued by the owners, which is another form of "illegal" occupation. In Italy, soon after the war there were widespread outbreaks of "squatting." At Messina, for example… homeless people seized the archbishop's palace where 3,000 rooms were uninhabited despite the desperate needs of the people. Frequent cases have arisen of individual or collective eviction orders being resisted by means of pickets of tenants around the homes.

The housing strike is a method of direct action, complementary in one sense to the last-mentioned. It has not been widely used and, for lack of precedent remains untried, unless one considers the strike for higher wages as a strike for housing —since a large part of the weekly wage goes in rent. In the form of collective refusal to pay rent, the housing strike becomes a great aid to large-scale squatting; in the form of financial coercion of the state, the municipality or the private usurpers of social wealth, it can become a great help to co-operative initiative.

The methods of direct action we have examined, while they are effective as tactics, cannot themselves bring about a definite solution. We need to get right to the root of the problem to find its basic causes and to face them with action on an adequate scale.

The home does not merely consist of four walls, it is also space, light, sunlight, and external environment. It is not only this, it entails also the school, medical services, green space, room for the children to play, facilities for rest, pastimes, culture—in other words, amenities, facilities for work, production, exchange—the

means of economic life. The home, in fact, extends into the community. When the home is healthy it is an efficient instrument for man's social purposes, and fits harmoniously into the texture of a healthy community.

The contemporary town is not merely an unhealthy community—it is not a community at all—it is a physical agglomeration of isolated buildings and people. Even if a widespread squatters' movement and an enormous increase in house construction were to house all the population to the standard now enjoyed by the rich, the result would be the same, because the city in capitalist civilization is inefficient and within its framework the home cannot be healthy.

The sickness of the home coincides with that of the city.

The origin of this malady, since the disintegration of the medieval community, is the abdication of the principle of *man* in favour of the principle of *authority*, the subordination of concrete facts to abstractions and the elevation of abstraction to the world of realities—Man's loss of the ability to give adequate social expression to his collective life.

The result today is a devitalized and decayed social body. It is inefficient from the human point of view because it reduces man to a state of life without relations with his fellows, with nature, with collective productive processes—a life hermetically sealed with asphalt and stone. It is inefficient from the functional point of view because instead of being the active centre of the surrounding region, it has become a parasitical body absorbing nourishment from the region for its costly bureaucratic and unproductive structure.

Urban planning conceived as a technical means of saving the present social structure, of damning up the pressing realities of life, is a dangerous delusion.

But conceived in a different way, as the manifestation of communal collaboration, it becomes the endeavour to liberate the true existence of man, the attempt to establish a harmonious connection between nature, industry and all human activities, and it is far more than a question of traffic, means of transport or the aesthetics of building.

For this reason the attitude we adopt to the new fact of urban planning is decisive.

It is possible to adopt a hostile attitude: "The plan must necessarily emanate from authority, therefore it can only be detrimental. The changes in social life cannot follow the plan—the plan will be consequent on the new way of life." Or an attitude of participation could be adopted: "The plan is the opportunity of 'liquidating' our present social order by changing its direction, and this changed aim is the necessary preliminary for a revolutionary social structure."

The first attitude is based on two main arguments. Firstly, that authority cannot be a liberating agent—perfectly true; secondly, that man can do nothing until he is free—a mistaken view. Man cannot be liberated, he must liberate himself, and any progress towards that liberation can only be the conscious expression of his own will. The investigation of the full extent of the problems of region, city and home, is such an activity. To find out the nature of the problems and to prepare their solution is a concrete example of direct action, taking away the powers of authority and giving them back to men. The attitude of hostility that really means "waiting for the revolution to do it" does not take into account the fact that the social revolution will be accomplished by clear heads, not by sick and stunted people unable to think of the future because of the problems of the present. It forgets that the revolution begins in the elimination of these evils so as to create the necessary conditions of a free society.

Urban planning can become a revolutionary weapon if we succeed in rescuing it from the blind monopoly of authority and making it a communal organ of research and investigation into the real problems of social life. These problems are numerous and urgently need a solution.

In the region, private property has arbitrarily divided arable land, and not only destroyed the emotional and functional relationships between men and the soil, but has put obstacles in the way of all the vital interests of the community. The problems of production, exchange, transport, communications, and of services—creation of industries, diffusion of culture, construction of roads and bridges—all these are in the hands of privileged minorities or of the state, which have neither the interest nor the skill to solve them.

In the town, the congestion and stratification of the inhabitants has destroyed or spoiled all aspects of individual and social life. Schools are unhealthy and overcrowded, medical services insufficient, traffic chaotic and dangerous, and the green belt absorbed by land speculators.

In the house, man is degraded to an animal level. Deprived of light, air, sun and grass, of contact with nature and with his fellows, he loses his independence and his capacity for social life. He becomes docile, obedient, amenable to discipline—and to war.

The situation can be reversed. If we develop a profound knowledge and understanding of local problems, and work out the technical means of solving them, and then vigilantly and actively see that these plans are put into effect—then town and country planning can be made a most effective instrument of collective direct action.

Chapter 3
Art And Freedom

19. Herbert Read: The Freedom of the Artist (1943)

In this essay, originally published in The Politics of the Unpolitical *(London: Routledge, 1943), later reprinted in* To Hell With Culture *(New York: Schocken Books, 1963), Herbert Read argues for an "experimental" attitude toward art, emphasizing the need for artistic freedom. Read saw art as liberating but recognized that such liberation cannot be fully achieved within contemporary society, hence his call to transform society so that the artist in everyone can be brought forth.*

MODERN ART HAS BROKEN THROUGH the artificial boundaries and limitations which we owe to a one-sided and prejudiced view of the human personality… [T]here is not one type of art to which all types of men should conform, but as many types of art as there are types of men… [E]ach type of art is the legitimate expression of a type of mental personality… [R]ealism and idealism, expressionism and constructivism are all natural phenomena, and the warring schools into which men divide themselves are merely the products of ignorance and prejudice. A true eclecticism can and should enjoy all the manifestations of the creative impulse in man.

If we could imagine a society in which each individual pursued his course in independence, happily producing what he wished to produce without interference from his neighbours, then in such a community each type of artist could express himself in the manner which he found most apt. Constructivists and superrealists, realists and expressionists, could live and work side by side in perfect amity. I do not suggest that such a community of individuals is too idealistic to contemplate; it is, in fact, the ideal towards which we should aim. But actually, here and now, we live in communities of a very different character. All the various societies which together make up modern civilization are in fact highly organized and complex, and according to their type of organization they encourage a particular type of art, or even discourage all types of art…

The libertarian attitude is essentially an experimental attitude… [When] a libertarian society openly recognizes the existence of distinct types of personality, and the necessity for these types to express themselves artistically, it will relegate artistic groups that pride themselves upon refusing to admit incompatible styles to the obscurity which is already the fate of similar groups in science. Any kind of exclusiveness or intolerance is just as opposed to the principles of liberty as social exclusiveness or political intolerance. In this respect art, and all cultural modes of expression, are of exactly the same status as political opinions…

It is… upon personal happiness that the future of art depends. But by 'happiness' I do not mean that state of eupeptic contentment which is actually of all states of mind the one least favourable to the production of a work of art. Happiness, in the field of art, means work: the capacity and ability to create something near the heart's desire. The happiness is not in the possession of the thing created, but in the act of creating it. It is the thesis so often and so rightly defended by Eric Gill—the thesis 'that human culture is the natural product of human living, and that human living is naturally and chiefly a matter of human working; that leisure is in its essence recreative, that the object of recreation is to fit us for living, that we may rejoice as a giant to run the course.' We make a table and call it work; we make a picture and call it art if we mean to sell the picture, recreation if we make it for our own amusement. But there is really no distinction: the art is not determined by the purpose of the thing we make, but by its inherent qualities, the qualities with which the artist has endowed it; and the pleasure of art comes from the act of creating these and, in a secondary and stimulating way, from the mental act of re-creating them in contemplation. What I wish to prevent is any narrow conception either of the artist or of the work of art. Every human being is potentially an artist, and this potentiality is of considerable social significance. The individual and society are the opposite poles of a very complex relationship. The individual is anti-social at the time of birth—observe the early days of any baby. He only becomes social by a painful process of adaptation, during which he acquires what we call, paradoxically, his personality, but actually that compromise character which is the result of subordinating personality to the prevalent conception of social normality. The psychological ills from which human beings suffer are a product of this compromise, or maladjustment. What becomes more and more certain is that these ills can to a large extent be avoided by the practice of an art. The people who make things—I have no evidence beyond my own observation—seem to be less liable to nervous break downs, and one of the recognized forms of treatment for mental diseases is known as 'occupational therapy.' No one

would suggest that the function of art is merely to keep people healthy; but it has its subjective effect. The artist not only creates an object external to himself: in doing so he also vitally reorganizes the balance of impulses within himself.

Our glance at the social function of art therefore reinforces the libertarian conception of art. All types of art are not merely permissible, but desirable. The needs of society comprise, not only the outward structure of a world to live in, but also the inward structure of a mind capable of enjoying life. We must therefore search for methods of encouraging the artist—the artist latent in each one of us…

Whether the wholly harmonious mind exists—the mind equally balanced between thought and feeling, between intuition and sensation—is perhaps doubtful, but surely that is the ideal towards which we ought to strive. Only such a mind can appreciate the fullness and richness of life. If we come to the conclusion that this complete and harmonious being cannot exist in our modern form of society, then our aim should be to change that form of society until such a life becomes possible. In this great aim, in which the energies of humanity will be absorbed for centuries to come, a right understanding of the nature of art and of the function of the artist is fundamental.

20. *Alex Comfort: Art and Social Responsibility (1946)*

Alex Comfort began writing this essay in 1942 in response to a notice in the Partisan Review *regarding the "new failure of nerve" in Western liberalism. His emphasis on individual responsibility in the face of collective madness is reminiscent of the contemporaneous writings of Paul Goodman (Selection 11) and Dwight Macdonald (Selection 13).* Art and Social Responsibility: Lectures on the Ideology of Romanticism, *was originally published by Falcon Press in 1946, and is included in David Goodway's collection of Comfort's anarchist writings,* Against Power and Death *(London: Freedom Press, 1994). The following excerpts are reprinted here with the kind permission of Nicholas Comfort and the Comfort estate.*

THE ROMANTIC HAS ONLY TWO BASIC certainties—the certainty of irresoluble conflict which cannot be won but must be continued, and the certainty that there exists between all human beings who are involved in this conflict an indefeasible responsibility to one another. The romantic has two enemies, Death, and the obedient who, by conformity to power and irresponsibility, ally themselves with Death…

The romantic bases his ethic upon his belief in the hostility or the neutrality of the Universe. He does not deny the existence of absolute standards, but he denies their existence apart from Man. The conceptions of artistic beauty or moral goodness did not exist before the emergence of consciousness, and they will return to oblivion

with its extinction, but they are none the less good for their impermanence. And because of this one-sided battle which the romantic believes himself to be fighting, he recognizes an absolute and imperative responsibility to his fellow men as individuals —both because he, unlike the Christian, is defending standards in which he believes but which are not by nature assured of triumph, which he feels will only exist so long as they are defended, and because his pessimistic interpretation of philosophy makes him feel towards his fellow men much as you might feel towards fellow survivors on a raft…

I would summarize the social conclusions of contemporary romantics in some such form as this:

i) Man, considered individually, seems to be internally maladapted. He possesses a conscious sense of personality which, as far as one can reasonably guess, is not shared by other organisms, and which renders the emotional realization of death intolerable and incompatible with continued enjoyment of existence. He therefore attempts universally to deny either that death is real or that his personality is really personal.

ii) At the present time, one of the main human refuges in the past (the negation of death) is apparently sealed by scientific research. I say apparently, because the important factor from the viewpoint of social psychology is not the actual evidence but the acceptance of death as real and final by a high proportion of the populations which have so far evaded the realization. This acceptance, coming upon people whose humanity has been undermined by social organization, is a root cause of the flight into barbarism.

iii) Accordingly, the emphasis is laid more than ever before on the negation of individual personality and responsibility, since to admit that I am an individual I must also admit that I shall cease to exist. The negation takes the form of a growing belief in the conception of an immortal, invisible and only wise society, which can exact responsibilities and demand allegiances. The concept is as old as human thought, but its acceptance is becoming more and more a refuge from the reality of self. Society is not only a form of abrogating moral responsibility, it is a womb into which one can crawl back and become immortal because unborn.

iv) …it is a property of over-specialized groups that they submerge constructive impulses and summate destructive ones, so that the product of any group action is by tendency destructive and irrational. The courses of action which the

group mode of thought imposes upon the individual members are so grotesque and so wildly at variance with reason and with normal constructive activity that by reference to individual standards of human responsibility they are clinically insane. The consciousness of personal responsibility is the factor which differentiates human relationships from superficially similar animal societies: and contemporary irresponsibility has thrown it overboard.

The barbarian revolution occurs without external change at the point where mutual aid becomes detached from political organization, civic delegation passes out of the control of the delegators, at the transition between a community of responsible individuals and a society of irresponsible citizens. At a definite point in the history of every civilization, and shortly before its economic peak, there occurs a transfer of civic obligation, from the community based on mutual aid to the society based upon common irresponsibility. It may manifest itself as an industrial revolution, a megalopolitan development of the city, or as a change in national attitude from community to communal aggression. Every society has its Melian Dialogues [Thucydides' account of the Athenian rationalization for the destruction of Melos in 416 BCE], and thereafter the barbarian revolution has taken place, and the actions of that society are irresponsible, and its members insane…

In a barbarian society, we are forced to live in an asylum, where we are both patients and explorers. Certain rules, arrived at empirically, will govern our conduct in terms of that analogy.

First, I recognize the seeds of madness in myself. I know that if ever, for any purpose, I allow myself to act as a member of such a group and to forfeit my responsibility to my fellows, from that moment I am a madman, and the degree of my insanity will be purely fortuitous.

Second, I must suspect all bodies, groups, teams, gangs, based on power, for where two or three hundred are gathered together, there is the potentiality of lunacy in the midst of them, whether lunacy that kills Jews, lunacy that flogs Indians, lunacy that believes Lord George Gordon or the Ku Klux Klan, or lunacy that bombs Berlin. Yet I shall not hate or distrust any of my fellow patients singly. They are exactly as I am. I can see how dangerous they are, but I can be as dangerous to them if I allow myself to become involved. It will be said that I deny social responsibility. I do not—I believe that responsibility is boundless. We have boundless responsibility to every person we meet. The foreman owes it to his men not to persecute them—he owes it as a man, not because there is an abstract power vested in the TUC [British Trades Union Congress] which demands it. Barbarism is a flight from responsibility, an attempt to exercise it towards a non-existent scarecrow rather than to real people. Each sin-

cere citizen feels responsibility to society in the abstract, and none to the people he kills. The furious obedience of the Good Citizens is basically irresponsible. "The simple love of country and home and soil, a love that needs neither reasons nor justifications, is turned by the official apologists of the state into the demented cult of 'patriotism': coercive group unanimity: blind support of the rulers of the state: maudlin national egoism: an imbecile willingness to commit collective atrocities for the sake of 'national glory.'"[Lewis Mumford, *Culture of Cities*, IV, 9, page 256.] We have no responsibility whatever to a barbarian society (we recognize no moral duties towards a gang of madmen): our responsibilities to each other I believe to be boundless.

Third, one must aim at concealment. When lunacy is a norm, cynicism is a duty. The chief task will be to remain unnoticed by these ranging gangs of fellow patients. Their main duty falls on anybody who, by remaining a person, reminds them of personality and death. One lives in perpetual danger from the hatred or the equally destructive desire of the Good Citizens, and we shall need to humour, to cajole, to deceive, to appease, to compromise, to run at the right moments. When two of these squealing packs are murdering each other we shall be denounced by both as traitors for failing to join in. The most we can do is to attempt to snatch out of the mob one or two of the pathetic figures, urged on by scamps, who compose such mobs. They are our friends.

The positive expression of such ideas is not in the ballot box but in the individual restoration of responsible citizenship, the practice of recalcitrant mutual aid, not in political organization but in the fostering of individual disobedience, individual thought, small responsible mutual aid bodies which can survive the collapse and concentrate their efforts upon the practice of civilization. It is the philosophy of direct action, of the deserter and the maquis [French freedom fighters], the two most significant and human figures of every barbarian age.

In future, our responsibilities are to our fellow men, not to a society. The point at which responsibility becomes finally submerged is the point at which we no longer have common ground with society. Once the choice of barbarism has been made, the only remedy is in direct action. We now accept no responsibility to any group, only to individuals. This repudiation is not confined to 'artists'—'artists' have made it because they happen to be human beings. They enjoy no rights that shoemakers, doctors or housewives are not equally entitled to demand. The claim of society on bakers is just as much vitiated by irresponsibility as its claim on poets. There are no corporate allegiances. All our politics are atomized.

It is not that as artists we have deserted society. It has deserted or ejected us, and we live on in contact with it as tenants whom the landlord has not troubled to have thrown out. We have not seceded, but in clinging to personality we cling to something which everyone knows is the harbinger of death. They hate us for reminding them of it. They burrow deeper into society to lose sight of the fact which towers over them. Rather than face it, they become insane. Fascism is a refuge from Death in death. And fascism epitomizes the historical tendency of barbarian society.

These are the necessary conclusions of an age in which a concept of society and of the universe—I mean the Victorian-Liberal-bourgeois concept—has collapsed. To describe them as obscurantist or a 'failure of nerve' contributes little to their discussion. They are the almost inevitable product of the time, and in practice they exercise everybody, even Marxist writers who repudiate them and find it hard to sympathize with 'romantics' who express them. They are far more a fact of social history than a result of conscious thought.

Further, they represent the conscious or unconscious state of mind of an entire generation of writers, both those who profess individualism and those who reject it. They are manifestly not identical with the ideas behind 'Art for Art's sake'—it would be far fairer to regard them as art for responsibility's sake…

I believe that in essence art is the act of standing aside from society, with certain important qualifications… Herbert Read has pointed out that in truly free communities art is a general activity, far more cognate with craft than it can ever be in contemporary organized life, and he consigns the professional artist to his father the devil. I accept the proposition: it seems to be merely another statement of the hostility between barbarism and humanity which I have described. A state of affairs in which art could become a part of all daily activity, and in which all activity was potentially creative, would be a free community, and not a society—that is, a personified body treated as though it were an entity in itself—of the kind I have attacked. Art, when it is professionalized, consists in standing aside.

But it is essential that there should be no bitterness in the action. It may take any form, from the pure escape of decoration to the analysis of dreams and impulses in the myth, and to the most savage denunciation. But there must be no bitterness against humanity, or the artist defeats his own end. Neither must there be an attitude of superiority. He has absolutely no right to claim exemptions or privileges except in his capacity as a human being. The artist employs his form as the voice of a great multitude. It is only through the vicarious activity of creation that the great multitude ever finds a voice. Every creative activity speaks on behalf of utterly voiceless victims

of society and circumstance, of every one, finally, since man is always at some time the victim of his environment: and since they have undergone the supreme indignity, on behalf of the dead. The artist in barbarian society is the only true representative of the people…

All creative work speaks on behalf of somebody who would otherwise be voiceless, even the decoration of the potter who protests against the monotony of his work. I am always conscious of these submerged voices, as much in the tentative and nervous forms of early expression—savage and childhood productions, bad derivative art produced, under civilized conditions, by people striving to express themselves—as in the technically professional work of the great ages of painting. No creative activity is free from the sense of protest. It is the sole way open to man of protesting against his destiny.

In the actual circumstances of contemporary writing, the standing aside must take different forms, though if it involves bitterness, hatred, a sense of moral and aesthetic superiority, or any form of ivory-towerism, it defeats itself. On the one hand, one can and must stand aside, though one can at the same time admire the scale and tragic quality of an event, or the courage which has gone to make an achievement. Anyone who is not deeply moved by events is probably not capable of creation. There is not the smallest reason why a poet should not write odes to the Russian Revolution or the Dneiper Dam if these subjects move him, and represent the message which, on behalf of some of the submerged voices, he is attempting to interpret, any more than there is a reason why he should not hate a tyrant or drive a concrete-mixer. But the poetry is subsequent to the fact that whoever writes it has already stood far enough away from his subject to be able to see it in reasonable and historical proportion. It is the right to do this, even in a community whose ideals inspire sympathy, that is utterly fundamental to good writing, and it is precisely this right which contemporary society is unanimous in denying. When it comes to the interpretation of the war, both publics and their leaders realize, consciously or unconsciously, that there is no more serious threat to the will to continue fighting than the existence of a body of objective art. It requires to be explained away, blackguarded into silence, conscripted, or ignored, according to the methods in vogue in the society concerned. But it continues to exist. The right to stand aside is contested everywhere. Leaders who have acclaimed the work of a particular artist because he denounced their opponents are exasperated to find that the denunciatory criticism extends to themselves.

And on the other hand there is the essential prerequisite on which all romantic theory is founded—the community of the artist with his fellow men: in other words,

his humanity. He must cater for the need to stand aside by regarding all movements and societies neutrally, not in that he refuses to judge them *at all*, but that he judges them on the same basis. He cannot afford to have in his bag divers weights—that is one of the traits of civic lunacy. The artist's isolation and humanity are no different from the isolation and humanity of other responsible people—isolation from barbarism, solidarity with other human beings...

The unit with which the artist is concerned is first of all the individual human being. The romantic artist sees him exactly as the physician sees him—an individual who shares his organs and a high proportion of his psychological make-up with every individual who has existed within historical time, and with the artist himself. Like the physician, the artist is one of humanity, subject to every branch of human experience, from politics to death, but possessing by virtue of his talent the faculty which the physician acquires through training, of elucidating, interpreting, assisting... He is neither a superman nor a privileged person, any more than the physician is. It is with this quality of humanness that the romantic is primarily concerned—it is the origin of the romantic sympathy, the concept of shared, responsible experience, and of man as the product and victim of environment, which makes romanticism and defines it. In addition to this prerequisite consciousness, there is the technical mastery, learned or acquired, which is needed to express it... To the artist as a human being, and to the physician in his practice, the sense of continuity of circumstances and difference of environment are perpetually present—the human being and the patient, for the purposes of art and medicine, are fundamental constants. There is no difference between Hagesichora and any other young girl dancing, between the Homeric warriors and any other soldier—you cannot tell whether the man under the theatre towels is a Nazi or an anarchist; that aspect of his existence concerns you very little—you are interested in him as a man. The neutrality of medicine has survived this war well. The neutrality of romantic art will also survive it, because it is based on the far larger community of man, which society tends to destroy, which one finds only in London's slums or America's prisons. It seems to me that it is this university in art which Marxist classicism misses, just as in the political sphere it does not extend 'working class solidarity' into the responsible and anti-authoritarian conception of human solidarity. It is the extension of this evaluation of man into politics which makes up anarchism, and the common foundation of anarchism and romanticism renders them inseparable in the evolution of art, just as medicine as a practice, if we are to oppose it to the technical veterinary surgery of such people as army psychologists, whose aim is something other than plain human welfare, is inseparable from a similar human neutrality.

The value of Marxist criticism has lain, however, in its perpetual emphasis on the environmental concern of the artist. Once fortified with this conception of humanity and his knowledge that he is a part of it, not an observer, the artist is under obligation to concern himself with the entire environment of the times, both by interpreting it and by modifying it. Writers who are afraid to throw their weight into the cause of the humanity they recognize will find little in the tradition of romanticism to support their abstention. This criticism is valuable in itself, but at present is pretty consistently directed against the wrong people. It is the concept of irresponsible society, whatever its social organization, that is now and always has been the enemy of the romantic conception of man, and in a period of disintegration, with irresponsibility at a premium, the artist who reflects and interprets is accused of decadence, and the artist who advocates responsibility is accused of disruption. I cannot see an iota of difference between the attacks of sycophants and clowns who propagate a theory of cultural bolshevism (that Joyce and Proust were responsible for the fall of France, for instance) and those of the political actives who charge romantic individualism with losing its nerve. They are both imitating the man who smashes the barometer because it points to rain.

…[W]e apply the same standards to every cause or body which presents itself, without owing allegiance to any of them. We recognize boundless responsibility to men, especially to all those who are deprived of their voices, but ultimately to all men, since they will in time become silent. We must demand the right to secession as the one square foot of ground which is solid and from which we can look and interpret the gigantic chaos of human existence. We are learning ourselves to live in the structure of insane societies while defying them, practicing to retain our lives as if we were really sane men in an asylum where all individuals were allies and all bodies were bent on killing us, and we teach others, as far as we can, to do likewise.

The weak are inheriting the earth, though we are forced to fight, plot, deceive for every inch of the legacy. They are taxed, killed, frightened, conscripted, swindled, interned, collectively; the gangs of good citizens drive them like sheep, they are dragged from their standing ground by the innumerable pressure of the flood around them, and the ranks of Bedlamite citizenship are recruited from them. They inherit by default, like small animals inhabiting the floor of a forest, and dying off like flies, but they strike back ineffectually and, by sheer weight of numbers, invincibly. Their aggregate intervals of sanity suffice to overthrow the entire edifice of society which has been built on their backs and out of their flesh. Their sane moments are ultimately decisive. Their clinging among the wreckage to mutual aid perpetuates civili-

zation. In the ultimate explosion of the barbarism structure, islets of true civilization, the nuclei of future cultures which have still their upward cycle to run, persist and grow. Then in a decade or two they begin like coral insects to construct a new load for their backs. But all of them are ready now and again, in the time of barbarism, to assert their personality from time to time. The woman who fails to fuse a shell securely, the clerk who does not look a second time at a pass, the girl who hides a deserter and the idiot who misdirects an escort, whatever their nationality, are acting as members and soldiers of the community of the weak, the greatest conspiracy in history, which is ceaseless. It is quite irrelevant that at the next moment they are killing Jews, bombing cities, supporting Jacks-in-office and believing lies. At times every one of them has struck a minor blow for personality. It is to these people that art owes a responsibility which is hard to measure...

It is rare that a free community of such people can come into existence. One finds islands of community which have escaped the curse of personified societies scattered everywhere—the shelters during the air raids, the Cossack villages, some primitive tribes, prisoners in Dachau or Huyton, the Russian collective farms. These are the largest communities in which anarchism is real and the standing aside preliminary to creation is not resented to the same degree as in the societies of clock faces, whose sole virtue is their unanimity in error. This virtue is a virtue of death. They do not escape death by evading it in the renunciation of life. It is not for nothing that Brueghel's skeletons have all the same faces.

And artistic responsibility consists in taking all this upon our shoulders—in providing voices for all those who have not voices. The romantic ideology of art is the ideology of that responsibility, a responsibility borne out of a sense of victimhood, of community in a hostile universe, and destined like Prometheus, its central creation, to be the perpetual advocate and defender of Man against Barbarism, community against irresponsibility, life against homicidal and suicidal obedience.

21. Holley Cantine: Art: Play and its Perversions (1947)

Holley R. Cantine, Jr. (1911-1977) was a war resister, writer and the publisher of Retort, A quarterly journal of *Anarchism, art and reviews (1942-1951). He and his partner, the anarchist poet, Dachine Rainer (1921-2000), were both imprisoned in the U.S. during the war as conscientious objectors. In 1943, conscientious objectors at the Danbury federal prison helped organize an inmate strike to desegregate the mess hall. Cantine and Rainer later published an anthology of prison writings,* Prison Etiquette *(Bearsville, NY: Retort Press, 1951), describing these events and setting forth the views of the imprisoned war resisters. The following excerpts are from Cantine's essay, "Art: Play and its Perversions," from the Fall 1947 issue of* Retort.

NEARLY ALL OF THE HIGHER ANIMALS, especially when they are young, prefer to occupy themselves a good part of the time with activity that has no direct practical value. In all save man, this activity is of a purely physical nature—jumping, racing, frisking about, or pretending to fight with one another. Man, as a result of his more highly developed intellect, and the accumulated culture produced by it, has built up a complex range of play. In some of its forms, human play resembles that of the other animals to a large extent, but other forms have become so refined and altered that it is frequently difficult to recognize that they belong in the same category.

Probably the most widely misunderstood of the forms of human play are those fields of activity which are classified as the fine arts—music, poetry, painting and so forth. So much has been written attempting to prove that art possesses some 'higher' or at least functional significance, that it is only by observing the behavior of small children, who have not yet become fully conscious of their social role, and who spontaneously alternate singing, dancing and plastic art with the playful actions of other species, that one can see it in its proper perspective.

It is generally recognized that play is natural and necessary for small children, but it is widely held that it is somehow inappropriate and beneath the dignity of adults. In many societies, particularly those that are based on class or status stratification, adult play is actively discouraged. At a certain age, which varies somewhat depending on culture, class and historical period, but which roughly coincides with puberty, the individual's desire for play is rather abruptly subjected to a concerted campaign of ridicule and repression. He is now no longer a child and should cease to behave like one. The time has come when he must assume the responsibilities and dignity of adult status.

It is the purpose of this article to attempt to demonstrate that the repression of the play impulse in adults is an arbitrary and largely harmful process, which results from the compulsions imposed by class stratification. The play impulse should be recognized as an important part of man's fundamental nature, and provided with adequate outlets, free from guilt and shame. Moreover, the separation between childhood and maturity is not imposed by nature as a sharp break. The process of human maturation is naturally smooth and gradual, and the naturally matured individual differs from a child only in the extent of his knowledge, the subtlety of his perceptions, and his greater physical strength, coordination and patience.

In most societies that have developed beyond the level of simple hunting or agriculture, there exists a differentiation of the status of individuals in terms of social power, prestige, and consequently, in many instances, of economic privilege. The concept of status differentiation can arise in a society in a number of ways: from religion, as in Polynesia and certain African kingdoms; as a result of the conquest and subjugation of one group by another; or simply from the growth of distinctions between different occupational groups within a society. Even within a simple equalitarian society, like the Andaman Islanders or the Plains Indians, status differentiation, on the basis of age and achievement may occur. Once a system of status has been established, in whatever manner, it develops a life of its own, and persists with extraordinary tenacity from one generation to the next.

The ascription of higher status to adults than to children possesses a certain elementary logic especially within the framework of primitive economics, where success in the quest for food depends on a fairly high degree of coordination and experience. However, even this natural basis for differentiation tends to produce unfortunate psychological consequences. It gives rise to a continual pressure on the younger members of the community to grow out of their inferior status as quickly as possible and to regard everything associated with that status as contemptible and unworthy. Where the rise in status is directly linked with physical maturation, and the achievement of higher status is virtually automatic once one reaches a certain level of physical prowess, this emphasis is not entirely harmful, although the emphasis on status achievement frequently tends to speed up the process of social maturation until it is out of harmony with its physical basis, and rush the individual into adult status before he is really ready for it—thus giving rise to unnecessary anxieties and tensions. But when advancement in status is not directly a consequence of maturation, and where, as in most class societies, the achievement of adult status does not present the individual with a wider range of possible activity, but the reverse, its psychological consequences are thoroughly deplorable.

For the lower levels of status in a class society, the amount of advancement possible is usually very little—practically speaking, the only certain way the unprivileged individual can advance himself in status is by growing up. In a class society, advancement in status is almost invariably one of the major preoccupations of the people, so the pressure on children, both internal and external, to relinquish their 'inferior' childlike ways and become adults is enormous, even when there is no immediate economic need for it.

Unfortunately, however, adult status in a class society permits greater scope for the individual's potentialities only in the realm of sexual adventures. In virtually every other respect, he is much more circumscribed than he was as a child, both by the pressure of economic necessity and that of social taboos. Especially on the lower levels of status, adulthood is defined in largely negative terms—the things one can no longer do without losing face are many, while the number of things he can now do that he was prevented from doing as a child is fairly negligible. He is free to take a job—in fact compelled to—but the possibility of exercising his faculties in his work is infinitesimal in comparison with the creative outlets that even a slum-child possesses, and he is strongly discouraged from doing anything creative when he is not working by the fear of being considered childish.

The lower one goes in the social hierarchy, the earlier the age of social maturity manifests itself.

On the bottom, where the ONLY social advance is from childhood to 'maturity,' boys in their early teens are already scornful of childishness and arbitrarily limit their play to such 'adult' pastimes as smoking, drinking, gambling and fornicating.

In the higher levels of the hierarchy, the pressure on children to grow up is somewhat less intense. Childhood lasts somewhat longer, and the transition is more gradual, but the process is not remarkably different and the end result is almost as limited and circumscribed.

The desire for play is considerably stronger than any efforts that can be made to destroy it by social pressure, but when it is prevented from manifesting itself naturally and spontaneously it tends to become furtive and twisted. Adult play, in a class society, except for the few fields which are denied to children—chiefly sex and the indulgence in strong drink—must disguise itself as useful work in order to be socially acceptable. In most pre-capitalist class societies, the arts are identified with religion; dancing, the plastic art, music and poetry all tend to become incorporated into the religious rituals of the society, and thus become a worthy occupation for adults.

In capitalist society, since religion has declined in importance, other justifications must be found.

For the majority of adults, virtually the only socially sanctioned form of play is attending spectacles. These are usually disguised as business transactions by charging admission; the performers, since they are paid for practicing their art, are, according to the peculiar logic of capitalism, workers, and therefore responsible members of society—baseball players, band leaders and musicians, movie actors are all workers. Card-playing, which is one of the few other kinds of play that a 'responsible' adult may indulge in, must also be done for money, thus conveying the illusion that it is a form of business enterprise.

Under capitalism, work is broadly defined as any activity that can command a price on the market. It can be no more than time spent sitting around and doing nothing at all—not even watching or waiting for something to happen that requires attention. Thus, during the late war it was a not uncommon practice for factories working on government contracts to hire more men than they could use and pay the extra ones wages without giving them anything to do, since they were paid for their services to the government in proportion to the number of men they employed.

These men, although conspicuously idle, were considered workers. They had to report for 'work' every day and remain on the premises until quitting time, just as if there was something for them to do. This is a rather extreme example, but the same basic idea is present in all jobs under capitalism. The activity can be entirely meaningless, but it is work if it is paid for.

Under capitalism, therefore, art is considered work when it is saleable, either as a commodity—a painting, for instance—or as a skill. An artist who cannot sell his art is not considered a full adult, unless, as sometimes happens, he is retroactively converted into a worker by finding a market for his hitherto worthless products. This phenomenon is frequently to be observed in the fate of the paintings of a so-called primitive painter, who paints as a hobby, with no thought of the market—and is generally considered a crazy eccentric by his neighbours—then they chance to fall into the hands of a professional art dealer and are sold by him for fabulous prices.

Those artists whose art is not saleable, but who for one reason or another persist in it—refusing to acquiesce in the socially accepted definition of worker—are in a difficult position in the matter of status. They are, in the main, jeered at as childish, and since only a very strong person can withstand this kind of pressure without being affected by it in some way, most of them tend to work out various rationalizations for their art, which, while they rarely satisfy the more 'responsible' members of the community, at least afford the artists themselves a partial relief from feelings of guilt.

These rationalizations fall into two broad categories. Both of them are clearly derived from the association of art with religion in most pre-capitalist societies, but they have both been somewhat secularized, and they are bitterly antagonistic to each other.

The first category defines art in rather mystical terms, as an exalted profession, and considers the artist to be a sort of consecrated person, whose values and accomplishments are too refined to be appreciated by the vulgar, philistine majority. This group looks on commercial success as unworthy of the 'true' values of the artist, and to disparage those artists whose art is saleable—although they seldom refuse to sell their own, if and when an opportunity presents itself.

The other category considers the artist a sort of evangelist in the cause of the oppressed, whose function is to create propaganda for the revolution. Formerly confined to a handful of radical philosophers, this view has been coming into its own during the past twenty years, and has become the official State doctrine in Russia. While it is as emphatic in its repudiation of commercial success as is the first category, it rejects it not from an elevated esthetic evaluation, but because it is counter-revolutionary; in fact, it tends to lump the artists of the first category with those who work for the market, since they are not particularly concerned about the fate of the masses.

Those artists whose rationalization falls in the first category are at least not necessarily prevented by it from following their own inclinations—although the very esoteric character of their approach tends to promote cliquism—and in some cases are able to create in almost complete freedom from pressure of an esthetic nature. The second category, however, naturally tends to dogmatism and rigidity—frequently exceeding the commercial standards in inflexibility and coerciveness.

The plight of the artist in capitalist society is thus far from enviable. If he is to practice his profession at all, he is faced by three almost equally unenticing alternatives: He can accept the values of the system and work with an eye to the market —which means that he must turn out the sort of work that is marketable, regardless of his personal taste or inclination. This kind of art is seldom more satisfying than any other job in a capitalist enterprise. Secondly, he can join the self-conscious esthetes, where he will at least be permitted a certain amount of freedom to follow his own bent, but at the price of being despised by the majority, economically insecure, and to some extent subject to the dicta of cults. In the third place, he can put himself into the hands of the self-appointed art-commissars, and dedicate his art to the cause of the oppressed. This means, in practice, that he must conform to the judgments of the commissars and curb his impulses almost as if he were working for the market.

In none of these three categories is the artist really free. When he repudiates the socially accepted concept of his role, he is still influenced by it to the extent that he accepts the premise that his art is a form of useful work and as such must be measured by a more or less fixed standard of acceptability, and is tormented by the fear that his art will be found wanting by whatever critics whose judgment he respects. Only a relative handful of spontaneous artists, who give no thought to any standards but their own satisfaction, can be said to function in the realm of pure art. They pursue their medium with the same lack of concern for external pressure that is characteristic of small children. In short, before the arts can become free, they must first be liberated from the idea that they are 'useful' in the sense that, say, carpentry is useful, and be considered from the standpoint of psychological criteria that are appropriate to their function.

It is necessary, before we can draw any conclusions about the relative value of play and useful work, to define precisely what we mean by useful work. Clearly the capitalistic definition is of no value to us, since it not only takes in far too much territory, but is based on a criterion that is only very remotely connected with genuine utility. The mere fact that something can be sold tells nothing of its actual value, as it is well known that there are plenty of people in existing society who can be induced to buy anything at all, or to part with their money for nothing.

Most concepts of utility that go beyond the simple capitalist definition still tend to be influenced by it to some extent. They usually define anything that goes to make up the standard of living of a middle-class family as useful—an entirely arbitrary procedure. From a strictly biological standpoint, the only work that can properly be considered useful is that which provides for actual bodily requirements—food, shelter. Since it is possible for man to remain healthy on a level not appreciably higher than the general living standard of other domestic animals, genuinely useful work clearly requires but a very small amount of time—even with quite primitive methods of production. All else, biologically speaking, is luxury—including privacy, more than a simple balanced diet, artificial light and practically everything else that is part of 'civilized living.'

The desire for more than a bare subsistence is virtually a universal phenomenon in human society, of course, but so is the desire for play. It is absurd to consider that luxury is any more important than play, or that the production of items of luxury is any more meaningful than playing.

It is even highly probable that the desire for more than a few modest luxuries is a form of compensation for the frustration of the play impulse or some other instinct when it is not simply a product of the requirements of status achievement—higher status being frequently indicated by an increase in material possessions.

In a society where there is no status stratification and thus no pressure on the individual to attempt to rise in the social hierarchy, the sharp distinction between children and adults that exists in status societies—and consequently the deprecating of play in favour of 'useful' activity—is not drawn. There may be, especially in difficult economic conditions, such as prevail among the [Inuit], for example, a purely economic pressure on everyone to contribute as much as possible to the food supply but this does not make for condescension toward children or a rigid differentiation between the roles of children and adults. On the contrary, the two roles tend to merge imperceptibly into one another. Children are treated with respect, as responsible members of the community, as soon as they can walk; their wishes and opinions are considered as seriously as those of anyone else. Likewise, in such a society, play is regarded as natural for everyone, whenever the immediate pressure of the environment permits. In non-status societies, like the Pueblo Indians, where the demands of the food quest are somewhat less severe, the amount of time devoted to non-utilitarian pursuits—decorating pots, story-telling—is at least as great as that consumed by practical work; and since even very small children perform some kind of useful function, the distinction between children and adults can hardly be said to exist. Everyone works, according to his capacity, when there is work to do, and everyone plays the rest of the time.

It seems to me that any really free society would be like this. Children would be encouraged to enter the workshops and participate in whatever work was going on, according to their capacity. However, since the major emphasis of the society would not be on production for its own sake, everyone would be free to devote a considerable part of their time to playful pursuits.

It is argued by some that in a society where man is free to pick his occupation without compulsion and to determine his own hours and working conditions, useful work would be sufficiently satisfying and enjoyable to take care of all creative needs. This argument, however, seems to me self-defeating, since if everyone were to devote his spare time to 'useful' work, so much stuff would be produced that it could no longer be considered useful. I can't imagine why an oversupply of clothes, food, houses and the like would provide greater satisfaction than if the surplus time was devoted to playful pursuits like art.

Moreover, there seems to be some factor in the makeup of humanity, to say nothing of other animals, which rebels against an excessive concentration of 'practical' activities, perhaps because these activities are, of necessity, too stereotyped to permit sufficient scope to individual ingenuity and caprice. The ways of performing

practical tasks are rigidly limited by the end to be achieved, whereas in the arts it does not really matter what one does—the work is an end in itself, and need meet no tests of durability, balance or form, unless its creator arbitrarily so decides. Each practicing artist determines for himself the rules he intends to follow and the effects he wants to achieve, and the success or failure of his achievement is ultimately a matter for him alone to decide.

Individual contributions naturally vary considerably, depending on the amount of time, emotional intensity and energy each individual devotes to his particular art form. However, whether or not certain individuals possess a natural superiority in their special field it is impossible to determine, since the criteria that can be used to judge such superiority are invariably too vague and subjective. It is fairly simple to set up standards to grade the skill of individuals in practical work, since there is general agreement about the ends to be achieved in such work. But in the arts, everyone can legitimately claim that he is attempting something entirely unique, and therefore his work cannot be measured by existing standards. The advantage of this from the standpoint of ego security is enormous.

The rules of art can best be viewed as the rules of a game—a game that is played by each artist alone—which are capable of infinite variation. A group of artists in a particular field may agree among themselves to follow the same set of rules, but any one of them is always free to break with them if he wants to, and set up new rules for himself. Why then, should there be any rules at all? Why not adopt the simple principle that art is the free expression of the individual and disregard technical questions?

For those whose minds are sufficiently simple to be satisfied with sheer self-expression, obviously this principle is adequate; there are plenty of practicing artists who could be cited as examples—artists to whom technique is of no importance, who approach art almost as small children do. But in most cases the human mind is too complex an organ to be content with such simple rules of the game—a fact which can be observed even in the art of children who have passed the age of five or six.

The human intellect is so constructed that it likes to solve problems, and when it is not confronted with enough problems in its daily experience, it tends to set up arbitrary ones and solve THEM. This tendency is not infrequently deplored as decadent and precious by those simple souls who are content with the raw outpourings of their psyches, but this seems to me an unwarranted assumption. Man, throughout the past several hundred thousand years, and his simian ancestors for countless millennia before that, have been constantly confronted by problems which they had to solve in order to survive. Therefore, it seems natural enough that the ability and de-

sire to solve problems should have become part of the psychological heritage of humanity—a faculty which may ultimately be no longer particularly necessary for survival but which is still certainly of the greatest importance. Since this faculty exists, it is also natural that it should be used, and if the daily environment does not present enough difficulties to exercise it properly, as I passionately hope will someday be the case for everyone, it must be exercised in some arbitrary way, just as individuals who lead a sedentary existence require more or less arbitrary physical exercise in order to be healthy.

It is one of the primary errors of the nature-fetishists to assume that the mind and its faculties are not part of nature, but a peculiar excrescence grafted onto man by civilization, which will wither away once the Good Life has been achieved. Man is an animal, of course, but he differs from all other species primarily in the size and complexity of his brain, which is just as much a part of his natural endowment as the powerful legs of the horse or the sensitive nose of a dog are part of theirs. It is certainly a serious misunderstanding of the Darwinian hypothesis to assume that if and when a natural faculty is no longer absolutely necessary for survival (a condition which is clearly a long way from being fulfilled in the case of the human mind) it tends to disappear. The theory of survival simply indicates that those who possess the qualities necessary for survival will survive; there is no natural mechanism for eliminating unnecessary qualities unless they are actually detrimental to survival.

It might be considered that identifying the arts as play robs them of all dignity and significance. In my opinion, the exact opposite is the case. The forced attempt to make art into a species of useful work has only subordinated it to either church, the state, or business, unless it was prepared to live a hole-in-corner existence, despised by the majority—who instinctively recognize its playful character, but are prevented from accepting it for reasons of status. If the play impulse is recognized for what it is —one of the fundamental needs of mankind—art is not depreciated but truly liberated when it is understood as a manifestation of this impulse.

22. Paul-Émile Borduas: Global Refusal (1948)

In 1948, a group of Quebec artists, the Automatistes, published the following manifesto writ-
ten by one of its members, the painter Paul-Émile Borduas (1905-1960). Quebec society at
that time was very conservative, dominated by a reactionary Catholic Church. The manifesto,
with its call for "resplendent anarchy," created a scandal and Borduas was dismissed from his
teaching position. The Automatistes were influenced by the Surrealists, utilizing a "stream of
consciousness" technique in which the artist would view a blank canvass, sketching forms
emerging spontaneously from the canvass, refining them and adding colour to create more
complex images.

WE WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE OF STONE to remain indifferent to the underlying
sadness of those who have put on a false air of gaiety, a psychological reflex that
takes the form of the most cruel extravagances—the cellophane wrapping with
which we try to cover up our current agonizing despair. How can we not cry out in
protest when we read the news of this horrible collection of lampshades pieced to-
gether from tattooed skin stripped from the flesh of miserable prisoners [by the Na-
zis during the Holocaust] at the request of some elegant lady? How can we stifle our
groans at the interminable list of concentration camp atrocities? How can we keep
our blood from curdling at descriptions of Spanish dungeons, unjustifiable reprisals,
cold-blooded acts of vengeance? How can we fail to tremble in the face of the relent-
less reality of science?

The reign of overpowering anguish is succeeded by the reign of nausea.

We have been disheartened by man's apparent inability to right these wrongs.
By the futility of our efforts, by the vanity of our hopes of old.

For centuries, the generous fruits of poetic activities have been a tragic failure
from a social point of view, at first violently tossed aside by a social structure that
then makes a tentative effort to reuse them by distorting them irrevocably in the
name of integration and false assimilation.

For centuries, splendid revolutions fought by people who believed in them ut-
terly have been crushed after one brief moment of delirious hope in their barely in-
terrupted slide toward inevitable defeat:

the French revolutions
the Russian revolution
the Spanish revolution

which ended as an international free-for-all, despite the vain hopes of countless sim-
ple souls throughout the world.

Once again, fatality was stronger than generosity.

How can we not be sickened by the rewards given for shocking acts of cruelty, to liars, to forgers, to manufacturers of useless products, to plotters of intrigue, to the openly self-seeking, to the false counsellors of humanity, to those who pollute the fountain of life? How can we not be nauseated by our own cowardice, our help-lessness, our weakness, our lack of understanding? By our own ill-starred loves... In the face of our continuing preference for cherished illusions rather than objective enigmas.

What makes us so efficient at imposing on ourselves this evil of our own mak-ing, if not our determination to defend the civilization that ordains the destinies of our leading nations?

The United States, Russia, England, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain: all of them the sharp-toothed heirs of the same Ten Commandments, the same gospel.

The religion of Christ has dominated the world. See what it has turned into: sis-ter faiths have now begun to exploit each other.

Suppress the forces that encourage competition in natural resources, prestige and authority, and they will be in perfect agreement. But no matter which one were to gain supremacy over the world, the general result would be essentially the same; only the details would be different.

Christian civilization is coming to an end.

The next world war will bring about its total collapse by eliminating all possibil-ity of international competition.

Even those who refuse to see will be unable to ignore its moribund condition.

The decomposition that began in the 14th century will nauseate even the least sensitive.

Its despicable exploitation, maintained so efficiently for so many centuries at the cost of life's most precious qualities, will finally be revealed to its multitude of victims—submissive slaves who, the more wretched they were, the harder they fought to defend it.

But there will be an end to torture.

The decline of Christianity will bring down with it all the people and all the classes that it has influenced, from the first to the last, from the highest to the lowest.

The depth of its disgrace will be equal to the height of its success in the 13th century.

In the 13th century, once the limits allowed for the evolution of moral educa-tion and relationships that had originally been inclusive were achieved, intuition

gave way to reason. Gradually the act of faith was replaced by the calculated act. Exploitation was born in the very heart of religion when it began to take advantage of existing feelings that had no other outlet, by the rational interpretation of holy texts for the purpose of maintaining the supremacy that it had once been freely given.

This rational exploitation spread slowly to all levels of social activity: maximum returns were demanded.

Faith sought refuge in the hearts of the people and became their last hope of reward, their only consolation. But there, too, hope began to fade.

Among the learned, mathematics replaced the outmoded traditions of metaphysical speculation.

The spirit of observation succeeded the spirit of transfiguration.

Method pushed our boundaries even further. Decadence became convivial and necessary: it favoured the creation of agile machines that moved at frightening speeds, enabling us to harness the power of our tumultuous rivers while we wait for the planet to blow itself up. Our scientific instruments are wonderful devices for studying and controlling things that otherwise would be too small, too fast, too vibrant, too slow or too large for us to comprehend. Our rational thinking has unlocked all the gates of the world, but at the price of our unity.

The growing chasm between spiritual and rational powers is stretched almost to the breaking point.

Material progress, that carefully controlled privilege of the affluent, did bring about political development—first with the help of religious authorities and later without them—but did nothing to renew the foundations of our sensitivity, of our subconscious, or to facilitate the full emotional development of the masses, the only thing that would have allowed us to escape from the deep rut of Christianity.

The society that was born of faith will die at the hands of reason...

The fatal disintegration of our collective moral strength into strictly individual and sentimental power has undermined the once formidable shield of abstract knowledge behind which society takes cover to enjoy its ill-gotten gains at leisure.

It took the last two wars to achieve this absurd result. The horror of the third war will be decisive. We are on the brink of a D-day of total sacrifice.

The rats are already fleeing a sinking Europe by crossing the Atlantic. However, events will eventually overtake the greedy, the gluttonous, the sybarites, the unperturbed, the blind and the deaf.

They will be mercilessly swallowed up.

A new collective hope will dawn.

It is already demanding the passion of exceptional insights, anonymous union in renewed faith in the future, in the future collectivity.

The magical harvest magically reaped from the unknown lies ready in the field. It was gathered by all the true poets. Its powers of transformation are as great as the violence practiced against it, as its continued resistance to attempts to make use of it (after more than two centuries, there is not a single copy of the Marquis de Sade to be found in our bookshops; Isidore Ducasse, dead for more than a century, a hundred years of revolution and slaughter, is still too strong for queasy contemporary stomachs, even those accustomed to present-day filth and corruption).

None of these treasures is accessible to our society as yet. They are being preserved intact for future use. They were created spontaneously outside of and in spite of civilization. Their effects on society will be felt only when our present needs are clear.

Meanwhile, our duty is plain.

We must abandon the ways of society once and for all and free ourselves from its utilitarian spirit. We must not willingly neglect our spiritual side. We must refuse to turn a blind eye to vice, to scams masquerading as knowledge, as services rendered, as payment due. We must refuse to live out our lives in the only plastic village, a fortified place but easy enough to escape from. We must insist on having our say—do what you will with us, but hear us you must—and refuse fame and privilege (except that of being heard), which are the stigma of evil, indifference and servility. We must refuse to serve, or to be used for, such ends…

Make way for magic! Make way for objective enigmas! Make way for love! Make way for what is needed!

We accept full responsibility for the consequences of our total refusal.

Self-interested plans are nothing but the stillborn children of their parents.

Passionate actions have a life of their own.

We are happy to take full responsibility for tomorrow. Rational effort can only release the present from the constraints of the past when it stops looking back.

Our passions will spontaneously, unpredictably, necessarily forge the future.

Although we must acknowledge the past as the birthplace of the future, it is far from sacred. We owe it nothing.

It is naive and unhealthy to think that, because historical persons and events happen to be famous, they are endowed with special qualities to which we ourselves cannot aspire. These qualities are indeed out of the reach of facile academic affectedness, but anyone who responds to the deepest needs of his or her being or recognizes his or her new role in a new world will attain them automatically. This is true for anyone, at any time.

The past must no longer be used as an anvil for beating out the present and the future.

All we need from the past is what we can put to use today. The present will inevitably give way to the future.

We need not worry about the future until we happen upon it…

The social establishment resentfully views our dedication to our cause, the outpouring of our concerns and our excesses, as an insult to their indolence, their smugness, and their devotion to the material pleasures of a life that has long ceased being generous or full of hope and love.

The friends of those in power suspect us of promoting the "Revolution." The friends of the "Revolution" think that we are nothing but malcontents: "…we are protesting against the status quo, but only because we want to transform it, not because we want to transform it into something…" The friends of the Revolution have suggested that it is our naive intention to try to "transform" society by replacing the men in power with similar men. So, obviously, why not choose them?

…They would be happy to organize the proletariat in return for a regular salary plus a cost-of-living allowance, and they are absolutely right. The only trouble is that, as soon as victory is firmly within their grasp, in addition to the small salaries they are currently receiving, they will keep squeezing more and more from the same proletariat, just as the bureaucracy does now, in the form of surcharges and the right to remain in power over long periods, with no discussion permitted…

Their plunder will be plentiful. We have already refused to let them share it with us… We leave the rationally ordained (like everything else that lies at the complacent heart of decadence) rush for the spoils to you. As for us, give us spirited action; we are risking all for our total refusal.

(We cannot help it that the various social classes that have succeeded one another in governance over the people have been unable to resist the lure of decadence. We cannot help it that what we know of our history teaches us that only the full development of our faculties, followed by the entire renewal of our emotional resources, can lead us around this impasse and place us on the road to a civilization that is eager to be born.)

All those who hold power or aspire to it would be quite happy to grant our every wish, if only we were willing to let them use their scientific regulations to twist our activities.

Success will be ours if we close our eyes, stop up our ears, roll up our sleeves and fling ourselves pell-mell into the fray.

We prefer our cynicism to be spontaneous, without malice.

Kindly souls smile somewhat at the lack of financial success of joint exhibitions of our work. It gives them a feeling of satisfaction to think that they were the first to be aware of its small market value.

If we do keep putting on exhibitions, it is not with the naive hope of becoming rich. We know there is a world of difference between us and the wealthy. They would never run the risk of this type of incendiary contact with impunity.

The only sales we have had in the past have been to people who did not understand the situation.

We hope that this text will avoid any such misunderstandings in the future.

If we work with such feverish enthusiasm, it is because we feel a pressing need for unity.

Unity is the road to success.

Yesterday we stood alone and irresolute.

Today we form a strong, steady group whose ramifications are already pushing the limits.

We also have the glorious responsibility of preserving the precious treasure that has been left to us. This is also part of our history.

Its tangible values must constantly be reinterpreted, be compared and questioned anew. This is an exacting, abstract process that requires the creative medium of action.

This treasure is our poetic resources, the emotional renewal that will inspire the generations of the future. It cannot simply be passed down but must be ADAPTED, else it will be distorted.

We urge all of those who yearn for adventure to join us.

Within the foreseeable future, we expect to see people freed from their useless chains and turning, in the unexpected manner that is necessary for spontaneity, to resplendent anarchy to make the most of their individual gifts.

Meanwhile we must work without respite, united in spirit with those who long for a better life, without fear of long delays, regardless of praise or persecution, toward the joyful fulfillment of our fierce desire for freedom.

23. André Breton: The Black Mirror of Anarchism (1952)

André Breton (1896-1966) was part of the anarchist influenced Dada movement during the First World War. In the 1920s, he helped found the Surrealist movement. Instead of negating art, as Dada tried to do, the Surrealists tried to use art to go beyond the mundane into the realm of the irrational and fantastic, revealing a higher reality. Although one would have expected such artistic revolutionaries to adopt an anarchist stance, as Breton admits in the piece below, most of them became pro-Soviet, seduced by the seeming "success" of the Bolsheviks in Russia, despite the Soviet policy of "socialist realism," which denounced surrealism as bourgeois decadence. The Surrealists were never a homogeneous group. Some, such as Louis Aragon, became Stalinists; Benjamin Peret fought along side the anarchists in Spain; others, such as Salvador Dali, who at one timed called himself an "anarchist monarchist," were apolitical. In the early 1950s, Breton and some other Surrealists estranged from the Communists, including Peret, began publishing material in the anarchist paper, Le Libertaire, *the then organ of the French Anarchist Federation. In their preliminary declaration in the December 1951 issue, translated by Paul Sharkey, they wrote:*

WE SURREALISTS HAVE NEVER RELENTED in our abhorrence of the State-Work-Religion trinity, an abhorrence that has often brought us into the company of the comrades from the Anarchist Federation...

By our reckoning, there is an urgent need for a far-reaching overhaul of doctrines. Which is feasible only if revolutionaries, together, look into all problems relating to socialism for the purpose, not of seeking some confirmation of their own ideas, but rather of working towards a theory likely to greatly invigorate the Social Revolution. Unless it wishes to be merely fleeting, the liberation of man must never be restricted to the economic and the political, but should extend to the realm of ethics (and the final sanitizing of men's dealings with their fellow-men). It is bound up with the masses' awakening to their revolutionary potential and must on no account lead to a society wherein all men are, as they are in Russia, equals in slavery.

Irreconcilable to the capitalist system of oppression, whether in the subdued form of odiously colonialist bourgeois "democracy" or in the guise of a Nazi or Stalinist totalitarian regime, we cannot resist asserting one more time our fundamental hostility towards both power blocs. Like any imperialist war, the one they are hatching for the purpose of settling their differences and annihilating any thoughts of revolution is not our war. Nothing can come of it except worse misery, ignorance and repression. For an opposition capable of arresting it and subverting, in the sense of utterly dismissing the present set-up, we look no further than the autonomous action of the workers.

Surrealism has been, and remains, alone in having embarked upon just such a subversion in its own theatre of sensibility. The spreading of it and the headway it has made into minds have exposed the bankruptcy of all the traditional forms of exploitation and shown that these were no match for a manifestation of conscious rebellion by the artist against the material and moral conditions foisted upon man. The fight to replace society's structures and the efforts made by surrealism to transform mental structures, far from excluding each other, are mutually complementary. The harnessing of both should speed the arrival of an era from which all hierarchy and all constraint will have been banished.

In the January 11, 1952 issue, Breton contributed the following piece, "To the Lighthouse," in which he explores the connections between Surrealism and anarchism. The translation is by Doug Imrie, Michael William and John P. Clark, from the Research on Anarchism website (http://raforum.info/article.php3?id_article=2408). An earlier version was included in the Drunken Boat Anthology, Art, Rebellion, Anarchy, *ed. Max Blechman (Autonomedia/Left Bank Books, 1994).*

IT WAS IN THE BLACK MIRROR OF ANARCHISM that surrealism first recognized itself, well before defining itself, when it was still only a free association among individuals rejecting the social and moral constraints of their day, spontaneously and in their entirety.

Among the higher spheres in which we encountered each other in the days following the war of 1914, and whose rallying power never failed, was Laurent Tailhade's "Ballad of Solness," which ends:

> Fair-eyed Goddess, send us now thy dawn,
> Bathed in vermillion, Salaminian light!
> Strike our hearts so tattered and forlorn,
> Anarchy! O torch-bearer of morn!
> Crush the vermin, banish now the night
> Raise high to heaven, upon our tombs be borne
> Above the raging tides that Tower bright!

At that time, the surrealist refusal was total, and absolutely incapable of allowing itself to be channeled at a political level. All the institutions upon which the modern world rested—and which had just shown their worth in the First World War—were considered aberrant and scandalous by us. To begin with, it was the entire defence apparatus of society that we were attacking: the army, "justice," the police, religion, psychiatric and legal medicine, and schooling. At that time, both collective declarations and individual texts… attested to our shared willingness to see them recog-

nized as plagues, and to fight them as such. But to fight them with some chance of success, it was still necessary to attack their armature, which, in the final analysis, was of a logical and moral kind: the so-called "reason" which was in current use, and, with a fraudulent label, concealed the most worn-out "common sense," the morality falsified by Christianity for the purpose of discouraging any resistance to the exploitation of human beings.

A very great fire smoldered there—we were young—and I believe I must insist on the fact that it was constantly fanned by what was taken from the works and lives of the poets: *Anarchy! O torch-bearer of morn!* whether they were named Tailhade, or Baudelaire, Rimbaud and Jarry—whom all our young libertarian comrades should know, just as they should all know Sade, Lautréamont and Schwob (of the *Livre de Monelle*).

Why was an organic fusion unable to come about at this time between anarchist elements proper and surrealist elements? I still ask myself this twenty-five years later. It was undoubtedly the idea of efficiency, which was the delusion of that period, that decided otherwise. What we took to be "triumph" of the Russian Revolution and the advent of a "workers' State" led to a great change in our perspective. The only dark spot in the picture—a spot which was to become an indelible stain—consisted of the crushing of the Kronstadt rebellion on March 18, 1921. The surrealists never quite managed to get beyond it. Nevertheless, around 1925 only the [Soviet] Third International seemed to possess the means required to transform the world. It was conceivable that the signs of degeneracy and repression that were already easily observable in the East could still be averted. At that time, the surrealists were convinced that a social revolution which would spread to every country could not fail to promote a libertarian world (some say a surrealist world, but it is the same thing). At the beginning, everybody saw it this way, including those (Aragon, Eluard, etc.) who, later on, abandoned their first ideal to the point of making an enviable career out of Stalinism (from the point of view of businessmen). But human desire and hope can never be at the mercy of traitors: *Crush the vermin, banish now the night.*

We are well enough aware of the ruthless pillaging to which these illusions were subjected during the second quarter of this century. In a horrible mockery, the libertarian world of our dreams was replaced by a world in which the most servile obedience is obligatory, in which the most elementary rights are denied to people, and in which all social life revolves around the cop and the executioner. As in all cases in which a human ideal has reached this depth of corruption, the only remedy is to re-immerse oneself in the great current of feeling in which it was born, *to return to the principles* which allowed it to take form. It is as this movement is coming to its very

end that we will encounter anarchism, and it alone. It is something that is more necessary than ever—not the caricature that people present it as, or the scarecrow they make of it—but the one that our comrade [Georges] Fontenis describes "as socialism itself, that is, the modern demand for dignity of humans (their freedom as well as their well-being). It is socialism, not conceived as the simple resolution of an economic or political problem, but as the expression of the exploited masses in their desire to create a society without classes, without a State, where all human values and desires can be realized."

This conception of a revolt and a generosity inseparable from each other and (with all due respect to Albert Camus) each as limitless *as the other*—this conception the surrealists make their own, without reservation, today. Extricated from the mists of death of these times, they consider it the only one able to make appear again, to eyes more numerous with every passing moment, *Above the raging tides that Tower bright!*

Breton refers to Albert Camus (1913-1960), the French existentialist with anarchist sympathies who protested against the continued imprisonment, torture and execution of anarchists and republicans in post-war Spain. In his 1951 book, L'Homme Révolté *[The Rebel], he wrote that revolutionary syndicalism,*

> like the commune, is the negation, to the benefit of reality, of bureaucratic and abstract centralism. The revolution of the twentieth century, on the contrary, claims to base itself on economics, but is primarily political and ideological. It cannot, by its very function, avoid terror and violence done to the real. Despite its pretensions, it begins in the absolute and attempts to mold reality. Rebellion, inversely, relies on reality to assist it in its perpetual struggle for truth. The former tries to realize itself from top to bottom, the latter from bottom to top. Far from being a form of romanticism, rebellion, on the contrary, takes the part of true realism. If it wants a revolution, it wants it on behalf of life, not in defiance of it. That is why it relies primarily on the most concrete realities—on occupation, on the village, where the living heart of things and men is to be found.

24. Julian Beck: Storming the Barricades (1964)

Julian Beck (1925-1985) and Judith Malina, both anarchist pacifists, founded the Living Theatre in New York in 1947. The Living Theatre was an experimental political theatre company that challenged artistic stage conventions, attempting to break down the barriers between writer and performers and performers and audience. The following excerpts are taken from Beck's introduction to The Brig: A Concept for Theatre and Film *(New York: Hill and Wang, 1965), a play by Kenneth H. Brown, directed by Judith Malina, about a military prison during the Korean War. The Living Theatre was shut down during the production of the play when about 70 IRS agents and police seized the theatre and all its assets for alleged tax evasion. Beck and Molina were charged with "impeding a Federal Officer" when they broke into their own theatre to put on a protest performance of* The Brig. *At the time, the authorities were taking action against a variety of artists and performers, prosecuting people like Lenny Bruce and Jonas Mekas (for screening, among other things, Jean Genet's* Un Chant d'Amour*) for obscenity, shutting down the New York Poets' Theatre (run by the anarchist poet Diane de Prima and Alan Marlowe), and harassing other experimental theatre companies, such as the Hardware Poets' Playhouse and Peter Schumann's Bread and Puppet Theatre. Beck was eventually sentenced to 60 days in jail, and Judith Malina to 30. The Living Theatre went into exile, leaving the United States, first for Europe and later Latin America, eventually performing pioneering street theatre in some 28 countries spanning five continents. By 2007, the Living Theatre was back in New York, where they staged a new production of* The Brig, *emphasizing the parallels between that military prison and the new military prisons in Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo Bay.*

A PLAY ARRIVES IN THE MAIL. I OPEN IT AT random and read a line. If the line is good, I go on, maybe start from the beginning and read the whole thing. I will not submit myself to reading a play if the writing is not good. And for the same reason will not submit any audience to it. Who am I to judge? And in this hard and arrogant way. "I am but an erring mortal," writes Gandhi, progressing from blunder toward truth. And I, may my blunders not cause pain, not to playwrights, not to anyone, and, as for truth, may we all get there.

The work of any important playwright. Open at random. Ibsen, Marlowe, Strindberg, Cocteau. The language is always good, like light. Language is the key. It opens the doors that keep us locked in confining chambers, the Holy of Holies, the instrument of unification, communication, and from communication let us derive the word community. The community is love, impossible without it, and the syllogism affirms then that love, as we humans may supremely create it, rises and falls with lan-

guage. Yes, the grunts of animals in the act of coitus—music for the ears of heaven. The proper sounds, the stresses, the silences, the grunts that rise from real feeling, satisfaction with food or with your body as I animally caress it; those sounds wrenched from my groin upward and out of the throat, they please you, because they are honest and near to God.

To see the human face, to hear the spoken word, the two maxima of experience. Eric Gutkind. But this is not easy. Not the face of corruption, not the abstracted face of the servile citizen of the abstract state, not the face grown expressionless through the fear of the dicta of a scared society, not the face that does not represent the climax of physical being, not the face that is a mask—mask of virtue, mask of preference, mask of distortion, falsehood, and failure—but the face the sight of which makes creation that much easier. And the spoken word must be the word we use when I speak to thee, not the language of deception, not the misuse of the word in order to dissemble, language that ultimately separates. The word must join us, else it is just another barricade. We kill one another when we do not speak the truth; it is the way to early death. But when you speak to me true I live, and you live a little longer. It is our joint struggle against death. The prolongation of this life depends on exaltation through exalted speech. Speech: the poet reading aloud, the actor speaking the word, not on the page, but in the ear. And that is why we crown with laurel those heroes who have strained to bring us knowledge of language that vaults the degradations of the unloving ways of the world: Aeschylus, the Prophets, Lao-tse, Rilke, Shelley, Joyce, Dante, the lovers under the quilts, and the fine practical language of woodsmen building a bridge, another plank. The miracle happens when speech unites...

I don't like to work alone, I adore collaboration, to join with someone and to do something; much more gratifying than working alone, because something else is happening; it's very sexy, even when you are not really fucking; you are filling someone else, and someone else is filling or is filled by you. Not a substitution for the McCoy, but something else, and full of its own aromas...

There has been some theatre verse in the last twenty years that I respect, but not enough, and still too dependent on the verse spirit of other eras to speak directly, engagingly, to the audiences of our time. We wait and work, because when it happens it will happen because we are prepared for it. By "we" I mean everyone, not only needing it, but wanting it, craving it, because we want to take flight—poetry after all is flight—and then we will be flying, man, then, not now, beyond even yearning, but ready to take poetic action, that's when...

"Poetry of the theatre," says Cocteau, not meaning meter; the phrase turned on the line, that kind of thing, but something else, which in the work of Brown and Gelber emerges as the distillation, extraction, representation of exact words and action of life as it is lived, honest, uncompromisingly honest, and by being life itself and not sham is some kind of poetry, something which flies, uplifts, probably because being very near to life itself, we are moved, as we are moved by poetry, because it is close to life, shows us life itself, and that is always the only encouraging thing. That is, nothing exceeds life itself, the human face, the spoken word, but it has then to be itself, not armor instead of flesh, not lies instead of speech…

What is the difference between development and change? I call for change all the time nowadays. That's what I reach for in these dark times as we all face annihilation, if not by bomb on the body then by clamp on the brain or by the fences of restriction that keep us from touching one another…

I am quick to state that I have never attended verse theatre anywhere done to my satisfaction. I would be satisfied by any verse theatre that aroused my better, not my baser, instincts.

What are these baser instincts? Fake notions of grandeur, bullshit beauty, intoxication with wigs instead of hair. Fetishes, when my sexual instincts are aroused by clothing instead of bodies, my mind by superimposed symbol glamour, legless ideas, bodiless creation. Simple arithmetic—the problem is to get closer to life. Paradox: nothing in the theatre can get closer to life than verse and nothing further away, nothing further away as when the verse strays into representing that kind of life which never ought to be.

At the beginning, in *Beyond the Mountains* and *Faustina*, we tried to bring formal elements into the theatre, counter attack on the prevalent theatre which knew only that Yeats wasn't good box office. But what to do with this verse, this vaulting language, the piercing phrases which illuminate your life forever, the whole staggering jumble of harmony of all things poetry, yet which when divorced from the body, from movement, from action, from the confrontation which means this life here and now as well as all those other plateaus on which we are conscious and unconscious, becomes like dead tissue, the severed head of a beautiful woman, disgusting?

How to attach the head to the body? How to make this verse into a living thing? We don't know what to do with the verse and the poets aren't giving us theatre verse suited to our powers. It goes back and forth. Together is what I am saying, collaborate, in community, to find the answer…

How do we find out what the plays mean and how do we communicate that meaning, how do we make what happens to us in the library happen on the stage more forcefully—by "we" I mean actors and poets—more gloriously, more excellently well? How do we learn to write a language, speak that language, express and enact that passion, vault those concepts? Is there something missing in those plays? Is there something missing in ourselves? Is there something wrong with them, with us, with everything? Must you wait until one has the answers before working with these plays? Must you wait until, alone, contemplating, meditating, the answer is arrived at? Is that possible? Can the answer be found only through trial and error? Who sets the values? Is there a right and a wrong about anything? Why is the actor playing Hamlet always more interesting nowadays than the play? Was it ever different? Will it ever be? Ought it to be? Are we wrong in our assumptions about verse? Is Aeschylus a deadhead, verse a romantic notion, a longing for things we ought not to long for? Who are these kings and princes? Are their images sickening in themselves, doomed to decay, best buried, so they simply no longer speak to our time? Should we forget them, should we then thus cut off the past from our being? Are we the sum of civilization? Is the thesis of duty to eternity and to the lives that have been lived and the things men have created a false hypothesis? How can we leave these questions lying about discarded? What is the good of answers without the pleasure and the glory of the struggle in the seeking...

Clue. Laughter. Chaplin. To produce a physical reaction, make the belly shake, mix up the head and eyes with the ridiculous, cracks in the ice and armor, something happening to them. The verse tragedies which I've been talking about, with all their gorgeous language and the rotund passions, all the seething emotions, and the stark dramatic moments, caught, roped, garlanded with what we consider the attributes of splendor—don't pierce the shell. Real feeling is not touched, only attitudes of feeling, the outside. Maybe it's the regality problem, no identification; we're outside. Then we must begin to concentrate on ways to get in there, or, just as good, a means to open the dam and let the insides flow out. If the experiments fail—Ehrlich permitted himself 605 failures—we still will be asking the question, unless we have found a form of theatre that makes poetry obsolete. I expect that might happen, and Shakespeare would become obsolete.

Perhaps all that writing must be left behind, the printed word, the library forgotten. Artaud. Then a theatre in which language pours from the throats of the actors: the high art of improvisation, when the actor is like a great hero, the partner of God. A man's proper job and position, isn't it, to create, make life on the stage, there

in our presence, doing whatever he is doing at maximum, like a great great lover, the new poetry flowing from his being, marvelous energy, a river in spring, fertilizing the banks? He is the actor I dream of, and his is the theatre I would like to go to, one worthy, as I have often said, of the life of each spectator...

I no longer make any designs for a play until I have heard the actors read it, not once but many times. I prefer not to make the costume designs until I have watched the staging and watched the actors move. I don't like to impose concepts, but rather let the designs emerge from the play, be an integral part of the staging and the actors' creative work. The system is not foolproof. Still heaps of mistakes, but the whole method is possibly moving in the direction of a creative ensemble, community, rather than a binding together of faggots, separate sticks; better a growing tree of course, something like that...

Somewhere along the line, around 1961 or 1962, Leo Lerman called us on the phone and said, "We're printing a picture of The Living Theatre staff, and we're trying to caption it. Can you give me twenty words summing up the purpose of The Living Theatre?"

I said, "Call me back in five minutes." Quick consultation. He did call back in five minutes, not ten. I said, "To increase conscious awareness, to stress the sacredness of life, to break down the walls"...

The advantages of doing plays with little or no money far surpass the disadvantages. First of all, second of all, and last of all, you are outside of the money system. Because money is a brig. Better the slave of poverty than the minion of money. At least you're not being screwed all the time, distastefully, against your will, without love. The chief disadvantage is that, having to do everything yourself, it takes more time. The period of creativity preceding the opening of a production reaches its peak of intensity during the few weeks immediately preceding the opening itself. Creative juices, time. They just don't flow for long. The problem of working without money is that of sustaining the juice time. The fear is that you will be all drained before the end of the work. Then you have to implore the muse. May she be kindly disposed. I have found that she usually is, happily enough, whenever there is less of Mammon's largesse lying around...

Pirandello's *Tonight We Improvise*... made a direct attempt at involving the audience. Of course, that is the heart of the Pirandello play. This device, the play within the play, the play that presumably takes place in the theatre on the night of the performance for the first time, as if it were the first time on each successive night, is part of a large part of twentieth-century dramatic literature...

It is true that our message, if you want to call it that, or our mission, was to involve or touch or engage the audience, not just show them something; but we did realize that these play-within-the-play devices arose out of a crying need on the part of the authors, and of us, to reach the audience, to awaken them from their passive slumber, to provoke them into attention, shock them if necessary, and, this is also important, to involve the actors with what was happening in the audience. To aid the audience to become once more what it was destined to be when the first dramas formed themselves on the threshing floor: a congregation led by priests, a choral ecstasy of reading and response, dance, seeking transcendence, a way out and up, the vertical thrust, seeking a state of awareness that surpasses mere conscious being and brings you closer to God. By bringing the play into the theatre and mixing together spectator and performer, the intention was to equalize, unify, and bring everyone closer to life. Joining as opposed to separation.

That there is no difference between actor and spectator. The Greeks used masks, and the Japanese, the Chinese, the commecija, and so many others, of course, but perhaps that is what we least need now. The mask has a function, but we had better learn that its purpose is not to conceal and symbolize, but to intensify, magnify, terrify, or seduce. I love masks but I love the human face more. I wonder about masks all the time...

People were often taken in by the play-within-the-play devices of *Many Loves*, *The Connection*, and *Improvise*. Not once, but often, people requested their money back at the box office because they had not come to see a bunch of people rehearsing; they wanted to see a show, the finished product. People theatrically unsophisticated, but to whom else are we speaking? Are we only addressing those in the know?

That part was good, that is, that people were disturbed and were learning. But the greater part of the spectators, the sophisticated spectators, were not content... But we finally disturbed ourselves by the device because it was, after all, basically dishonest, and we were publicly crying out for honesty in the theatre. The plays were not being rehearsed that night yet we were pretending they were...

Deception was not the means we wanted to involve the audience. It fundamentally meant that we did not respect the people out there. You do not cheat when you respect, and when the audience found out, and it surely would find out, it would not respect us for having fooled them, no matter how well we had done it.

The climax of our work at the loft was Paul Goodman's *The Young Disciple*, half in verse and half in prose. But Goodman knew what he was about, he always does, and in this play, among other things, he was confronting the problem of verse in the theatre, and in his brief preface to it he writes:

I have tried in this play to lay great emphasis on the preverbal elements of theatre, trembling, beating, breathing hard, and tantrum. I am well aware that the actors we have are quite unable both by character and training to open their throats to such sounds or loosen their limbs to such motions. But this is also why they simply cannot read poetic lines. It would be worthwhile, to the renovation of our art, to make a number of plays of just these pre-verbal elements in abstraction, as the painters have returned to the elements of color and form.

Is the solution as plain as Goodman says? If so, then let us get to work at once. I know that if it is not all of the solution it is part, one of the wheels of the way. What happened when we did this play was exciting for us. Apparently also for the audience. They were disgusted, affronted, annoyed, terrified, awed, and excited. There is a scene in which a character vomits, and one in which someone creeps about on all fours in total darkness making night noises, strange husky grating and chirping sounds, and the audience panicked, and something was happening which whispered to us that it was important...

The ghost of Artaud became our mentor and the problem that we faced... was how to create that spectacle, that Aztec, convulsive, plague-ridden panorama that would so shake people up, so move them, so cause feeling to be felt, there in the body, that the steel world of law and order which civilization had forged to protect itself from barbarism would melt. Why? Because that steel world of law and order did more than just protect us from barbarism; it also cut us off from real feeling. That is, in the process of protecting ourselves from the barbaric instincts and acts we feared, we simultaneously cut ourselves off from all impulsive sensation and made our selves the heartless monsters that wage wars, that burn and gas six million Jews, that enslave the blacks, that plan bacteriological weapons, that annihilate Carthage and Hiroshima, that humiliate and crush, that conduct inquisitions, that hang men in cages to die of starvation and exposure there in that great concourse of the Piazza San Marco, that wipe out the Indians, the buffalo, that exploit the peon, that lock men in prisons away from natural sex, that invent the gallows, the garrote, the block, the guillotine, the electric chair, the gas chamber, the firing squad, that take young men in their prime and deliberately teach them to kill—I mean we actually teach people to kill—and that go about our daily business while one person every six seconds dies of starvation. Artaud believed that if we could only be made to feel, really feel anything, then we might find all this suffering intolerable, the pain too great to bear, we

might put an end to it, and then, being able to feel, we might truly feel the joy, the joy of everything else, of loving, of creating, of being at peace, and of being ourselves...

Insert. Repertory. I have nothing to say about repertory that has not been said before. There can be no creative, that is, growing, company of actors without it; the one-shot stuff is merely obeisance to Mammon's dynasty, and so forth...

A resurgence of realism was needed: what had been passing for realism was not real. There had to be pauses. Directors had to learn to let actors sit still for a long time in one place as in life, and actors had to learn to adapt to this new idea. There had to be an end to sets with angled walls, the whole false perspective bit. There had to be real dirt, not simulations. There had to be slovenly speech. If there was to be jazz, then it had to be real jazz and not show-tune jazz. If there was to be real speech, then there had to be real profanity; the word "shit" would have to be said, not once but again and again and again until audience ears got used to it. Goodman has been using words like "shit," "cock," "cunt," and "fuck" in his theatre pieces for more than a decade. The way had been prepared, and he had used the words not as expletives but as functional Anglo-Saxon words in context. Of course, that was intolerable. But Gelber's unrelenting and uncompromising use of the word "shit" in its most ordinary usage would make it easier for the Goodman plays in the future. There had to be honesty, as much honesty as we could pull out. We had to risk embarrassment; we had to risk boring the audience, but it had to be done. We had to talk about the untalkable subjects; we had to talk about heroin and addicts. It was important, important to show that these people who, in 1959, were considered the lowest of the low—in fact a recent law had made selling heroin to minors a capital offense—we had to show that these, the dregs of society as they were regarded, were human, capable of deep and touching feelings and speech, worthy, of our interest and respect; we had to show that we were all in need of a fix, and that what the addicts had come to was not the result of an indigenous personality evil, but was symptomatic of the errors of the whole word...

The work of John Cage. We first became acquainted with it around 1950. The first concern, the first special event ever presented by The Living Theatre, was arranged by him at the Cherry Lane. We presented the premiere of his *Music of Changes*. By using methods of chance and indeterminacy to construct his work, he was saying to us all, "Get rid of all this misdirected conscious dominion. Let the wind blow through. See what can happen without the government of sweet reason." These methods produced remarkable effects in his music. We had all been long familiar with the effects of chance in painting: Arp's "Pieces 'of Paper Arranged According to

the Laws of Chance," Duchamp's' great glass which splintered so beautifully by accident, Kandinsky's and Picasso's and Pollack's drips and splashes. In *The Connection* Judith had arranged an atmosphere in which the actors could improvise lines and actions, in the context of the play, never straying too far. This often led to terrible choices, largely because we are not well trained in this area, but often terrific moments emerged. Best of all, an atmosphere of freedom in the performance was established and encouraged, and this seemed to promote a truthfulness, startling in performance, which we had not so thoroughly produced before…

[Judith Malina] began to let the actors design their movements, creating a remarkable rehearsal atmosphere in which the company became more and more free to bring in its own ideas. Less and less puppetry, more and more the creative actor. The careful directing books we had used at the beginning were by now quite gone. She began to suggest rather than tell, and the company began to find a style that was not superimposed but rose out of their own sensitivities. The director was resigning from his authoritarian position. No more dictation.

Still searching for Artaud. We also talked publicly a good deal about the theatre being like a dream in which the spectator is the dreamer and from which he emerges remembering it with partial understanding. We had talked about this with Paul Williams, who designed the Fourteenth Street theatre for us. That is why the lobby was painted so brightly, the brick walls exposed, like the walls of a courtyard, the ceiling painted sky blue, a fountain running as in a public square, and kiosks standing in the center, one for coffee and one for books. The lobby was the day room, the theatre was painted black, narrower and narrower stripes converging toward the stage, concentrating the focus, as if one were inside an old-fashioned Kodak, looking out through the lens, the eye of the dreamer in the dark room. The seats were painted in hazy gray, lavender, and sand, with oversize circus numbers on them in bright orange, lemon and magenta—all this Williams' attempt to aid us to achieve an atmosphere for the dreamers and their waking-up when they walked out into the lobby…

To break down the walls. How can you watch *The Brig* and not want to break down the walls of all the prisons? Free all prisoners. Destroy all white lines everywhere. All the barriers. But talking about this to people is not enough. To make people feel so that whenever the noise of triumph is heard, the noise of opening night applause, no other noise can be heard but the terrible noise in the resounding cement and steel corridors of prisons, let them hear the noise, let it cause them pain, let them feel the blows to the stomach, produce a horror and release real feeling, let this happen until there are no prisons anywhere.

The Brig is the Theatre of Cruelty. In that it is the distillation of the direction of The Living Theatre's history. You cannot shut off from it, as from a dream. It is there, real, in the pit of your stomach. Defy the audience. Tell them you don't want to involve them. Don't run into the aisle to embrace them. Put up a barricade of barbed wire. Separate until the pain of separation is felt, until they want to tear it down, to be united. Storm the barricades.

When we were arrested for insisting on putting on our play, Judith, myself, Ken Brown, so many members of the cast and staff, and when we were brought to trial, one of the charges in the indictment was that we had yelled, "Storm the barricades!" from a window to the crowd in the street below waiting to be let in to see the last performance of *The Brig*. We were acquitted of that charge. Rightly so: we never said it. Never said it because we are simply too familiar with public demonstrations and the responsibility of leaders of demonstrations, too committed to the Gandhiian concept of nonviolence ever to incite a crowd in this manner, but when the suggestion of this charge first confronted me at a grand jury hearing, I went through a twisting moment of *dejà vu* or *déjà entendu*. Where did this accusation come from? The Assistant U.S. Attorney was asking me, "Mr. Beck, did you or did you not shout 'Storm the barricades!'?"

"No," I stumbled a reply, "no."

At the trial no one could testify that either of us, Judith or I, had said this, though someone who was on our side said that the words might have passed his lips; so maybe that's the explanation. But all that night I felt we were confronting the barricades. Yes, we want to get rid of all the barricades, even our own and any that we might ever set up.

The Brig and Artaud. Artaud's mistake was that he imagined you could create a horror out of the fantastic. Brown's gleaming discovery is that horror is not in what we imagine but is in what is real.

New York City, July 1964

25. Living Theatre Declaration (1970)

Following their voluntary exile to Europe, the Living Theatre took an active role in the radical social movements that were developing there, eventually abandoning the theatre place for the streets for the reasons set forth in the following manifesto from April 1970.

THE STRUCTURE IS CRUMBLING! ALL OF THE institutions are feeling the tremors. How do you respond to the energy?

For the sake of mobility The Living Theatre is dividing into four cells. One cell is currently located in Paris and the centre of its orientation is chiefly political. Another

is located in Berlin and its orientation is environmental. A third is located in London and its orientation is cultural. A fourth is on its way to India and its orientation is spiritual. If the structure is to be transformed it has to be attacked from many sides. This is what we are seeking to do.

In the world today there are many movements seeking to transform this structure—the Capitalist-Bureaucratic-Military-Authoritarian-Police-Complex into its opposite: a Non-Violent-Communal-Organism. The structure will fall if it's pushed the right way. Our purpose is to lend our support to all the forces of liberation.

But first we have to get out of the trap. Buildings called theatres are an architectural trap. The man in the street will never enter such a building:

1) Because he can't: the theatre buildings belong to those who can afford to get in; all buildings are property held by the Establishment by force of arms.

2) Because the life he leads at work and out of work exhausts him.

3) Because inside they speak in a code of things which are neither interesting to him nor in his interest.

The Living Theatre doesn't want to perform for the privileged-elite anymore because all privilege is violence to the underprivileged. Therefore the Living Theatre doesn't want to perform in theatre buildings anymore. Get out of the trap; the structure is crumbling. The Living Theatre doesn't want to be an institution anymore. It is… clear that all institutions are rigid and support the Establishment. After 20 years the structure of the Living Theatre had become institutionalized. All the institutions are crumbling. The Living Theatre had to crumble or change its form. How do you get out of the trap?

1) Liberate yourself as much as possible from dependence on the established economic system. It was not easy for the Living Theatre to divide its community, because the community was living and working together in love. Not dissension, but radical needs have divided us. A small group can survive with cunning and daring. It is now for each cell to find means of surviving without becoming a consumer product.

2) Abandon the theatres. Create other circumstances for theatre for the man in the street. Create circumstances that will lead to action which is the highest form of theatre we know. Create Action.

3) Find new forms. Smash the art barrier. Art is confined in the jail of the Establishment's mentality. That's how art is made to function to serve the needs of the people, get rid of it. We only need art if it can tell the truth so that it can become clear to everyone what has to be done and how to do it.

Chapter 4
Resisting The Nation State

26. Alex Comfort: Authority and Delinquency (1950)

Alex Comfort's pioneering work, Authority and Delinquency in the Modern State, *was originally published in 1950, and has been republished several times since. In it he argues that the modern state and capitalism provide a ready and dangerous outlet for people with sociopathic personalities. The solution is not a "supra-national super state," but the abolition of centralized power through the withdrawal of the cooperation and acquiescence of the people. The following excerpts are taken from the slightly revised 1970 edition, and are reprinted here with the kind permission of Nicholas Comfort and the Comfort estate.*

DURING THE EARLY PHASES OF INDUSTRIALISM, the predominantly acquisitive psychopath found ready scope in the expansion of industry, commerce and finance. His emergence was, in fact, the signal for the passing first of laws designed to safeguard his financial victims and later of laws controlling the conditions of industrial employment. To this extent the increased opportunity for acquisitive delinquency in centralized societies has hastened the extension of political control. Changes in institutions, and in the economic position of Britain, have already greatly reduced this opportunity. Determined delinquents of the acquisitive type probably find a more congenial outlet in crime or near-crime, and the financial rewards of politics are not likely to attract them. Where, however, as is usually the case, financial success is a means rather than an end in itself, and its pursuit is motivated by the desire to enjoy the power and security which accompanies wealth, a book-keeping estimate may be inadequate. Power in its totalitarian form has been seen to provide adequate rewards both to vanity and to avarice—Goering's medals and his collection of pictures belonged properly to the search for ostentation rather than to the acquisitiveness of the miser. Acquisition for its own sake is probably a relatively uncommon form of delinquency.

In postwar English society, psychopaths of the power-acquisitive type are probably likely to flourish on the fringes of government, as contact-men and wire-pullers, rather than within it as legislators. In America, the earlier pattern of business competition remains, and the egocentric psychopath has provided the model of a widespread national myth of success. By virtue of their hero-status, such individuals can intervene in politics to safeguard their interests or gratify their ambitions with greater ease than in Britain, where they command a less reverent public attitude…

The centralization of urban democracy has brought the techniques of electoral propaganda and those of commercial advertising into very close proximity. While greed is unlikely to propel an individual into Parliament, where his income may actually be reduced, and his opportunities of adding to it curtailed, the confidence-man is as much a figure of urban social-democracy as he is of underworld society. In rural communities the confidence trick is of necessity the stock-in-trade of the itinerant rogue. It can only become a sedentary occupation in large social aggregates, which provide both concealment and a supply of victims. The confidence man is more dependent upon his victim than any other type of criminal—he can operate only if he has access to the credulous, the acquisitive, the bewildered, and the insecure. These characteristics are prominent in the urban electorate: while it is upon credulity and greed that the criminal swindler depends for a livelihood, his political counterpart depends largely upon the existence of a sense of insecurity, and the desire of the public to appoint a trusted delegate…

A desire for personal violence finds little direct outlet in the activities of modern democratic legislators however violent their public behaviour. In primitive aggressive societies, dominance passes readily to those who possess strength, initiative, unscrupulous determination, and self-confidence. Of such material were the majority of successful and unsuccessful usurpers… One effect of centralization has been to remove these biologically potent and dominant individuals from the legislative to the executive side of society. The opportunities for purely physical displays of initiative, or for the gratification of a love of personal violence, must be strictly limited for cabinet ministers. National military leaders at the legislative level are increasingly non-combatant civilians, and events such as the Siege of Sidney Street (in 1911 when Winston Churchill, then Home Secretary, personally superintended the use of a field gun against gunmen, reputed to be anarchists, besieged in a house in East London) are increasingly the province of the police or the army and not everyone who harbours such fantasies can find the opportunity to act them out as a war leader in the indiscriminate bombing of civilians. Where a preoccupation with violence ex-

ists in civilian legislators, it is more likely to be of the fantasy type, the realization of which, in genocide, indiscriminate warfare, or persecution, is if anything more serious to society than the behaviour of the individual bully. The enforcement machinery, however, together with the armed forces, is still the sole socially legitimate outlet for aggressive physical adventure…

> The police force and the ranks of prison officers attract many aberrant characters because they afford legal channels for pain-inflicting, power-wielding behaviour, and because these very positions confer upon their holders a large degree of immunity… It is often forgotten that many of our legitimate vocations require a lack of emotional sensibility. Prototypes are the executioner, or the officer who applies the lash to a prisoner. Yet these are only the crassest instances, those which cannot be smoothly concealed behind the screen of means justified by the end. [H. von Hentig, *The Criminal and His Victim*, 1948]…

The desire for violence and for the infliction of pain or of destruction finds its expression in modern government through the fantasy-delinquent, who seeks office as a means of realizing his fantasy, or who, once in office, succumbs to opportunity and rationalization; and in practice among the personnel of war and of enforcement… Such destructive impulses not infrequently coincide with, or are projections of, an inner psychical conflict which may involve a deep sense of guilt, and their realization in practice, however rationalized, may accentuate that guilt. A certain number of persons, among them many whose instability expresses itself in ambition, may manifest such guilt as a profound unconscious desire for punishment… it may conceivably precipitate decisions of a catastrophic and pain-producing kind, in which the individual and the society which he governs are punished together. The deep sense of aggression and guilt underlying much of the behaviour of Nazi leaders may partly explain the attraction for them of a total and irrevocable Götterdammerung. Forces of a similar kind may also play a part in determining the choice of war or of national subjection by less obviously psychopathic political leaders.

The fantasy-delinquent has found a new field in the executive services which devised and handled wartime propaganda. Atrocity propaganda, in the form of derogatory and horrifying accounts of a group enemy, and of his misdeeds, has been found in all cultures: in its modern form, which has already come to play a large part in war and in peacetime political campaigning, the technique of atrocity propaganda is highly stylized. It consists in recounting horrific, and especially sadistic, happenings, which may be true or false, but which are presented primarily in a form which evokes

sexual stimulation rather than simple fear or distaste. This stimulation of repressed responses gives rise to a sensation of guilt rather than of disapproval, and the guilty thought is then projected against the public enemy. A study of most of this propaganda, and of the public response to it, shows fascination and desire to be as strong components of its effectiveness as civilized anger at barbarity...

Paranoid psychotics, and pre-psychotics, occupy a special position in centralized politics, because their tendency to project their grievances against external bodies, such as racial minorities, institutions, and nations strikes a deep chord of sympathy in the minds of anxious and frustrated electorates. The pre-paranoid may be indistinguishable from the over-emphatic grumbler: how far he is likely to attain office will depend on the direction in which he systematizes his resentment. Should he project it against a body such as the Jews or the police he may become the centre of a pogrom or a riot: if his imaginary enemies have more than a local validity as figures of fear and dislike, he may go far. Paranoia directed against public figures in general can lead to a conspiratorial theory of history, a sobering thought for those who concern themselves, as in this essay, with public delinquency. The paranoid shows a marked tendency to discuss his opinions, to conduct propaganda for them, and to acquire adherents. Most instances of *folie a deux* represent the sharing of a paranoid grudge. This process is helped by the gradualness with which the delusion goes beyond the bounds of reason, by the skill with which it may be argued, by the presence of a basis of original fact in most cases, by the walling-off of the abnormal part of the mind from other fields of mental activity and by the tendency of the paranoiac to act out by recruiting real prosecutors through a tendency to 'shake his face in people's fists.' In politics, paranoids who attain office early are particularly dangerous, since they often become more and more deluded with age, and the public and their colleagues may grow up with their prejudices on a basis of toleration. Strictly paranoid attitudes toward the Jews, the Communists and the Germans have been observable in democratic statesmen of our own time, quite apart from public projections of resentment against these groups. The late Mr. Forestall jumped out of a window pursued by imaginary Communists, and the late Joseph Stalin died surrounded by imaginary as well as real conspirators.

It is fairly obvious that extreme paranoiacs are unlikely to be acceptable members of parties which pursue policies based on self-interest or social objectives, or in the more disciplined revolutionary parties. They may, in some cases, be used, since their preoccupation gives a handle to any astute colleague who desires to manipulate them. Mild paranoid symptoms are, however, not uncommon in aggressive psycho-

paths, since they spring naturally from the resistance of society to the impact of these people, and this dangerous combination has accounted for some of the most serious anti-social actions by governments… war is by far the most important psychopathic activity of modern states. It is important to realize… the tendency which modern centralized governments appear to exhibit toward the permanent war economy—in the face of external enemies, as a natural expression of public attitudes, and the projection of guilt and resentment, which may be deliberately focused on out-groups in order to divert it from revolutionary channels, and as a reaction to economic pressure. War is the condition in which centralized government finds itself most fully in control, most secure in its authority, and most readily able to command undisputed public allegiance. The unity of purpose, real or fictitious, which results from defence or attack is as intoxicating an experience for authority as it is for a public which is weary of the isolation and aimlessness of urban asociality. For such societies war may be a release of guilt and tension. It is their finest hour. The more marked the tendency to incorporate war methods and war attitudes into peacetime life, the greater the demand for civic and subordinate psychopaths. The wartime demand for individuals willing to stab in the back, to dissemble, to forge, and to seduce enemy agents, has its peacetime parallel. The personnel of espionage, and possibly also the research and technical staffs who devote themselves deliberately to the elaboration of mass destruction, fall into this category. In extreme cases (Stalin and Beria's Russia and the CIA come to mind) one may end with a paranoid hard core, quite beyond policy control, flanked by a large force of borderline delinquents, informers and double, treble or quadruple agents who may dismay their superiors by private enterprise spying or assassination. The degrees of psychopathy present will depend on the extent to which such people act under the influence of a systematized dual standard, of responsibility at home and aggression toward the permitted enemy, and the extent to which their choice of employment is the result of factors in their previous personality. Under conditions of 'cold war' the paranoid individual, employed as a torpedo, a spy, or a propagandist, may also acquire importance—his mood is in key with the general suspicion and tension. We naturally breed Lee Harvey Oswalds…

War is the only surviving national activity in which the opportunity to shine is combined with a full indulgence for aggressive behaviour and a pressing invitation to the individual to participate. Almost all other communal activities take place through a chain of delegation so long that its end is lost to the sight of the individual—only in war are his effort and his capacity appreciated: no delegation interposes between the

soldier and the enemy, or between the civilian public and its appointed tasks of 'staying put' or 'going to it.' The sense of purpose and unity which war artificially creates are, for urban cultures, a drug of addiction. Regarded with fear, it may be accepted with relief and seen in retrospect with regret. It provides a personal experience both of emotional release and of social cohesion which may outweigh its horrors. Huge operations are conducted by god-like and infallible leaders, for objects expressed in perpetually repeated and readily understood stereotypes. Operatic attitudes such as 'unconditional surrender' or 'massive retaliations,' derived from exhibitionist leaders, supersede intelligent thought. Emotion and excitement based on physical fear and physical aggression are kept at a high pitch—the violence of the film, the gladiatorial show and the suicide motor race, standard addictions of asocial cultures which provide a more limited release for aggressive desires, cannot compete with the violence of war. Problems can be shelved and replaced by action or by appropriate gestures. The atmosphere of the nursery, with its securities and insecurities, of being in the hands of those who know best, is recreated. The genuine fear and hatred of war under these conditions cannot disguise its satisfactions. The citizen is placed in the same situation toward forbidden acts of aggression as the child who is suddenly given the run of the forbidden room, or the repressed adolescent who suddenly gets access to sexual satisfaction. After such an orgy, return to reality is as painful as continuance in danger.

This ambivalence makes the threat of war and the promise of war two of the most important political forces of our age. They react with equal force on the legislators. War, consciously or unconsciously, is for them a suspension of difficulties and of conflicts—so long as it continues, demands and agitations cease to be dangerous, confidence and solidarity can be maintained, opposition can be identified with the enemy, and the dramatic aspect of public actions is increased beyond all peacetime precedent. It provides a distortion of reality in which abnormal impulses may pass as normal, and irrational ideas achieve unquestioning acceptance. It simplifies power and administration to a series of undisputed attitudes.

It is essentially the socially maladjusted civilian who is happiest in wartime —his problems are shelved, the difficulties of his personal relationships are superseded: the criminal can redeem himself by enlisting his delinquency on the popular side: the paranoiac is at grips with an enemy whom others beside himself recognize and revile. The adjusted individual finds his entire life disorganized, his family broken up, his liberty curtailed and his protests regarded as treasonable. War is essentially the playground of the psychopath in society. The intermediate majority

experience both aspects of war, and in societies like our own, which traditionally condemn personal violence, guilt as a reaction to war is widespread. The majority of participants accept the oversimplified version of the issues, often after severe mental struggle, because they see no alternative—they fail, however, to accept the institution or its implications. The public which acclaims victories cannot be allowed to see over-realistic films of commando training, or its morale will suffer. A fiction of controlled, discriminate violence has to be maintained, and is readily destroyed. The wartime government is always perplexed by the difficulty of assuring, in democratic orders, that resolution or exhilaration does not turn to disgust, and in totalitarian orders, that the emotions aroused do not recoil in aggressive resistance to the arousers. The democratic war administration has to lead a horse to the battle without allowing it to smell too much blood—the dictator has to ensure that the lynch mob does not lynch the instigators as well as, or instead of, the victims.

Revolutionary movements subsist by projecting social evils, including war, upon the ruling group—given a change of institutions, war will vanish. Governments may employ the same methods—war is identified with Hitler or Napoleon, or with a nation or group, and the defeat of this enemy is the road to permanent peace. Sociology has rightly stressed the function of war as a meeting-point for aggressive impulses in society as a whole, and the importance of stereotypy, projection, group myths, hostility to foreigners, and individual aggressiveness. While the war-orientation of modern societies is unquestionably the outcome of such factors, it would be unrealistic to minimize the role of governments. In fact, few if any of the more disastrously delinquent acts of nations in recent years are, in the final analysis, the result of spontaneous upsurgings of public aggression. The attitude of the centralized society toward war is always ambivalent, but the manifestations of warlike tendencies are predominantly under the control of governments. Neither the German exterminations of Jews, nor the Allied massacre of enemy civilian populations, which have been cited as the two most widespread and serious group-delinquent manifestations of the second World War, were spontaneous. In the case of the Jews, spontaneous feeling was inflamed, intensified, and artificially maintained by a legislative group; in the case of the policy of indiscriminate bombardment, intensive propaganda failed to still all public doubts of its necessity and morality. Elaborate public rationalization of both actions took place through official channels of information...

With the exception of such activities as looting or the sack of occupied territories, wartime delinquencies and 'war crimes' do, in fact, originate more commonly in specific individual delinquency among the ruling groups than in crowd behaviour.

Crowd manifestations such as those of the early days of the Franco-Prussian War have been relatively uncommon even in totalitarian countries without deliberate stage management. Their main consequences have been limited delinquency such as the ill-treatment of prisoners, lynchings, or simple civil crime. Abundant evidence exists that a large part of the fighting and civilian populations retain intact the majority of their civilized attitudes toward their fellow-men in any instance where there is direct contact. In the case of the Japanese, much of the barbarity exhibited toward prisoners belonged to a cultural tradition wholly unlike that of Western Europe, and was no greater than the barbarity of discipline existing within the military group itself. The most reprehensible acts of the second World War were almost all committed either upon superior orders, or by *elite* enforcement bodies, selected by institutional rulers, and indoctrinated to perform them. In some cases, the authority derives from a leader of the crowd-exponent type, and the psychology of such actions closely resembles that which has been studied in the peacetime lynch-mob. In others, delinquency is the planned execution of a pattern of individual fantasy. Hitler's anti-Semitic policy was one example of this kind. Jung (*Brighter than a Thousand Suns*, 1958) gives a striking picture of how the 'Manhattan Project' grew into another, and of the anxiety of American weapons chiefs lest the war should end before atomic weapons could be tested on an Asian population.

There is documentary evidence relating most of the calculated and indiscriminate war crimes to the invention and planning of individual psychopaths in office. The role of group projection and stereotypy is greatest in producing acquiescence at the lower levels of the chain of command. In some instances, the effective lack of hand-to-hand contact assists this process—few regular fighting men would have accepted an order to massacre civilians in detail, by means involving contact, but many were capable of acquiescence in forms of indiscriminate war which did not destroy the stereotype or upset the security of the rationalization. In other cases, acquiescence was limited to non-participant consent, while the actual deeds were performed in private by the selected *elite*, part of whose function was to perpetuate public acquiescence by terrorism…

It will be seen from these considerations that the aggressive energies of frustrated civilizations and persons are responsible for wartime delinquency far more by enabling potential killers to secure office and obedience than through direct outbursts of violence. '*La terreur d'aujourdhui a ses bureaux*,' and the individual citizen contributes to it chiefly by obedience and lack of conscious or effective protest. Social obedience and conformity are, in general, rather less prominent in centralized urban

than in primitive or in civilized rural communities. The urban community retains and conforms to its own mores, but these are neither so well knit nor so universally respected as in other types of society: those which concern social and political attitudes have been widely modified by rapid change in living, and are increasingly external to the individual. The primitive man tends in general to conform actively —the civilized urban citizen combines an acquiescent attitude toward the executive with an apathy toward public standards which expresses itself either in cynicism or in a conviction that 'they' (the legislative group and its executive fringe) cannot be effectively resisted by his own efforts... The individual cannot test the leadership qualities of his rulers, since the executive protects them from comparisons—he treats them increasingly along the characteristic lines of thought which we find reserved for out-groups—in hostile or friendly stereotypes, as an alien 'they' upon whom the individual is dependent for elementary needs, but for whom he need entertain no moral respect.

Acquiescence in delinquent policies is in part a reflection of this sense of impotence. The individual is addressed as an individual, and in isolation, by the entire sales and enforcement organization. Unless he himself is overwhelmingly menaced by the proposed policy, and even when he is so menaced, he lacks the personal and cultural energy to differ. In wartime, part of this acquiescence is the acceptance of the official interpretation of the war: the citizen both agrees to acquiesce, and agrees to blame the public enemy for what has occurred. Once this has taken place, often after a particular event which fixes the projection against the enemy, the stimulus-effect of war becomes apparent—the group-feeling of the nation, the sense of purpose and leadership, the release of crisis-anxiety in actual war, all tend to make rejection of the commitment more and more difficult. It may persist through hardship and even despite certain defeat: the acquiescence once secured gains force with the progress of events. How far it can be presumed upon by the legislators will depend on the extent to which the war situation has been created before actual hostilities begin: Nazi Germany secured it by the entire repertoire of political tyranny, to the point at which even tacit disapproval of delinquent actions was minimal, before the outbreak of the second World War. In Britain, the public which accepted the atomic bomb in 1946 would have been less likely to accept it in 1940, and would have withheld its support from any form of indiscriminate warfare in 1936 by a large majority...

Centralized societies, then, have removed at least one of the most important bars to delinquent action by legislators and their executive, in the creation of a legis-

lature which can enact its fantasies without witnessing their effects, and an executive which abdicates all responsibility for what it does in response to superior orders. The main residual bar to large-scale delinquency is the survival of individual standards, which are increasingly vulnerable to propaganda, and to the impact of a society which has little opportunity for sociality. We have here the counterpart of the change which has taken place in leadership and selection, and the harmful effects of both processes are additive. While these risks are real, we have to set against them the extreme vulnerability of the entire social apparatus upon which they depend to individual resistance and communal loss of morale. The strength of the enforcement machinery is largely a façade, which impresses the individual chiefly because he faces it alone, and political observers in social democracies uniformly over-estimate the power of the State to withstand shifts in public opinion…

In any psychological study of the world today, the irrational and the destructive emphases may well appear to predominate. There is, however, the abundant evidence of the dynamism and persistence of sociality, of individual impulses toward co-operation, integration, and social health. Irrational institutions are secure only so long as they can satisfy or divert the constructive side of their public's thought and attitude; once the irrationalities are felt, even if they are not consciously understood, as threats to home security, personal liberty, or individual life, the fabric of institutions is at once threatened. So long as the protest takes explicitly political forms, within the mechanism of social democracy, its power of effecting real change is limited by the factors which we have discussed. Once it manifests itself as public resentment, disillusion, or loss of obedience, sufficiently strong and sufficiently resistant to propaganda, the mechanism of enforcement, which is designed to coerce active individuals rather than passive majorities, is largely disarmed. It seems unlikely that any government which exists at the present time could surmount such a nation-wide loss of confidence. So far as the purely destructive aspects of revolution are concerned, the idol which, by conscription or exhortation, can repress the opposition or quiet the doubts of a public for whom its deity is not yet suspect, has feet of clay, once its power and its significance are challenged by attitudes rather than by parties. The degree of social delinquency which is possible in any society, our own included, is a function of the degree of acquiescence which the delinquents can command in their public. Beside the general public temper, the attitude of specific groups may prove a decisive barrier to an irrational policy. Scientific and technical workers occupy a vital position in the modern society, as do groups of public utility workers in transport, production and mining. The conception of the General Strike, which played a large

part in early socialist thought, was sociologically sound. Its political efficacy has been reduced more by the growth of Trade Unionism into a centralized pattern similar and allied to that of the State, than by any inherent power of governments to deal effectively with public refusal. As modern states have attempted to reinforce their police and military forces by selection and indoctrination, they have also attempted to extend similar guarantees of loyalty to other groups. This process is particularly obvious in connection with military science. A major safeguard against delinquent national policies is endangered whenever scientific workers consent to delegate their judgment or co-operate with authority under conditions which lie outside their own control…

When we consider delinquent actions by the state itself, the 'war crimes' with which we are familiar, the liberal tradition turns naturally to a reapplication of the method which it upheld in local affairs—governments must be placed under the control and coercion of a World government, which can prevent misconduct as the local state prevents crime. This attempt to carry the pattern of centralization a stage further inspires no confidence whatever in the light of our study of the mechanisms which determine individual conduct. The greater the degree of power, and the wider the gap between governors and governed, the stronger the appeal of office to those who are likely to abuse it, and the less the response which can be expected from the individual… Public social sense which transcends frontiers is a fact, and it persists, but it has so far failed to restrain local governments from aggressive actions. Who is to repress the world authority when it too falls into the wrong hands?

…We have to recognize that the psychopathic government is an outgrowth today of an anxious, even though basically normal, public. It is also the most important vested interest in the continuance of centralization. If individual conduct is to be regulated primarily by laws and institutions, the centralized order is overwhelmingly superior to less unified patterns. The failure of the state to wither away is implicit in its assumptions. The organizational aspect of its work becomes continually more deeply confused with the repressive and the regulative. The growth of an asocial public, dependent on central direction for the standards it lacks, ensures that the time will never be ripe for any return of function to the public at large. The temptation is to hang on a little longer, to centralize further, if only to save the immediate situation. Even where the discoveries of sociology make contact with the legislature, their implementation is something to be put off until 'after the final victory' or 'after the end of the emergency.' Cultures which gravitate into a chronic emergency can postpone them indefinitely. The time for the revolution is never ripe…

The intervention of sociology in modern affairs tends to propagate a form of anarchism, but it is an anarchism based on observational research, which has little in common with the older revolutionary theory beside its objectives. It rests upon standards of scientific assessment to which the propagandist and actionist elements in nineteenth-century revolutionary thought are highly inimical. It is also experimental and tentative rather than dogmatic and Messianic. As a theory of revolution it recognizes the revolutionary process as one to which no further limit can be imposed —revolution of this kind is not a single act of redress or vengeance followed by a golden age, but a continuous human activity whose objectives recede as it progresses.

The specifically 'anarchist' concept most relevant today is that of direct action, constructive combativeness—the by-passing and defiance, where necessary, of the 'usual channels,' both by *ad hoc* organization and in purely demonstrative or negative forms.

…[T]he concept of institutional world government, for all its attraction to those who accept the self-estimate of the State in national society, is a direct inversion of the process which we require. We have suggested that the delinquencies of states arise at two levels—in the psychopathy of publics, and in the psychopathy of individuals expressing their own and their culture's aggression through the mechanism of power. The restraint which can effectively prevent delinquent action by states must be applied to the individuals who directly initiate policy, and to the subjects who support them. Such restraint can be applied at one level only, that of the individual, who by his withdrawal from delinquent attitudes undermines the social support they receive, and renders impotent if he can make himself sufficiently numerous and combative, the individuals whose policies are imposed upon society only through his acquiescence or co-operation.

27. Geoffrey Ostergaard: The Managerial Revolution (1954)

In 1942, the former Trotskyist, James Burnham, published The Managerial Revolution, *in which he argued that managers in both capitalist and socialist societies were assuming effective control of them, becoming a new ruling class. That "intellectual workers" were seeking to achieve state power by a variety of means was a familiar argument to anarchists. Bakunin had argued that Marxism was the ideology of this new class, and that the modern state was reaching the stage where it would fall under the control of the bureaucratic class, rising "into the condition of a machine" (Volume 1, Selection 22). In the following excerpts the anarcho-syndicalist Geoffrey Ostergaard (1926-1990) applies Burnham's analysis to English*

society, arguing that in England the managerial revolution was spearheaded by the Fabian Society, the group of middle class socialists associated with George Bernard Shaw and Sydney and Beatrice Webb. Originally published in Freedom, January 1954; reprinted in The Tradition of Workers' Control—Selected Writings by Geoffrey Ostergaard *(London: Freedom Press, 1997), ed. Brian Bamford.*

WHEN THE FUTURE HISTORIAN COMES TO WRITE the history of the managerial social revolution in [England], he will undoubtedly assign a prime role to the Fabians. To them belongs the credit for preparing the way for the peaceful emergence of the new ruling class by the elaboration of a 'socialist' ideology which could, at one and the same time, enlist the sympathy of the proletariat without antagonizing those elements of the old capitalist class which were to be enrolled in the new ruling class of managers...

The popularity of the early Fabians... was in no small part due to their freeing British Socialism from revolutionary ideas and diverting it into constitutional paths, thereby making it respectable for even the middle class 'do-gooders' to profess a belief in socialism. The Fabian Society began and has continued as essentially a middle class movement, with middle class men and with middle class ideas and prejudices. No one will deny that the Fabians have often displayed a genuine sympathy for the poor and the oppressed, but however much they were *for* the working class they were never *of* it. To the Fabian the working class has always appeared at best as a rather stupid helpless child who requires an intelligent guardian to protect him...

No essential change, the Fabians argued, was necessary, as the Marxists thought, in the apparatus of government. Much less was it necessary, as the anarchists believe, to destroy the whole conception of the modern centralized State...

All that was required was for the people to gain control of the machine through the use of their votes and to perfect it for their own ends. With the acceptance of the democratic State went the tendency to identify it with the community. Such an identification made it possible to regard State control and State ownership as control and ownership by the community in the interests of 'the community as a whole'...

The revolutionary socialists and anarchists, grounding their theory on the prime importance of the ownership of the means of production as the source of power of the ruling class, were led to draw a distinction between capitalist public ownership and genuine socialization. The capitalists as a class, however much certain interested sections of them might be hostile to particular acts of nationalization, were not averse to, and indeed supported, a limited extension of it in those services

which were natural monopolies and which were of great importance to the functioning of private industry—notably communications, transit and power.

Such nationalization could be welcomed as increasing the general efficiency of private industry, as providing a secure and profitable field for investment, and as producing surpluses which could be used to relieve national and local taxation on property. The extension of public ownership by a capitalist controlled State could, therefore, only mean the strengthening of capitalist domination.

The Fabians, in contrast, showed themselves far less discriminating. Every extension of public ownership and control they welcomed as a victory for the community over the capitalists, and socialism became practically equivalent to the extension of State power and ownership…

The acceptance of the bourgeois State machine with its location of sovereign legal power in Parliament entailed the corollary that any institutions the workers built up should be subordinate to it… Consumers' co-operation naturally had a part to play in the field of distribution, but elsewhere it suffered from inherent limitations which only the State could overcome. The function of the Trade Unions was to represent the interests of the producers *vis-à-vis* the consumers. The extent of Trade Union control was, however, to be strictly limited to a partial control over the conditions of work. In no circumstances was it to extend to interference in the productive side of business management…

Accepting explicitly the development of modern large-scale industry, they underlined… the growing distinction between the capitalist owners and the salaried managers, the latter performing the indispensable function of organizing production while the former, through their property rights, simply laid claim to profits, rent and interest. The progressive development of industry from individual ownership and management to joint stock companies and trusts indicated, they argued, that the next step, as each industry became 'ripe' for control, was the elimination of the capitalist owners, the State taking the place of the share holders 'with no more dislocation… than is caused by the daily purchase of shares on the Stock Exchange' (Sidney Webb). The managers were further reassured by the categorical statement that there would be no nonsense about equality of wages. The Fabian Society, declared one of its tracts (No. 70, 1896), 'resolutely opposes all pretensions to hamper the socialization of industry with equal wages, equal hours of labour, equal official status, or equal authority for everyone.' Management, it was later pointed out, is, or is fast becoming, a specialist technique, and its profession must be organized as such and paid its appropriate reward (Webb: *The Works Manager Today*, 1916).

With this high regard for bureaucratic and managerial administration went a characteristic managerial ideal—that of social efficiency, an ideal, which, if it has always found expression in socialist literature, has previously been subordinate to the more human values of freedom, mutual aid and social co-operation. The Fabians above all emphasized the economic advantages to be gained from a collectivist economy—the replacement of the 'anarchy' of competition by planned production and the elimination of wasteful unemployment and poverty through the establishment of a national minimum standard of life. The total effect of Fabian doctrine was thus to transform socialism from a moral ideal of the emancipation of the proletariat to a complicated problem of social engineering, making it a task, once political power had been achieved, not for the ordinary stupid mortal but for the super-intelligent administrator armed with facts and figures which had been provided by diligent research…

The acceptance of the existing State meant the acceptance of an institution which, while it suited the bourgeoisie and could be, in this country at least, fairly readily adapted to the new ruling class of managers, is incapable of being controlled by the workers. The State and especially its central organs, as all who study its functioning know and as all practical politicians realize, is essentially a power over and above the people and not one readily amenable to their control. It acts in their name but in reality it acts in the interests of the dominant groups in society, which control the instruments of production, however many concessions it may care to make in the way of social welfare schemes. The Fabian theory of State ownership in the interests of the community coupled with the insistence on the subordinate role of the trade unions and co-operatives and on the importance of the experts, the bureaucrat and the manager, is one that is of direct interest to the managerial class, just as it is opposed to the interests of both the workers and (in the long run) to the capitalist owners.

No amount of assertion, statutory or otherwise, that nationalized industries are to be run 'in the public interest' can disguise the fact that they are being run in the interests of those in whom the real control is vested.

The concept of 'the public interest,' in itself an unanalyzable mumbo-jumbo, is in fact a beautiful ideological smokescreen to hide the interests of the managers while, at the same time, exposing the capitalists to public obloquy and confusing the workers. The limitation of the Trade Unions to a subordinate role in the nationalized industries means, moreover, that these working class organizations which could and should be operated as a base for building up, 'within the womb of the old society,' the power of the proletariat, have been castrated from the outset: the Trade Unions are to be used by the new masters, many of whom are ex-Trade Union leaders, only as

more refined instruments for disciplining the workers. The emphatic rejection of the revolutionary idea of workers' control—the most direct threat that the managers had to face—is a signal victory for the new ruling class…

It may be that the managerial society is inevitable if present tendencies continue but this does not mean that the dominance of the managers must be meekly accepted. The proletarian social revolution may be further off than we once thought and the difficulties of bringing it to birth may be more substantial than we once optimistically imagined, but this provides no reason why we should not continue to work for it. To think otherwise is to accept—as Burnham himself accepts—the fallacy of historical determinism.

But we can only work for the proletarian social revolution if we have cleared our minds of the ideology of the managers. The time has now come for laying the foundations of a new workers' movement—a movement which will not be misled by doctrines that appear to hold out the prospect of workers' emancipation but in reality hands over the workers to new masters, a movement which will cut through the web that the Fabians have so cunningly spun, albeit half-unconsciously, in the interests of the managers…

[T]he class struggle must be redefined in such a way as to make clear that the proletariat has two enemies, the old, fast-disappearing capitalist class and the new increasingly powerful managerial class—the men whose social power is based not on their property rights but on the key positions which they hold within the industrial process. The long and bitter struggle of the first workers' movement is drawing to a close. The drama is ending in a Pyrrhic victory for the workers and the stage must now be set for the next and second phase of the class struggle—the struggle against the managerial class.

28. Mohamed Saïl: The Kabyle Mind-Set (1951)

Mohamed Saïl (1894-1953) was an Algerian anarchist and anti-colonialist active in the French anarchist movement and the national liberation struggle in Algeria. He was imprisoned in France on several occasions for his anti-militarist and anti-colonialist activities. He published numerous articles in the French anarchist press calling for the liberation of North Africa from French colonial rule (many of which are collected in Appels aux travailleurs algériens *(Paris: Fédération Anarchiste, 1994). A committed internationalist, he fought with the Durruti Column in Spain during the Revolution and Civil War. He was sent to a French concentration camp during the Occupation (as were many anarchists, particularly Spanish refugees), but escaped to join the resistance. After the Second World War, he remained active*

in the revived French anarchist movement and continued to campaign for the liberation of the French colonies. The following excerpts, translated by Paul Sharkey, are from his article, "The Kabyle Mind-Set," originally published in the Fédération Anarchiste paper, Le Libertaire. *Saïl represents an important link between European anarchism and the anti-authoritarian rebels in the Kabyle region of Algeria who continue their struggle against the Algerian government that has replaced their former colonial rulers.*

TIME AND AGAIN... I HAVE ALLUDED TO THE markedly libertarian and individualistic temperament of my Berber fellow-countrymen from Algeria. But today, now that the Ali Baba's cave overseas is beginning to crack and crumble, I believe it might be useful to argue, against all the professional pessimists or dreamers yearning for lucrative position, that an Algeria freed of the colonialist yoke would be ungovernable in the religious, political and bourgeois sense of the term. And I defy all of the rabble pretenders to the crown to adduce the slightest valid and honest excuse for their unwholesome aspirations, for I would counter with my own tangible and verifiable detail, without however denying that their policy has enjoyed a degree of success in terms of action against the colonialist tyrant.

The native Algerian, especially the Kabyle, has to be seen in context in his native village and not judged on the basis of how he performs at a rally demonstrating against his mortal enemy: colonialism.

As far as the native Algerian is concerned, discipline represents a degrading submissiveness unless freely consented to. However, the Berber is highly receptive to organization, mutual aid and camaraderie, but, as a federalist, he will only embrace order if it is the expression of the yearnings held in common by the grassroots. When a village delegate is appointed by the Administration, Algeria looks upon him as an enemy.

Religion which, once upon a time, made him bow to the whims of the *marabout*, is in decline, to the point where it is a commonplace to see the representative of Allah held in the same contempt as the infidel. Everybody still talks about God as a matter of habit but in reality no one believes in him any more. Allah is in retreat thanks to the Algerian toiler's ongoing contact with his fellow wretches from the metropole and some Algerian comrades are also doing Trojan work in this fight against obscurantism.

As for the nationalism for which I regularly upbraid Algerians, we should not forget that this is the bitter fruit of the French occupation. A rapprochement between peoples will banish that, just as it will banish religions as well. And, more than any other people, the Algerian people is receptive to internationalism, either because it has a taste for it or because its nomadic lifestyle inevitably acts as an eye-opener. Kabyles can be found in every corner of the world: they seek their plea-

sures everywhere and fraternize with everybody and their dreams are always of learning, well-being and freedom.

So I refuse to credit that the nationalist puppets can ever become ministers or sultans with the intention of bringing to heel this people which is temperamentally rebellious.

Up until the French came, the Kabyles never agreed to pay taxes to a government, and that includes the governments of the Arabs and Turks to whose religion they were converted only by force of arms. I am singling out the Kabyles especially, not because I myself am a Kabyle, but because they genuinely are the dominant element in every regard and because they have it in them to drag the rest of the Algerian people into the revolt against authoritarian centralism in all its guises.

The funniest thing is that the gang of forty thieves or charlatan politicians offer us a brand of overseas nationalism in the form of an Arab union under the aegis of Islam and with political, military and spiritual leaders akin to those in the countries of the Levant…

Think about it, therefore, a nice little Algerian government in which they would be the caïds (headmen) a government even more arrogant than the government of the *roumis* (Europeans), for the simple reason that an upstart on the way up is always harsher and more ruthless that one who has already "arrived"! There is no way round it: Algerians crave neither the plague, nor cholera, nor government by *roumis* nor government by a *caïd*. Besides, the vast majority of Kabyle toilers know that a Muslim government, at once religious and political, cannot help but be of a feudal and therefore primitive character. All Muslim governments thus far are proof of this.

Algerians will see to their own self-governance along the lines of village and douar, without any deputies or ministers to grow fat at their expense, for the Algerian people, released from one yoke, will hardly want to saddle itself with another one and its federalist, libertarian temperament is a sure guarantee of that. It is among the mass of manual labourers that one encounters a sturdy intelligence and high-mindedness, whereas the horde of "intellectuals" is, in the vast majority of instances, bereft of all unselfish sentiment.

As for the Stalinists, they do not constitute a force to be reckoned with, their membership being recruited solely from the ranks of cretins or riff-raff. For the native has scarcely any enthusiasm for having a label hung on him, whether that label be 'liar' or 'super-fascist.' As for the collaborators, police, magistrates, *caïds* and other slave-drivers living high on the Algerian hog, their fate is a foregone conclusion: the noose, and they are good value for it.

For all of these reasons should my compatriots be regarded as genuine revolutionaries flirting with anarchy? No, for while they are of an undeniably federalist, libertarian temperament, they lack education and culture and our propaganda, which is crucial for these rebel spirits, is found wanting.

Le Libertaire, 16 February 1951

29. Maurice Fayolle: From Tunis to Casablanca (1954)

In 1946, following the Japanese surrender the previous year, revolts against French rule began in Indochina (Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam). After years of bloody struggle, French forces finally withdrew in 1954 (soon to be replaced by U.S. troops). French anarchists opposed French colonialism, but were careful not to endorse national liberation groups that sought to install indigenous regimes that would continue to exploit and dominate their populations. Around the time that the French forces retreated from Indochina, an armed struggle for national indepedence began in Algeria, lasting until 1962. The French government resorted to conscription, and had up to 500,000 troops in Algeria. The French used torture and assassination to combat the independence movement, and put millions of Algerians in concentration camps. The following article by Maurice Fayolle, "From to Tunis to Casablanca—where the grapes of wrath are ripening," was published in December 1954, near the beginning of the war, in the French Anarchist Federation paper, Le Monde libertaire, *and is translated here by Paul Sharkey.*

DOWN THROUGH THE AGES, THE SUN-KISSED shores of North Africa have drawn envious glances. Hordes of successive conquerors have swooped upon their gold, azure and purple hued lands, bringing in their wake the usual aftermath of invasions. After the Romans, Vandals, Arabs and Turks, the British, Spanish and French carved themselves out colonial empires there. But that which was yesterday will not do for today: once and for all, history tolls the death knell of colonial conquest—in the brutish form of military occupation at any rate. Those who refuse to face the facts are witless, mad or criminal.

North Africa has joined the ranks of enslaved peoples in the worldwide struggle the latter are waging to achieve national independence. Egypt and Libya have already cast off the yoke.

Tunisia and Morocco are in revolt. And Algeria, that "integral part of French territory" (to quote [the French president Pierre] Mendès-France) is caught up in fevered insurrection.

What are we to make of these developments?

…For a start—but need we spell it out?—we condemn all forms of colonialism, including those forms that disguise themselves behind "territorial" unity. Dubbing Algeria the soil of France, when the vast majority of the natives have no rights, no political freedoms, no economic parity with the occupiers, on the grounds that one has conjured three French departments into existence there, is nonsense or a joke in questionable taste (Yet his "contrivance" has allowed PMF to take a step that NO premier before him ever dared take and commit conscripts to a colonial war. For in Algeria, it being "French soil," there are no rebels, only "separatists").

The supporters of the strong-arm policy—some of them at any rate—have no option but to concede the fact: the living standards of the natives have remained frightfully poor. And the much-vaunted "modernization" of the place has, ultimately, succeeded only in furthering the enrichment of the capitalists and the comfort of the occupiers. So it was natural, predictable and inevitable that the authors and enforcers of this idiotic policy would some day reap the grapes of wrath that their criminal selfishness planted in the hearts of the natives.

That day has come and none of the naive or phony whining, none of the outrage, genuine or feigned, none of the heartfelt or self-seeking tantrums are going to change a thing. That said, do we therefore endorse the nationalist and "separatist" movements thrown up by such explosions of wrath?

It would be a paradox for anarchists who denounce borders as hateful realities to give their unreserved backing to ideologies which have as their aim the creation of fresh borders.

It would be a paradox for anarchists who denounce the misdeeds of the hold of religion to offer unreserved backing to the acts of men who are notoriously in thrall to a religious mind-set bordering upon fanaticism (See the message that Habib Bourguiba [Tunisian nationalist leader] addressed to the National Council of the Neo-Destour. It can be summed up in three words: God, Fatherland, Islam).

It would be a paradox for anarchists who denounce exploitation in all its guises to offer unreserved backing to a struggle, the upshot of which will be to "release" the native proletariat from exploitation by Europeans into exploitation at the hands of their own bourgeoisie (The Arab League, the sponsor of national liberation struggles in Islamic countries, is a motley collection of all the feudal lords and religious fanatics the Orient has to offer. Such a leadership has only a queer sort of a "liberation" to offer the colonized peoples!).

There is a tragic nonsensicality to the trend of history in our day. Even as, under the impact of technological progress—-especially in the realms of transport—the world is

undergoing an out-and-out "shrinkage" that makes nonsense of compartmentalization along national lines, nationalist movements are popping up everywhere demanding new borders.

Even as science is asserting the primacy of rationalism, religious fanaticism is raising its head everywhere and experiencing a resurgence in those places where it had been dormant. Even as, now that capitalism was staring at its final contradictions and proletarian unity and revolutionary determination would be called for, that unity is shattered and that determination watered down into anachronistic nationalist and religious demands.

These pointless struggles delay the great, inevitable social transformation that will be the only source from which a livable world can emerge. They are illustrative of the dismal error on that article in the Marxist catechism according to which the national liberation of enslaved countries must precede and pave the way for their social liberation.

Proletarians have no homelands: why would they fight to establish any?

Malatesta has long since condemned the Marxist chicanery that diverts revolutionary action away from its proper and permanent objectives. Which is why we say and we alone are entitled to say so in this free newspaper which is not beholden to the slush funds of any government or propaganda machine.

Yes: those who are spilling blood in North Africa today just as they so recently did also in Indochina are criminals.

Yes: those who hope to guarantee the French presence in North Africa through huge reinforcements of CRS companies, paratroops and dragnets are dangerous lunatics (Leaflets dropped by air over the Aurès mountains close with these words: "soon a terrifying curse will fall upon the heads of the rebels." In the wake of which *la paix française* will descend once more. We have already witnessed the Foreign Legion using the talents of former SS [Nazi] personnel in "police" operations. Might it also be using them to draft its proclamations?).

But we also say to the North African proletarians: we watch your struggles with sympathy, for we will always be on the side of the oppressed against the oppressors. But beware: do not squander your new energies pointlessly in pointless battles. You have better things to do than fight to seal yourselves up inside new borders. Better things to do than fight for a change of masters. Better things to do than fight to replace the Gospel with the Quran.

Rising above racial prejudices, nationalist mirages and religious lies, the anarchists fraternally invite you to join them in the only valid fight: the fight that aims at

the liberation of all men—those from colonized countries as well as those from the colonizing countries—from all exploitation and every tyranny.

Peoples of North Africa! You are right to rise up against those who make slaves of you. But you are wrong to do so under the aegis of a nationalism and a religious fanaticism that spawn fresh servitude.

Authentic liberation will come only from the Social Revolution.

And that will only come when the peoples rediscover the paths of INTERNATIONALISM!

30. André Prudhommeaux: The Libertarians and Politics (1954)

André Prudhommeaux (1902-1968) was a French anarchist who began his involvement in the movement during the 1930s. He was born in a Fourierist "phalanstery" (Volume 1, Selection 7) founded by his mother's uncle. His father was a pacifist active in the cooperative movement. He was a left wing Marxist in the 1920s and early 1930s, associating with the German and Dutch council communists. He translated into French Herman Gorter's Reply to Lenin *(Librairie Ouvrière, 1930), the German council communist's response to Lenin's acerbic attack on left-wing Marxists opposed to the Bolshevik dictatorship in Russia,* Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder. *He moved towards anarchism in the early 1930s, partly in response to the rise of the Nazis in Germany and the collapse of the German Communist movement. He supported the anarchist social revolution in Spain during the Civil War (1936-1939, see Volume 1, Chapter 23), but opposed the participation of anarchists in the Republican government. Following the Second World War, Prudhommeaux was involved in the revival of the French anarchist movement and contributed to numerous anarchist publications. The following excerpts, translated by Paul Sharkey, are taken from his article in* Contre-courant, *No. 55, November 1954, "The Libertarians and Politics," written under the pseudonym of André Prunier. Prudhommeaux argues that during times of revolutionary upheaval, the role of anarchists is to push for the expropriation of the land and the means of production by the peasants and workers themselves and for the creation of popular militias to defend these gains and to preserve the most extensive freedom possible. During periods of seeming political "stability," anarchists can promote and defend existing liberties through civil disobedience, strikes and other forms of individual and collective direct action.*

SHOULD LIBERTARIANS FACE UP TO THEIR responsibilities in political developments, or not? The issue is a controversial one. At one extreme we have the comrades [individualist anarchists] who cannot be shifted from their claim "to be unmoved" [L'Unique] by what is going on in the world as they look for whatever suits them and meets their needs. This stance has a certain nobility about it: it is the pose struck by

an Archimedes who, in the heart of a Syracuse under siege from the enemy, was immersed in the solution of a problem of geometry: his eyes fixed on the figure that he had drawn in the dirt, he met his end, they say, without so much as deigning to glance at his killers. But most of the "unmoved" do not go quite that far: as they open newspapers that speak to them of butchery more or less remote in terms of time and space, they make do with a shrug of the shoulders and a "What can we do?" And it seems to me that in so doing they gratuitously abdicate a very real power belonging to every man of conviction and character: the power to bring influence to bear, in no matter how small a degree, upon the events by which they are beset, by making a stand and striving through some act of creative intelligence to slough off the fatalism of universal slavery.

At the opposite extreme stand those who are perpetually overwrought at the slightest fluctuation in the game of politics as played between professionals. They imagine that they should (or can) take an effective hand in each and every one of these inextricable permutations, the uncertain meaning of which almost escapes the very protagonists. At every turn, their appetite for engagement and active involvement in events finds an outlet in penny dreadful "exposés," sensational "analyses," inflammatory declarations made on behalf of the proletarian and popular masses who, let it be said here, are utterly "unmoved" by them. Hence the frantic sounding of the alarm, the avalanche of plots exposed, the makeshift catalogue of grievances, the plans for revolution extending into every country in the world, the headlines weekly heralding social revolution in Teheran, Cairo or Caracas and Judgment Day in Paris the following day at the latest.

This attitude, founded upon bluff and perpetual agitation is, to my mind, a greater danger than the other, for it brings the movement into disrepute in the estimation of level-headed people and thereby leads to a nonsensical competition in demagogy and to a megalomania by which only imbeciles or nutcases could be taken in. With every single newspaper that comes out, they play the Capitoline geese, "placing the masses on the alert," screaming blue murder, calling for all-out war on fascism, inciting to riot and calling for assistance in the final struggle, even though nothing is happening, like calling out the fire brigade on a hoax. And, come the day when there actually is something happening, it is most often the case that the slogan-chanters are nowhere to be seen, except when there has been a "sea change" in their attitudes…

I think that the best response to the question I raised at the opening of this essay lies in a "happy medium." No, the libertarian should not and cannot just ignore

what is going on in the world and what is encapsulated in the major political phenomenon of man's oppression of his fellow man through the State. No, the libertarian neither should nor could for long lose sight of his private life: his innermost intellectual and moral life is forever being compromised and threatened by inquisition, encroachment and subtle intrusions—sometimes promising, sometimes menacing, sometimes blindly brutal—by the powers-that-be. But the libertarian's response cannot be to get caught up in the games of competing authorities and confound the struggle against the government-in-place—which is to say, political opposition—with resistance to and emancipation from the State, which is an a-political or anti-political struggle with its own principles, methods, means and outcomes entirely separate from the sort of opposition that seeks to replace one government with another. In this respect, the libertarian should not and cannot engage in politics: politics is always his enemy whereas private life (outside of the State and what is termed 'public life' in the formal or oppositional sense of the word) is his cornerstone, his fortress, his home ground, the defence and expansion of which conditions his every relationship with the world of politics…

In practical terms, a basic distinction has to be drawn. There are places where the libertarian school of opinion, ideological expression and organized endeavour occupy a place of importance: where (by virtue of numerical and material might, force of tradition, overlap with ethnic temperament, cultural radiation, etc.) the libertarian movement plays, or could play, a role of the first magnitude in political life and have great clout—like it or not—in the country's fortunes. There, plainly, the individual performance of each libertarian and that of the organized movement implies much more weighty general consequences and, in a way, a political accountability to the "country" and "people" than was once the case. In such cases, profound changes to the political, economic or social system, success or defeat for rival blocs in peace time, or of armies in war time, and the existence of a pretty widespread climate of prosperity or despair, liberalism or totalitarian slavery, may well stand or fall on the action or abstention of the libertarian movement on a given terrain.

By way of a classic example of the make-or-break responsibilities of the libertarian movement vis-à-vis the people or the country, let us take the Iberian peninsula and, out of the whole of the peninsula, the Catalonia-Aragon-Levante region. There, during the [1936-1939] civil war, the anarchists and syndicalists of the CNT were the key element in the running of the public economy and the defence against the rebels. True, it cannot be argued that the CNT and FAI, on their own, were in a position to protect, feed and equip the northeastern provinces, but I think it was absolutely im-

possible for the "governmental" organizations… to protect and defend the Catalonia-Aragon-Levante area but for the CNT-FAI… From which it follows of necessity that faced with the Francoist rebellion and the powerlessness of the government, the stance of the CNT-FAI was imperiously dictated by a choice: the identification of a Public Enemy No. 1 and the choosing of temporary allies. Hence the program I tried to set out at the time in a piece in *L'Espagne Antifasciste* entitled "The Uselessness of Government"… In my view, the problem was to help rescue the Spanish republic and its liberal republican system through anti-statist, revolutionary and substantially libertarian measures imposed in response to developments and by the very nature of those developments.

And actually those measures were imposed unsolicited not only in libertarian quarters but in pretty much every other segment of antifascist and anti-centralist opinion, to the extent that they effectively strove to rally to the defence of civil liberties and the common weal. The core point in this entire program was the practical condemnation of a defensive deployment founded upon military-governmental ideas and the embracing of a social offensive taking in the whole of the country by extending the trail-blazing of Catalonia to other areas: peasant take over of the land, employee take over of the factories, public services taken over by the unions and townships, the raising of volunteer people's militias carrying the war behind the rebel's lines, etc.

It remains my conviction that on that basis victory was achievable, and when I say victory I mean not only defeat for Franco and for the home-grown, military, political and clerical backlash, but indeed a telling set-back inflicted on statism and authoritarianism in all their guises. It was a question of turning the hierarchical, closed Iberian society of the *bienio negro* more and more into an open society allowing for the boldest social experiments and assertion of the local collectives' right to ignore the State. As for the internationalization of these principles to the advantage of the ancillary movement with firms being taken over in a host of western nations, that of course would have been a crucial factor in the consolidation and expansion of libertarian forces within Spain and across the globe… the entire worldwide libertarian movement was fated to share in and spread the responsibilities of the Spanish libertarian movement—even in those lands where anarchists were only the tiniest minority with no apparent influence over society's prospects—or to suffer the blows of an unprecedented defeat.

But this leads me to a second necessary distinction relating to the political resonances of there being a libertarian faction in a country where that faction occupies

the position of a seemingly insignificant minority. I am referring here to the cases of those countries whose politics are relatively liberal and where libertarians have had the chance to get together and express themselves in the spoken and written word...

The conventional profile of parties in countries with a long-established democratic tradition points us towards the French categories of right, left and centre, or the Anglo-American camps of governing party and opposition party, stable arrangements swapping places at intervals every several years or sometimes every several decades.

We know that in England the change-over between the two main parties now in existence is almost automatic: the "Labour" party, with every new parliament, takes over from the "Conservative" party and vice versa... Pretty much the same is true of American politics which is governed by pretty much wholesale replacement of the Republican administration every five, ten or fifteen years by a Democratic administration, involving an almost complete turn over in State personnel. That State is not, as it is in France, made up of virtually immovable officials but of people who switch from the private to the public sector and back again. The impact of the spirit of opposition to the government upon Anglo-Saxon pendulum swings is very great, but the libertarian influence—which is to say, the anti-state influence—is virtually nil. In fact, no matter what the anarchists in those countries may do, their movement is denied all responsibility for the country's political future. It operates on the plane of ethics and institutions on both the basis of individual conscientious objection, and by sustaining in its undiluted form the Jeffersonian notion of minimal bureaucratic meddling and maximal civil, religious and moral liberty...

In the Latin countries, such as France and Italy, the position is rather different. There one finds a highly fluid kaleidoscope of parties facilitating multiple permutations. In particular we may speak of three distinct forces: the two extremes and the centre or "third force." The far left is represented by the Communist and like-minded opposition; the far right by the nationalistic, clerical and quasi-fascist opposition. As oppositions, these elements make up part of the parliamentary system but, as candidates for power, the extreme parties represent a lethal threat to the democratic constitution for which a dictatorship drifting towards totalitarianism would be substituted. So the liberal game only has meaning within the limits of government permutations ranging from conservative liberalism to reformist socialism. Every oscillation that might venture beyond this would derail the system and there would be no going back. Fluctuations in opinion and particularly in extremist opposition opinion, inflating or deflating the acutely discontented sides, are, naturally, promptly

mirrored by the endemically unstable government that characterizes the Italian and French democracies. In normal times, the extremes balance each other out and the role of arbiter, complete with "governmental responsibilities"—if they may be so described—falls to the "moderate" parties...

And how, in this year of 1954 is the influence of libertarians and of that segment of opinion that sympathizes with them translated into practical action? As an auxiliary of the far left against the far right, and as opposition to the ruling party. Not in electoral terms of course—given the abstentionism of anarchists and quasi-anarchists when it comes to elections—but in terms of trade union and social demands. The most striking outcome is that centre-right liberalism is slightly out of favour as compared with the socialist reformism of the centre-left and the clericals are more or less held at bay, albeit to the advantage of a "secular" statism. Statism, let it be said, is not the exclusive property of the anti-government disaffected. Most lower-ranking and middle-ranking officials are both statist in function and disaffected... their demands are naturally directed at ensuring growth in administrative tasks, bureaucratic staffing levels, monitoring of public services, budgetary controls, etc. So there is a certain paradox in the fact that in normal times the libertarian movement's practical political influence tends to be deployed on broadening rather than narrowing the functions of the State, while operating as a factor in opposition to the government and in more or less virtual opposition to the regime.

As I see it, the most useful political role played by the libertarian sector in these conditions is not political in the strictest sense of the word, but educational. It consists of snapping at the heels of the political far left while resisting the actions of the far right. By siphoning off from the Communist Party—it being statist and totalitarian—those personnel that take their stand on the terrain of "worker" opposition in their pursuit of a dictatorship that is supposedly "of the proletariat," luring them over to anti-statist ground, while serving as a monitoring force tasked with using strikes and direct action to resist the ploys of the fascist and clericalist right, libertarians can contribute effectively, in normal times, to the preservation of the basic rights of the individual, especially since they refrain from all direct dabbling in merely "anti-government" opposition politicking.

However that role presupposes the existence of a degree of stability and a certain political stalemate which, these days, is perpetually under threat. Yet the threat does not derive from the "clear cut division of the world into two blocs." A world where a country split into two opposing parts that almost automatically balance each other out and neutralize each other thereby enjoys a measure of relative stabil-

ity and is highly unlikely to be exposed to the vagaries of civil or international warfare. By contrast such warfare erupts almost inevitably where there is scope for error and surprise and where one protagonist "turns traitor" by experimenting with some unexpected coalition or neutrality. These days we are familiar with examples of this sort of thing and countless instances could be cited. In 1914, central Europe attacked France and Russia in the mistaken belief that the Anglo-Saxons would remain neutral.

In 1939, the western powers were confidently depending on Russia to oppose the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis; but in a diplomatic master-stroke, Molotov allied himself with Von Ribbentrop. With scarcely a blow struck, these two godfathers divided up continental Europe while Japan annexed the European colonial possessions in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. It took the unexpected resistance from England, the fact that Hitler and Stalin were both "spoiling for a fight," and a gargantuan effort by the USA which had looked like remaining neutral, to stabilize the situation. In domestic political terms, the situation is the same. Behind every successful *coup de force* contemporary history has to show, there is a shift in alliances.

In Italy, the Duce [Mussolini] capitalized on the mutual neutralization of the bourgeois liberal Giolitti and the semi-insurrectionist Italian workers' movement to play both ends against the middle and seize power. In Russia, Lenin had done likewise, after having used the soviets as a counter to Kornilov's and Kerensky's constitution. In Germany it was thanks to 'paradoxical' rivalry and connivance from Stalin that Hitler saw off the Weimar Republic. And without exaggeration a case can be made that in Spain as in Germany, Communism served as Fascism's pretext and auxiliary. At the national and international level, the liberal conservative faction believed that the extremist parties of right and left would cancel one another out and saw this as its chance to retain some room for manoeuvre.

In fact the dividing up of the remnants of democracy had already been decided and, while looking at one another with a jaundiced eye, the rightwing and leftwing totalitarians were both on the look-out for a chance to stab the people's freedoms in the back. And need we hark back to 6 February 1934 when communist and fascist were found, together, rushing the French parliament in order to put paid to the Third Republic which was blithely counting upon their differences being irreconcilable?

Does it need saying that the same factions, allies in the same circumstances, turned up only yesterday on the Champs Élysées to lambast the Laniel government and acclaim Marshal Jouin? In every recent turning point in history, factional warfare or wars between states have almost always sprung from an unexpected coalition of what had been regarded as opposing forces, or from intervention on one side or the

other by what had been regarded as neutral forces, and the blame for the catastrophe has scarcely ever been attributable to the presence of stable, persistent and balanced contradictions between openly admitted antagonistic interests. It is not the spontaneous class struggle but the existence of militarized, fanatical and disciplined parties thereby capable of forging ahead without a word of warning to former friends and allies and of entering into coalition with the one-time enemy, abruptly carrying out just about any "U-turn," that represents the essential danger hanging over the head of civilization. This revolutionary-reactionary ambivalence which is a characteristic feature, *par excellence*, of factions with totalitarian leanings, ought to be familiar to anarchists who have often been its dupes and its victims. And so we can only conceive of the conscious political role of libertarian minorities, in a country such as France or Italy, as keeping a watchful eye so as to counter every trespass by leftwing or rightwing totalitarians against working people's civil liberties and basic rights by means of direct action, civil disobedience, strikes and individual and collective revolution in all their many forms…

As for the peasants' economic and social push for the land and the workers' for actual ownership of the instruments of production, and of the oppressed for an end to military and colonial occupation, it goes without saying that we could not possibly be indifferent to them.

When this is the case, our role is to heighten consciousness and make the spontaneous actions emanating from the people more responsible: and, conversely, it is up to us to lobby on behalf of suitable ways and means whereby everybody can gain and retain his freedom. And that, as I see it, is where libertarians' direct involvement in politics ceases. Moreover, an anti-politics that is far seeing in terms of the realities it is up against and the impact it might make—and is therefore intelligent and measured in its rejection of ill thought-out commitments—can and should be enlisted as a guide in our social conduct.

31. Noir et Rouge: Refusing the Nation-State (1957-62)

Noir et Rouge *(Black and Red, the colours of anarcho-syndicalist and class-based anarchist groups, with black representing anarchism and red proletarian socialism) was a French anarchist review published by the Groupe Anarchiste d'Action Revolutionaire (G.A.A.R., or Revolutionary Action Anarchist Group) from 1956 to 1970.* Noir et Rouge *sought to make anarchism relevant to post-war Europe. Students associated with* Noir et Rouge, *such as Daniel Cohn-Bendit, were later to play a significant role in the May 1968 events in France. As the preceding selection from Maurice Fayolle indicates, anarchist attitudes toward national*

liberation struggles were a matter of some debate. In 1957, Noir et Rouge *drew the following conclusions, translated by Paul Sharkey, regarding nationalism and national liberation movements:*

1) Political, economic and cultural nationalism may well be the leading phenomenon, or at any rate, the most visible one, in contemporary society.

2) The workers' movement is not immune from the division into nations and vertical separation into nations generally appears stronger than any horizontal cleavage between the classes.

3) Peoples unwittingly follow a parallel evolution and international revolutionary experience is very limited.

4) Not only is effective solidarity between the metropolitan peoples and colonial peoples very restricted, but between the peoples of Europe themselves it is nonexistent (cf. Algeria and Hungary).

5) The root cause of such impediments to the development of a global consciousness and mode of social existence is the existence of nation-states.

6) The proliferation of nation-states is an irreversible historical trend, a backlash against world conquest by those few European states that were the first affected by capitalism and industrialization.

7) This phenomenon is irreversible—although it ought to be superseded—and effective equality of peoples is the pre-requisite for a genuine international society. The proliferation of states means that the larger ones are weakening and the smaller becoming unlivable.

8) National emancipation movements do not strive for a libertarian society, but it is unattainable without them. Only at the end of a widespread process of geographical, egalitarian redistribution of human activities can a federation of peoples supplant the array of states.

This is a process that imperialism, in its older or newer forms, has merely hindered to the advantage (in the case of the former) of western Europe or (in the case of the latter) of the United States and USSR.

9) Local particularism is not of itself a libertarian goal, but, set alongside worldwide monopoly, it represents a backlash every bit as wholesome as the rebellion of the individual against social oppression and the mirage of nationalism.

10) In our view, there is no chosen people, no great nation, no country that is the homeland of freedom, human rights or socialism, no civilization deserving

of admiration. Every state is anti-libertarian by vocation, every people libertarian in fact the moment it rebels, but it can equally quickly cease to be so in its dealings with other peoples, if it countenances exploitation of them.

11) The mirage of the nation is possessed only of a mighty negative and destructive charge (when it combats oppression and smashes domination); it has nothing positive to contribute to human consciousness and to the construction of a better society.

12) Therefore, anarchists can afford colonial and national liberation movements only an eminently critical support. Their mission is to undermine the foundations of all nationalist mentality, all nationalist world-views, as well as every colonial and imperial institution. The bulwark of exploitation and oppression, injustice and misery, hatred and ignorance is still the State wheresoever it appears with its retinue—Army, Church, Party—thwarting men and pitting them against one another by means of war, hierarchy and bureaucracy, instead of binding them together through cooperation, solidarity and mutual aid.

Noir et Rouge, No 7-8, 1957

In the following piece, "Regarding the Underdeveloped Countries," Noir et Rouge *discusses the problems raised for anarchists by the continuing appeal of nationalism and the decline of proletarian internationalism amid the division of the world into two great power blocs. The translation is by Paul Sharkey.*

SINCE THE END OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR, it is as if public opinion has suddenly stumbled upon the existence of two thirds of the globe with its famished populations, subsistence economies and problems lagging several centuries behind those of the privileged countries. Everybody has now been overcome by affection and concern for our "forlorn brethren" and is searching for some way of helping them. All of which is very heart-warming and indeed exciting, except that there are certain doubts as to these humanitarian concerns. But let's look at the issue from the other end, through the opening of these peoples' eyes to their own predicament. In fact, this self-awareness was inevitable: when one is hungry, unemployed, exploited and oppressed, it doesn't take an outsider to open one's eyes to the fact... The novelty resides in an increasingly acute, increasingly widespread raising of consciousness on the one hand, and, on the other, in an edifice deliberately held in place by mystification (the role of civilization, missionaries, paternalism...) and by violence, but cracking and crumbling nonetheless...

The fact that intercourse and mutual knowledge have become easier, the example of revolutions in semi- or under-developed countries, the fallibility of the colonial empires as evidenced in both world wars, the role of elites drawn from the local bourgeoisie itching to supplant their erstwhile masters—as we see it, all of these have played their parts in allowing these peoples to reach a stage where they can no longer bear or accept a certain state of affairs...

By our reckoning, the national ideal remains a significant driving force in countries denied national independence. It has not been superseded even in the European context (where chauvinism or racism persist in latent or rampant forms). Lagging behind the times, the countries of, say, Africa, are only starting out on their history and can hardly be taken to task for wanting to assert their national identity. But such national aspirations should not be regarded as an absolute, crucial necessity. The directly federalist and multi-national experiences even now extant and which ought to be more positive experiences, in theory, have not had any great impact on the matter: substituting religious unity—Islamic, for instance—or racial unity for national unity, is every bit as questionable as undiluted nationalist ambitions.

So what we are faced with here is a matter of content, not of labelling, an increasingly acute, human and social appreciation of the meaning of equality and a rejection of domination. Even self-styled socialist experiments (Nasser's Egypt or Castro's Cuba, say) do not necessarily produce socialist results as we understand them.

...[I]t is our belief that the banishment of colonialist exploitation is at least a curtain-raiser: leaving the victims of exploitation confronting exploiters who are fellow countrymen now (unless they have actually managed to put paid to all exploitation)...

At the same time, there is no way of denying that proletarian solidarity is a dead duck. The revolution in Spain may well have been its last gasp, and how. The change that has overtaken the minds of workers has not just induced them to shrug off the revolutionary spirit, but made them more likely to stand by their own colonialist masters than by their colonized brethren. True, the capitalists have shared out a few crumbs from the pie baked at the expense of the "natives" in order to buy the silence of their workers. But the fact is that French workers (and not just their trade unions and "their parties") are more likely to strike to press home a demand or express solidarity with some of their own, than to be moved by the fate of thousands of butchered Algerian proletarians, much less take a hand in their struggle.

...[G]iven the "bankruptcy" of the European proletariat, an attempt has been made to relocate hope, idealization and enthusiasm in the underdeveloped, so-called "proletarian" countries. It is even more telling that those who have striven to identify

themselves with the worker proletariat—only to be let down by it—are now the ones identifying with the aspirations of the underdeveloped countries.

At last, in the midst of the wasteland and the despair, they have come up with a just cause, a revolutionary force and they identify their own youth with the youthfulness of a people. And at the same time, one can disassociate oneself from the colonialist system…

Human beings are split into two kinds: the colonized and the colonizers, the supposition being that in the so-called colonialist countries all class conflict, every injustice, every revolt and social sensibility is regulated. The exploited and their bosses are proclaimed as equals, all belonging in the same category. This is too great a simplification, for social issues and the needs of the struggle are far from having been done away with and they should not be overlooked. While it has never been wholly embraced by all who have lined up on the side of the colonized, this approach has been a tendency found among many of them. A further dangerous schematization might also blind one to the underdeveloped regions kept under wraps within the colonialist countries themselves: the Portuguese empire manages to coexist alongside a poverty and an underdevelopment that are almost as significant in Portugal itself as in her colonies. The wealthiest empires, the Spanish Empire and the Ottoman Empire, have bequeathed to us countries within Europe's own borders that still in economic terms considerably lag behind.

Relocating the problem to faraway lands gives it the appearances of the abstract and the well nigh exotic. While the issue of national and social liberation has no geographical boundaries, it is not historically isolated either: from time to time, human history is thrown into turmoil by the collapse of a system of oppression and empire, by the changing characters on stage, by the ending of one civilization and the emergence of another. It is only a few centuries since the Conquistadors were replaced on the continent of America by the Liberators, and their struggles for national liberation shook the entire backward-looking regime of the day. Closer to our own times, we have seen the same phenomenon in Central and Eastern Europe—the liberation of the Slav countries emerging from the Turkish and Hungarian empires. And as for the "Eastern Question" from those days, to this day there is competition between the world powers over influence as well as a need for peoples in struggle to take those powers into consideration and even make use of them.

These days, this fact is all the more pronounced, given the division of the entire world into two mutually hostile blocs, in a cold or hot war as they compete for influence and territory. And so every event, no matter where on the planet it may surface,

is immediately added to the board and becomes a factor in this vast game of chess. How can small peoples escape this attraction? How, even though they profess to be neutrals, can they really be neutral? How could a genuinely revolutionary force emerge and steer clear of those two imperialist blocs?

On this latter score too, the libertarian stance is finely balanced… while opposed to all oppression and government, libertarians cannot quite break free of this division of the world into two blocs. It is understandable that, confronted with the economic and military might of the United States, the failure of any even slightly more independent and novel movements and the passivity of the working class, any libertarian approach should border upon unreality. The international situation being as it is, the temptation is to opt for the lesser evil and line up—even symbolically—in the shadow of one camp or the other; to pose as a "realist" and level charges of impracticality at those who persist in holding aloof from both camps and holding our ground.

Plainly, there are quantitative differences: our comrades in Russia have been massacred and languish in prison… Over here we can still speak freely: but in the United States the anti-anarchist legislation is still in force. It is a fact too that there are some countries left where libertarians fleeing the concentration camps of the eastern bloc or Spain can get on with their lives and be openly libertarians. But such facts should not blind us to the fact that the "free world" still boasts its Franco and its Salazar [Portuguese dictator], that the capitalist world bares its fangs every time it is confronted with even a limited force breaking ranks and trying to undermine the foundations of privilege, and that statist trends are gaining in strength.

But above all we must keep faith with the libertarian spirit and not mortgage our future (no matter how hypothetical it may seem right now) for, should the situation change, it might prove more positive and achievable. Especially since, for all their material might, both camps—the capitalist and the pseudo-capitalist—have shown themselves to have failed as ideologies and, for all their efforts to the contrary, they will not be able to stop the masses from looking for a more humane, fairer ideal. Inside the Soviet empire we have even seen the workers of Budapest [during the 1956 Hungarian uprising] tearing down Stalin's statue and calling for workers' councils, self-management, free confederation and rejecting dictatorship while also rejecting capitalist values. What few examples there have been in the West of spontaneous struggle have also shown the refusal of the masses to identify with their government or abide by party political watchwords or even those of their trade unions.

Instead of playing the grocer and weighing up the virtues of East or West, the overriding need is for us to exploit what few possibilities we still have left to try to ex-

pose their respective mistakes, confirm that there is another way to go, try to define it by citing historical examples and make it known, not merely here but above all in the underdeveloped countries, as their only chance of being able to build something just and worthwhile.

If we have any doubts about the constructive worth of the principles of anarchism, how are we going to help others to wake up to their spirit of initiative, self-management, effective democracy, federalism from the ground up, rejecting racism and imperialism and working towards an economics without exploitation, these being, deep down, the essential principles of anarchism?

We have no option but to acknowledge that the nationalist mindset is still around. Humanity is still divided along the lines of family, country and race: its innermost consciousness has yet to be thrown open to pure and simple human fraternity and the individual. In the underdeveloped countries, this situation is aggravated further by the systematic scorn from the former colonizers, the badge of a pseudo-superiority founded upon race, and by an ongoing obsession with dominating and oppressing.

But besides this nationalist mindset, we are equally obliged to recognize a sense of justice, a craving for equality, an aspiration to unfettered development, a selflessness and a spirit of sacrifice, particularly in the masses in revolt. So we cannot divorce their need to assert their national identity from their concern for social justice.

It strikes us that we should try to support the quest for social justice and make a stand against all chauvinism, racism, any notion of domination, exploitation and power…

It is for the peoples themselves to achieve their own liberation. Our part should be to present the libertarian ideal and libertarian principles—which are very little known—as an example.

Noir et Rouge, No. 21, 1962

By the late 1950s, there was growing opposition in France to the war in Algeria. French anarchists had opposed France's war against Algerian independence as part of their opposition to colonialism, with some engaging in such militant tactics as bombing troop trains, and others helping to smuggle deserters and draft resisters out of the country. In this article, translated by Paul Sharkey, Jean Marie Chester discusses national resistance and resistance to the war in Algeria, and how the latter could lead people toward a more anarchistic perspective.

GENERALLY SPEAKING, NATIONAL RESISTANCE IS a clandestine struggle, be it violent or otherwise, which, in a given situation, brings together individuals with kindred or

different motives for altering that situation (in most instances that situation is for-eign occupation or domestic dictatorship).

While resistance starts off as a refusal, it nonetheless almost always has some aim in mind. The latter should be vague and unspecific enough not to split the resis-tance. In the most recent instances, the aim, the myth, so to speak, will be described as "national liberation."

Once the unity of the resistance has been achieved, one of the enduring prob-lems is how to preserve that unity. Hence the need to invest it with a framework whereby everyone, whatever his own particular reason for resisting, can be assured that his neighbours are fighting for the same cause as him. This is described as the Front or the Movement... and every political faction wages quiet warfare from within it against the others in a competition for leadership of the movement, so that, come victory, it alone will be the beneficiary...

National resistance is often nonsense, insofar as the working class militant fighting for his class, the bourgeois fighting for his nation, someone who believes in Heaven fight-ing on behalf of Christian morality, and someone else with no such belief who knows that morality to be murderous of freedom, find themselves shoulder to shoulder.

The more heterogeneous the social make-up of the resistance, and the greater the part played by action as its mortar, the deeper that nonsense will go, for every-body has his own reasons to act.

That nonsense was exposed to the light of day in the wake of the "Liberation" in France [in 1945]. On account of the multiplicity of social strata that had, to one de-gree or another, taken part in the resistance, it was some time before there was a re-sumption of the class struggle. In France, a government "emanating from the resistance" and faithful to its "spirit" acted as a buffer against that struggle, while the CP [Communist Party] played ball by rolling up its sleeves, as we can all remember.

Elsewhere in Europe, the CP managed to permeate the resistance and—abetted by the presence of the Red Army—forced acceptance of so-called people's democra-cies. Many resisters paid for the misunderstanding with their lives or liberty. And our anarchist comrades from the Eastern bloc, having fought in the resistance in their homelands for liberation found themselves obliged, come "Liberation," to choose be-tween prison or exile. Were they not victims of that misunderstanding too?

French resistance to the war in Algeria has the novelty of having emerged, not in a country oppressed by another country, and therefore having "national liberation" as its goal, but actually in an oppressor country. Its aim is therefore to fight to get France to stop oppressing the peoples in her charge and the Algerian people in particular.

So those who have opted to help the FLN [the Algerian National Liberation Front] or refused to fight against the Algerians are prompted primarily by humanitarian rather than political motives.

Then again, even though they may claim to be acting in the name of anti-colonialism, a vague enough term, each of them fights for reasons of his own.

Ranging from the genuine Christian, be he bourgeois or proletarian, prompted by his moral code to help the humble and who carries suitcases, faces risks, prays to his God and believes he is acting out of Christian charity when, unknown to himself, his simple humanity carries him far beyond such charity and brings him on to the terrain of genuine solidarity—through to the militant worker for whom solidarity and internationalism are second nature, so much so that he is unaware of "committing himself" or even of "helping" the Algerians, since he is merely being true to himself and to his ongoing struggle against exploitation from whatever source.

From the bourgeois student who no longer identifies with the class into which he was born and who has spent several years searching in vain through leftwing organizations for some echo of his rebelliousness and purity and who, some day, following a chat with some Algerian student whom he just happens to bump into, recognizes that everything he has been thinking and questing after throughout his youth is being lived and sometimes died for, and at that point decides to join the struggle—through to the "leftist intellectual" who, having spent ten years dithering over whether to join "the Party" and "go to the masses," hoping to meet with the warm welcome he in his isolation so sorely craves, but, backing off with every Budapest [a reference to the Soviet repression of the 1956 Hungarian uprising], one evening stumbles upon this sense of fraternity in a hotel room where a dozen Algerians ply him with mint tea.

All of these, and so many different others besides… are randomly thrown together as couriers. What have they in common with one another beyond the dangers they brave and the connection created by their daily encounters with courage and fear?

And yet do they not try to invest this unity in activity with some basis in ideology and with a truly meaningful doctrine? The sincerest of them see eye to eye, for inevitably there are among them some who have joined the fight just so that their party or church might have a foothold there so that when the time comes for the distribution of the prizes they can have a stake in the new Algeria…

Whereas up until now we have been talking primarily about those helping the Algerians, either directly or through what the mass circulation press has trained us to think of as "FLN support networks," they are however not the ones for whom the need to draw out the ideological lessons of their actions is most pressing.

In fact, their voluntary commitment arose from what they already thought: had they thought otherwise, there was nothing forcing them to make their stand.

The position of the young obliged by the "draft" to make a snap decision and a life commitment by opting for draft evasion or desertion is quite different.

The differences in their positions is reminiscent of what happened in 1942-1944 among the volunteer resisters and refractories whose stance was determined by their refusal to go to Germany on compulsory labour service.

The volunteer resister retains a morsel of freedom and until such time as he is identified and tracked down as a resister, he retains his power to drop out of the struggle should it cease to live up to his aspirations, or to trot off home like a "hero" should it end in victory.

The refractory, draft-dodger or deserter is always an outcast. By virtue of his initial act of refusal, he is obliged to fight or to surrender or go into exile, not knowing for how long he is to be an outlaw in his own land—for amnesty laws only come in when there is a change of regime.

And this at the age of just twenty.

How many of our anarchist comrades, especially the older ones, realized when they turned deserter at the age of 20 what the implications of that act would be for the remainder of their lives? And they enjoyed the distinct advantage of having been anarchists prior to deserting.

And of today's young deserters, how many are prompted by a worldview? For how many of them was the dodging of the draft or desertion a partial refusal in the context of a broader rejection of an exploitation-based society?

It appears that the reasons of today's young for deserting vary considerably.

In fact, if we compare the ideological deserters back then with today's deserters, it looks as if the latter represent a sort of an instinctive response, an unfathomed human wholesomeness whereby the young, individually, draw the courage to turn deserter from within themselves, without the comfort of membership in a community of refusers.

For, in the end, what are the options open to today's twenty year olds?

Two main options: compliance or refusal.

Compliance means embracing the rules by which a rotten society plays, the outward show, the good manners, the *Parisen-Libéré*-apolitical-newspaper we all know: there lies the route to Auxiliary Service.

Compliance means mediocrity, falsehood, the quest for future position, agreeing to serve as a lackey today in the hope of becoming a master tomorrow...

[B]ut luckily for the human race, there are still some individuals who cannot comply and cannot play along, back down, suck up to the rich and look down their noses at navvies.

Luckily, there is refusal.

Of the refusers, there are more than one might think. To begin with, they are virtually indistinguishable, in human terms, from those who, within two or three years, are going to end up as deserters or paras [paratroopers] in Algeria.

This may appear a paradox, lumping deserter and para together, if only for a moment. And yet.

Those who instinctively refuse to set foot inside the rotten structure have had neither the time nor the occasion to come up with a precise idea of what they are capable of. They refuse. They say no. They say "to hell with it." All well and good—but then what?

Then the most lost souls among them stay as "blousons noirs" (and it is interesting to note that nearly all of the "blousons noirs" sign up for the Paras, no doubt in the belief that there they will find a sense of brotherhood, although they neglect to worry as to whether the commission of crime might not be the fee for admission to the brotherhood).

Later, the most intelligent or sensitive among them, the ones whose parents most likely have what they call a "good heart," the ones lucky enough to be in a position to be able to refuse to be cowards—those ones desert and the life of a deserter begins for them from that point forwards.

They will require buckets of courage and, when one is on one's own, courage quickly runs out. The need for fellowship, for a group identity, that need… prompts young draft-dodgers and deserters from the war in Algeria to band together to help one another and to get themselves organized. Which is how, among one segment of the youth today, the talk is of the "Jeune Résistance" movement…

"Jeune Résistance" was specifically spawned by the need felt by some ten or so draft-dodgers and deserters who had ideological commitments prior to their acts of defiance… to "come together in a common quest for some way of putting their act to some purpose."

After which, with a guarantee of fellowship from young non-refractories, it was decided that the movement should be launched.

The aim of JR is to look beyond the stage of individual desertions and sponsor a trend towards collective desertion…

In a pamphlet—"*Jeune Résistance explains*"—distributed at some risk at the 27 October demonstration in Paris with the cops charging around all over the place, we read:

> It is not a question of just an escape network for deserters, but rather of a movement of resistance to the Algerian war and to fascism, one addressing itself to French youngsters as a whole. Whereas acts of refusal thus far have been rather ineffectual because they have been individual, the point is to prepare and organize a COLLECTIVE RESISTANCE ON THE PART OF FRENCH YOUTH. In every one of the countries where there are young refractories, a JR team is set up. In the various regions around France, young leftist militants set up further teams. Whereupon the latter liaise with a central team…

These youngsters have thrown caution to the wind and played the difficult card, the Freedom card, and chosen to live with their heads held high… these youngsters have, through their refusal, unwittingly stumbled upon anarchism (an anarchism that many a professed anarchist would never have had the courage to display…). And we are not saying this just so as to take them over, but—should these lines perchance happen to be read by any of them—perhaps in order to "put them on their guard" against those who would like to take them over.

The fact that we are not in fact members of Jeune Résistance may well afford us the necessary detachment to see it in its true dimensions and grasp its true quality. It strikes us that the road opening up in front of these youngsters bypasses the parties now.

It strikes us that it is up to them to debate with one another, understand their refusal and work out honestly if other spheres of social, political and economic life are not every bit as deserving of further refusals as colonialist warfare is. Having made the decision of a lifetime, thrust upon them at the age of twenty, it is possible and would be logical for them to arrive at the notion of wholesale refusal of society through its being called into question in its entirety. Maybe then they will be more alive to the fact that the road to human freedom and dignity for the colonized, the deserter, and the worker does not involve the parties, churches or politicized trade unions, but is caught up with the obscure but ongoing struggle of exploited and oppressed peoples, with the fight for life, and the march towards a classless society.

Maybe they will wake up to the fact that their refusal to kowtow to the state, capitalist, colonialist and oppressor has thrust them—whatever their origins—into the front ranks of the class struggle.

That they should be putting out feelers to the workers and looking to the future with them rather than with the parties which, while professing to serve them, most often do nothing but live off them.

Of course, not all Young Resisters will see the course through to the end and those who will venture furthest will leave in their wake those for whom the act of refusal was an isolated event. The latter will not have the clarity of vision to venture beyond their act—and no doubt many young Christians among them (not that we would automatically "cast the first stone," but rather the fact is that they will be the ones with the longest, hardest road to travel, imbued as they are with a religion whose strings are pulled by the exploiters)—will then wake up to the fact that their very act will have led them into a blind alley, that maybe they acted thoughtlessly, and, older and wiser and settling abroad, they will get on with their lives, heartsick with having ruined their lives with one youthful mistake instead of their hearts swelling with pride at their having decided to do the manly thing.

A new younger generation has been spawned by resistance. The Algerian war which drew it out is but a passing moment in history, a tougher stage in a struggle that will only finish once man's exploitation of his fellow man, in whatever form it may assume, is ended. This new younger generation—no matter how few its numbers—is only temporarily separated from the masses on account of its having opted for the hardest course. Starting now, it should prepare for the future when it will take up its place in the van of the workers' struggle.

It is up to us in the factories and offices to make the cause of these youngsters better known, to refute the slanders spewed at it by the parties and trade unions, and to prepare for the time when, once the war in Algeria is over, we will have to campaign for the rehabilitation of these young refractories, deserters and draft-dodgers.

And then, perhaps for the very first time ever, we will have a resistance that will not founder upon a misunderstanding...

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32. Vinoba Bhave and Jayaprakash Narayan: From Socialism to Sarvodaya (1957)

After many years of conflict, India obtained its national independence from England in 1947. During the struggle for independence, Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948), drawing on Tolstoy's doctrine of non-violent resistance (Volume 1, Selection 47), developed the concept and practice of Satyagraha, a spiritually based form of non-violent direct action (see Selection 34 below). Following his assassination in 1948, his work was continued by Vinoba Bhave (1895-1982) and Jayaprakash Narayan (1902-1979). Bhave assumed the role more of a spiritual guide, following Gandhi's example, while Narayan played a more overtly political role, based on his experience as a socialist politician during the independence struggle. Their Bhoodan movement sought the return of private land to village communities. Gandhi himself was familiar with Kropotkin's Fields, Factories and Workshops *(Volume 1, Selection 34), and had advocated a decentralized society of village communities for post-independence India. It is this vision, similar to the communitarian-socialism of Gustav Landauer and Martin Buber (Selection 16), that Narayan discusses in his 1957 pamphlet,* From Socialism to Sarvodaya. *The following extracts from Bhave's writings are taken from* Democratic Values: Selections from the Addresses of Vinoba Bhave, 1951-1960 *(Sarva Seva Sangh Prakashan, Kashi, 1962). Narayan's* From Socialism to Sarvodaya *has been reprinted in* Jayaprakash Narayan: Essential Writings *(1929-1979) (New Delhi: Konark Publishers, 2002), ed. B. Prasad. Most anarchists outside of India did not share Bhave and Narayan's optimistic views regarding the positive uses of nuclear energy.*

VINOBA BHAVE: SARVODAYA: FREEDOM FROM GOVERNMENT

SARVODAYA DOES NOT MEAN GOOD GOVERNMENT or majority rule, it means freedom from government, it means decentralization of power. We want to do away with government by politicians and replace it by a government of the people, based on love, compassion and equality. Decisions should be taken, not by a majority, but by unanimous consent; and they should be carried out by the united strength of the ordinary people of the village…

My voice is raised in opposition to good government. Bad government has been condemned long ago by Vyasa in the Mahabharata. People know very well that bad government should not be allowed, and everywhere they protest against it. But what seems to me to be wrong is that we should allow ourselves to be governed at all, even by a good government…

If I am under some other person's command, where is my self-government? Self-government means ruling your own self… It is one mark of swaraj (self-government) not to allow any outside power in the world to exercise control over oneself. And the sec-

ond mark of swaraj is not to exercise power over any other. These two things together make swaraj—no submission and no exploitation. This cannot be brought into being by government decree, but only by a revolution in the people's ways of thought…

There is a false notion abroad in the world that governments are our saviours and that without them we should be lost. People imagine that they cannot do without government. Now I can understand that people cannot do without agriculture, or industries; that they cannot do without love and religion. I can also understand that they cannot do without institutions like marriage and the family. But governments do not come into this category. The fact is that people do not really need a government at all. Governments grew up as a result of certain particular conditions in society. Men have not succeeded in creating a feeling of unity and avoiding divisions; we have not learned fully the art of working together without conflict, so we try to get things done by the power of the state instead; we try to do by punishment what can only be done by educating the community…

The ultimate goal of sarvodaya is freedom from government. Notice that I use the words freedom from government, and not absence of government. Absence of government can be seen in a number of societies whose affairs are all at sixes and sevens, where no order is maintained, and where anti-social elements do as they please. That kind of absence of government is not our ideal. Absence of government must be replaced by good government, and afterwards, good government must be replaced by freedom from government. A society free from government does not mean a society without order. It means an orderly society, but one in which administrative authority rests in the villages…

We have before us three different theories of government. The first is that the state will ultimately wither away and be transformed into a stateless system; but, in order to bring that about, we must in the present exercise the maximum of power. Those who accept this theory are totalitarians in the first stage and anarchists in the final stage.

The second theory is that some form of government has always existed in the past, exists now, and will continue to exist in the future; a society without a government is a sheer impossibility. Therefore society must be so ordered as to ensure the welfare of all. There may be a certain amount of decentralization but all important matters must be under the Centre. The supporters of this theory hold that government must always exist, and that a government elected by society must have an over-all control of affairs.

The third is our own theory. We too believe in a stateless society as our ultimate goal. We recognize that in the preliminary stages a certain measure of government is necessary, but we cannot agree that it will continue to be necessary at a later stage. Neither do we agree that totalitarian dictatorship is necessary to ensure progress towards a stateless society. On the contrary we propose to proceed by decentralizing administration and authority. In the final stage there would be no coercion but a purely moral authority. The establishment of such a self-directing society calls for a network of self-sufficient units. Production, distribution, defence, education—everything should be localized. The centre should have the least possible authority. We shall thus achieve decentralization through regional self-sufficiency…

After "independence" people have become less independent, less self-reliant. We have to rely on the government for everything. Things have come to such a pass that we expect the government to do everything while we do nothing, not only in social and religious matters like untouchability, but even in our domestic affairs. How can a people become stronger so long as it depends so much on the government?

A law may solve our problems but it will not make us stronger. What people really need is to become aware of their own inner strength, and that they can only do if they solve some of their problems for themselves.

It is just this strengthening of society that is the object of the Bhoodan movement. It is therefore a political movement, but one that is opposed to current political methods. Our aim is to build up a new kind of politics, and in order to do so we keep ourselves aloof from the old kind. We call this new politics "*lok-niti*," politics of the people, as opposed to "*raj-niti*," politics of the power-state…

My main idea is that the whole world ought to be set free from the burden of its governments. That cannot happen so long as we depend on government for help in everything. If there is one disease from which the whole world suffers, it is this disease called government…

These expressions, "Shanti Sena" (Peace Army), "Sarvodaya ," and "gramdan"—what do they all mean? In essence they all mean that you must yourselves take charge of your own affairs. By forming parties you are burdening yourselves with a government, but you are doing nothing for yourselves. We have to set ourselves free from the parties, and with that end in view a Sarvodaya Mandal (Society) has been formed here. But this Sarvodaya Mandal is not going to promise, after the fashion of the parties, to make a sarvodaya society for you. They will tell you to make it for yourselves. The Lord says in the Gita, "We must work out our own salvation." The Sarvodaya Mandal will tell you that you are capable of doing this, and that it is you

who must do it. They will give you help and advice if you wish it, but you yourselves can and must take the initiative…

So long as we do not get rid of these governments of ours, the world will never know peace. The Communists' ultimate aim is the withering away of the state, but for the present they want to strengthen it. In fact, the stateless society is only a promissory note, but state tyranny is cash down! In our modern conditions a powerful state can bring nothing but slavery. Therefore sarvodaya stands for an immediate reduction in the power of the state.

As far as individuals are concerned everyone should be taught to keep his impulses and senses under control. In our social structure we must accept the principle that the welfare of one group is not opposed to the welfare of another.

In such a social order the need to use force would be eliminated. Certain moral principles would be so universally accepted in society that they would be reflected in its practice and included in the children's education. These principles would be respected by the members of the community of their own free will. Such a society would be truly self-governing.

JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN: FROM SOCIALISM TO SARVODAYA (1957)

Socialism and communism both lay great emphasis on material prosperity, on ever-growing production and on an ever-rising standard of living. It cannot be denied that the material wants of man must be reasonably fulfilled. And when it is realized that socialists and communists are always the advocates of the poor and downtrodden, their emphasis on material progress and happiness can be appreciated. It is also true that in poor and backward countries like India it is the main task of social reconstruction to raise quite considerably the people's standard of living. But it would not do here or elsewhere to apotheosize material happiness and encourage an outlook on life that feeds on an insatiable hunger for material goods. There can be no peace in the minds and hearts of men, nor peace amongst men if this hunger gnaws at them continuously. That would necessarily set up an uncontrolled competition between individuals, groups and nations. Everyone would be trying to outdo his neighbour and every nation not only to catch up with other nations but to leave them all behind. In such a restless society violence and war would be endemic. All values of life would be subordinated to this overmastering desire for more. Religion, art, philosophy, science would have to serve that one aim of life: to have more and still more.

Equality, freedom, brotherhood would all be in danger of being submerged in a universal flood of materialism. There would be no poise in human life, no real satisfaction because the possession of more would only whet the appetite for still more…

The socialist way of life is a way of sharing together the good things that common endeavour may make available. The more willingly this sharing is practiced the less tension and coercion in society and the more of socialism. I believe that unless members of society learn to keep their wants under control, willing sharing of things may be difficult, if not impossible, and society would be bound to split into two divisions: (1) comprising those who are trying to discipline others and (2) comprising all the rest. Such a division of society always leaves the question open: who would discipline the discipliners, rule the rulers? The examples of the communist countries and the experience of socialist governments show that the answer to this perennial question is extremely difficult. The only solution seems to be to restrict as much as possible the need and area of disciplining from above by ensuring that every member of society practices self- discipline and the values of socialism, and among other things, willingly shares and cooperates with his fellow men...

I decided to withdraw from party-and-power politics not because of disgust or sense of any personal frustration, but because it became clear to me that politics could not deliver the goods, the goods being the same old goals of equality, freedom, brotherhood and peace...

The party system with the corroding and corrupting struggle for power inherent in it, disturbed me more and more. I saw how parties backed by finance, organization and the means of propaganda could impose themselves on the people; how people's rule became in effect party rule; how party rule in turn became the rule of a caucus or coterie; how democracy was reduced to mere casting of votes; how even this right to vote was restricted severely by the system of powerful parties setting up their candidates from whom alone, for all practical purposes, the voters had to make their choice; how even this limited choice was made unreal by the fact that the issues posed before the electorate were by and large incomprehensible to it.

The party system as I saw it was emasculating the people. It did not function so as to develop their strength and initiative, nor to help them establish their self-rule and to manage their affairs themselves. All that parties were concerned with was to capture power for themselves so as to rule over the people, no doubt, with their consent! The party system, so it appeared to me, was seeking to reduce the people to the position of sheep whose only function of sovereignty would be to choose periodically the shepherds who would look after their welfare. This to me did not spell freedom—the freedom, the swaraj, for which I had fought and for which the people of this country had fought.

Democratic socialists had no doubt talked vaguely of decentralization of power… But in practice I found that their entire concern was, and still is with the capture of power. They seem to believe that even decentralization of power was possible only after the present centres of power had been conquered, so that decentralization and de-institutionalization could then be legislated into being. They do not see the absurdity of this procedure. Decentralization cannot be effected by handing down power from above to people who have been politically emasculated and whose capacity for self-rule has been thwarted, if not destroyed, by the party system and concentration of power at the top… The process must be started from the bottom. A program of self-rule and self-management must be placed before the people, and by a constructive, non-partisan approach they must be helped to translate it into practice. It is clear now that it was in order to undertake such a program on a nationwide scale that Gandhiji was thinking of converting the Congress into a non-partisan Lok Sevak Sangh. It is exactly this task that Vinobaji [Vinoba Bhave] has undertaken…

As questioning about politics was not confined to the party system alone, fundamental questions arose in my mind as to the place and role of the State in human society, particularly in relation to the goals of social life that had fixed themselves before me. Perhaps my schooling in Marxism, with its ideals of a stateless society, made these questions more pointed and troublesome. Though I had given up the basic postulates of Marxism, because they did not promise to lead me to my goals, I continued to feel strongly that human freedom could be fully and wholly realized only in a stateless society. I was, and am, not sure if the State would ever wither away completely. But I am sure that it is one of the noblest goals of social endeavour to ensure that the powers and functions and spheres of the State are reduced as far as possible. I became at this time, and still am, an ardent believer, like Gandhiji, in the maxim that that government was the best that governed the least. The test of human evolution for me became man's ability to live on amity, justice and cooperation with his fellow men without outward restraints of any kind. That is why I have considered the human and social problem to be at bottom a moral problem.

With this conception of the role and place of the State in society at the back of my mind, I viewed with very deep apprehension the march of the State to greater and greater glory. Democratic socialists, communists as well as welfarists (not to speak of the fascists), are all statists. They all hope to bring about their own variety of the millennium by first mastering and then adding to the powers and functions of the State.

The bourgeois State had a monopoly of political power. The socialist State threatens to add to that the monopoly of economic power. Such a great concentra-

tion of power would require equal, if not greater, power to control and keep it in check. There would be no such power at hand in a socialist society. Paper constitutions could hardly be expected to guarantee freedom and sovereignty to the citizen. The economic and political bureaucracy would be too strong and in occupation of such vantage points that the liberties and rights of the people, as well as their bread, would be entirely at its mercy.

I am aware that democratic socialists are conscious of these dangers and are trying to revise 'checks and balances.' The independent trade unions are supposed to be a great bulwark of freedom, though it is recognized that the great trade unions are themselves becoming more and more ridden with bureaucracy. Plans for industrial democracy and public accountability for State enterprises have been drawn up. Consumers' associations and co-operatives of all kinds are rightly supposed to function as balancing and restraining factors. Even decentralization of authority and functions has figured of late in socialist thinking. But after all is said and done the democratic socialist State remains a Leviathan that will sit heavily on the freedom of the people.

The only remedy for this that I could think of took me farther away from politics and towards sarvodaya. The remedy obviously is… to make it possible for the people to do without the State as far as practicable and to run their affairs themselves directly. Speaking as a socialist, I would put it thus: the remedy is to create and develop forms of socialist living through the voluntary endeavour of the people rather than seek to establish socialism by the use of power of the State. In other words, the remedy is to establish people's socialism rather than State socialism. Sarvodaya is people's socialism. Whether every socialist agrees or not with sarvodaya, he should agree that the more of people's voluntary socialism and the less of State-enforced socialism, the fuller and more real the socialism… It should be obvious that in order to develop non-State forms of socialism, it should be unnecessary for anyone to function as a party or to engage in struggle for the capture of power. Both power and party have no relevance in this context. What is needed rather is a band of selfless workers prepared to live and move in the midst of the people and help them to reorganize their lives on a self-reliant and self-governing basis. One cannot help being reminded here of Gandhiji's Lok Sevak Sangh again.

The question now arises, what will be the form of that society in which it will be possible for the people to run their affairs directly and develop all those values of life that characterize a socialist society: co-operation, self-discipline, sense of responsibility? This is a question to which socialists have paid the least attention so far. Human society has so grown that we have the complex industrial civilizations of today,

with great human forests that are called cities, with economic and social relationships that are utterly impersonal and non-lifegiving, with modes of work that are irksome and bereft of joy and opportunities of creativity and that have the sole criterion of productivity and efficiency to recommend them. Science has turned the whole world into a neighbourhood, but man has created a civilization that has turned even neighbours into strangers. Such a complex and top-heavy society cannot but be a heaven for bureaucrats, managers, technocrats, statists. Such a society cannot be a home for brothers to live together as brothers. Socialists, in the name of science, production, efficiency, standard of living and other hallowed shibboleths have accepted this whole Frankenstein of a society—lock, stock and barrel—and hope, by adding public ownership to it, to make it socialist. I submit that in such a society the very breath of socialism would be hard to draw. Self-government, self-management, mutual co-operation and sharing, equality, freedom, brotherhood—all could be practiced and developed for better if men lived in small communities. This is beginning to be realized by forward-looking thinkers even in the West.

Further, man is a product both of nature and culture. So for his balanced growth it is necessary that a harmonious blend between the two [be] effected. This blending, in spite of parks and green avenues, is not possible in such centres of modern civilization as London, Paris, New York, Moscow. As a result, modern man's development is warped and one-sided. A harmonious blending of nature and culture is possible only in comparatively smaller communities. Let me quote Aldous Huxley from his *Science, Liberty and Peace*:

> Now it seems pretty obvious that man's psychological, to say nothing of his spiritual, needs cannot be fulfilled unless, first, he has a fair measure of personal independence and personal responsibility within and toward a self-governing group, unless, secondly, his work possesses a certain aesthetic value and human significance, and unless, in the third place, he is related to his natural environment in some organic, rooted and symbiotic way.

It was for these reasons that Gandhiji insisted that the Indian village and village self-government (*gram raj*) were the foundations for his picture of society—the society of equal and free human beings living as brothers in peace.

Living in small communities and producing mostly for self or local consumption on small machines may be regarded by some as setting the hand of science backwards. Science and centralized large-scale production and large conglomerations of human habitations are thought to go necessarily together. Nothing could be more absurd. Science is of two kinds: (a) pure science and (b) applied science. I would call

pure science alone science, and the other technology. Now, the application of science does not depend upon science itself but upon the character of society. Large-scale, big-machine production was profitable to the money makers, so technology took the course of that particular type of production. The money makers were the dominant class in society and their will had to be done. Governments also—irrespective of ideologies—preferred centralized, big-scale production, because that was necessary for war making (or defence, if you please), and—no less important —because it also concentrated great economic, and, therefore, political power in their hands. Thus governments and profiteers combined to create the Frankenstein of modern society. Poor science had no say in the matter. Rather, had the scientists had their way, many of them, I believe, would be happy to smash many of the engines of production and destruction that their discoveries had helped to create. But suppose society had pursued not the aims of power, profit and war, but of peace, goodwill, co-operation, freedom and brotherhood, science could have been equally applied to evolve the suitable technology. If that were to happen, it would be not regression of science, but progression in a creative rather than destructive direction. It should be pointed out that atomic energy has made more possible than ever before the dispersal of production and the development of small technology, that is, technology appropriate to production in small units and by small-sized machinery...

I am not suggesting that the whole picture of this new society is clear to anyone or that all its problems have been thought out and resolved. How, for instance, would these small self-reliant, self-governing communities be related together is a major question that immediately springs to mind. There is, of course, Gandhiji's grand conception before us: "In this structure, composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever widening, never ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual, always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance, but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units."

Gandhiji's words give us direction, but much thought and experience will be necessary before the picture becomes more clear. However, one warning must be sounded. While it is undoubted that life in small communities, permitting and promoting personal relationships, will be more suited to the realization of sarvodaya ideals, it should not be imagined that small communities, by virtue merely of their size, will necessarily be sarvodaya communities. Had that been so, we would have en-

countered sarvodaya in every village of India today. The outward forms of living have relevance only when the inward forms are given. Men must understand and accept the sarvodaya view of life before they can proceed to investigate in what environment and social framework they could live that life best.

The fear is often expressed if self-reliant and self-governing communities will hold together and the unity and integrity of the nation will abide. In a sarvodaya world society the present nation States have no place. The sarvodaya view is a world view, and the individual standing at the centre of Gandhiji's oceanic circle is a world citizen. But let us leave for the present the world picture of sarvodaya. There is no reason to suppose that self-governing small communities will be hostile to one another or isolationist or selfish in their inter-relationship. If the internal life of a community is laid on sound foundations, its external life cannot but be equally sound.

33. Vernon Richards: Banning the Bomb (1958-9)

Vernon Richards (1915-2001) was one of the editors of Spain and the World, Revolt, War Commentary *and the revived* Freedom. *He was married to Marie Louise Berneri, with whom he was prosecuted for causing disaffection among the armed forces in 1945. After her death in 1949, he continued to edit and contribute to* Freedom *until his death in 2001. During the 1950s, the Ban the Bomb movement emerged in Europe and North America, focusing on banning nuclear weapons. In England, protests were organized by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). The CND rejected civil disobedience, a tactic that was adopted by other anti-war groups, such as the Direct Action Committee Against Nuclear War, and the Committee of 100, to which Herbert Read and the philosopher, Bertrand Russell, belonged. Aldermaston was the site of the protest marches organized by the CND. Richards was critical of the appeals to authority to which these various groups resorted at various times, advocating an explicitly anarchist approach.*

RESIST WAR!
IT MAY BE TRUE THAT THE ARMAMENTS race creates "tensions" between nations (politically speaking, that is) but that is only a by-product, and not the reason for armaments which are but one of the means resorted to for dealing with the permanent 'tensions" that divide the nations of the world. Wars, and thus armaments, are means to particular ends; they are but the instruments which today, however, have become so effective, so universally deadly, that their use would defeat the ends to which they were put...

The H-Bomb... has made war, as an instrument of the power struggle, a boomerang, and created a situation in which the weakest power is virtually as strong as those possessing the latest nuclear devices.

In a revealing article in the Sunday New York Times... Walter Millis indicates the impasse into which politicians have been led by their own H-Bomb mentality: "Only recently has the Pentagon come to a serious realization of the extent to which, by staking everything on the threat of instant thermonuclear retaliation, it has paralyzed any use of military force as an instrument for the regulation and control of contemporary international relations"...in that one sentence are summed up the dangers of war in our society. It has probably already been decided by those in power to ban H-bomb warfare even before public opinion has been organized to actively oppose it, and in spite of the fact that research into the making of bigger and better weapons, and more effective means of delivering them, continues and is ever intensified. War, as Mr. Millis points out, is an instrument for the control and regulation of international relations... the war industry is a vital safety valve when the capitalist machine threatens to blow up. In a word, capitalism and power politics cannot survive without a cold war economy and force to turn to in periods of crisis. It is not enough, then, for public opinion to be opposed to war—even less if it is opposed only to nuclear war—in order to stop war. The following, in order of importance, are the only positive steps which can lead to the abolition of war:

1) reorganization of production and distribution on a world scale and based on human needs and not profits;

2) refusal by workers to be employed in industries engaged on war production;

3) mass resistance to conscription, military or industrial, as well as refusal to join Forces on a voluntary basis in spite of financial or other inducements.

We are only too aware of the fact that it is unlikely that any of these steps will be taken in the foreseeable future. Yet there is no easy way round the problem...

Now, the function of the government is to govern, and in this task it has recourse to the Law and to the force behind the Law. To suggest... that we can make the government follow and the public lead is tantamount to putting the government and parliament out of business. This the latter would resist on legal and constitutional grounds and, if it felt the situation called for "firmness," by the use of the police and armed forces...

Paralysis of the war machine in itself might make little difference to the international political situation but the effect on the industrial economy would be immediate and far-reaching, obliging those who are involved in the resistance movement, in their own interest, to extend their activities into the social and economic fields... or starve on the dole...

It is, we believe, pretty obvious that the moment you advocate that public opinion should be active as well as vocal you are denying the government its executive powers and admitting that parliament is not the sounding board of public opinion. In a word you are recognizing that parliamentary democracy does not work; that is just what anarchists have been saying all along! And because they are realists, as well as human beings, they have been putting forward solutions which, however unattainable they may appear to be to a conditioned, class-ridden, fatalistic and subservient mankind, are nevertheless realistic and practical if mankind really wants all the things, spiritual and material, which it is always saying it wants.

You want peace, you want freedom and security; you need love and you seek happiness; you want leisure and you yearn to be yourself. But you will get nothing so long as you sit back and wait for Big Brother to get them for you!
Freedom, February 15, 1958

WHICH ROAD FROM ALDERMASTON
We imagine that only a few of those of us taking part in the Aldermaston March have any illusions as to the influence such a demonstration will have on British "Defence" policy. On the other hand, we are not suggesting that since it has no effect on the government it is a waste of energy. There are times when the importance of an action is for oneself. For some the very fact of having broken away from the routine pattern of life to take part in this March; for others the effort of will needed to join a demonstration for the first time in their lives, are all positive steps in the direction of "rebellion" against the Establishment…

The prospect of abolishing nuclear weapons in a foreseeable future is remote indeed, even assuming that one persuaded the Government of this country to disarm unilaterally. The threat of fall-out from tests, or annihilation as a result of nuclear war between Russia and the United States, remain. Even assuming that all countries agreed to nuclear disarmament, that is no guarantee, for as Bertrand Russell pointed out… "it is not enough to ban nuclear weapons. If you ban nuclear weapons completely, and even destroy all the existing stocks, they will be manufactured again if war breaks out. The thing you have to do is to ban war." And to this end "we must work towards some system which will prevent war. It requires a different imagination, a different outlook and a different way of viewing all the affairs of men from any that has been in the world before."

That "different outlook and imagination" we submit must come from the people and not from governments. If we recognize (and in our view there is ample evidence to prove it) that the existing economic system creates and perpetuates social injustice as

well as slumps and unemployment, which only a war or a war economy alleviate; that the centralization of power creates strife within the nation and between nations, and that in the struggle for power, war is a potent argument—then the only practical action is that which attempts to remove these causes of war. To seek solutions through the existing organisms of society is not only unrealistic, but downright silly.

There are no short-cuts to peace. There are no compromise solutions between the rulers and the ruled. The day when we will be in a position to influence governments we shall also have the strength to dispense with governments. Until we can put short term prospects in their proper perspective we shall continue to overlook the long term aims which alone can ensure a world at peace. For the past twelve years we have been engaged on the problem of imminent annihilation by the Bomb or enslavement by the other side. After twelve years we are still where we were, and in spite of all the wise men "guiding" our political destinies we are still living with annihilation or enslavement on our doorstep. Are we not yet satisfied that these methods of solving mankind's problems get us nowhere?

Is it not time people stopped worrying about the imminence of annihilation, for it's obvious that we are not able to do anything about it, if the politicians decide to press the button? If only a fraction of the energy now used in trying to reform our delinquent system were devoted to developing what Bertrand Russell calls a "different imagination," we have no doubt that in another twelve years' time we would be able to point to some progress on the solid road to peace.

Freedom, March 28, 1959

HOW WOULD WE BAN THE BOMB?

We think there are two kinds of necessary activity. On the one hand any kind of protest is salutary, if only for ourselves...

But at the same time if the enemy to human emancipation is the State and government, and we are agreed that we cannot easily destroy them by direct assault, then the only alternative left to us is to eventually destroy them by attrition, by withdrawing power from them as a result of taking over direct responsibility for more and more activities which concern our daily lives...

We must starve the State of initiative. Every radical worthy of the name has shared Jefferson's view that "that government is best which governs least." Both the Labour and Tory Parties promise us more and more government. It is up to us to resist this threat by protest and demonstration (not so much for the Government's sake but to draw our fellow citizens' attention to the dangers) and through our actions,

showing by our sense of community and initiative that we are more than capable of running our own lives—including the enjoyment of our leisure hours.

What can we do to ban the H-bomb? Very little, friends, until we decide that running our own lives is an important part of life for which we will always "have the time." When we "find" or "make" this time we shall have little time or patience for the antics of politicians and power maniacs, or, energy to waste on making weapons for our own annihilation!

Freedom, April 4, 1959

34. Nicolas Walter: Direct Action and the New Pacifism (1962)

Nicolas Walter (1934-2000) was an English anarchist, a frequent contributor to the anar-chist and secular humanist press, and the translator of several historic anarchist texts (see, for example, Volume 1, Selections 31, 32 and 44). Walter was a member of the Spies for Peace group that in 1963 anonymously published a secret government document regarding plans to protect the ruling elite in underground bunkers in the event of nuclear war. In this ar-ticle, Nicolas Walter describes how Gandhi's concept of non-violent resistance, satyagraha, was adopted by the Ban the Bomb movement in England and transformed into non-violent di-rect action. Reprinted with the kind permission of Christine Walter.

THERE ARE TWO OBVIOUS WAYS OF TAKING direct action against war—a mutiny by those who fight, and a strike by those whose work supports those who fight. In fact a mutiny against war is scarcely feasible. Mutineers have usually been protesting against their standard of living rather than their way of life, against those who give them orders to kill rather than the orders themselves. Mutiny is after all a rebellion of armed men, and armed men don't lay down their arms… A soldier, said Swift, is "a yahoo hired to kill," and once he has let himself be hired (or conscripted) to kill it is hard for him to stop killing and become a man again—if he does, he immediately ceases to be a soldier, and his protest is no longer mutiny. Ex-soldiers are often the most resolute pacifists, after they get out of uniform. "If my soldiers learnt to think," said Frederick the Great, "not one would remain in the ranks." But soldiers are very carefully taught not to think. And even if they did, mutiny would scarcely be the way out—how can violence be destroyed by violence?

A strike against war is more feasible, since the working classes aren't already committed to war and they have a long tradition of strike action. But the hard fact is that the Left—socialist, communist and anarchist—has a pretty shocking war record. People who are quite prepared to lead workers into strike after strike for wages are not willing to strike against their rulers for peace, and most wartime strikes have

been intended not to prevent war but to prevent rulers and employers from using war as an excuse to increase discipline or decrease wages. When a strike is clearly against war, it is almost always against that particular war, not against all war; and even when it is against all war, it is almost always against national war and not against civil war as well. But they are both war—a vertical war between social classes is just as much a war as a horizontal war between separate communities within a single society. War is only a name for organized mass violence. But left-wing disapproval of horizontal war is usually in direct proportion to approval of vertical war, and vice versa; while a diagonal war is easily disguised as a patriotic or class war, whichever is approved. The man who won't fight the enemy abroad will fight the enemy at home, and the man who won't fight the enemy at home will fight the enemy abroad. In the event the Left will fight just as willingly as the Right, and as often as not they end by fighting on the same side. Most people oppose the use of violence in theory, but most people use violence in practice, and no one who deliberately uses violence really opposes war. As Thomas à Kempis said, "All men desire peace, but very few desire those things which make for peace"…

[M]ilitarism is stronger than anti-militarism, nationalism is stronger than internationalism, conformism is stronger than non-conformism—and never more so than in the middle of a war crisis. A general strike against war before the State has caught the war fever demands a revolutionary intention that seldom exists; a general strike against war after the State has succumbed demands a degree of revolutionary courage and determination that almost never exists. The Left is reluctant enough to challenge the State when all the circumstances are favourable—how much more so when the circumstances are completely unfavourable! Once the State is down with the fever, it is already too late to protest or demonstrate or threaten strike action, because the fever is so infectious that the people catch it before anyone quite realizes what is happening; and by the time war actually breaks out it comes as a relief, like a rash following a high temperature. Then there is no chance of doing anything except in the case of defeat.

The problem is partly one of simple timing. Randolph Bourne, the American liberal pragmatist whose observation of the Great War drove him to anarchist pacifism, pointed out in his unfinished essay ["The State"]… that "it is States which make war on each other, and not peoples," but "the moment war is declared, the mass of the people, through some spiritual alchemy, become convinced that they have willed and executed the deed themselves;" with the result that "the slack is taken up, the cross-currents fade out, the nation moves lumberingly and slowly, but with

ever-accelerated speed and integration, towards the great end," towards "that peace-fulness of being at war... War is the health of the State. It a sets in motion through-out society those irresistible forces for uniformity, for passionate co-operation with the Government in coercing into obedience the minority groups and individuals which lack the larger herd sense." For war isn't only against foreigners. "The pursuit of enemies within outweighs in psychic attractiveness the assault on the enemy with-out. The whole terrific force of the State is brought to bear against the heretics." Of course, "the ideal of perfect loyalty, perfect uniformity, is never really attained," but "the nation in wartime attains a uniformity of feeling, a hierarchy of values culminat-ing at the undisputed apex of the State ideal, which could not possibly be produced through any other agency than war... A people at war have become in the most literal sense obedient, respectful, trustful children again." Nor, alas, are the working classes immune to "this regression to infantile attitudes," so "into the military enterprise they go, not with those hurrahs of the significant classes whose instincts war so pow-erfully feeds, but with the same apathy with which they enter and continue in the in-dustrial enterprise." People whose highest ambition is to capture the State for themselves can't be expected to destroy it...

As Bourne said in 1918, "We cannot crusade against war without crusading im-plicitly against the State." It is because most pacifists never realize this that they are constantly surprised by the hostility their behaviour provokes. Most pacifists are re-ally sentimentalists—hoping to get rid of war without changing anything else, so you can bully people as long as you don't actually kill them. It was because the greatest of all pacifists—Tolstoy—saw through this sentimentalism that he became an anarchist after 1878 as well as a pacifist [Volume 1, Selections 47 & 75]. He never called himself one, since he used the word to describe those [anarchists] who relied on violence, but his eloquent and unequivocal condemnation of the State makes him one of the great-est of all anarchists too... [B]ecause Tolstoy utterly denied the justice of the State's authority, he had to proclaim the duty of total resistance to the State's totalitarian demands...

[P]assive resistance is usually thought of as an inner-directed and ineffective technique, bearing witness rather than *doing* something (as it tends to be, for in-stance, in the hands of individual conscientious objectors), and both the idea and the history of other-directed and effective passive resistance have been buried by the hu-man obsession with violence. The suggestion that passive resistance is the solution to tyranny runs underground in political thought until the 16th century French hu-manist, Etienne de La Boetie wrote an essay [Volume 1, Selection 2] advocating it as a

way out of the "willing slavery" on which tyrants based their power: "If nothing be given them, if they be not obeyed, without fighting, without striking a blow, they remain naked, disarmed, and are nothing." And he meant it politically as well as psychologically when he said, "Resolve not to obey, and you are free"…

Whenever we feel that pacifism must stop being passivism and become activism, that it must somehow take the initiative and find a way between grandiose plans for general strikes which never have any reality and individual protests which never have any effect, that it must become concrete instead of abstract—when in fact we decide that what is needed is not so much a negative doctrine of non-resistance or non-violent passive resistance as a positive doctrine of non-violent active resistance, not so much a static peace as a dynamic war without violence—then our only possible conclusion is that the way out of the morass is through mass non-violent direct action. What sort of mass non-violent direct action? The answer was given more than half a century ago not by a war-resister at all but by a man who was leading resistance to racial oppression in South Africa, by an obscure Gujarati lawyer called Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi…

[S]atyagraha… is a Gujarati word coined by Gandhi to replace the term "passive resistance," which he disliked because it was in a foreign language and didn't mean exactly what he meant. It is usually translated as "soul-force," but the literal translation is "holding on to truth"… For Gandhi, the goal was truth and the way was non-violence, the old Indian idea of *ahimsa*, which includes non-injury and non-hatred and is not unlike *agape* (or love) in the New Testament. But in the Indian *dharma*, as in the analogous Chinese *tao*, the way and the goal are one—so non-violence is truth, and the practice of *ahimsa* is *satyagraha*…

There has been much rather fruitless discussion of the exact meaning of *satyagraha*. We are told it isn't the same as passive resistance, which has been given another new name—*duragraha*—and is thought of as stubborn resistance which negatively avoids violence rather than as resistance which is positively non-violent by nature, as *satyagraha* is. *Duragraha* is obviously just a subtle method of coercion, but *satyagraha*, according to Gandhi, "is never a method of coercion, it is one of conversion," because "the idea underlying *satyagraha* is to convert the wrong-doer, to awaken the sense of injustice in him." The way of doing this is to draw the opponent's violence onto oneself by some form of non-violent direct action, causing deliberate suffering in oneself rather than in the opponent. "Without suffering it is impossible to attain freedom," said Gandhi, because only suffering "opens the inner understanding in man." The object of *satyagraha* is to make a partial sacrifice of one-

self as a symbol of the wrong in question. "Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, it means pitting one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant"…

Richard Gregg has ingeniously explained the psychological effect of *satyagraha* as follows:

> Non-violent resistance acts as a sort of moral ju-jitsu. The non-violence and good will of the victim act like the lack of physical opposition by the user of physical ju-jitsu, to cause the attacker to lose his moral balance. He suddenly and unexpectedly loses the moral support which the usual violent resistance of most victims would render him. He plunges forward, as it were, into a new world of values. He feels insecure because of the novelty of the situation and his ignorance of how to handle it. He loses his poise and self-confidence. The victim not only lets the attacker come, but, as it were, pulls him forward by kindness, generosity and voluntary suffering, so that the attacker quite loses his moral balance. The user of non-violent resistance, knowing what he is doing and having a more creative purpose and perhaps a clearer sense of ultimate values than the other, retains his moral balance. He uses the leverage of superior wisdom to subdue the rough direct force or physical strength of his opponent.

Everyone who has taken part in non-violent direct action knows how true this is, and knows the strange sense of elation and catharsis that results; he can't lose, since if he is attacked he wins by demonstrating the wrong he came to protest against, and if he is not attacked he wins by demonstrating his moral superiority over his opponent. But this means that he must choose non-violence because he is strong, not because he is weak. Gandhi always reserved particular scorn for what he called the "non-violence of the weak" (such as that of the pre-war and post-war appeasers of aggression), and insisted that non-violence should be used as a deliberate choice, not as a second-best. "I am not pleading for India to practice non-violence because she is weak," he said. "I want her to practice non-violence conscious of her strength and power."

Gandhi was no weakling, in any sense. "Where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence," he said, "I would advise violence…But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence"…

This is the reverse of "peace at any price"; it is peace at my price. It is saying to the aggressor: You can come and take my country and hurt and even kill me, but I shall resist you to the end and accept my suffering and never accept your authority.

For a time you will prevail, but I shall win in the end. This is not mere passive resistance, for *satyagraha*, as Gandhi said, "is much more active than violent resistance"...

Richard Gregg is quite sure that "non-violent resistance is a pressure different in kind from that of coercion," and this is the view of most Gandhians; but Joan Bondurant has decided that "throughout Gandhi's experiments with *satyagraha* there appears to be an element of coercion," albeit "coercion whose sting is drawn"... The truth is surely that there are two sides to coercion, and while a *satyagrahi* may be quite sincerely innocent of the slightest wish to coerce, the person at the receiving end of his *satyagraha* may feel very decidedly coerced. Some people have even called the technique "moral blackmail.".. In the end the precise amount of coercion in *satyagraha* and even the precise definition of *satyagraha* are rather academic points. The only important point is whether *satyagraha* works, and how it works; if it can't convert an opponent it is clearly better that it should coerce him gently rather than violently. For as Gandhi said, "You can wake a man only if he is really asleep; no effort that you may make will produce any effect upon him if he is merely pretending sleep." And so many men are doing just that...

"A tiny grain of true non-violence acts in a silent, subtle, unseen way," he said, "and leavens the whole society." So we should sow it. This is what the new post-war pacifists have done, and this is how they have at last discovered how war-resisters can really resist war.

The new pacifism is not really all that new. It is little more than an eclectic mixture of ideas and techniques borrowed from it various predecessors. From the old pacifism comes the flat refusal to fight; from the old anti-militarism comes the determination to resist war; and from Gandhi comes the use of mass non-violent direct action. There are other borrowings. From socialism comes the optimistic view of the future; from liberalism come the idealistic view of the present; from anarchism comes the disrespect for authority. But the new pacifism is selective. It rejects the sentimentality of the old pacifists, the vagueness of the anti-militarists, the religiosity of Gandhi, the authoritarianism of the socialists, the respectabi1ity of the liberals, the intolerance of the anarchists.

The basis of the new pacifism is unilateralism, the demand that this country [England] should offer a sort of national *satyagraha* to the world. "Someone has to arise in England with the living faith to say that England, whatever happens, shall not use arms," said Gandhi before the last war; but "that will be a miracle." Miracle or not, that is what has happened. The new opposition to war derives from opposition to nuclear war, to the bomb rather than to bombs, and not from opposition to all vio-

lence. At first this looks like a retreat, but on second thoughts it is possible to see that it can actually be an advance. The progression used to be from the lesser violence to the greater; now it is the other way round, and instead of justifying war because violence is sometimes necessary we are now learning to condemn violence because its use in war is always useless. Few people start by accepting total non-violence; quite a lot can start by rejecting nuclear war. Thus many new pacifists refuse to take the name of "pacifist," partly because pacifism has a bad image… and partly because they aren't like the old pacifists. The old pacifism tended to be simple minded and tender-minded; the new pacifism tends to be tough-minded and bloody-minded…

There were many traditional Indian techniques of non-violent resistance for [Gandhi] to use, as well as the universal ones of the strike and noncooperation—the exodus (*deshatyaga*), the trade-strike (*hartal*), the fast unto death (*prayopaveshana*), the sit-down (*dhartu*) and civil disobedience (*ajna bhanga*). Gandhi himself preferred civil disobedience and the trade-strike, and he preferred not to break the law until it became necessary. He always thought the sit-down was a barbaric technique, as bad as sabotage, and condemned it even though many of his followers used it (notably in Bombay in 1930). But it has of course become the chief technique of unilateralists who favour illegal action, whether it is used for direct action (against military sites) or for civil disobedience (at significant places in large towns). There are other points of difference—Gandhi used to insist on absolute obedience to his orders during a *satyagraha* operation (though he never tried to impose himself: it was more like the old Roman dictatorships than anything else), and on a very high degree of training and discipline; arrested *satyagrahis* used to co-operate with the police as soon as they were arrested (but we should remember that thousands of them were beaten unconscious before they were arrested in the 1930 salt-pan raids, for example); and there seems to have been much more shouting and scuffling than we are used to. Above all, Gandhi proclaimed that he loved his opponents—few unilateralists could claim as much… But in the important things the unilateralists have followed Gandhi pretty closely, especially in the insistence on non-violence, self-sacrifice, openness and truth, though they could do with rather more of his self-criticism and self-discipline.

The direct action sit-down was naturally the technique favoured by DAC [Direct Action Committee], and its members were a little self-righteous about the superiority of their methods over anything else. Their self-sacrifice extended even to matters like choosing the most unfavourable possible time of the year or place in the countryside for their demonstrations, and this was something of a defect, since their impact was inevita-

bly softened by the very small numbers they attracted. They were more important than CND [Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament] in the long run, but instead of sneering at the CND leaders' obsession with numbers they might have tried to see just why thousands of people would march from Aldermaston while barely a hundred would sit-down at any missile site. It would be disastrous for the unilateralist movement to calculate its success entirely in terms of the numbers of people who take part in or get arrested at illegal demonstrations, but numbers are significant all the same…

The Committee of 100 was formed in October 1960 as an act of dissatisfaction with both CND (which was too moderate) and DAC (which was too puritanical), and as a gesture of no-confidence in orthodox political action… [I]ts inspiration was anarchist, both conscious and unconscious, and the effect of its activities since it was formed has been to give British anarchism a bigger push forward than anything else that has happened since the last War. The Committee has tried to use the sit-down technique both for civil disobedience and for direct action; so far it has only succeeded with the former, since people are still shy of direct action, and Very Important People (who make up a good proportion of the Committee's official membership) are shyer than most. The idea is that either civil disobedience or direct action on a large enough scale come to the same thing, a sort of non-violent insurrection… In practice it has become clear that the most successful [actions], in terms of efficiency and discipline, are the sudden small ones which are organized without much notice, while the most successful ones, in terms of propaganda and effect, are the big ones which are organized weeks ahead, and which take place in central London.

Now it is regrettable, of course, that many people who are prepared to break the law in the middle of the metropolis are not yet prepared to do so at military sites in suburbs or out in the countryside, but there it is—it is very human, and we are dealing with human beings, not saints. It is one of our first principles that we are all free individuals and can make up our own minds and follow our own consciences. So it is nothing more than common sense to get people used to breaking the law where they are most willing to do so before moving them on into direct action when they feel more sure of themselves. (This is what Gandhi would have done in our place, for he was nothing if not shrewd. And just as people are being trained to take action in the right way, they are also being trained to take action at the right time.)

We have already seen how the root fallacy of the old pacifists and anti-militarists alike was that they spent all their effort in making plans for a general strike and were then reduced to individual protest—they played with models of direct action in their heads. The new pacifists and anti-militarists began with the individual protest and use

their effort to work up by stages to the general strike—they are playing with models of direct action in the city streets and the country lanes. We are learning a new language, as it were, by the direct method, which is far more effective than studying books of grammar; we can't speak perfectly yet, but at least we have begun to speak.

Not that our direct action is real direct action yet. Even DAC never managed to achieve a genuine direct action demonstration; the nearest they came was in the first attack on North Pickenham, and the result was that they were attacked not only by the servicemen and police but by the civilian labourers working on the site. After all, real direct action can only be taken by people in their own homes and places of work; the only people who can take real direct action at military sites, until we can raise 100,000 people to surround one, are the people who work at military sites. Direct action is in fact almost unknown in British politics, and it is desperately difficult to open most people's minds to it at all. But, as Gandhi said, "never has anything been done on this earth without direct action." Somehow the Committee of 100 has to increase its numbers and eventually get them out to the sites, and this is punishing work.

This applies in other areas of political life too. Gandhi's successors in South Africa and North America are fighting racial oppression as he did—indeed he once suggested that "it may be through the negroes that the unadulterated message of non-violence will be delivered to the world"—and there is room for direct action against the small amount of racial oppression we already have in this country. It is also possible to see a valid extension of the same technique into areas like housing, poverty, bureaucracy, subtopia, and so on. But above all the use of non-violent direct action can become an instrument of the unofficial Labour Movement, or at least that part of it which is still immune to Marx's "incurable disease of parliamentary cretinism" (recently renamed "Labourism" by Ralph Miliband). The Committee of 100 formed an industrial sub-committee last October and maintains a loose alliance with the syndicalist movement in general. As Michael Randle said to a hostile journalist, "It is quite legitimate for people who come from a background of industrial struggle to see there is a relation between what we have been saying about nuclear disarmament and what they are saying about society in general." So far the purpose of the alliance has been to mobilize the Labour Movement against the Bomb. Energy should also be flowing in the other direction, to mobilize the unilateralists against the State and against all the imperfections in our society—but not to pour the wine of the new pacifism into some old bottle or other, such as parliamentary by-elections or the Labour Party or the New Left. The unilateralists have stimulated the Left; let's hope there is some feedback so that the unilateralists are stimulated by the Left as well.

Gandhi always insisted that every *satyagraha* operation should be accompanied by a "constructive program." At first it is difficult to see how unilateralists can have one (though I suspect that Gandhi would have told us to join Civil Defence en masse!), but a little thought shows that since our *satyagraha* or *duragraha* is directed against the Warfare State our constructive program should be to replace it.

This isn't such a new idea. All left-wing anti-militarists wanted the social revolution to follow the general strike against war, and though most pacifists wanted nothing of the kind there were always some, like Tolstoy, who wanted nothing better. Bart de Ligt said at the end of his mobilization plan [against war] that "the collective opposition to war should be converted into the social revolution," and elsewhere he stated the law, *The more violence, the less revolution*, and called for a non-violent "revolutionary anti-militarism"[Volume 1, Selection 120]... Violence in human history has brought us to the concentration camp and the Bomb; perhaps we can now learn to take Aldous Huxley's simple and superficially rather sentimental statement that "violence makes men worse; non-violence makes them better" quite seriously at last. And when Richard Gregg says "although it is not a panacea non-violent resistance is an effective social instrument whereby we may remould the world," and when Joan Bondurant says it is "the solution to the problem of method which anarchism has consistently failed to solve," we will begin to listen with attention. How much better is "propaganda by deed" when it is *against* bombs instead of *with* them?

What is our task? It is to increase and extend our resistance to the Bomb and all bombs, to war and to the Warfare State, to our State and to all States, by direct action and by civil disobedience and by education and by mutual aid...

We may not succeed—but at last we have started something, you and me and all of them. At last we are learning how to take direct action, even if at the moment it only involves "sitting in puddles as a symbolic gesture—of our own impotence." At last the intelligentsia has found a cause that doesn't involve being somewhere else when the trigger is pulled, as George Orwell put it. And at last we are beginning to see the possibility of the situation envisaged years ago by Alex Comfort, "when enough people respond to the invitation to die, not with a salute but a smack in the mouth, and the mention of war empties the factories and fills the streets." We are far from this situation, but I still hope, remembering Gandhi's observation that "A society organized and run on the basis of complete non-violence would be the purest anarchy." I don't know what our chances are. I only know what I myself am going to do.
Anarchy, No. 13, March 1962

35. Paul Goodman: "Getting into Power" (1962)

In this essay, Paul Goodman discusses the debilitating and corrupting effects of "getting into power" in order to direct and control, or reform, society. It was written in response to a campaign to run "peace" candidates in the 1962 U.S. midterm elections and published in October 1962, when the Kennedy administration brought the world to the brink of nuclear war during the Cuban missile crisis. Reprinted with the kind permission of Sally Goodman and the Goodman estate.

LIVING FUNCTIONS, BIOLOGICAL, PSYCHOSOCIOLOGICAL, or social, have very little to do with abstract, preconceived "power" that manages and coerces from outside the specific functions themselves. Indeed, it is a commonplace that abstract power—in the form of "will power," "training," discipline," "bureaucracy," "reform schooling," "scientific management," etc.—uniformly thwarts normal functioning and debases the person involved... Normal activities do not need extrinsic motivations, they have their own intrinsic energies and ends-in-view; and decisions are continually made by the ongoing functions themselves, adjusting to the environment and one another...

The functions of civilization include production, trade and travel, the bringing up of the young in the mores; also subtle but essential polarities like experimentation and stability; also irrational and superstitious fantasies like exacting revenge for crime and protecting the taboos. Different interests in the whole will continually conflict, as individuals or as interest groups; yet, since all require the commonwealth, there is also a strong functional interest in adjudication and peace, in harmonizing social invention or at least compromise. It is plausible that in the interests of armistice and adjudication, there should arise a kind of abstract institution above the conflicts, to settle them or to obviate them by plans and laws; this would certainly be Power. (This derivation is plausible but I doubt that it is historical, for in fact it is just this kind of thing that lively primitive communities accomplish by quick intuition, tone of voice, exchange of a glance, and suddenly there is unanimity, to the anthropologist's astonishment.) Much more likely, and we know historically, abstract power is invented in simple societies in emergencies of danger, of enemy attack or divine wrath. But such "dictatorship" is *ad hoc* and surprisingly lapses.

Surprisingly, considering that power corrupts; yet it makes psychological sense, for emergency is a negative function, to meet a threat to the pre-conditions of the interesting functions of life; once the danger is past, the "power" has no energy of function, no foreground interest, to maintain it...

Altogether different from this idyl is the universal history of most of the world, civilized or barbarian. Everywhere is invasion, conquest, and domination, involving for the victors the necessity to keep and exercise power, and for the others the necessity to strive for power, in order to escape suffering and exploitation. This too is entirely functional. The conqueror is originally a pirate; he and his band do not share in the commonwealth, they have interests apart from the community preyed on. Subsequently, however, piracy becomes government, the process of getting people to perform by extrinsic motivations, of penalty and blackmail, and later bribery and training. But it is only the semblance of a commonwealth, for activity is not voluntary. Necessarily, such directed and extrinsically motivated performance is not so strong, efficient, spontaneous, inventive, well-structured, or lovely as the normal functioning of a free community of interests.

Very soon society becomes lifeless. The means of community action, initiative, decision, have been pre-empted by the powerful. But the slaveholders, exploiters, and governors share in that same society and are themselves vitiated. Yet they never learn to get down off the people's back and relinquish their power. So some are holding on to an increasingly empty power; others are striving to achieve it; and most are sunk in resignation. Inevitably, as people become stupider and more careless, administration increases in size and power; and conversely. By and large, the cultures that we study in the melancholy pages of history are pathetic mixtures, with the ingredients often still discernible: There is a certain amount of normal function surviving or reviving—bread is baked, arts and sciences are pursued by a few, etc.; mostly we see the abortions of lively social functioning saddled, exploited, prevented, perverted, drained dry, paternalized by an imposed system of power and management that pre-empts the means and makes decisions *ab extra*. And the damnable thing is that, of course, everybody believes that except in this pattern nothing could possibly be accomplished: if there were no marriage license and no tax, none could properly mate and no children be born and raised; if there were no tolls there would be no bridges; if there were no university charters, there would be no higher learning; if there were no usury and no Iron Law of Wages, there would be no capital; if there were no markup of drug prices, there would be no scientific research. Once a society has this style of thought, that every activity requires licensing, underwriting, deciding by abstract power, it becomes inevitably desirable for an ambitious man to seek power and for a vigorous nation to try to be a Great Power. The more some have the power drive, the more it seems to be necessary to the others to compete, or submit, just in order to survive. (And importantly they are right.) Many are ruthless and most live in fear.

Even so, this is not the final development of the belief in "power." For that occurs when to get into power, to be prestigious and in a position to make decisions, is taken to be the social good itself, apart from any functions that it is thought to make possible. The pattern of dominance-and-submission has then been internalized and, by its clinch, fills up the whole of experience. If a man is not continually proving his potency, his mastery of others and of himself, he becomes prey to a panic of being defeated and victimized. Every vital function must therefore be used as a means of proving or it is felt as a symptom of weakness. Simply to enjoy, produce, learn, give or take, love or be angry (rather than cool), is to be vulnerable. This is different, and has different consequences, from the previous merely external domination and submission. A people that has life but thwarted functions will rebel when it can, against feudal dues, clogs to trade, suppression of thought and speech, taxation without representation, insulting privilege, the Iron Law of Wages, colonialism. But our people do not rebel against poisoning, genetic deformation, imminent total destruction.

Rather, people aspire to be top managers no matter what the goods or services produced. One is a promoter, period; or a celebrity, period. The Gross National Product must increase without consideration of the standard of life. There is no natural limit, so the only security is in deterrence. The environment is rife with projected enemies. There is a huddling together and conforming to avoid the vulnerability of any idiosyncrasy, at the same time as each one has to be one-up among his identical similars. Next, there is excitement in identifying with the "really" powerful, the leaders, the Great Nations, the decision-makers, dramatized on the front page. But these leaders, of course, feel equally powerless in the face of the Great Events. For it is characteristic of the syndrome that as soon as there is occasion for any practical activity, toward happiness, value, spirit, or even simple safety, everyone suffers from the feeling of utter powerlessness; the internalized submissiveness now has its innings. Modern technology is too complex; there is a population explosion; the computer will work out the proper war game for us; they've got your number, don't stick your neck out; "fallout is a physical fact of our nuclear age, it can be faced like any other fact" (*Manual of Civil Defense*); "I'm strong, I can take sex or leave it" (eighteen-year-old third-offender for felonious assault). In brief, the underside of the psychology of power is that Nothing Can Be Done; and the resolution of the stalemate is to explode. This is the Cold War.

I have frequently explored this psychology of proving, resignation, and catastrophic explosion (Wilhelm Reich's "primary masochism"), and I shall not pursue it again. It is filling the void of vital function by identifying with the agent that has frus-

trated it; with, subsequently, a strongly defended conceit, but panic when any occasion calls for initiative, originality, or even animal response. Here I have simply tried to relate this psychology to the uncritical unanimous acceptance of the idea of "getting into power in order to..." or just "getting into power" as an end in itself. There is a vicious circle, for (except in emergencies) the very exercise of abstract power, managing and coercing, itself tends to stand in the way and alienate, to thwart function and diminish energy, and so to increase the psychology of power. But of course the consequence of the process is to put us in fact in a continual emergency, so power creates its own need. I have tried to show how, historically, the psychology has been exacerbated by the miserable system of extrinsic motivation by incentives and punishments (including profits, wages, unemployment), reducing people to low-grade organisms no different from Professor Skinner's pigeons; whereas normal function is intrinsically motivated toward specific ends-in-view, and leads to growth in inventiveness and freedom. Where people are not directly in feelingful contact with what is to be done, nothing is done well and on time; they are always behind and the emergency becomes chronic. Even with good intentions, a few managers do not have enough mind for the needs of society—not even if their computers gallop through the calculations like lightning. I conclude that the consensus of recent political scientists that political theory is essentially the study of power-maneuvers, is itself a neurotic ideology. Normal politics has to do with the relations of specific functions in a community; and *such a study would often result in practical political inventions that would solve problems*—it would not merely predict elections and solve nothing, or play war games and destroy mankind.

`Let me sum up these remarks in one homely and not newsy proposition: Throughout the world, it is bad domestic politics that creates the deadly international politics. Conversely, pacifism is revolutionary: we will not have peace unless there is a profound change in social structure, including getting rid of national sovereign power.

Liberation, October 1962

Chapter 5
Creating A Counter-Culture

36. Herbert Read: Anarchism and Education (1944-47)

Anarchists have always regarded education as fundamental to genuine social change (see Volume 1, Chapter 14). In 1943, Herbert Read published Education Through Art, *in which he argued that the purpose of education is "to develop, at the same time as the uniqueness, the social consciousness or reciprocity of the individual... education must be a process, not only of individuation, but also of integration, which is the reconciliation of individual uniqueness with social unity." He summarized his ideas on education through art in* The Education of Free Men *(London: Freedom Press, 1944). In a subsequent lecture, "Anarchism: Past and Future,"* Freedom, *17 May 1947 (reprinted in* A One-Man Manifesto and Other Writings, *ed. D. Goodway, London: Freedom Press, 1994), Read argued that in the post-War world anarchists need to focus on the role of social psychology and education in achieving a "revolution" in people's attitudes in order to achieve lasting social change. The following excerpts are taken from "Anarchism: Past and Future" and the concluding section to* The Education of Free Men.

ANARCHISM: PAST AND FUTURE

THE FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS OR ATTITUDES underlying anarchism can, in my opinion, be reduced to three—three principles which we must accept if we are to continue to call ourselves anarchists.

The first is the belief in *personal freedom*—not merely a belief in individual liberty, but in a state of mental equilibrium in which thought is calm and life is harmonious. It is no good being politically free if we remain psychologically obsessed.

The second belief is in the social principle of *mutual aid*. We anarchists do not accept either the individualistic philosophy of the liberals and capitalists, or the totalitarian philosophy of the socialists and communists—we believe that society can be organized on a co-operative and federal basis, free from exploitation and from dictation.

About the third belief we may not be so unanimous, but I personally think that it follows originally from the first and second beliefs, and that it is now forced on us by the logic of events. It is the belief in *non-violence*—in non-violent resistance to oppression, and in non-violent methods of attaining our ends…

When we have got hold of the right principles of social relations, there will then be the problem of putting them into practice. The idea that this can be done by some kind of revolutionary *coup d'état* is really very childish. You cannot readjust individuals to society, or society to individuals, by purely external measures of control. The necessary changes are not so much political as biological—not structural, but organismic. The only way a biological or organismic change can be induced is by training or education. The word *revolution* should largely disappear from our propaganda, to be replaced by the word *education*. It is only in so far as we liberate the growing shoots of mankind, shoots not yet stunted or distorted by an environment of hatred and injustice, that we can expect to make any enduring change in society. Revolutions fail because they are built on the bogs and volcanoes of vast social neuroses; the few sane and enlightened pioneers who may lead a revolution are almost immediately swamped by the forces of the collective unconscious which the violence of the revolutionary event releases. It is not the enemy confronting the barricades which defeats a revolution, but the forces coming up from the rear.

We may have to act in a revolutionary spirit in a given situation… but a new order of society such as we desire can only be given a firm and enduring foundation within the physique and disposition of the human being, and education in its widest sense is the only means we have of securing such fundamental changes in the whole social group.

About the type of education likely to bring about such fundamental changes there may be legitimate differences of opinion… In general, what is necessary is some form of moral or ethical education. The declining influence of the churches has left an enormous gap in the process of education. The education given in primary and secondary schools, in universities and in technical colleges, is an almost exclusively *intellectual* education: it trains the mind and memory of the growing child, but neglects the emotions and sensibility.

Some of you may look askance at words like 'ethics' and 'morality' and fear that they may be a cloak under which some escapist form of religious mysticism would be gradually introduced. But that is really a very narrow-minded and timorous attitude. You have only to consider the psychological make-up of the human being, and to compare this structure with the normal methods of education, to realize that funda-

mental constituent elements of the human psyche are either completely ignored, or ruthlessly suppressed, by present practices in the schools. Everything personal, everything which is the expression of individual perceptions and feelings, is either neglected, or subordinated to some conception of normality, of social convention, of correctness. I am not suggesting that we should educate for a world of eccentrics, of willful egoists. Far from it. I am really suggesting that these forces which we call feelings, instincts and emotions, should be used creatively, and communally—that we should substitute, for our neurotic separateness and discordant relationships, disciplines of harmony and of art. The end of moral education is the creation of group discipline, of group unity or unanimity, a living-together in brotherhood. Brotherhood is an instinctive social unity—a unity in love. But it does not grow without care, without a united will and a discipline. Just as the family can be an epitome of hell if it is based on discordant wills, on parental disharmony, on ignorant suppression of natural instincts, so society is hell let loose when it is one vast neurosis due to social inequalities and social disintegration. Moral education is simply education for social unity and as such it hardly exists today. But it is the only guarantee of the endurance, of the lastingness, of the social revolution…

Finally, we have to develop and give a more perfect expression to our philosophy of freedom. Our philosophy is our faith. We believe that it is firmly based on empirical evidence—on the evidence of the natural order of the universe, on the evidence of biology and history. But we have to give systematic order to that evidence and eloquent expression to the general concepts which arise from the evidence. We shall find some support in ancient philosophy—in Indian, Chinese and Greek philosophy; but virtually we have to build on new foundations…

Humanity is diverse; evolution is creative. A philosophy of freedom is a philosophy which allows for growth, for variation, for the possibility of new dimensions of personal development and social consciousness.

How does this program which I have sketched for the future of anarchism differ from our previous conceptions of anarchism? Well, obviously, it is less political. I will not admit for a moment that it is less revolutionary. But the revolution envisaged is a humane one, and not a political one. But if we can secure a revolution in the mental and emotional attitudes of men, the rest follows. This is fundamental anarchism—anarchist fundamentalism. It discards forever the romantic conception of anarchism—conspiracy, assassination, citizen armies, the barricades. All that kind of futile agitation has long been obsolete: but it was finally blown into oblivion by the atomic bomb. The power of the State, of our enemy, is now absolute. We cannot

struggle against it *on the plane of force*, on the material plane. Our action must be piecemeal, non-violent, insidious and universally pervasive.

But this does not mean that we should retire to some sort of monastic life and lead a purely spiritual existence. On the contrary we must study various forms of non-violent action, and above all the strategy and tactics of the strike weapon. Passive resistance to all forms of injustice must be organized, and must be made effective. Our most immediate aim is resistance to military conscription and the preparation of some co-ordinated policy of universal resistance to all forms of military action wherever and for whatever reason used. That aim alone is sufficient to absorb the energies of all those comrades whose temperaments are extraverted and energetic. But however much we become engaged in such revolutionary activities, do not let us forget that the real revolution is internal, that the most effective action is molecular, and that only insofar as we change the actual disposition of men do we guarantee the enduring success of the social revolution we all desire.

THE EDUCATION OF FREE MEN

We who demand freedom in education, autonomy in the school and self-government in industry are not inspired by any vague ideal of liberation. What we preach is really a discipline and a morality as formal and as fixed as any preached by church or state. But our law is given in nature, is discoverable by scientific method, and, as Aristotle points out, human beings are adapted by nature to receive this law. Because we are so adapted, freedom, which is a vague concept to so many people, becomes a perfectly real and vivid principle, because it is a habit to which we are pre-conditioned by biological elements in our physical frame and nervous constitution.

Education, from this point of view, is an undeveloped science. To discover, for example, the degree of poise and co-ordination in the muscular system of the body is an art which has never yet been defined and practiced. Harmony within the family, harmony within the social group, harmony within and among nations—these are no less psycho- physiological problems, questions of pattern and practice, of adjustment to natural proportions and conformity to natural harmonies.

Each individual begins life as a dynamic unity. Into that original unity tensions and distortions are introduced by an unconscious and largely alien environment. It is alien because it is unconscious. Unless we were motivated by hatred towards the human race, we could not consciously introduce those abstract systems of law and morality on which the evolving body and soul of the person, born to potential unity and beauty, are disastrously stretched and deformed.

I do not pretend to know what are the exact precepts of a morality of love and mutual aid: I doubt if they can be formulated more explicitly than they were long ago in the Sermon on the Mount. But life, which is an organic growth, cannot be lived according to an abstract formula of words, but only to a pattern, and not to a pattern in the abstract sense of a defined form, but only to a living, evolving form, which obeys rules not in stasis, but in growth. Life is movement: we cannot halt it for a moment without killing it. The pattern is only visible in time. We can give pattern to our span of years, but we cannot, without death or distortion give life to a pattern of law, to any 'purely verbal, symbolic system of behaviour' [Dr. Trigant Burrow]. The basis of a living community, the basis of individual happiness, is physiological: it is only insofar as this physiological basis has unity with nature (*physis* = nature) that. society itself can have harmony and health. It is in small units—in the family circle, in the classroom and in the school, that this harmony and health must be first achieved. In so far as some abstraction called the state interferes with the integrity of these groups —and by their integrity we mean their capacity for spontaneous growth—in that degree the state is denying life and health to its citizens. Freedom is simply space for spontaneous action: men live in communities solely to secure that space…

Art… is a discipline which the senses seek in their intuitive perception of form, of harmony, of proportion, of the integrity or wholeness of any experience. It is also the discipline of the tool and the material—the discipline imposed by pencil or pen, by the loom or the potter's wheel, by the physical nature of paint, textiles, wood, stone or clay.

But the point about such discipline is that it is innate: it is part of our physiological constitution, and is there to be encouraged and matured. It does not have to be imposed by the schoolmaster or the drill sergeant: it is not a kind of physical torture. It is a faculty within the child which responds to sympathy and love, to the intelligent anticipation of impulses and trends in the individuality of the child. For this reason the teacher must be primarily a person and not a pedagogue, a friend rather than a master or mistress, an infinitely patient collaborator. Put in a drier and more pedantic way, the aim of education is to discover the child's psychological type, and to allow each type its natural line of development, its natural form of integration. That is the real meaning of freedom in education.

The art of children is supremely important for this very reason: it is the earliest and the most exact index to the child's individual psychology. Once the psychological tendency or trend of a child is known, its own individuality can be developed by the discipline of art, till it has its own form and beauty, which is its unique contribution

to the beauties of human nature. This, of course, is the antithesis of those totalitarian doctrines of education (not confined to totalitarian countries) which strive to impose a unique concept of human nature on the infinite variety of human persons.

A child's art, therefore, is its passport to freedom, to the full fruition of all its gifts and talents, to its true and stable happiness in adult life. Art leads the child out of itself. It may begin as a lonely individual activity as the self-absorbed scribbling of a baby on a piece of paper. But the child scribbles in order to communicate its inner world to a sympathetic spectator, to the parent from whom it expects a sympathetic response.

Too often, alas, it receives only indifference or ridicule. Nothing is more crushing to the infant spirit than a parent's or a teacher's contempt for those creative efforts of expression. That is one aspect of a crime which disgraces the whole of our intellectual civilization and which, in my opinion, is the root cause of our social disintegration. We sow the seeds of disunity in the nursery and the classroom, with our superior adult conceit. We divide the intelligence from the sensibility of our children, create split-men (schizophrenics, to give them a psychological name), and then discover that we have no social unity.

We begin our life in unity—the physical unity of the mother and child, to which corresponds the emotional unity of love. We should build on that original unity, extending it first to the family, where the seeds of hatred are so easily and so often sown, and then to the school, and so by stages to the farm, the workshop, the village and the whole community But the basis of unity at each successive stage, as at the first stage, is creativity. We unite to create, and the pattern of creation is in nature, and we discover and conform to this pattern by all the methods of artistic activity—-by music, by dancing and drama, but also by working together and living together, for, in a sane civilization, these too are arts of the same natural pattern.

37. Paul Goodman: A Public Dream of Universal Disaster (1950)

The following excerpts are from Paul Goodman's contribution to a symposium on the H-Bomb, printed by Alternative *(March 1950) and distributed free by the Committee for Non-Violent Revolution. Later that year the Korean War began and Alternative was banned from the mails for advocating draft resistance. Goodman's socio-psychological analysis of contemporary society is more fully developed in his contribution to* Gestalt Therapy: Excitement and Growth in the Human Personality *(New York: Julian Press, 1951), co-written with Frederick Perls and Ralph Hefferline, and* Growing Up Absurd: Problems of Youth in the Organized Society *(New York: Random House, 1960).*

WE HAVE IN AMERICA A COMBINATION OF unexampled general wealth and unexampled civil peace. Economically and sociologically these are beneficent causes of each other, the more civil order the more production, and the more wealth the less incentive to destroy the civil order. By civil order here is meant not the absence of crimes of violence, but the pervasive safety of both city and country. Compared with other ages, travel is without danger anywhere and at any hour; there are almost no brawls, riots, or armed bands. Madmen do not roam the streets, disease is quickly isolated in hospitals; death is never seen, childbirth rarely. Meat is eaten, but no one in the city ever sees an animal slaughtered. No such state of non-violence, safety, and sterility has ever before existed. Concerning our wealth, again, I need only point out that none of the debated economic problems has to do with subsistence; the unions demand better hours, wages, and security, the capitalists demand fewer controls and better conditions of reinvestment; a single case of starvation is a scandal for the press. Less than 10% of the economy is concerned with elementary subsistence. Never in history have there been so many comforts, luxuries, and entertainments.

Psychologically the picture is more dubious. There is little frustration but there is little satisfaction. General bafflement and insecurity of individuals in the too-big society destroy self-confidence and initiative, and without these there cannot be active enjoyment. Sports and entertainments are passive; the choices on the mass-market are passive; people make nothing for themselves and do nothing for themselves. The quantity of sexuality is increasingly great and approaching adequacy, but the de-sensitization is extreme. It used to be felt that science and technology and the reform in mores would bring an age of happiness. This hope is disappointed; everywhere people are disappointed. Even so far, then, there is evident a reason to smash things, to destroy not this or that part of the system (e.g. the upper class), but the whole system en bloc; for it offers no promise, but only more of the same. And considered more deeply, we have here the condition almost specific for the excitement of primary masochism: continual stimulation and only partial release of tension, unbearable heightening of the unawares tension (unawares because people do not know what they want nor how to get it), and finally the desire for orgasm interpreted as a desire for total self-destruction. It is inevitable that there should be a public dream of universal disaster, with explosions, fires, and electric-shocks; and people pool their efforts to bring this apocalypse to an actuality.

At the same time, however, all overt expression of destructiveness, annihilation, anger, combativeness, murderousness, is suppressed, in the state of civil peace. To a large degree the feeling of anger is suppressed and even repressed. People are

sensible, tolerant, polite, and cooperative in being pushed around. But the occasions of anger are not minimized. On the contrary, just the situation of substituting for the large movements of initiative the competitive routine of offices, bureaucracies, and factories, produces continual petty frictions, hurt feelings, being crossed. Small anger is continually generated and never really let out; big anger (that goes with big initiative) is repressed. The result is the projection of the angry situation afar; we find big distant causes adequate to explain the accumulated anger that is certainly not explicable by petty frictions (and that is largely self-hatred). In brief, one is angry with the enemy.

This enemy is also cruel and hardly human; there is no use in treating with him as tho he were a human being. Why is this? The aim of American love, as is proved by the content of all popular cinema and literature, is sado-masochistic; but the love-making itself is not, in general, sado-masochistic (for that would be anti-social and indecent). Therefore it must be "someone else" who is sadistic.

In civil society, the cluster of aggressive drives is "anti-social," but fortunately in wars they are not "anti-social." That is, one can wage wars against enemies who indeed anger, and fascinate, by their beastliness and sub-human strength. But it must be remembered that the ultimate aim of these wars is universal explosion and disaster, satisfaction at last, and the end of civil peace.

The mass-democratic army, further, is excellently apt for the needs of the people. It gives security, removes one from the jobs and homes that give no great pleasure and rouse feelings of inadequacy; and it organizes one's efforts more actively toward sadism and primary masochism.

People observe the catastrophe approaching: they receive rational warnings and make all kinds of resolutions. But energy is paralyzed for one is fascinated by and really desirous of the dangerous prospect. One is eager to complete the unfinished situation. People are bent on mass suicide, an outcome that solves most problems without personal guilt.

In these circumstances any pacifist propaganda without adventurous revolutionary social and psychological action is worse than useless: it solves no problems and increases personal guilt. To refuse war in a society geared to war is a salutary shock, but the shock is useful merely as a means to further releases of anxiety and aggression; as such a good fuck or a fist-fight is equally useful.

38. L'Impulso: Resistance or Revolution (1950)

The developments in anarchist theory that followed the Second World War were not welcomed by all anarchists, many of whom continued to put their faith in the working class. The following excerpts, translated by Paul Sharkey, are from an Italian anarchist polemic, "Resistencialism: Plan of Defeat," by some class struggle anarchists, including Arrigo Cervetto, Pier Carlo Masini, Ugo Scattoni and Renzo Sbriccoli, published in their paper, L'Impulso, *in February 1950. The main object of their attack was the Italian anarchist review,* Volontà, *which they accused of adulterating anarchism with the new ideas coming from anarchists in the Anglo-Saxon countries, such as Herbert Read.*

The Volontà *group was receptive to the new ideas coming from Anglo-American anarchists, particularly their critiques of consumer culture, technology and conventional notions of progress. What the class struggle anarchists of* L'Impulso *could not accept or explain was the historic failure of the proletariat to embrace the anarchist cause. They derisively referred to these new anarchist currents as "resistencialism," because these currents advocated resistance to all authority, regardless of the prospects of a successful working class revolution. When it became clear that the working class was not unifying around revolutionary anarchist ideas, the class struggle anarchists were presented with a dilemma: join with the majority of workers who supported political action or remain anarchists. Some of them, such as Pier Carlo Masini, chose the first alternative and abandoned anarchism altogether.*

RESISTENCIALISM: A NEOLOGISM MEANT AS a generic term for those pseudo-revolutionary currents that in fact, by casting themselves in the role of brake or resistance, making their demands or registering their protests within bourgeois society, rejecting a clean break with or usurping of it, are doomed to be absorbed or digested into it...

The devising of the term was suggested to us by a recent editorial in the review *Études Anarchistes*, tellingly entitled "Resistance and Revolution" (Year 1, No. 4, July 1949) in which two distinct strains are identified within international anarchism: the "resistencialist" strain which rules the roost in the Anglo-Saxon countries, and the revolutionary strain which has its roots in the Latin countries...

Resistencialism rejects any logical definition, any rational systematization, any distinct political physiognomy. It rides out to do battle with schemas, these being the devilish instruments of logic, and with systems, the hellish realms of reason.

It is a-logical, anti-systemic and extra-rational.

"Indeed, rational constructs have proven to be fallacious precisely because of that rationality. In place of such logical plans we need to have the courage to live without plans…the turbulent disorder of spontaneous, independent ventures."

Its number one foe is ideology. When an ideology pauses in front of it, resistencialism denounces it as a secret weapon in the armoury of Power… anybody professing it being a "*general or a would-be general*." And ideology comes tumbling down!

… "We deliberately shun the tendency to 'systematize' this multi-faceted world in accordance with the simplistic lines of some ideology. We reject any attempt to seek out, through a review, allegedly definitive certainties that furnish the basis for the construction of yet another ideology upon which another uniformly structured Movement then feeds."

Hence the rejection of any over-arching theoretical organization, or any affiliation to a program, in the name of some amorphous, polyvalent anarchism.

"In terms of methodology, anarchism is ipso facto a-systematic, if not anti-systematic." Hence the insistence upon the matters of variety, multiplicity, and the contrasts and contradictions of "competitive tension" and "creative disorder."

"But is it not plain that the human is made up of contradictions, hostilities, dissipations, divergent views, assertions of contradictory aims and that I do not 'enter' this magma from without, determined by activation of the individual will and enhanced through strength of numbers?

"Beware of attempts to 'introduce order.' 'Who' will determine 'how'? That way lies Mussolini and Hitler."

Hence the constant invocation of "common sense" and "simple, elementary ideas" as the empirical surrogates of a valid theoretical guide and the recurrent cry of the anti-cultural: "All ideologues are potential tyrants."

Hence the childish paeans to indiscipline for its own sake, disobedience for disobedience's sake, to revolt as an end in itself in the absence of any clearly defined goals.

"Which is why the pointless cry of 'Long live freedom' today translates primarily as a more determined resolution: Long live indiscipline, long live disobedience."

On these tired old variations on the theme of freedom are founded resistencialism's anti-social and effectively reactionary groundwork.

In this way, anarchism stops being the ideology of the working and peasant class, the product of a reasoned re-elaboration of revolutionary experiences, the theoretical weapon for the defence of the unitary, ongoing interests of the labouring class, the objective outcome of a specific historic process: in the skilful hands of the resistencialists, it becomes a motley, whimsical subjective representation, a multi-purpose tool and, once

reduced to a lifeless, worn-out, lightweight thing, it proves, first, the ideological disarmament of the class and then its suicide, carried out in tribute to some abstract, metaphysical freedom.

The confusion grows with the insistence upon the multifarious and the contradictory: not content with justifying the current disorderliness of a capitalist society which is "multifarious and contradictory," it offers atomization and proliferation of its conflicts as the only remedy to its drawbacks, and sets about trying to reproduce those contradictions in extreme and frantic form within the class movement itself, forgetting that, following that reasoning, even the variety in its most minor terms, and the antinomy in its contrasting terms, presuppose the tightest unity (there being no multiplicity of the multiplicitous, no antinomy of antinomies)…

[W]e can understand the ease with which the anti-Marxist critique is conducted in *Volontà:*

> The roots of social ills lies in economic inequality, Marx says, and everything else springs from that… Anarchism, on the other hand, says: the root of society's ills is authority… Economic primacy is but one facet of this affliction. Indeed, the ranks of those without property also include quite a few individuals and groups minded to command and those who have property also include individuals and groups sensitive to freedom, albeit not many. There are obvious non-economic forms of ascendancy as well as intellectual and moral ones that depend upon the strength of tradition and the power of cultural privileges and which carry rather more weight in society than economic ones, which are also the means whereby economic ascendancy manages to survive and found the power of their elites upon the submissiveness and prejudices of the masses. This is a *de facto* reality…

That is a statement that… turns on its head the whole traditional revolutionary approach of anarchism that attacked the forces of conservatism *en bloc* by striking directly at its established interests.

Nor, in the assault upon the notion of class, is there any lack of appeal to the acquisitive poor and unselfish rich, the trite and repeatedly rebutted banality of the revolutionary critique which has been resuscitated time and again with moderate simplicity.

Resistencialism revives all this, exposing its own impoverishment in terms of arguments and turning a blind eye to the fact that the class movement does not look upon men as they might like to be but rather as they actually are in terms of the social position they hold and the historical role they fill, as it explains away the phenome-

non of the *declassé* as a spill-over from the bourgeoisie of young people who, not having a ripened consciousness of their own class but having at the same time turned their backs on a decadent society incapable of satisfying their thirst for learning and their craving for a history, are pushed down into the proletariat and absorbed into it, rightly challenging the philanthropy and liberality displayed by individual captains of industry or groups thereof.

The psychological introspection that *Volontà* tries to inject into social criticism in order to supplant the notion of class is in fact a superb means of diverting attention towards secondary and subsidiary matters and a dangerous weapon in the relativization and negation of the conceptual foundations of our struggle. Such is the logical consequence of resistencialism, the political face of pragmatism and relativism.

And the conclusion is the usual one.

Bereft of the tiller and compass of principles, one ends up invoking the element of experience or reactionary common sense, which are obviously extra-rational factors or "simple, elementary notions" (i.e., details, fragments, embryos, non-ideas) in order to strive forward into the daylight, planless and directionless, on the sole basis of "trial and error."

Note that only in a time of dispersion and drift such as the one we are currently experiencing could a trend peddling such arguments prosper at all; only in a time of counter-revolutionary crisis such as the present could such resistencialist notions be smuggled into anarchism by means of trespasses against its principles and take root there…

There is no such thing as one civilization or one society. There is class civilization and class society. And proletarian civilization on the move, the proletarian society in the making, have peaked not in the super-capitalism of the USA but rather in the Paris Commune, in the original soviets in Russia, in the European revolutions during the red years following the First World War, and in the Spanish revolution. These are the high watermarks, the highest points reached by the proletariat in its class progress. We need to move on from there by subjecting these experiences and experiments to criticism and review with an eye to perfecting plans for further revolutionary undertakings…

"Trying to get us 20th century anarchists to adopt the same practical postures struck by the anarchists of the 19th century, is really flying in the face of history. Those anarchists never witnessed the death of socialism, as it turned into Bolshevism or Labourism (and, in the negative sense, fascism). These are the experiences that tell us: socialism is dead and buried and differently begun again."

…For resistencialists, the original, age-old symbiotic relationship between socialism and anarchism has been superseded and it has become a "hybrid."

"Hybrids of the 'libertarian socialist' variety, or 'anarchist socialist' variety or the 'classist anarchist' sort seem—from an anarchist point of view moreover—to strike implicitly contradictory poses"…

We would like to pause at this point to consider the supposed contradiction between anarchism and classism, between the anarchist movement and the class movement.

Resistencialism steers clear of "simplification," of the division of society into classes, and thus takes men at random, one by one, independently of their social standing, fishing for them in that great melting pot of the reaction, politically undifferentiated strata (or else takes account of status in society but only as an environmental or professional connotation, without tossing in the absurd hypothesis that classes do exist). As far as *Volontà* is concerned, classes are a figment of the imagination, mere supposition, a non-existent and abstract factor; the class criterion being an illusory criterion and the proletariat a myth.

What matters to the resistencialist is Man, the man in the street, with his instinctive needs and impulses and passions: the poor man, the poor woman, the poet, the thief, the nurse, the whore, an amorphous, contradictory, indeed unclassifiable reality. Should that man try to measure his circumstances alongside those of others, we discover that he is part and parcel of a class that acts and reacts in a uniform manner, single-mindedly, moving towards shared goals; if he becomes aware of his class's strength in solidarity and indeed of its historic vocation, then that man is no longer so straightforward, commonplace and real; he is an abstraction and no longer serves the purposes of resistencialist discourse. Then should that man, elaborating upon the age-old day to day experiences of his class embrace a theory, embrace the historic role he is awarded by that theory, then that man, formerly clear-sighted and astute, no longer serves the purposes of the resistencialist farce.

"Therefore we do not divide up the world of men and women into economic classes or political classes, or moral classes or classes of any other sort. We look at each man and woman on his or her own. Even as we notice the tremendous negative burden of the will to rule even among the poor, so we learn to prize the rudiments of libertarian will to be found even among the wealthy, even those faithful to Church and Party…"

The common man may be rich or poor, a have or a have-not, a property-owner or a proletarian. None of it matters: it is enough that this man does not get into poli-

tics, distrusts politicians and their 'ignoble arts' and sticks to the modest, limited horizons of family and work... stays ideologically blinkered and intellectually deaf, "an anarchist even when he is not aware of it," for him to be welcomed into the new anarchist reprint of the Almanach of Good Guys.

Volontà replies to the criticisms that anarchists raise about this attempted dismantling of the notion of class by borrowing some of the bile from anti-proletarian writings and from the ancient reserves of conservative journalism.

Thus it denies the value of: "some alleged class, the only real aspect of which is that, as a myth, it is the prop for ideological elites in need of an army by which to don the mantle of generalship to which they feel an irresistible attraction."

Thus, with grieved and frightened pietism, the resistencialists break a lance against the "revolutionaries" responsible for all the working people's misfortunes.

"In all of this there is the deliberate effort to set the Italian people back on some new Way of the Cross wherein it repeats the experience it has already had with the Socialist Parties."

However the criticism is a very lame one even when it tries to break down the historical equation of class antagonism into segments corresponding to countless "social groups," be they hegemonic or subaltern, even when the ghosts of the middle orders or feudal economy are produced, even when they offer to replace the bourgeois-proletarian divide, every bit as frightening as "the one between whites and blacks, between saints and sinners" with "the ongoing conflict between innovators and conservatives"—which is a vacuous phrase or an outright truism.

Viewed in this light, the traditional reaction-revolution relationship is also warped into something else associated with all diversionary tendencies: the regression-progress divide.

That progress rules out violence, advocates evolution and ultimately becomes its opposite is confirmed by this passage: "revolution... does not necessarily mean violent overthrow because the work of destruction of our old society has already been greatly advanced by fascism and war (sic). It is now time to rebuild."

So far, resistencialism has been rehearsing the old saws of educationism, and small wonder. Only later did it devise a new and suggestive scheme of revolution, trying to palm it off on people not quite cured of their revolutionary romanticism.

"We are not alarmed to detect an initial period of chaos in every revolution... as long as we trust in men, as long as the belief is that, if they are left free socially—through the unleashing of their humanity and bestiality, whereby they also ring up serious mistakes—they will become truly free as individuals too."

"Our understanding is that the destruction of the bourgeois order will instantly usher in chaos. But if one or two generations show enough courage to get the better of that chaos, keeping the craving for freedom constantly alive, out of this a new order will emerge."

But, what do you know? None of that is revolution, it is crisis.

The revolution is active intervention by the broad worker and peasant masses radicalized by crisis and linked to the active minority in the very crisis of bourgeois society, for the purpose of putting an end to the resultant chaos: it is not itself the chaos.

Describing the act of revolution as "the concrete dissolution of all social ties," as "conclusive chaos," or as "creative chaos," is tantamount to furnishing the class enemy and our own adversaries with valid means of launching a polemical assault upon anarchism…

But we can very readily understand how that literary description of revolution as a "crisis" is merely an expedient whereby the hard and fast problems of revolution can be dodged: the problem of laying the groundwork for it (preparing the chaos?), the problem of its defence (defending the chaos?), the problem of its spread through space and time and the matter of its active minority.

Indeed we know from experience that there are three vital coefficients to the act of revolution: the crisis in the capitalist system, nationally and internationally; active participation by the broad worker and peasant masses of city and countryside; and the organized action of the activist minority.

Resistencialists are not conversant with these requirements and place the activist minority on a par with reactionary elites that follow or shadow the paths of power. However, the former harbour an overwhelming contempt for the masses, and place their trust in the spontaneity of the "common folk" as enough to bring off the revolutionary "miracle" and know nothing of the locomotive function of the activist minority and prefer chaos (in fact, counter-revolution) to its presence.

"The effective evil, that is, the root cause of the general unsuitability of the average man and woman, in terms of their social relations, to self-government, is the presence of elites. There is in fact but one cure for this, and only one: boldly confronting the requirement for a period of chaos… This might look like an irrational course that does not lead towards anything organic. And it is indeed irrational… but is effectively the right course."

The author forgets yet again the profound difference between minorities endowed with an authoritarian ideology and minorities fed with a libertarian ideology:

he forgets that ideology is not something abstract but a tradition, a pedagogy, a consistent shaping of generations of militants, a methodology, custom and practice, a literature: which is to say, a real weight, a genuine brake, a true guarantee.

The activist minority cannot betray its own ideology without letting itself down as an activist minority. The minorities which have failed thus far have gone bankrupt, not because they failed to enact their principles but precisely because they… enacted principles that were essentially weak principles liable to corruption and proven bankrupt.

The anarchist minority will not fail if the theory it applies—anarchism—is the right treatment. And since we know that anarchism is not only the correct general theory but also a theory that is especially correct in relation to the activist minority and its nature, its functions, its limitations, we trust to that essential instrument of the struggle.

Only the resistencialists, having turned their backs on anarchism's socialist contents and casting aside the notion of class, misrepresenting the notion of revolution, inevitably were led… to underrate the activist minority and thus to underrate the anarchist movement itself…

[W]hen we read in *Volontà* that we should be taking on those with power "not because they are rich but because they are masters, not because they seize a larger portion of produce than we do, but because they strip us of the freedom to dispose of our own labours" and "for the sake of a society wherein we will largely be less well off than in the gigantic cities grown up around mass industry, but we will be more free," we are obliged to conclude that we are not exactly dealing with a bourgeois-capitalist product brand here but rather with a paleo-bourgeois, pre-capitalist, artisanal product—and thus a product that is all the more anachronistic and backward-looking…

Volontà fails to broach the issue of a wage that is no longer decapitated by the entrepreneur's profits: nor does it address the issue of pay sufficient to meet one's needs. In a vague and fantastic way, it only raises the necessity of doing away with the wage, and therefore proclaims the freedom to work whenever, however and wherever one pleases, as well as the freedom not to work.

Objections: This cannot be taken seriously. The resistencialists see the wage as anti-aesthetic. So the wage must be done way with. They fail to suggest any new form of recompense and merely devise utopias on the theme of "creative joy." They replace the traditional formula of "he who does not work, neither shall he eat," with the paradise island fantasies of "food is there for all, even for those who do no work," including tramps and parasites…

Resistencialists see the anarchist society of "free coexistence and competition between many kinds of organizations" as necessarily a pluralist society, inclusive of countless lifestyles and associations, from individual property rights to collective ownership.

Here the utter absence of revolutionary ideas stands exposed.

In economics, in fact, there is no pluralism, but only a fixed and insurmountable dualism: either a socialist economic organization without private ownership and without free competition, or liberal economic disorganization founded on private property and free competition.

Tertium non datur. There is no third way and the notion of mixed management (e.g. economic islands along cooperative or community lines floating in a sea of capitalist disorder) is not a marriage of socialist organization with liberal disorganization but is wholly incorporated within the latter.

Volontà, reducing socialism to an "experiment to be mounted" within a contradictory society the foundations of which remain individualistic economic units, is unaware that those units, by their very nature, will receive a boost, an incentive to accumulation and conquest. In the dynamism of history the culmination of this process is for socialist communities, hypothetically hatched within enemy territory, to be gobbled up by privately owned units, or—if only!—the other way around.

So much for the realm of resistencialist freedom ("a society in which all may be free... implies an ever greater expansion of diversity and competition"). The freedom of *homo homini lupus* of the Hobbesian tradition, the freedom of one man to act like a wolf preying upon another. Unless the angel of harmony steps in... such a society still produces one thing and always will: the State, the product of its class contradictions.

All of the foregoing definitively establishes that an anarchist movement of consequence cannot be built upon the ashes of resistencialism.

Once it manages to ensconce itself within the anarchist movement, resistencialism is capable of overseeing only one thing of any consequence: defeat...

According to resistencialists, the movement should be without foundation, in terms of either program or organization; it should not operate under guidance... but pursue many conflicting directions and maybe even be directionless; it should not base its hopes upon the strength of activist organization, but upon "minimal groups" of resisters. It should remain somewhat primitive, patriarchal, highly intimate and clannish.

The type of "resistencialist" militant this produces is, moreover, rather indefinable; he should not give priority to "pervasive" political work "within the context of working life, busy days of work and love;" he should not focus his interest on the complex problems of revolutionary strategy but carry out "quiet, unassuming social

activity comprised of personal contacts and encounters;" he should not seek contact with the broad masses so as to identify his problems with theirs, but rather be content with relations with his "neighbour" and gauge the impact of "how great a social standing he has earned through his own lifetstyle."

We may state that the resistencialist is the exact opposite of the squalid "professional revolutionary" who has cut all ties with society, career, work and family and who could not give a damn for his "standing in society" and who, without turning into a hermit or fanatic, has embraced a harsh self-discipline made up of modesty, probity, balance and ongoing political endeavour (we might cite Bakunin and Cafiero here as instances from a long time ago or Makhno and Durruti as more recent examples).

We fail to understand how, after reducing the militant to such a "resistencialist" goo, one could stake all one's hopes on individual action, even though the rejection of collective action (basically the only sort that, besides the results, holds out any guarantee of effective emancipation of the broad masses by means of their participation in the struggle) offers no other way forward.

39. David Thoreau Wieck: The Realization of Freedom (1953)

David Thoreau Wieck (1921-1997) became interested in anarchism during the Spanish Revolution and Civil War, inspired by the anarcho-syndicalist CNT (Volume 1, Selection 124). He was imprisoned for three years during the Second World War for resisting the draft and was involved in several prison actions protesting racial segregation (as were several other anarchists, such as Holley Cantine Jr., see Selection 21). After the war he became an editor and contributor to Resistance, *one of the English language anarchist publications scorned by the* L'Impulso *group.* Resistance *advocated continued draft resistance as part of its opposition to war, militarism and the state. The following excerpts are taken from Wieck's contribution to* Resistance, *Vol. X1, No. I (August 1953).*

ANARCHISM BEGINS BY EVALUATING THE society we live in—our "way of life." In this life we find too much misery and unhappiness, too much destruction, too little fulfillment of the potentialities of human beings.

First, there are the gross evils that everyone perceives: the waste, the destruction, the restrictions. Our nation is involved in endless wars, the government conscripts our young men, wealth is destroyed. Our natural riches, our scientific genius, are not shared with the impoverished nations of the world, but are the means of control and exploitation. Now, in the climate of permanent war, a great cloud of prohibition and fear is darkening the face of our people, and citizens fearful of being silenced are beginning to learn the dismal art of silence.

Thinking people are aware, too, that after a dozen years of high prosperity, millions still live on the borderline of poverty. They know a little of what it means in America to belong to a dark-skinned race. It is easy to see that only a minority of Americans can "succeed," while the greater number are condemned to lifelong, futile pursuit of the goals of wealth and social status they have been educated to aspire to.

The truth is that the wealth, the position, the standard of living we have learned to strive for, do not yield deep satisfaction—they are joyless and even boring. The successful man feels a dissatisfaction he tries to resolve by renewed struggle to achieve greater heights. In our emphasis on wealth and status, we squeeze out everything irrelevant to these goals, everything that could possibly be worthy of our effort, and rewarding.

We all know that work is dominated by motives of profit—but this is not the worst. It is absolutely dominated by motives of *consumption*, as profits, or wages, or (in "welfare" theories) quantity of social production. To this aim all our scientific endeavor, all our ingenuity of organization, is attuned. But man is not—need it be said?—merely a *consumer*, he is a worker. As a worker he is now only a machine-tender, a passive instrument of industries geared to production of quantity. The deterioration of the quality of goods is a painful, if minor, consequence of this one-sided economy: the debasement of work in a society dedicated to economic progress is an irony and a disaster...

In our society, too, we take it for granted that we should be strangers to each other—strangers who work together, and "deal" with each other, by the media of authority and money-exchange. We miss, hardly aware of our loss, the qualities of social warmth, of fraternal rivalry and cooperation—we miss these satisfactions and the strength they would give us.

We take it for granted that a small number of people, more or less talented, shall make—one would hardly say "create"—under the usual consumption-oriented conditions of the market, our "works of art," our "entertainment," while the rest of us are spectators.

And we are also a people who, in grave conflict within ourselves, have created all manner of crippling make-shifts to reconcile, with the life-goals our society teaches us, with the demands for conformity made upon us, our half-perceived but real yearnings for love, for self-respect, for friendships, for creative activities. Or rather, not reconciled the two forces, but reconciled ourselves to heavy deprivations.

Now, we must praise our country for its marvelous productive techniques, its medical miracles, the high development of scientific knowledge. We have, as few so-

cieties have ever had, the basis for living. But there is still—except for a very few—nothing but existence, an unworthy survival.

It is the purpose of anarchism to look beyond survival—to look at what must be done if we are to achieve a worthy and noble life.

How can these problems be met? The obvious way, the one continually tried by good-intentioned people, is to attack each problem separately. We are plagued by war—so we look for ways to achieve peace. Poverty and gross inequality are unjust and destructive—the treatment of law-breakers is a scandal to a civilized country—our educational systems make the many literate, but educate very few—and so, on these and many other fronts, men and women are working to undo the evils.

A right beginning! But it does not turn out well, and failure to pay frank attention to the results, and the reasons for the results, leaves many good-hearted people fixed in dead-ends.

In certain cases, like war, the evil stubbornly resists every effort to abolish it, or even limit it.

In other cases the evil can be modified, but its most destructive features persist. Thus, prison reform can eliminate certain brutalities, but imprisonment, no matter how modified, destroys the best qualities in a man. Or, the conditions of labour in industry are improved—the worker is protected against injury, discharge and humiliation—but the work does not, by becoming less inhumane, become human. Or, the living standards of workers are raised—but still the worker must sell his labour-power, still he is only an instrument, a hand, whose mind and inventiveness are not wanted. Nor does "economic security" transform a lonely, frightened citizen into a human being.

Or a third thing occurs: the reform can be achieved, but only by adding to the bureaucratic structure of society. Such has been the destiny of the labour movement. And bureaucracy is the deliberate—and only possible—method of government to cope with economic destitution in old age, with the reckless exploitation of natural resources, with the economic piracy of monopolists...

If we look at the history of each reform-effort, we can see that neither lack of good will, nor ignorance, has defeated or limited them. Reform has failed because each of these evils fulfills an essential function in our society (or is bound up with an essential function), and none can be arbitrarily ripped out of the total pattern. In the best cases, the evils can be mitigated only by the pyramiding of bureaucracy. In the worst cases, not even this much relief is possible.

How could the unequal property system be upheld without police and prisons? How can capitalist exploitation be mitigated, if not by the superimposition of bu-

reaucracy? How could there be community when people are competing desperately with each other, when we are frightened of each other, hostile toward each other? How can our lives as workers become different, while consumption and war remain the dominant motives? How can there be war, and no centralized government? How centralized government, and no war? The list could be extended almost indefinitely. These are the dilemmas of reform.

Our society does change constantly, of course—but always it turns on the poles of power, war, the State. It becomes more bureaucratic or less, more warlike or less, more restricting or less—there can be all the stages from Capitalism to State Communism, from limited democracy to totalitarianism. These variations can mean the difference between tolerable and intolerable existence. But they do not allow, in the best of them, for the growth and development of Man. For the great majority of people, there is no life, merely labourious survival.

In order to give a new tone to our society, a new quality to our life, we must change the central principles of our society—we must learn how to live socially, and work together, without the profit-and-power motive; without a monopoly property-system; without centralized political authority; without war. This is why the anarchist proposals are so extreme, so sweeping; and why anything short of them brings disappointment, only superficial change…

Anarchists, anarchists alone, propose to reorganize our common life without the crippling destructive principles of power, monopoly-property, and war.

The principle which anarchists propose to substitute is Freedom—but freedom in a sense quite different from its debasement in the wars of propaganda. We contend that men need to be free of restriction in order to grow to the limit of their powers—and that when these powers are released from inhibition, entirely new solutions to our economic, political, and social problems will be possible.

Our anarchist philosophers have emphasized different facets of our unutilized "human resources":

1. Man tends to be rational, to be able to recognize his problems and solve them. A false education, from infancy to adulthood, and the "positive institutions" by which society has tried to preserve order and morality among a bewildered population, have crippled these powers. Let men be free, from the first, encouraged to discover their own abilities and own interests, let them be ungoverned, and they will tend to have "right opinions."

(In the false education of today, the suppression and distortion of sensual pleasure certainly plays a dynamic role. I think it remains moot whether it plays a

decisive *initiating* role—and will therefore be a special problem in achieving freedom—or is a reflex of social unhappiness, inhibition of sociality, and other factors. In either case, its crippling influences make the sexual mores, both here and now and in respect to a free society, a natural major concern of anarchists.)

2. The self-interests of people clash, but we need not dread this clash. It is destructive now because people submit to others, because they acknowledge Power and Authority. It can be productive, it will lead men beyond anything the isolated individual could possibly conceive of—and Authority is just such an isolated individual—but only if men are unashamedly themselves, not possessed by Ideas, Gods, Authorities, or Neuroses.

3. Men possess a natural tendency to solidarity, to cooperation. This tendency our social institutions check and even suppress. Let men rid themselves of these constraints, and we will come into our biological heritage of mutual aid...

Reason, fraternal conflict, mutual aid—these powers of men, stifled in our lives today, can be the principles, the heart of a new society. Men must be free of the control and restrictions of economic and legal authorities, free of coercion to conformity: but these constraints exist because men *accept* them, so they must be *willing* to be free. This is the hypothesis of freedom.

Let men be free, and then the problems of economics and politics can find good solutions. No longer need our industries be owned monopolistically by corporations or government—the practice of voluntary cooperation, the principle of equality, will allow new kinds of organization. Released from cramping monopoly ownership, our engineering and managerial ingenuity will find ways to balance our interests as consumers and as workers. Our political life will no more be centralized in national government, and men and women will gain sovereignty over their destinies. The individual can be liberated from demands for conformity—we will need no more prisons—and so on through a host of "social problems" which remain unsolvable so long as the fundamental principles of the society are unchanged.

(Oh, yes! the solutions will tax our ingenuity. But at last they will be, in principle, possible, and the freedom of communities and groups to try even the most extreme experiments should accelerate the discovery of the best solutions.)

Nothing less than Paradise!—so it must seem to those afraid of bold dreams... On the contrary! The vision is modest; it is only because we are habituated to a meager life, only because we have timidly accepted the traditions of capitalist-militarist society, that freedom appears fantastic. Once achieved, it will doubtless seem like no more than a stage in human progress...

History is not, as man used to hope, marching us toward our freedom. We claim only this: we see in man the potentiality of living in freedom; we know there are times, now and then, when social conflicts create the demand for liberty, for equality, for justice, and moments when the grip of the past is loosened and choice becomes possible. At such times, can the desire for freedom, the love of freedom, be evoked in people by anarchists? This is our hope.

The present is not a time when men feel an excess of power, or ideals seem possible of realization. Our time is permeated by despair and deadness of spirit. To submit to this spirit is simply to confirm it. Those who are able to perceive that this is a time of degradation and not an inevitable expression of man's nature, have a responsibility to hold before their countrymen an image of what men *may* be, if we gain our freedom and humanity...

When opportunities finally arise, then we shall have to think through the first acts of freedom; but first people must gain the will to be free. What marvelous arrangements they will invent then, it is hardly worth the trouble to try to guess...

When people begin to lose faith in the old order and a revolution occurs, communalistic, democratic institutions invariably spring up to perform the functions of the fallen institutions. As at all times, the work of anarchists is to show people how they can extend their freedom—because if they do not, authority speedily reconstitutes itself...

Progress toward freedom consists of the awakening of desire for freedom in the apathetic masses. It consists in *resisting and undermining even the revolutionary institutions*, when they do not yet represent the free actions of the people. Even theoretically, this idea is difficult; but by it, we can understand why revolutions have all turned out so badly, why a revolution is desirable only if it can lead toward freedom. People who are deprived of masters, but do not desire to be free, have never had difficulty in finding new masters...

That people are human, or proletarians, or intellectuals, gives them no automatic impulse toward freedom. It is nice to talk of "the universal yearning to be free"—but this means only, "people do not like to feel oppressed and restricted"; it certainly cannot mean that they yearn to make choices and exercise the responsibilities of free men. To be free—not merely to escape oppression—is a potentiality of man, the condition, we think, of man's nobility; not given, only earned...

[A]narchism is a philosophy based on the premise that men need freedom in order to solve urgent social problems, and begin to realize their potentialities for happiness and creativity. Anarchists initiate their practical actions by looking squarely at the time

and place they live in, and deciding what can be done *now* to forward their goal: to find the next step to be taken, to take it, and encourage others to move ahead.

The step to be taken now, we believe, is to keep alive the idea of freedom, and the desires it is meant to serve; to live and work with people and act toward social institutions in the ways which will grant us the nearest approach to the humanity of which we dream; to come together in the solidarity of anarchists to invent actions together. In these ways, if we are inventive, we can introduce into our neighbours' lives the idea and practice of freedom.

40. David Dellinger: Communalism (1954)

David Dellinger (1915-2004) was an anti-war activist who participated in the protests against racial segregation in the U.S. prison system when he was imprisoned at Danbury penitentiary for his draft resistance during the Second World War. He was involved not only with the Resistance group but also Liberation, *to which Paul Goodman frequently contributed, and* Direct Action, *which he co-founded with the pacifist A. J. Muste and the Catholic anarchist Dorothy Day. He was one of the "Chicago Seven" tried for inciting the riots at the Chicago 1968 Democratic Party convention. At the age of 85, he hitch-hiked to Quebec City to protest against the North American Free Trade Agreement. The following excerpts are taken from his article, "Problems of the Communal Group," in* Resistance, *Vol. XII, No. 4 (December 1954). In the 1960s, communal living became much more widespread as a "counter-culture" began to develop that embraced many of the pacifist and egalitarian values that had been espoused and lived by people like Dellinger for many years.*

THE BUSINESSMAN WHO JOINS A FREE COMMUNE may find it hard in the beginning to lose his ulcers, to plow a garden, or to tell the truth. The former employee may sleep late in the morning, evade equal responsibility, and at the same time expect the community to serve as "the welfare state." The ex-social worker may continue to plan people's lives for them. And so on down the line, depending on the particular insecurities, frustrations, or arrogances associated with each person's former life. But these are not problems of human nature. They are problems of what has been done to our personalities by the world we grew up in but now want to grow out of...

These character lags put a strain on both the economic functioning and the psychological relationships of the new group, particularly since one of the habits which clings to us from the past is the habit of judging our fellows rather harshly by their actual performances and ourselves rather benevolently by our good intentions. Since we are all victims of a gap between our aspirations and our practice, the new community can easily become a hotbed of misunderstanding, mistrust, and recrimination.

To counterbalance this, the members must have a dominating vision of a new life and a thorough revulsion from the anti-social customs of present day society. To have the best chance of survival a new commune must be composed of persons who have the same type of disgust at the economic selfishness of society that the conscientious objector has concerning war and violence. They must have a vision of brotherly love in day to day economic and personal relationships similar to that of the historic pacifist in the area of international problems. Otherwise their devotion to community can be expected to be as temporary as the "pacifism" of sentimental peace-lovers who abandon conscientious objection and war resistance when the "enemy" commits some heinous atrocity or when pacifists are threatened with social ostracism, unemployment, or jail.

Too often communities begin with an overload of individuals who have been attracted by the secondary benefits community seems to offer (in some cases moving to the country with congenial persons, in other cases sharing a city apartment with stimulating fellow-writers and artists, etc.). In such cases, the "community" may blow up...

Naturally the vision of the experimental community is not just a question of the individual attitudes which the members bring in from their past experiences. A commune must find ways not only of sharing its economic resources so that the total product provides greater strength and freedom for the members than they would have been able to achieve, ethically, as isolated individuals. It must do the same intellectually, spiritually, and aesthetically. This is where community recreation (not the self-conscious, forced recreation of some liberal groups but just finding time to do things together that are fun) and community study, reading, and discussion are so important.

This need for a deep dedication on the part of the individuals and for a strong common faith to keep petty conflicts and individual weaknesses in perspective is one of the reasons why religious communities have been the most successful from the point of view of survival...

But the commitment has nothing to do with the superstitions, rituals, morality, or theology of existing churches or of many past communities. In fact in the 20th century this dedication is least apt to be found in ordinary "religious" groups. What is essential is a feeling for the possibilities of human development—a dominating faith in freedom, love, mutual respect, social equality, and economic sharing as goals worth more than any of the temporary and partial bribes our present society can dangle in front of us. If the members of a community have this faith and join community in order to put it into daily practice, they have made a big step toward outgrowing the

type of "human nature" which wreaks havoc with communal finances, unbossed work-relationships, and the whole attempt to live together as interdependent but self-reliant equals. As in the well known example of marriage, if the community has the will to survive the first difficult period of internal adjustment and external pressure, it can move forward into a time when it is still composed of human beings but of human beings who have begun to develop greater capacities for living in love, freedom, and sharing.

It may be objected by some that a commune which is thought of as a revolutionary social experiment, or which requires conscientious commitment on the part of its members, must inevitably be too stuffy to be desirable. It may also be pointed out that the community must have its daily pleasures and satisfactions or it will not be able to survive. This latter is important. The community must not be a place where self-conscious idealists glumly sacrifice their daily happiness in the supposed interests of an abstract or future Utopia. This does not mean, however, that a community must provide the same "benefits" as our Coca-Cola culture provides for some of its members—the flashy, impractical cars, the latest impractical rage in women's clothes, the luxurious, impractical houses, the soft, unhealthy foods, the higher degrees from our prostituted universities, and the various other items of conspicuous consumption which are sought after to show we can afford them rather than for their intrinsic value.

In addition, the members of a community must be willing, at times, to sacrifice some of the conveniences that are actually desirable but which are not available in most of the countries of the world and are not as indispensable as most Americans have been led to believe. The community must be fun, and it must be practical enough to provide for the material needs of its members. But the communal form of organization must not be used as a justification for dissociating happiness from ideals or separating daily satisfactions from social awareness. One of the basic sicknesses of our society is that it makes just such separations. Yet too many "radicals" want to be sure that in a community they will start right out with the full quota of physical conveniences and material benefits that such a sick society can offer them outside community.

The "commitment" I refer to involves commitment to a love-relationship of communal sharing among the members. But it includes more than that. It requires a transfer of values, a growth in social solidarity with all human beings, a liberation from dependence on the socially irresponsible and personally noxious titillations of our society…

From what has been said about the difficult transition from a psychology of selfishness, inequality, and insecurity to the psychology of communalism and solidarity, it might appear that a beginning community should avoid too sharp a rupture with the practices of the society we have grown up in. For instance, it is frequently asserted that a new group should not begin by having communal finances because people are not used to sharing their money (economic needs and resources) so intimately…

As a matter of fact, I believe that the opposite is true. The transition is more difficult and personal growth is impeded unless the daily life is sufficiently in advance of the life we have previously known to give us a daily consciousness of living in new relationships. Otherwise, sharing some minor activities in common will subject us to the petty annoyances and seeming losses of freedom that arise in cooperative ventures. But earning our living in the old ways and preserving private responsibility for our family finances will deprive us of the sense of brotherhood and solidarity that comes when everyone is putting both his needs and his abilities into the common effort. The communal vision is not just a product of thought and imagination and community discussions. It must be fed from the actual experience of new social relationships.

Persons who are unsure as to just how far their beliefs extend should live in the commune on a trial basis, even being allowed to hold on to their private savings, if they have such. But the community itself should be thoroughly communal and everyone's daily life should be on a fully communal basis during the trial period…

[W]ithout communal economics, Jones, who works in a socially useful vocation which is underpaid in contemporary society (say farm labour) might earn half as much as Smith whose parents gave him a college education and the contacts to drag down a socially harmful position (say as an advertising executive or a lawyer). Tittle might not work at all, but would continue to draw an "independent income" from stocks and bonds… Such injustices from the society we are supposedly rejecting are equally destructive of real community, whatever the actual amounts of money involved.

To speak of making a transition from capitalism to communalism while clinging to private ownership and private finances is like being a wife-beater who decides to make a transition by planning to beat his wife only on Mondays and Fridays instead of every day, and by using his fists instead of a club. Since wife-beating is the traditional example of shameful conduct, the analogy will appear grotesque to anyone who yearns for solidarity and brotherhood but has not yet realized just how depraved contemporary social and economic relationships actually are. In fact, to treat anyone as either a boss or an employee will some day be seen to be as inconsistent with brotherly love as wife-beating is with love between the sexes. The same is true

of saying to our friend: "Society pays me $150 a week and pays you $50, so that will be the difference in the economic resources available to me and my children as against those available to you and yours. But I still love you as brother, and if you ever need anything I'll be glad to lend you fifty dollars."

The transition from the social relationships we have rejected to the new relationships we dimly apprehend will be slow enough without consciously deciding to organize the experimental commune on false basic principles in order to make it more "successful." The man and woman who have been brought up in a society which practices wife-beating will be a long way from a true love-relationship even after they have repudiated wife-beating, because of all the other false attitudes and character patterns they have absorbed. But once they have glimpsed some of the possibilities of mutual love there is no point in either waiting till society passes a law against wife-beating or in fooling around with "some" beatings. This will not help their growth.

Our culture not only assumes but for the most part glorifies a pattern of economic and social relationships based on selfishness, inequality, and "authority," modified by philanthropy. Because we have lived by this system and its attitudes (even when we have hated it) we cannot shed it as a snake sheds its skin. When we begin to see the revolutionary possibilities for human life under free, equal, and loving relationships, we are only at the beginning of the road. But the principles on which our economic, social, and "power" relationships are consciously organized should be as revolutionary as possible. They should be developed from our own understanding (which, of course, is not from our own isolated, personal discoveries but from the dreams and experiments of men and women through the ages) and not from the patterns of the existing culture.

41. A.J. Baker: Anarchism without Ends (1960)

A. J. Baker was a member of the Sydney Libertarians, a group of anti-authoritarians formed in Sydney, Australia during the 1950s, with whom George Molnar and Germaine Greer were also associated. They adopted the following quotation from the early Marx as their motto: "Since it is not for us to create a plan for the future that will hold for all time, all the more surely what we contemporaries have to do is the uncompromising critical evaluation of all that exists, uncompromising in the sense that our criticism fears neither its own results nor the conflict with the powers that be." They distinguished themselves from the "utopian" anarchists by abandoning any pretext of ultimately achieving a completely free society, focusing instead on "being anarchist or libertarian here and now," hence their endorsement of an "anarchism without ends."

The following excerpts are taken from a paper Baker presented to the London Anarchist Group in March 1960, "Sydney Libertarianism."

[T]HE PROBLEM FOR THE UTOPIAN ANARCHIST is to explain how the passage from an unfree to a free society is going to take place. But the solution offered… greatly over-emphasizes the part that can be played by co-operation and rational persuasion. The ideas and practices which prevail in existing society, it is claimed, are so obviously vicious and illogical that they cannot persist. With the spread of education and the growth of a saner attitude to political and social questions we must expect the gradual triumph of the rational and freedom-loving outlook.

The trouble with this belief is that it assumes education and persuasion occur in a social vacuum, when in fact they occur under definite social conditions, and we can by no means alter these conditions at will. It is likewise assumed that the rational decisions of men have an immense influence on the course of events, when the social facts go against this assumption. Thus, take the operation of social institutions like the State, Churches, the army, universities, and so on. These don't arise because (or just because) certain people get together and decide to create them nor do they continue to exist because certain people have decided to prolong their existence. Institutions are usually there, going on in certain specifiable ways, irrespective of what rational decisions individuals make or fail to make. Anarchists have always been the first to point this out in regard to the State—e.g., that those like the Bolsheviks, who think they capture or control the State are, in fact, captured or controlled by the State; hence the continuity of the State machine and its manner of working from Tsarist to Soviet times… Parts of the State apparatus such as the army and public service are not just instruments of the politicians, let alone of "the people"; like newspaper organizations, trade union secretariats, and so on, they have a "life" of their own, and largely shape the outlook of the men who work in them…

To take a concrete case: consider the type of sexually free society Wilhelm Reich advocated [Selection 75]. In existing society we have what Reich called the "authoritarian sexual morality," i.e., the denial of adolescent sexuality, emphasis on compulsive monogamy, and so on, which means that the great mass of the people, even when they are married, are subject to guilt feelings, possessive jealousy or other disturbances to their sexualities. But, in contrast with this, Reich argued, it is biologically perfectly possible for people to have non-authoritarian, orgiastically much more satisfactory, sexual relationships. Well, then, suppose we want to bring about a society in which this kind of sexual freedom prevails. It is highly utopian to think that people could be rationally educated into this, even if many of them would gain from

doing so. For sexual freedom to occur on a large scale, two things would have to be achieved: first, a negative requirement, the power of religious and other moralistic forces in society would have to be destroyed; and, secondly, on the positive side, new social conditions would have to arise or be brought about in which it would be possible for straightforward and non-guilt ridden sexual relationships to become widespread. But a policy of rational argument and good wishes would not achieve these results. Thus, to bring about the second, not only would there need to be such obvious conditions as the availability of contraception and abortion, there would also have to be the absence of neurosis and guilt feelings in the people themselves. But these guilt feelings—or, as Reich says, the incapacity of people for orgastic satisfaction—are mainly derived from childhood training and from the guilts and prohibitions instilled by the existing educational system. But how do we, the would-be revolutionaries, change the existing educational system? By educating the existing educators? But in that case we should need to be already running the educational system! In other words, it is one thing to know how the prevailing sexual ideology affects the sexual life of most people and a quite different thing to bring about a significant disappearance of that ideology.

For reasons of this kind, then, Sydney libertarians are wary of talking about reforming society or about future freedom. Instead they use such phrases as "anarchism without ends," "pessimistic anarchism," "permanent protest." "Anarchism without ends" indicates that there are anarchist-like activities such as criticizing the views of authoritarians, resisting the pressure towards servility and conformity, having unauthoritarian sexual relationships, which can be carried on for their own sake, here and now, without any reference to supposed future ends. Similarly, the label, "pessimistic anarchism," indicates that you can expect authoritarian forces in any society whatever, that freedom is something you always have to struggle for, and is not something which can be guaranteed in some future society… Then there is the slogan, "permanent protest," which has been borrowed from Max Nomad [Max Nacht (1881-1973)], who also refers to "permanent revolution" and "perpetual opposition." (Compare, e.g., his books, *Rebels and Renegades* and *Apostles of Revolution*.) The libertarian use of the phrase, "permanent protest," has some differences from Nomad's use, for he has more in mind mass revolutionary movements and argues that the underdog is born to be betrayed by all of his would be emancipators, but that the only thing for the underdog to do is to go on protesting. (Compare Albert Camus in *The Rebel*: "The historic mission of the proletariat is to be betrayed;" and his distinction between (constant) rebellion which he supports and (final) revolution which he opposes

because it merely introduces a new form of tyranny.) But while Nomad refers particularly to protest against the social structure as a whole (the overall distribution of power and privilege), libertarians in speaking of "permanent protest" wish rather to stress the carrying on of particular libertarian activities within existing society...

What are examples of these activities? ...There are various false theories, metaphysical views, overt and concealed moral and political assumptions that have wide influence in society; the role of the critic is to expose these as illusions or ideologies, and this is a permanent job which has to be carried on from generation to generation. Politicians, priests and policemen don't change just because their justifications of themselves are shown to be illogical or absurd. Similarly, other libertarian activities are carried on here and now and not with an eye to some future state of affairs when they will cease to exist. The utopian picture of a future free society would not even be intelligible to us if we were not already acquainted with examples of unauthoritarian activities in our present society. Contrary to the utopian, the libertarian looks not to some future society in which authoritarianism will have been got rid of and freedom supposedly brought into existence for the first time. Instead, he takes it to be a matter of keeping alive what already exists, of keeping up protest, keeping on struggling to emancipate himself from myths and illusions, and of keeping going his own positive activities. You don't have to reform or overthrow the State before you can carry on libertarian activities. You don't have to wait hopefully for the destruction of religion; you can, here and now, with your children and your friends, resist the pressure from Christian forces. You don't have to try to make the world safe for sexual freedom of the Reichian kind, but you can here and now fight against guilts and ideology and, at least to some extent, live a straightforward, uncompulsive sexual life. In other words, free or unauthoritarian activities are not future rewards, but are activities carried on by anarchist or libertarian-minded groups, here and now, in spite of authoritarian forces.

42. Gary Snyder: Buddhist Anarchism (1961)

Gary Snyder is a poet closely associated with the "Beat" movement which helped inspire the counter-culture of the 1960s. He is said to have been the model for the "Japhy Ryder" character in Jack Kerouac's The Dharma Bums*, and had a long association with Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Allen Ginsberg, with whom he shared an interest in Buddhism. His writings express an ecological sensibility within a nonhierarchical conception of the universe. The following excerpts are taken from his essay, "Buddhist Anarchism," originally published by Ferlinghetti's City Lights press in the* Journal for the Protection of All Beings, *No. 1 (1961).*

BUDDHISM HOLDS THAT THE UNIVERSE AND all creatures in it are intrinsically in a state of complete wisdom, love and compassion, acting in natural response and mutual interdependence. The point of being a Buddhist—or a poet, or anything else for that matter—is to follow some way of life that will bring about personal realization of this from-the-beginning state, which cannot be had alone and for one "self"—because it cannot be fully realized unless one has given it up, and away, to all others.

In the Buddhist view, what obstructs the effortless manifestation of this natural state is ignorance, fed by fear and craving. Historically, Buddhist philosophers have failed to analyze-out the degree to which human ignorance and suffering are caused or encouraged by social factors, and have generally held that fear and craving are given facts of the human condition. Consequently the major concern of Buddhist philosophy is epistemology and "psychology" with no attention paid to historical or sociological problems. Although Mahayana Buddhism has a grand vision of universal salvation and boundless compassion, the actual achievement of Buddhism has been the development of practical systems of meditation toward the end of liberating individuals from their psychological hangups and cultural conditionings. Institutional Buddhism has been conspicuously ready to accept or support the inequalities and tyrannies of whatever political system it found itself under. This is death to Buddhism, because it is death to compassion. Wisdom without compassion feels no pain.

No one today can afford to be innocent, or indulge himself in ignorance about the nature of contemporary governments, politics, social orders. The national polities of the modern world exist by nothing but deliberately fostered craving and fear—the roots (both socially and psychologically...) of human suffering. Modern America has become economically dependent on a fantastic system of stimulation of greed which cannot be fulfilled, sexual desire which cannot be satiated, and hatred which has no outlet except against oneself or the persons one is supposed to love. The conditions of the Cold War have turned all modern societies, Soviet included, into hopeless brain-stainers, creating populations of "preta"—hungry ghosts, with giant appetites and throats no bigger than needles. The soil, the forests, and all animal life are being wrecked to feed these cancerous mechanisms.

A human being is by definition a member of a culture. A culture need not be mindless and destructive, full of contradictions, frustration and violence. This is borne out in a modest way by some of the findings of anthropology and psychology. One can prove it for himself through Buddhist practice. Have this much faith—or insight—and you are led to a deep concern with the need for radical social change and personal commitment to some form of essentially non-violent revolutionary action.

The disaffiliation and acceptance of poverty by practicing Buddhists becomes a positive force. The traditional harmlessness and refusal to take life in any form has nation-shaking implications. The practice of meditation, for which one needs only "the ground beneath one's feet," wipes out mountains of junk being pumped into the mind by "communications" and supermarket universities. The belief in a serene and generous fulfillment of natural desires (not the suppression of them, a Hindu ascetic position which the Buddha rejected) destroys arbitrary frustration-creating customs and points the way to a kind of community that would amaze moralists and eliminate armies of men who are fighters because they cannot be lovers.

Avatamsaka (Kegon) Buddhist philosophy—which some believe to be the intellectual statement of Zen—sees the universe as a vast, interrelated network in which all objects and creatures are necessary and holy. From one standpoint, governments, wars, or all that we consider "evil," are uncompromisingly contained in this illuminated realm. The hawk, the swoop and the hare are one. From the "human" standpoint, we cannot live in those terms unless all beings see with the same enlightened eye. The Bodhisattva lives by the sufferer's standard, and he must be effective in helping those who suffer.

The mercy of the West has been rebellion; the mercy of the East has been insight into the basic self. We need both. They are both contained, as I see it, in the traditional three aspects of Buddhist practice: wisdom (*prajna*), meditation (*dhyana*), and morality (*sila*). Wisdom is knowledge of the mind of love and clarity that lies beneath one's ego-driven anxieties and aggressions. Meditation is going into the psyche to see this for yourself—over and over again, until it becomes the mind you live in. Morality is bringing it out in the way you live, through personal example and responsible action, ultimately toward the true community (*sangha*) of "all beings."

This last aspect means, for me, supporting any cultural and economic revolution that moves clearly toward a free, international, classless society; "the sexual revolution," "true communism." The traditional cultures are in any case doomed, and rather than cling to their good aspects hopelessly, it should be realized that whatever is or ever was worthwhile in any culture can be reconstructed through meditation, out of the unconscious. It means resisting the lies and violence of the governments and their irresponsible employees. Fighting back with civil disobedience, pacifism, poetry, poverty—and violence, if it comes to a matter of clobbering some rampaging redneck or shoving a scab off the pier. Defending the right to smoke pot, eat peyote, be polygamous, polyandrous or queer—and learning from the hip fellaheen peoples of Asia and Africa attitudes and techniques banned by the Judaeo-Christian West. Re-

specting intelligence and learning, but not as greed or means to personal power. Working on one's own responsibility, no dualism of ends and means—never the agent of an ideology—but willing to join in group action. "Forming the new society within the shell of the old." Old stuff [an IWW slogan]. So is Buddhism. I see it as a kind of committed disaffiliation: "Buddhist Anarchism."

43. Nicolas Walter: Anarchism and Religion (1991)

The following excerpts are taken from a talk given by Nicolas Walter at the South Place Ethical Society on 14 July 1991. Focusing on the Judaeo-Christian tradition, Walter considers the relationship between anarchism and religious beliefs and institutions. I have included it in this Volume because he surveys anarchist views of religion during the time periods covered by Volumes 1 and 2, from ancient times to the peace movements of the 1960s.

FOR THE PRESENT PURPOSE, ANARCHISM IS defined as the political and social ideology which argues that human groups can and should exist without instituted authority, and especially as the historical anarchist movement of the past two hundred years; and religion is defined as the belief in the existence and significance of supernatural being(s), and especially as the prevailing Judaeo-Christian system of the past two thousand years. My subject is the question: Is there a necessary connection between the two and, if so, what is it? The possible answers are as follows: there may be no connection, if beliefs about human society and the nature of the universe are quite independent; there may be a connection, if such beliefs are interdependent; and, if there is a connection, it may be either positive, if anarchism and religion reinforce each other, or negative, if anarchism and religion contradict each other.

The general assumption is that there is a negative logical connection, because divine and human authority reflect each other; and psychological, because the rejection of human and divine authority, of political and religious orthodoxy, reflect each other. Thus the French *Encyclopdie Anarchiste* (1932) included an article on Atheism by Gustave Brocher: "An anarchist, who wants no all-powerful master on earth, no authoritarian government, must necessarily reject the idea of an omnipotent power to whom everything must be subjected; if he is consistent, he must declare himself an atheist"… As a matter of historical fact the negative connection has indeed been the norm: anarchists are generally non-religious and are frequently anti-religious, and the standard anarchist slogan is the phrase coined by the (non-anarchist) socialist Auguste Blanqui in 1880: "Ni dieu ni maître!" (Neither God nor master!). But the full answer is not so simple.

Thus it is reasonable to argue that there is no necessary connection. Beliefs about the nature of the universe, of life on this planet, of this species, of purpose and values and morality, and so on, may be independent of beliefs about the desirability and possibility of liberty in human society. It is quite possible to believe at the same time that there is a spiritual authority and that there should not be a political authority. But it is also reasonable to argue that there is a necessary connection, whether positive or negative.

The argument for a positive connection is that religion has libertarian effects, even if established Churches seldom do. Religion may check politics, the Church may balance the State, divine sanction may protect oppressed people. In Classical Greece, Antigone (in the Oedipus myth) appeals to divine law in her individual rebellion against the human law of the ruler Creon. (In Sophocles' play *Antigone* (c. 440 BCE), Creon actually says in response to her rebellion, "There is no greater evil than anarchy," one of the earliest uses of the word in the pejorative double sense.) Socrates… appealed to the divine demon within him to inspire his individual judgment. Zeno (the founder of the Stoic school of philosophy) appealed to a higher authority than the State. Within Judaism, the Prophets of the Old Testament challenged Kings and proclaimed what is known as the "Social Gospel." One of the most eloquent texts in the Bible is Hannah's song when she conceives Samuel, which is echoed by Mary's song when she conceives Jesus, the Magnificat: *My soul doth magnify the Lord; and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my saviour... He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats; and hath exalted the humble and meek. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away."*

Within Christianity, Jesus came for the poor and weak, and the early Christians resisted the Roman State. When Christianity became the established ideology in its turn, religious heretics challenged both Church and State…

John Ball, the ideologist of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, was a priest who proclaimed in a sermon to the rebels: *"Things shall not go right until there is neither master nor slave."* Later religious dissent led to political dissent, and the extreme Puritans in the English Revolution of 1649-1659 were the pioneers of the native tradition of anarchism. Gerrard Winstanley, the ideologist of the Diggers or True Levellers, who came nearer to anarchism than anyone before the French Revolution, moved within a few years from quoting the Bible to invoking "the great Creator Reason" [Volume 1, Selection 3]. The tradition was continued by the Ranters and Seekers, the Quakers and Shakers, and later the Universalists and Unitarians, and may be seen in the modern peace movement.

The argument for a negative connection is that religion supports politics, the Church supports the State, opponents of political authority also oppose religious authority. In Classical Greece and Rome, the religious skeptics Protagoras, Diogenes, Epicurus, Lucretius, Sextus Empiricus were the real liberators (and the same is true in Ancient India and China). Within Judaism, God is the archetypical figure of (male) authority, the Jewish State was a theocracy ruled by priests, and the few good Prophets (and the good Rabbis who followed them) should be seen as dissenters. In Christianity, Paul told his followers that "the powers that be are ordained of God," Church and State stand together as the "two swords" of the Gospel of Luke, and the good Christians have been rebels against ecclesiastical as much as secular power [as have] the heretics and skeptics, esprits forts and libertins, the freethinkers and philosophes, [such as] Jean Meslier and Denis Diderot (who both wanted to see 'the last king strangled with the guts of the last priest')…

All progressive thought, culminating in humanism, depends on the assumption that every single human being has the right to think for himself or herself; and all progressive politics, culminating in anarchism, depends on the assumption that every single human being has the right to act for himself or herself… There is no doubt that the prevailing strain within the anarchist tradition is opposition to religion… Bakunin, the main founder of the anarchist movement, attacked the Church as much as the State, and wrote an essay which his followers later published as *God and the State* (1882), in which he inverted Voltaire's famous saying and proclaimed: 'If God really existed, he would have to be abolished." Kropotkin, the best-known anarchist writer, was a child of the Enlightenment and the Scientific Revolution, and assumed that religion would be replaced by science and that the Church as well as the State would be abolished; he was particularly concerned with the development of a secular system of ethics which replaced supernatural theology with natural biology [Volume 1, Selection 54]… In Spain, the largest anarchist movement in the world, which has often been described as a quasi-religious phenomenon, was in fact profoundly naturalistic and secularist and anti-Christian as well as anti-clerical [Volume 1, Chapter 23]. Francisco Ferrer, the well-known Spanish anarchist who was judicially murdered in 1909, was best known for founding the Modern School which tried to give secular education in a Catholic country [Volume 1, Selection 65]. The leaders of the anarchist movements in Latin America almost all began by rebelling against the Church before rebelling against the State. The founders of the anarchist movements in India and China all had to begin by discarding the traditional religions of their communities…

[T]he great exception is the phenomenon of Christian anarchism and religious anarcho-pacifism. Above all, Leo Tolstoy, who rejected all orthodoxies of both reli-

gion and politics, exerted a powerful double pressure towards anarchism (although he always repudiated the anarchist movement) and towards religion, by pushing Christians towards his idiosyncratic version of anarchism as much as he pushed anarchists towards his idiosyncratic version of Christianity. He influenced the Western peace movement (including such figures as Bart de Ligt [Volume 1, Selection 120] and Aldous Huxley, Danilo Dolci and Ronald Sampson), and also movements in the Third World (especially India, including such figures as M. K. Gandhi and J. P. Narayan) [Selections 32 & 34, this Volume]. A similar development in the United States is the Catholic Worker movement (including such figures as Dorothy Day and Ammon Hennacy).

So the conclusion is that there is indeed a strong correlation between anarchism and atheism, but that it is not complete, and it is not necessary. Most anarchists are non-religious or anti-religious and most take their atheism for granted but some anarchists are religious. There are therefore several valid libertarian views of religion. Perhaps the most persuasive and productive one was that expressed by Karl Marx (before he became a 'Marxist') in the famous passage from his essay *Towards the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (1844):

> Religious distress is at the same time an expression of real distress and a protest against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, the soul of a soulless situation. It is the opium of the people. The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is required for their real happiness. The demand to give up the illusions about their condition is the demand to give up a condition which needs illusions. The criticism of religion is therefore in embryo the criticism of the vale of tears whose halo is religion.

The true anarchist attitude to religion is surely to attack not faith or the Church so much as what it is in so many people that needs faith and the Church, just as the truly anarchist attitude to politics is surely to attack not obedience or the State so much as what it is in most people that needs obedience and the State: the will to believe and the will to obey. And the last anarchist hope about both religion and politics is that, just as the Church once seemed necessary to human existence but is now withering away, so the State still seems necessary to human existence but will also wither away, until both institutions finally disappear. We may yet end with Neither God nor master!

44. C. George Benello: Wasteland Culture (1967)

C. George Benello (1927-1987) was long associated with Our Generation, *the publishing project that arose out of the anti-war movement and the New Left during the 1960s. Benello was most concerned with issues of democracy, community and workplace organization. In 1967,* Our Generation *published his influential essay, "We Are Caught in a Wasteland Culture," from which the following excerpts are taken. Benello took the concept of a counter-culture a step further by arguing that the creation of a viable counter-culture requires the creation of a new kind of community based on the face-to-face democracy of interconnected and mutually interdependent functional groups.*

WE LIVE IN A PEOPLE-KILLING CULTURE, AND, if we use the term culture in its anthropological sense, there is good basis for saying that primitive South Sea Island cultures are considerably more advanced than our own machine-dominated society. What is implied is that there are certain psychological and ecological universals— laws which define the conditions under which human growth and self-realization can take place, no matter what the level of technology. The material conditions of culture may change and evolve, but the basic conditions under which the primacy of the person can be affirmed do not. We live in a society today in which both the scale and structure of human organization represent forces powerfully opposed to the possibility of human growth and freedom. But the sheer momentum of the organizational and technological apparatus makes for acceptance, and so we content ourselves with attempts at internal adjustment while the juggernaut rolls on...

The Ontong Javanese call a person poor not when s/he is lacking in material goods, but when s/he lacks the requisite of shared living. When one lacks family, working partners, or intimate friends, one is then considered poor. The notion here is of psychic deprivation. We shall use the term *loss of affectivity* to signify this and understand affectivity to mean something like libido or Eros... Affectivity is the energy available to carry on the purposes of the individual in society. It inheres in social institutions and is generated through personal interaction under the conditions of stability, trust, and belief in the possibilities of collaboration for common purpose...

To switch to an economic metaphor, we live in an economy of *psychic scarcity*, wherein there is a net lowering of affectivity throughout the culture. The face-to-face associations which... the cultural anthropologists speak of as constituting the nuclear structure of society, its basic building blocks, have lost their functional relevance, being dissociated from the big organizations which are the locus of politics and power...

When large organizations utilize human energy resources, they are drained away from the other spheres of family, local community, church, leisure and cultural activities...

Not simply riches, but psychic rewards inhere at the top of a narrow pyramid. Thus people flee from the barren base of the wasteland culture and scramble up the various status hierarchies to where the psychic plenty is. The success ethic is thus a structural product of the wasteland culture. The vertically organized, highrise society characterized by big organizations with their status hierarchies becomes fundamentally power-ridden, since only through power can the elements of psychic plenty be achieved. As a result the contemporary ideology of organization... glorifies the status quo in all its anti-human splendor. As Paul Goodman put it in *People or Personnel*, people are personnel, to be fitted to the purposes of the organization. Moreover, in the pyramid organization is coterminous with compulsion; where compulsion does not exist, organization is impossible, and where compulsion is unnecessary, organization is also not required.

The wasteland culture thus constitutes a power-ridden system. The important purposes of the society are carried out by large organizations which are densely organized at the top into interlocking directorates. The members of the directorate see each other at work and at play, as community figures or as business or political leaders. They operate the committees, boards of trustees, cabinets, and other forms of face-to-face associations which are the inevitable forms in which decision-making takes place. The lives of the members of these groups are rendered meaningful, and their effectiveness is heightened, through the graded relevance and integration of the fundamental spheres of work, leisure, public, and private life.

As we go down the vertically organized ladder of these establishments, we find that the density of intensive structure soon gives way to a machine form of organizing. Work is specialized, and jobs are narrowly defined according to a set of procedures. As a result there is little chance for an integration of purposes and functions within work, and less chance still for an overall integration of work with the other spheres of living.

It is the corporation, moreover, which determines prices, profits, the where and how of production, and how resources of the land will be allocated. In short, it determines to a basic degree the environment we live in. The public sector is not driven by profits but uses the same hierarchical model of organization as the corporation, and is likewise an inefficient system, in terms of productivity and use of personnel. The rigidity, hierarchy, and rewards of this system discourage innovation and involvement in work.

The real reasons for the present structure are discernible though hidden. The organizations are power-ridden, and thus the purpose of the system is not efficiency as such, but *efficiency of control.* We live in a society in which power is to a high degree coordinated, not in a terrorist political fashion but rather in a manipulative, economic-technological fashion. In a society dominated by machine production, the machine becomes the most effective instrument for political control within the society. Exploitation goes on behind a facade of bureaucratic administration wherein power is concealed, distant, and highly rationalized.

Communities are built to fit into the demands of the highway system which in turn is determined by the demands of Detroit [the then centre of the automobile industry] rather than of rationality; foreign policy is determined by the stages in the development of weapons systems and in the meanwhile the landscape degenerates into urban chaos. In its external effects, the organizational style has destroyed the integrity of the nuclear units of the society... As the big organizations have drawn off life and energies from the communities where people live, a wasteland culture has emerged.

It is the big organizations which socialize and determine values now, rather than the communities where people live, with their structure of local organizations—town meeting, church, grange, and so forth. The result is manipulative, power-ridden people. The split between the administrator and the professional is exacerbated and built in, and the wasteland culture is institutionalized in big organizations through inequitable distribution of the scarce values of prestige and power, which cluster disproportionately at the top. While professionals derive satisfaction predominantly from their work, administrators derive satisfaction from the control of people within the organizational apparatus. In short, they are politicians, but authoritarian ones. They are... "other-directed" people, attuned to personal nuances, molding themselves in the image of those above them. They believe in authority figures and are submissive to them, while in turn deriving satisfaction from the exercise of authority over those beneath themselves. They are conventional and unquestioning, and also hostile and aggressive, but tend to displace their hostility onto those inferior to themselves, or onto out-groups. They downgrade emotions, which they view as a sign of softness.

There is a circular reinforcement between the conditions of affective deprivation in the family which produces the power-centered, manipulative personality and the authoritarian, power-ridden organization of society. The society trains and socializes children to want what the society can provide, creating personality types oriented to the values that are prevalent. But the origins of the power orientation in

affective deprivation should show us that psychosocially it is the highrise, power-ridden *structure* of society that must be changed, not simply the exploiters who inhabit the top. If people happily join in the scramble up the status ladder to power, it is not universal human nature that drives them, but rather a fundamental reaction to an environment of psychic scarcity.

The fragmentation of the spheres of work and leisure, family and public life, destroys… the deep psychic need for wholeness. Growth and realization involve a central process of dynamic unification. Affectivity can expand from narcissism to broader involvement only when the basic spheres of life are objectively interrelated.

We are still tied to a liberal-progressive tradition which holds that, if we but liberate humanity from its chains of exploitation, it will simply fall into Utopia. We seem to share the Marxist belief that to look too closely at the shape of the good society is utopian, which means unrealistic. But as Martin Buber pointed out [Selection 16], it is the faith in revolution as solving all problems that is naive, not the effort to create paradigms of the future. Without the outlines of the desired society already in evidence, revolution becomes simply the replacement of one set of elites with others…

The basic problem is the problem of organization. Organization is power, which is what politics is about. All organization is ultimately political, and so the problem is to counter organized power with… a different *kind* of organization and a different *kind* of power. Both institutional change and attitude change are needed. The answer lies in a changed infrastructure where human association is a matter of face-to-face groups living and working together. Both the heart as well as the organizational form are involved…

Organization is power only for those sectors of the organization which are involved in face-to-face communication—as at the top—where decision-making in its full dimensions takes place: proposing, planning, deciding, and testing. The need is to spread this form throughout the entire organizational structure. Given the structure, the functions must follow.

What would be the structure and values of egalitarian organization? It is based on groups, rather than the individual as the nuclear unit. People are not simply socialized in primary association; their basic identity is inseparable from those primary groups. Where the present organizational style creates a mass of personnel fixed in special pigeon-holes and a status hierarchy with an elite in control at the top, the alternate style would create groups which communicate both vertically and horizontally through a system of delegates whose power is limited by the groups they represent. Structure and function interrelate, and thus the values that flow from such

a structure would be in accord with it. Since decision, control, and power are distributed throughout the organization, the dichotomy between the professional, job-oriented and the status, administration-oriented would disappear; authority would not be dissociated from function. Economic reward, presently tied to a system of status hierarchy so as to reinforce it, would give way to a more egalitarian system of rewards. With power distributed throughout the organization, there would be no scrambling for status positions, where the power is. This in turn would reinforce the work orientation, since evaluation of achievement would be based on how well the job is done, not on ability at interoffice or interorganizational politics. Authority would be rational, since based on professional capacity.

The psychological effect on the individual would be to increase both freedom and involvement, rather than one at the expense of the other. Where work based on financial reward reinforces self-seeking individualism and encourages a passive orientation toward authority, work based on functional incentives reinforces responsibility, co-operativeness, and involvement. With self-fulfillment through pride in work… and from joint endeavor, many of the conflicts between free enterprise and overall planning on the macro-economic level will be lessened. The worker as producer would not be dissociated from the worker as consumer, or the worker as community member, and thus the project of integrating work more fully with the other spheres of living will become possible. This would occur as the "needs" of the productive enterprise become identified with the needs of all its members, since its members after all form the society.

If we can agree that the primary problem in advanced industrial society is the problem of organization and how it works, then we have already taken a large step toward determining how to go about changing it. The quickest way is also the shortest way. At the heart of the present ideology of organization is an image which is strongly dystopian, wherein human possibility is seen as confined totally within the vast economic-technical structures set off against it. This one-dimensionality, as Herbert Marcuse calls it, serves to define a pervasive ethos which tends to limit thought as well as action. Change must strike at the heart of this, and for this to happen, it is not enough to agitate and lecture. People must experience the implications of a different ideology. Thus rather than seeking to tinker with existing organizations, since it is the structure and ideology which must be changed, it is better to build from scratch.

At the top of the present organizational structures, there is a degree of community. But on the other levels the pseudo-community that prevails pails when confronted with the real thing. Thus any organization that seeks seriously to work for

change must be capable of offering a vision of an empowering counter-community. The pervasiveness of the reigning ideology gives it a specious power: its basic failure to satisfy and be functional is masked from view because there is nothing else on the horizon. People do not opt out in general because there is nowhere to go. Those at the top have their community and power, but for the rest, the wasteland culture is fundamentally repressive. But people have grown cynical; having invested energy in the present system with minimal rewards, they are not about to listen to mere promises. Thus there is the need to create alternative structures.

Attitudes, and thus beliefs, are formed and also changed at the level where people interact directly with one another—in cells, chapters, or groups… Groups must be created which function as therapeutic communities, where members are expected to live, not merely talk about, the values of openness, honesty, co-operation, deriving from a less dystopian view of human nature, based on the primacy of the person. But for this to happen the vision must be made clear: the goal is a society organized in such a fashion that the basic activities of living are carried out through organizations whose style and structure mirror the values sought for. But again, just as within the groups, the objective is to live the values, so the broad social objectives must be demonstrated, not preached. The movement for change must seek to mobilize the resources that can actually create the alternative structures of work, education, community living, communication, that are seen as representing the values of openness, psychological freedom, and participation…

As the movement develops and enlists members and the resources of money and human skills, it must seek to achieve take-off: the stage where it can begin to build significant paradigms that challenge the style and structure of existing institutions. At this stage there will develop a powerful reinforcing process which should give great impetus to the movement. There will be a process of mutual reinforcement and interaction between the three basic levels… where change is taking place: *first*, the level of changed human relationships wherein openness, honesty, and cooperation take the place of manipulation, dishonesty, and selfishness. The direct existential satisfaction derived from groups acting as therapeutic communities will become evident and will thus clarify the meaning of goals and programs. *Second*, as resources become available for the creation of definite projects, concrete and definite achievements will give embodiment and meaning to both the group experience and the goals. *Third*, because the vision is a total one, rather than centered on specific issues and problems, projects of many sorts will reinforce the vision: co-operative schools, day care centers, community unions, newspapers, radio, and later producer

enterprise. As the projects grow, the organization will gain associational density: associations of schools, mass media, community projects, and so forth.

Wholeness in living is in fact a product of the objective interaction and interpenetration of the basic spheres of human existence. When one is lucky enough to be able to realize in one's personal behaviour values which are also exemplified in one's daily work and for which there exists an articulated vision embracing all of social life, then one can be said to be living wholly…

The nuclear units of the new organization must show by their operation that the ideology they are committed to is one which asserts the primacy of the person. Given this, the initiation of the process of integration on the primary level can begin: the demonstration that there can be an integration rather than an inevitable conflict between working together in a primary association and asserting the primacy of the person. The dialectic of this process is a continuing one, wherein the group as it accepts new members confronts its own problems as well and grows toward solidarity.

The primary stage in the growth toward solidarity is a cathartic one, wherein frustrations which have had no outlet and have been repressed and de-repressed, are raised to the level of consciousness. Group members must be encouraged to speak out, releasing pent up frustrations and bitterness… People who have achieved no compensatory method of dealing with alienation, such as opting out, internalize their condition and see it as something for which they are to blame. They see their loneliness as a result of their own failings and thus to their loneliness is added guilt. But when neighbours are organized into groups and experience small successes in changing the conditions of their neighbourhood, the sense of powerlessness and loneliness gives way to solidarity and a sense that something can be done…

Solidarity is achieved through ideology and structure, which in both cases speak to existential need. The identification of theory and practice, of working for values that are also lived, creates a level of commitment which a single-issue organization can never match. The investment in such organizations is worth the effort, because the psychic returns are great; and this is so precisely because a high level of commitment is made possible, in fact required, thus defeating the alienation of the wasteland culture.

Some object that imparting an ideology is manipulative and its proponents seek only to free people psychologically. As if training people to be more adjusted within the framework of a system that grinds up individuals to suit its profit-making ends is not itself an advanced stage of manipulation! The present ideology masks itself as a non-ideology and as the only rational way to carry on the project of techno-

logical advance. The imperative is to question this thesis at its roots by posing to it an alternative organizational view. This alternative would affirm and maintain the primacy and integrity of the person through the objective integration of life and work. For this, what is needed is insight into the many ways in which the present pattern of working and living together affects us so as to make us mistrustful, leery of open mutuality, and apathetic toward the possibility of having any real effect.

In a one-dimensional society, pervaded by its monolithic assumptions, the importance of paradigms is great. There is an extensive literature of criticism dealing with alienation, fragmentation, exploitation and other variants, but people see no other way. They either ascribe their problems mentally to a conspiratorial group behind the scenes… or simply shrug their shoulders fatalistically, ascribe conditions to the determinism of the *weltgeist* or technology and try to make [do]. But for new models to represent serious structural change, they must be significant alternatives to existing institutions, capable of equalling or surpassing them in quality of output…

The problem is not how to influence politics but how to *be* politics—thus not how to get into power but how to transform and humanize it… [W]here the issue is the quality of life itself, it is not simply the many injustices of the present power-ridden system which can serve as the motive for change, but rather the experience, as it is created, of a life made meaningful through institutions which truly serve. In the historical development of such a movement, the nuclear structure comes first. But as it grows, confrontations will inevitably occur, and with them a new form of political power will develop. At this time the necessity of maintaining the essentially para-political goals of the movement must be balanced with the political struggle to maintain itself and grow. But by then what is being defended is not simply a set of discrete political goals, but a way of life.

The objective then is a society which is fully democratized. This means a society both densely and intensively organized in an integrative fashion wherein the basic activities of life interrelate. Such interrelatedness is inevitable when the center of concern changes from the efficiency of the organization in pursuing its particular objectives to the primacy of the person as the locus for the objective interrelation of human purposes. The central image of this process is people working in face-to-face relations with their fellows in order to bring the uniqueness of their own perspective to the business of solving common problems and achieving common goals. Expertise and technology are then the servant, not the master of such groups, since, where the primacy of the person is affirmed, there is no formula that can define the substance of the common good. Particular groups, associations, and communities must work

out particular solutions and a particular destiny in accord with a style and culture that evolve uniquely...

At present the centralist and power-oriented ideology grows unchecked, and in the upper reaches of the warfare state coalesces into smoothly meshed elites, patriotically cooperating to make the world safe for "democracy." With this comes the pyramiding of inequities of income and of power, so that while the rich grow richer and more powerful, those at the base drop out into increasing poverty. And underneath the base, things begin to crumble: the long hot summers multiply, crime rates reach new highs. There is no lack of symptoms that evidence a breakdown. But breakdown does not give assurance of reform. Thus the movement for change must rely primarily on the validity of its own vision and the congruence of its structure with that vision if it is to benefit from the breakdown. It can then draw off energy and resources from the present system, as it becomes an increasingly fundamental and mutually exclusive alternative to it. As it develops a critical mass allowing it autonomy in major ways it can renounce the present system, creating its own fundamental institutions of law and government, and at this stage it will have passed from paradigms into politics.

What is being affirmed is the organic or systematic quality of the present social structure which, with all its defects and even contradictions, is still based on a powerful, albeit neurotic and destructive, power dynamic. To effect significant change nothing less than a different dynamic and motive system must be created, and so the requirement of building anew is an imperative one—thus the need to precede politics with paradigms and to avoid the old trap of getting into power. In the end, it is a philosophy of the person and of human possibility that is in question. But the expression of this philosophy must confront the organized power of dehumanization that has grown so tremendously in this century and created the wasteland culture we see around us. For this, it is not enough to be on the right side, committed to the right philosophy. One must act.

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45. Louis Mercier Vega: Yesterday's Societies and Today's (1970)

Louis Mercier Vega (1914-1977), originally named Charles Cortvrint, was born in Brussels. He was active in the French anarchist and labour movements in the 1930s, where he worked with André Prudhommeaux (Selection 30) and Marie Louise Berneri (Selections 4, 15 & 75), among others. He fought with the Durruti Column during the Spanish Revolution and Civil War. As with many other anarchists in Spain, he escaped to Latin America in 1939. After the Second World War he was active in the European and Latin American anarchist movements, contributing regularly to many anarchist publications. He wrote several books on anarchist themes, including Anarcho-syndicalisme et syndicalisme révolutionnaire *(Paris: Spartacus, 1978) and* Anarquismo ayer y hoy *(Caracas: Monte Avila Ed., 1970). In the following excerpts from Mercier Vega's essay, "Yesterday's Societies and Today's," reprinted in* L'increvable anarchisme *(Paris: UGE, 1970; Bordeaux: Analis, 1988, 2nd ed., preface by A. Bertolo), translated by Paul Sharkey, Mercier Vega analyses the changing role and composition of the "working class" in modern societies, providing some explanation for its failure to play the revolutionary role assigned to it by the L'Impulso group and other class-struggle anarchists, but also suggesting that quality of life issues may yet inspire working people to radically transform society.*

IN THE SPACE OF A FEW DECADES, MOST societies have evolved and been transfigured. A few under pressure from "those at the bottom," many under that from revolutions in technology: in part through the impact of the clear-sightedness and raised awareness of their citizens, and massively as the result of warfare—international rivalries, competitions between industrial groups, military conquest or confrontations, imperial squabbles over empire.

Relations between the classes, the various dependencies of the individual and the State's structures and prerogatives have changed. The anarchist may think that these changes have wrought no essential change in what he has always denounced, namely, the economic, political and social constraints weighing upon the worker, the law's endorsement of privilege, the frustrated circumstances in which he who is the object rather than a full shareholder in society finds himself placed. This reaffirmation of the soundness of his principles is no impediment to the very conditions of the social struggle having changed and the way in which oppression is sensed, suffered or rejected having evolved. Which naturally requires much amendment to our propaganda and methodology.

Let us take an example removed from theoretical considerations: let us take the technical edge enjoyed by Argentinean anarchists back in the 1920s—automatic

weapons, fast cars, an extensive network of local and international accomplices—over a police force equipped with revolvers, obsolete vehicles and poor telegraphic communications; by the 1940s, that edge had disappeared and bank raids had become all but impossible...

An even more prosaic instance would be the "*macadam*" procedure employed by many French building and steel industry workers when the threat of unemployment loomed over them; this comprised faking work accidents in order to make insurance claims. This practice was relatively commonplace up until the war in 1939 but became impossible with the establishment of social security.

But this is only a single facet of a social phenomenon. The working class too has—in its mentality, behaviour, fears and hopes—felt the impact of a society operating in accordance with new approaches...

Hunger has become the exception rather than the rule, falling sick is no longer such a catastrophe and certain conveniences have become standard fare in the home and women are no longer strictly dependent upon the earnings of men. In many regards, the working man enjoys advantages once the preserve of the *petite bourgeoisie*. He can watch television, listen to the radio and take holidays. He is often in a position to become a homeowner, an impossible dream in the years before the war. But most of all, he is, if he is native-born or has been resident in the country for a long time, even in a position to watch the most recent arrivals straining and scrambling in order to get a foot on the ladder of society, at the end of which process they will be able to enjoy, as he already does, the latest conveniences of modern society...

The ideal of the working man is to see his son leave the status of working man behind, rise out of his class and become a white collar worker, an office-worker with a paper qualification. The grand ambition of collective emancipation has been supplanted by the shorter-term hope of individual promotion, if not for the working man himself, then at least for his offspring. There could be no plainer proof that the manual worker considers his status inferior and his place in society as subordinate. Even should the working man, taking a pride in his professional capabilities, cherish the notion of passing on his trade to his son, technical innovations would rule this out. A carpenter is not in a position—except on some restoration job—to set any young man, let alone his own son, on course for a dead-end career. Any more than any lathe operator or fitter.

In spite of the improvements that have altered his lifestyle and lifted it above that of his elders, he feels that the working class to which he belongs is doomed to dependency. He may well have a suburban home or a "three bedroom" house in some

dormitory town, but he would undoubtedly rather be in a position to rent in a more centrally located district. He may well drive a car, but that is lest he be restricted to his far-off home, can get away from the city for the weekend for a breath of "fresh air" fifty or a hundred kilometres away, along with several tens of thousands of other escapees who, after picnicking to the sounds of the transistor radio, will spend hours on end inhaling gas fumes in the barely moving traffic jams on the journey home. Even when he shows off and plays the bourgeois, he knows and senses that, in the final analysis, his car is more of a burden than a source of relief and that social pressure and the fear of looking shabbier than his neighbour doom him to such outward shows of affluence.

The tendency of an affluent society is to turn him into a fatted calf forever shuffling off to new pastures. It denies him all sense of fraternal community but draws him into an increasingly complicated machine to which he is obliged to defer. In order to provide for his and his family's ever increasing needs, he needs to put in a few more hours of over-time, take on extra work and get used to traffic jams, contributing to all the security funds and voting for those who will ensure that the system survives and fends off any fundamental change. Hence this comment from one Parisian steelworker: "By the time I get home and the wife and kids tackle me about how much overtime I have done, my next pay-cheque and how it is to be spent, with loan arrangements and catalogues to help in this, I get the feeling I've turned into a money-machine."

Working class communities established on the basis of district, trade, workplaces and unions are vanishing. The home is too far away from the workplace; housing estates bring together families whose interests differ and whose origins vary endlessly; the mass media encourage every individual and family cell to wall itself off from the rest. The large company itself, far from encouraging a sense of solidarity among its workforce, reinforces divisions. On emerging from the "firm," wage-earners scramble for the means of transport that will ferry them, exhausted, back to their homes, meaning that a half hour, an hour, sometimes two hours are spent on the crowded metro system, packed buses and overcrowded trains. The only things permanently in position being the lumbering branches of the great political and trade union machines. Only the workshop, where he spends eight hours working, can occasionally offer a little warmth, where he has his place and importance and where problems take on a more human dimension.

The mammoth size of certain firms, the extreme division of labour, the complexity of manufacturing processes conspire to dwarf the working man and make him feel like

some replaceable cog. In a shoe factory, furniture factory, machine-shop, the idea of a collective of comrades supplanting the management was not utopian. Class relations were pretty straightforward and the dividing lines were clear and it was plain to see where the profits were going. The ultimate demand—that the site and the instruments of labour be taken over by the workers—required courage and daring and a repudiation of subject status rather than any further education. In a complex of interdependent plants, with production schedules emanating from above and operating in accordance with a fluid market, the hope of a worker takeover, and the slogan "all power to the unions," acquire the ring of utopianism.

The trend towards stratification in everything, the compartmentalization of tasks, the discrepancies in hours worked and monthly wages of the white-collared and the boiler-suited, manifestly inflate this phenomenon of worker disorientation, which is significant enough on its own. The very idea of a new society is transfigured by it. "Socialism" comes to look like streamlined organization without any fundamental changes for "those at the bottom."

Those remarkable observers Andrée Andrieux and Jean Lignon, with their long-established, solid grounding in workers' conditions, have summed up the new mindset very well:

> The notion of a post-capitalist society peddled by the activist does not open up... the prospect of a new life before the labouring masses. Their material circumstances would alter, but not their 'existential' situation, which is not the case for the activist. If capitalism were to die out, the activist and the masses would no longer find themselves sharing the same circumstances. The militant, unless performing some administrative or managerial function lifting him off the shop floor and hoisting him into the office, would remain on the shop floor as the delegate representing the workers, but would at the same time be the agent of the new order. The workers are pretty much aware of this fact: so is the activist.

The outlines of a new society are emerging from within the working class, or rather, working classes, or, if you will, the great pyramidal conglomeration of wage-earners, and they are not such as to inspire much enthusiasm. Despite the obvious technical problems or the scale of the obstacles, there is a backlash in the shape of the "utopian" but telling call for a profound break with the system of dependency, and in times of great social crisis that call resonates in the heart and reaches into the very soul of the working man. At which point the anarchists come into their own, address-

ing themselves to the man weary or ashamed of his enslavement, and not merely "the masses," labour or some statistical category.

Of course, the working class has never been as unified and undifferentiated as the revolutionary or reactionary intellectuals have painted it. But at least there was a bunch of waged labourers making up a social stratum with shared characteristics, one whose role in the production process was vital and whose lifestyle set it apart. There were differences in wage levels, but not to the extent that they gave rise to clearly separate strata.

These days we need to speak of several working classes. Ranging from the "beginner" proletariat, most of it made up of recent migrants—home-grown or foreign-born —engaged in the hard, tough or unpleasant jobs, to the management echelons who are salaried only for tax reasons, not forgetting public service workers divided up or broken down by category, salaried industrial employees with their different regional pay rates, specialist intellectuals from the agencies and laboratories—all involved in the production process from which they find it hard to escape in order to join their otherwise like-minded university chums who have taken up managerial positions.

Wage differentials make class consciousness that much harder to achieve: they add to jurisdictional disputes, splitting the unions and encouraging collusion between the (private or state) management and privileged brackets of wage-earners. They accentuate rather than curtail the tendency to retain a sub-proletariat reduced to low wages and readily disposed of in the event of a crisis or economic slow-down, alongside groups of workers, employees and officials locked into complex regulation arrangements wherein their docility and diligence are reflected in their wage levels.

The internal divisions within the working classes broadly correspond to differentiation on the basis of national or ethnic origin, especially in Europe, and it is to be feared that great waves of xenophobia will be unleashed should there be competition for the right to work when there is not enough work to go around. This is a real danger against which the trade union bodies have made no provision as they confine themselves to vaguely internationalist pronouncements while making no effort to adopt significant numbers of foreign workers who are often exposed to double or triple exploitation, including exploitation at the hands of their own mischievous compatriots.

The lack of a common objective, some overall purpose, even a utopian one, among the body of wage-earners, reinforces the importance of purely quantitative demands and accords a telling importance to the initiative of the authorities. There being no expectation of a comprehensive overhaul of the economic system and government system, which would involve every single worker showing an interest and

making a willing contribution, the only option left is to screw as much as possible from a less and less controllable regime which grows ever more distant but which offers a guarantee of infinite economic growth, provided that the worker keeps his nose out.

Through diversification, the worker's condition leads to a breakdown in what mutual aid and community feeling ever existed (little enough in practice but an enormous factor in terms of its symbolic and moral presence). Even on a reduced scale, imitating the bourgeois turns the working man into a bourgeois.

A mental imbalance sets in, surfacing only in times of great tension when events bring it to light. The wage worker in his heart of hearts feels doomed by his fate while, failing to chime with a collective revolutionary movement, all of his efforts are directed solely to keeping up the appearances of bourgeois or manager. This is what substantial segments of working class youth can see or guess at before they are absorbed into the system, before they themselves are caught up in the daily grind. Their rebelliousness should be seen less as contempt for the elders and more as a contempt for conformity, not so much a determination to "make it" as an index of disgust with the society proffered to them.

In manual worker and technician alike—for there is such a thing as *engineer-labour* just as there is street-sweeper labour—the underlying feeling, whether conscious or flaring up in some work dispute, is that all of the appearances of full citizenship are granted him except where work is concerned, and that this exception makes a fallacious lie and nonsense of the whole thing.

In French populist language, going to work is translated as "gluttony for punishment."

So the new features of industrial society, the characteristics of a post-industrial society represent further hurdles in the already tough search for ways of sketching and building a libertarian world. On the other hand, the outcome, the advantages of a super-organized society do not have the capacity to do away with either the feeling of frustration in workers or the need to come up with a fundamentally different society. If anarchism did not exist, it would very quickly be invented by way of a response to the hypocrisies and blights of the modern world.

46. Joel Spring: Liberating Education (1975)

Joel Spring is the author of several works on schooling and education, including How Educational Ideologies are Shaping Global Society *(Mawah, N. J.: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2004),* Educating the *Consumer-Citizen: A History of the Marriage of Schools, Advertising, and Media (Mawah, N. J.: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2003),* Wheels in the Head: Educational Philosophies of Authority, Freedom and Culture From Socrates to Human Rights *(New York: McGraw-Hill, 1999), and* Education and the Rise of the Corporate State *(Boston: Beacon Press, 1972). The following excerpts are taken from* A Primer of Libertarian Education *(Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1975).*

THE WEDDING OF REVOLUTIONARY THOUGHT to radical pedagogy had its roots in a profound pessimism, a feeling that revolutionary social and economic changes in the twentieth century had resulted in totalitarian states—the Soviet Union, for example, where revolutionary impulses were followed by a period of conservative dictatorship. Why the failure of this revolutionary endeavor? For people like [Wilhelm] Reich, [A.S.] Neill, and [Paulo] Freire the answer lies in its failure to provide radically new means of education and socialization by which all people could be brought into the revolutionary movement and become acting members of it rather than its objects.

From this perspective, a radical educational theory makes sense only if it is seen as part of a total revolutionary endeavor. One of the most serious problems facing the present and future development of libertarian forms of education is the dangerous separation of educational methods from a political and social ideology. Radical experiments in education tend to be trivialized as fast as they are developed. Paulo Freire's techniques are adopted by the Peace Corps and the free school methods of Summerhill are introduced into the classrooms of the public school without any relationship to their underlying radical ideology. What begins as a radical movement is quickly absorbed by the existing system; new techniques are used, but only to accomplish the old objectives of control and discipline...

All methods and content in education affect character and action. Consequently, all educational techniques reflect some ideological position. For instance, Paulo Freire has certainly shown that the teaching of reading and writing might be the most political act in education. If education is pursued without a conscious radical perspective, it will do nothing but serve the existing social order.

It should also be clearly understood that there are two distinct ways of talking about education's potential to have a radical effect on society. On the one hand, educational systems such as Paulo Freire's can provide a method which liberates individ-

uals so that they will act to bring about a radical change in society. On the other hand, an educational establishment itself may directly affect society, as in the case of a day-care center which weakens the family structure. Both approaches can be combined within one system…

Any attempt to make a radical pedagogy part of a radical political and social movement must come to terms with [the] educational establishment. The neglect of attempts to change this educational establishment would mean the neglect of an entire generation which is held in the custodial control of the school… If we talk about change in our social institutions, we certainly cannot neglect one of the largest and most intrusive of them. In fact, it is the one public institution which has the most contact with all members of society.

The school, in short, must be approached first of all as a political and social institution. To give concrete meaning to theories of radical education—to that which *can be*—one must begin by coming to terms with that which *exists*. The one major shortcoming of radical educational theorists has been their failure to deal with the reality of existing educational systems and how their theories might be implemented. For instance, it is fine for A.S. Neill to establish a model like Summerhill, but Summerhill has little meaning unless it can be implemented throughout society… The failure of many free schools in the 1960s was a direct result of not making a concrete assessment of the political workings of public schooling and developing strategies to confront and change that system. Many of these schools just languished outside the system, without money or power. What this means is that if radical pedagogy is to be made part of a radical movement, it cannot act as if it were creating a new educational system in a vacuum. Strategies must be developed to confront the political realities of the existing educational establishment…

One of the first steps that could be taken would be the elimination of compulsory education… No radical educational plan can really be developed if all children are required to attend a school approved by the state government. But at the same time compulsory education laws are attacked, it must be recognized that they were originally developed to solve certain social problems, namely child labour and juvenile delinquency. Compulsory education does protect children from economic exploitation and does serve the custodial function of occupying time. Thus, the end of compulsory education would have to be accompanied by a change in the economic structure which allowed for the financial independence of youth…

Economic independence would allow for the changing of other laws affecting youth. Child labour laws could be eliminated because youths would no longer be vul-

nerable to exploitation on the labour market. Youths could choose jobs because of interest and desire to learn. There could also be a campaign to ensure adolescent sexual freedom. Not only could all restrictive laws be removed but birth-control devices and information might be provided. Economic independence and legal changes hopefully would overcome what Wilhelm Reich referred to as the "housing problems." Independent residences might be made available to youths. Society, in short, could recognize the legitimacy of adolescent sexual activity.

The economic independence of youth would represent a major step in the liberation of women. Traditionally, girls and young women have been under the control of the family for longer periods of time than their male counterparts. Even marriage at an early age only results in a shift from the control of one head of the household to another. A major source of female dependence on the family is the lack of easy access to occupations which provide economic independence. Combined with this economic problem is the traditional attitude that women must be protected by the home and denied the social independence of their male counterparts. Providing women with equal economic independence would hopefully allow them the same type of social freedom and opportunity for development.

The elimination of compulsory education and the shifting of educational funding from the level of the school to that of the individual could break the power of the educational bureaucracy. It should be recognized that in the United States, control of the school does not really reside in the local boards of education. Such important educational issues as curriculum, content of textbooks, and requirements for teacher certification are decided within an interlocking educational bureaucracy which includes professional organizations, state officials, universities, and publishing companies—not to mention the new learning corporations... which represent the most important and rapidly growing parts of this bureaucracy.

One way to weaken the power of this educational bureaucracy would be to avoid any supervision of educational spending, leaving decisions about how the money should be spent completely up to the individual. That would mean parental supervision until the child was twelve or thirteen; after that, the individual youth would have absolute control over the spending of the money. If a government body were established to supervise the spending, it would be likely to fall under the power of the same social and economic influences which have surrounded the school. Instead, we could develop a democratic system which placed control in the hands of the individual. The practice of freedom is the best exercise in learning how to use freedom. What little money might be lost or squandered at an individual level would be nothing compared to the amount of money wasted

and squandered within the existing educational structure. The history of government control and regulation in the United States has been one of creating what has been called a "socialism for the rich." We could exercise a traditional American distrust for government organizations as sources of power for those in control, and instead place our faith in individual actions.

The demise of the existing educational structure could be accompanied by the recognition that the concept of the school is out of date in modern technological society. The school in the nineteenth century was viewed not only as a source of social control but also as a center where all the materials of learning, books and teachers, could be concentrated. With mass media and urban living there is no reason why a person should not be able to learn the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic just by growing and interacting within the community. Ivan Illich's *Deschooling Society* has certainly offered path-breaking suggestions in this direction.

One of the immediate questions that occur when it is suggested that the school be eliminated is: What happens to the poor? Is not the school their only hope? How will they learn growing up in a culture of poverty? Without the school will there not be even greater social class differences? In response, it should be clearly recognized that schooling has not eliminated poverty in the past nor will it in the future. To use the school to solve problems of poverty is to seek a conservative solution without directly changing the social structure which created poverty. It should also be recognized that schooling as a system of social selection has tended to *reinforce* the existing social class structure. But to get *rid* of the school is certainly not going to eliminate poverty. In other words, having schools or not having schools is not going to make that much difference because schools are not at the heart of the problem of poverty. But if the school were eliminated *and at the same time* children and youth were given economic independence, the problem of poverty would be confronted directly. Poor children would have enough money to explore and enjoy the advantages now reserved for the middle class.

The next question, of course, is whether the culture of poverty doesn't hinder and limit the type of choices made by the parents and youth. The answer, of course, is yes. But this "yes" must be qualified in two ways. First, the poor are better judges of how their educational money should be spent than the traditional leaders in the educational bureaucracy. Second, the legal and legislative campaign directed against compulsory education and educational funding could be accompanied by the radicalization of the schools of education in major universities. This would provide a center for dealing directly with the problems raised by a culture of poverty by utilizing com-

munity education programs based on methods like Paulo Freire's and by developing techniques of radical therapy…

As Wilhelm Reich suggested in the 1920s, nothing of major consequence can be accomplished by treatment at an individual level. If repression exists on a society-wide level, the solution is not individual treatment but changing those social conditions and institutions which cause repression. Individual therapy is essentially conservative because it leaves untouched the source of the problem. The same difficulty exists with schools and the faculties of education which have served those schools. Treatment of social problems has tended to be at an individual and conservative level. There is an attempt to overcome the culture of poverty by treating the child within the confines of the school. The real solution lies in directly attacking the social conditions which keep a person from learning and growing in our society…

Educational sociology and psychology could work together to accomplish what Wilhelm Reich called radical therapy. Both of these disciplines could begin to look at the problem of why certain people within our society cannot learn without relying upon the authoritarian structure of the school. If such dependency does not exist, we can safely abandon the school and rely on every individual to grow and learn in his or her own manner. But one suspects that at this stage, there are still many barriers to free and independent learning. This might be particularly true in cultures of poverty. The job for psychology and sociology would be to identify those barriers which create a state of dependency in the learning process. Is the problem, as Reich suggested, mainly centered around the existence of the nuclear family? Is the problem more directly related to the economic conditions of poverty? Is it a result of the structure and the conditions of our modern urban environment? These and a host of other questions immediately come to mind. Sociology and psychology could then go on to identify those social conditions which would allow people to live and grow in the world without the authoritarian control of the schools. They could develop a radical therapy which would result in major changes in our society. If children cannot learn, one must not stop with just helping them to overcome their immediate problem. One must identify those social conditions which hinder their learning and directly attack those conditions…

One hundred years ago it would have been difficult to convince large numbers of people that changing educational institutions was a necessary part of political and economic change. Today this is equally true because social and economic forces have made schools one of the central controlling agencies in society. For this reason schools must become a part of any attempt at major social change. This does not nec-

essarily mean an extension of schooling; it could as easily mean the limitation or elimination of schooling. What must be kept in mind is that mass schooling is a product of a particular set of historical forces which has made it into one of the major institutions for planned socialization.

What must also be kept in mind is the distinction between schooling and education. Schooling has been a planned method of socialization designed to produce obedient workers and citizens through a system of institutional controls. On the other hand, education can mean gaining knowledge and ability by which one can transform the world and maximize individual autonomy. Education can be a source of individual liberation. One of the internal contradictions within the present system of schooling relates to this distinction. Modern workers do need basic skills and some degree of understanding of the world and, consequently, must be given some education. It very often happens that this education raises the level of awareness enough to cause rebellion against the process of socialization or schooling. This has occurred in the last ten years in student protests and demands for protection of individual liberties and rights. Unfortunately this has occurred mainly in middle-class schools where there is still some semblance of education. Poor children have been primarily well schooled and not well educated.

Presently in the United States there is a movement to eliminate all vestiges of education in favour of something called "career education." The career education movement holds as a basic tenet of faith that all learning must be directed toward the needs of some future occupation. Learning is made subservient to a future social role and the socialization process of the school. Knowledge is not presented as a means of understanding and critically analyzing social and economic forces but as a means of subservience to the social structure. "Career education" could represent the logical outcome of the controlling power of schooling.

What must be sought in the future is a system of education which raises the level of individual consciousness to an understanding of the social and historical forces that have created the existing society and determined an individual's place in that society. This must occur through a combination of theory and practice in which both change as all people work for a liberated society. There should not be a blueprint for future change but, rather, a constant dialogue about means and ends. Education should be at the heart of such a revolutionary endeavour.

Chapter 6
Resurgent Anarchism

47. Lain Diez: Towards a Systemization of Anarchist Thought

Lain Diez was a Chilean "non-conformist" anarchist active from the 1940s to the 1970s. He contributed to the French anarchist paper, Le Libertaire, *in the 1940s, and translated Vernon Richards'* Lessons of the Spanish Revolution *into Spanish (Paris: Belibaste, 1971). The following piece was originally published in Noir et Rouge, No. 28, December 1964, and is translated here by Paul Sharkey. Lain Diez sketches out an anarchist alternative to consumer capitalism and bureaucratic socialism, while rejecting any notion of historical determinism, suggesting some influence by the philosopher Karl Popper, author of* The Poverty of Historicism *(London: Routledge, 1957).*

1. THE ANARCHIST IDEAL IS A SOCIETY FROM which the sway of every authoritarian institution and man's exploitation of his fellow man have been banished.

In political terms, such a society is synonymous with a federal regime organized from the bottom up through the federation of territorial units entering into a mutual commitment to respect their individuality. In economic terms, these units form a succession of echelons of coordination to the extent that they feel the need to centralize and rationalize their ventures and compensate for the inequalities entailed in differences in productivity or geographical location. Throughout all this process of coordination and compensation, the criterion of organic growth is to take priority over any "planning" consideration, if we take the latter in the sense of centralized, bureaucratic economic planning (Gosplan) [Soviet economic planning committee]. By "organic growth" we mean development in which any community's real needs for goods and services can be aired freely, without the distortions caused either by business advertising that conjures up artificial demand, or by the contrived scarcities deriving from the plan, the result of decision-making by technobureaucrats arbitrarily determining what should be consumed or produced, decision-making more attuned to their interests as the co-dominant class and the interests of the State they serve…

The ideal society to which anarchism looks bluntly poses the problem of human goals, for there can be no parallel reshaping of society in the absence of a reshaping of man. In this regard it parts company from Marxism which makes man an appendage of society and, more narrowly, of its economic infrastructure and has never tackled the issue of moral autonomy, with the dire consequences familiar to us all. But implicit in the reshaping of man are the ethical aims to which his education is to be tailored. Those aims and appropriate educational methods ought not to be designed to bring about a passive adaptation to the new regime with an eye to its consolidation, but rather to enhance the creative capacity, especially in the arts, so as to counter the conformism that might be a brake upon progress and directly threatens the freedom of the individual, the cell from which the body of society derives its fresh vitality.

2. Ends and means are regarded as forming an indivisible whole but, ultimately, it is the means that determine the ends.

In fact, if men opt for means divorced from freely embraced ethical standards adapted to the lofty goals being pursued, whether this be due to exceptional circumstances or out-and-out opportunism… this will prompt them to amend their goals and abandon their principles so as to turn to others more in tune with their pragmatic approach. This spotlights a process of corruption that is going to end up bringing into disrepute the movement of which they are members and the very ideals that drive it. Hence the necessity of frequently measuring one's means against one's goals… [T]here is more to anarchism than just innovation and perpetual change: there is also the effort to preserve values, which does not at all rule out slow, patient digestion of new experiences. The latter are taken on board and little by little enrich its spiritual inheritance, thereby furnishing our movement with fresh ideological and emotional weapons, rendering it more effective in its propaganda and activity.

3. Anarchism's more recent experiences require that it focus more upon its values and means rather than upon its goals and ideals.

In its brief past history, our movement has not managed to avoid two reefs that a greater stress laid upon values and means might have enabled it to outflank: one being millenarianism and the other the negative superstition of the State, the antithesis of the positive State superstition or myth.

…[T]he difficulty with anticipating the society of our dreams, be it only in broadest outline, is a difficulty for which there is no solution and a perfect illustration of Zeno's paradox. In fact, unless we want to trade in illusions… we really have to start from the economic and life statistics available and reconcile those often dis-

torted figures with arbitrary hypotheses about the impact of new factors upon consumption and output and on the conduct of people in circumstances that differ utterly from the present circumstances—all of it aggravated by the tensions characteristic of a revolutionary process adding further uncertainty. The pro-planning Achilles is never going to catch up with the revolutionary tortoise.

Work and therefore society will see to its own organization… "First we engage and then we see," Napoleon used to say as he attacked—translated into the popular parlance of our own times, that means: "We can share the burden as we go." If the muleteer knows what he is about, there is no question but that the team will not grind to a stop and that the cargo will reach its destination…

So let us, for the time being, set our futuristic plans to one side and focus attention upon our principles, so as to move back from there to values, which is the essential problem right now. That way we will be better equipped to grapple with choosing the means we will use in our propaganda and activity, as well as the equally important business of bringing our lives into harmony with the principles we profess…

With the matter of ends being set to one side—pending the new order—we will be able to focus on thoughts about values, principles and means, an urgent business that will not brook being put off until another day. But I should first of all say a few words about the second blight I mentioned: the state superstition. This is one of the most deeply anchored, even obsessive, views held by anarchism—that most of the ills by which mankind is beset spring from the state. By doing away with the state, we will be doing away with the main source of the authoritarianism and oppression that hobble the unfettered expansion of the human personality. Which is why, in theory as well as in practice, anarchists have concentrated their fire on the State myth and the hard and fast expressions thereof. But in so doing we forget that the state is an effect of underlying social causes, that is, that it is a product of society, its genesis in time being determined by certain prime biological, economic and psychological factors. True, in our own day, the State per se, out of an instinct for survival, is the promoter and intensifier of those effects: but that is only a secondary reaction that presupposes the existence of these primary factors. It is these that we must tear up by the roots if we want either to forestall the resurrection of the state after every attempt to abolish it, or simply to defuse its aggression and bullying.

It needs saying and repeating that the State's roots go deep into society and into man himself… if we wish to combat the state effectively, we must reshape the society and man that spawn and sustain it. Political weapons and a policy of arms are absolutely ineffective in securing this aim. However, there is a positive side to the

age-old struggle waged by anarchism and, generally, by the individual against the state: the importance accorded to direct action, without which, as Gandhi put it, "nothing in this world ever gets done"…

4. In the face of historicism, our movement must champion voluntarism.

By historicism I intend all those theories that sit in judgment of human teachings and exploits generally by setting them against an historic context, the latter being deemed an indefinite development, either rectilinear or ongoing or dialectical. An instance of the first of these might be the theory of progress through a law of intellectual evolution, say [Auguste] Comte's law of the three estates, and, of the second, the succession of thesis, antithesis and synthesis associated with the Hegelian system (copied by Marx) and which [Eugene] Dühring, with scathing irony, described as "yes-no-ism" (*Janeirenei*). A feature common to all of these historicist systems is the supremacy (in terms of decision making in men's affairs) of History (with a capital letter) which, unknown to men, supposedly foists its law upon them: that law being inevitable progress or a learning process. This new and jealous divinity has its intermediaries who, like the priests of the ancient religions, interpret its intentions, prophesying as they did and issuing thunderous anathemas against miscreants refusing to be awed by their revelations. They also arm a secular arm against heretics and have no hesitation about borrowing the measures that inquisitions down through the ages have employed against free spirits.

Not that anarchism means to substitute the notion of whim for the notion of law, however. It does not deny the existence of certain uniformities within society such as are found in nature's phenomena which create the environment, context and setting within which men operate and evolve. But at most these are just some of the many determinants that wield a greater or lesser influence, depending on historical circumstances and man's creative capacity, his determination to survive and improve himself.

In my personal view, anarchist voluntarism… posits a discontinuous evolution of society, i.e., an evolution made up of successive series or evolutions. Each series stands apart from its predecessor on account of its fresh contributions which substantially alter the face of society and the notions men entertain of their relationships with their fellows and with the universe. There are series that are parallel in time in two different locations around the globe and increasingly these interact until they come to represent one single underlying trend, a worldwide series due to be carried on in turn by another series bearing the mark of fresh features, and so on, *ad infinitum*. So the chief characteristic of voluntarism is freedom. Freedom manifests itself through the burgeoning of new forces that interrupt the continuity of development

and cannot be explained away in terms of known antecedents nor by the data of historical consciousness. These are like ferments that suddenly emerge, hatched in the silence of human gestation. Trying to connect them with the past is a pointless exercise. This process is typical of the great religions, the genesis of which has no historical explanation and which I would venture to suggest defies rational, scientific explanation.

This breach of historical continuity is typical of the dynamism within society. Statistical factors build up and consolidate and tend to immobilize it. Man's discoveries and inventions rescue it from this condition of immobility. Advances in navigation and our knowledge of astronomy have opened up new worlds to us: the unexpected or even revolutionary notions of relativistic physics and "quanta" have profoundly altered our view of nature: daring astronautical technology has pushed back the boundaries of man's direct exploration of space by hundreds of thousands of kilometres. All these discoveries and inventions, made over an astonishingly brief period of time, are like gigantic pulsations rattling the decrepit structures of society. Social changes are on a scale hardly ever found in natural vegetation. Human biology, sociology and morals have also tasted liberating revolutions of their own.

48. Murray Bookchin: Ecology and Anarchy (1965)

In his influential 1965 essay, "Ecology and Revolutionary Thought," Murray Bookchin (1921-2006) drew the connections between anarchism and ecology, arguing that ecological crisis can only be overcome and an ecological society achieved by creating anarchist forms of social organization. His vision of decentralized, relatively self-sufficient communities, where there is an integration of manual and intellectual labour, is reminiscent of the anarchist communist vision of Kropotkin in Fields, Factories and Workshops *(Volume 1, Selection 34) and of the "pure anarchists" in Japan (Volume 1, Selection 106), as well as proto-green anarchists like Herbert Read and Paul Goodman. Reprinted in* Post-Scarcity Anarchism *(Palo Alto: Ramparts Press, 1971).*

UNTIL RECENTLY, ATTEMPTS TO RESOLVE THE contradictions created by urbanization, centralization, bureaucratic growth, and statification were viewed as a vain counterdrift to "progress"—a counterdrift that could be dismissed as chimerical at best and reactionary at worst. The anarchist was regarded as a forlorn visionary, a social outcast, filled with nostalgia for the peasant village or the medieval commune. His yearnings for a decentralized society and for a humanistic community at one with nature and the needs of the individual—the spontaneous individual, unfettered by authority—were viewed as the reactions of a romantic, of a declassed craftsman or

an intellectual "misfit." His protest against centralization and statification seemed all the less persuasive because it was supported primarily by ethical considerations—by utopian, ostensibly "unrealistic" notions of what man could be, not of what he was. In response to this protest, opponents of anarchist thought—liberals, rightists, and authoritarian "leftists"—argued that they were the voices of historic reality, that their statist and centralist notions were rooted in the objective, practical world.

Time is not very kind to the conflict of ideas. Whatever may have been the validity of libertarian and non-libertarian views a few years ago, historical development has rendered virtually all objections to anarchist thought meaningless today. The modern city and state, the massive coal-steel technology of the Industrial Revolution, the later, more rationalized systems of mass production and assembly-line systems of labour organization, the centralized nation, the state and its bureaucratic apparatus—all have reached their limits. Whatever progressive or liberatory role they may have possessed, they have now become entirely regressive and oppressive. They are regressive not only because they erode the human spirit and drain the community of all its cohesiveness, solidarity, and ethico-cultural standards; they are regressive from an objective standpoint, from an ecological standpoint. For they undermine not only the human spirit and the human community but also the viability of the planet and all living things on it.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the anarchist concepts of a balanced community, a face-to-face democracy, a humanistic technology, and a decentralized society—these rich libertarian concepts—are not only desirable, they are also necessary. They belong not only to the great visions of man's future, they now constitute the preconditions for human survival. The process of social development has carried them out of the ethical, subjective dimension into a practical, objective dimension. What was once regarded as impractical and visionary has become eminently practical. And what was once regarded as practical and objective has become eminently impractical and irrelevant in terms of man's development toward a fuller, unfettered existence. If we conceive of demands for community, face-to-face democracy, a humanistic liberatory technology and decentralization merely as reactions to the prevailing state of affairs—a vigorous "nay" to the "yea" of what exists today—a compelling, objective case can now be made for the practicality of an anarchist society…

The essence of ecology's reconstructive message can be summed up in the word "diversity." From an ecological viewpoint, balance and harmony in nature, in society and, by inference, in behaviour, are achieved not by mechanical standardization but by its opposite, organic differentiation. This message can be understood clearly only by examining its practical meaning.

Let us consider the ecological principle of diversity—what Charles Elton calls the "conservation of variety"—as it applies to biology, specifically to agriculture. A number of studies… clearly demonstrate that fluctuations in animal and plant populations, ranging from mild to pestlike proportions, depend heavily upon the number of species in an ecosystem and on the degree of variety in the environment. The greater the variety of prey and predators, the more stable the population; the more diversified the environment in terms of flora and fauna, the less likely there is to be ecological instability. Stability is a function of variety, and diversity: if the environment is simplified and the variety of animal and plant species is reduced, fluctuations in population become marked and tend to get out of control. They tend to reach pest proportions.

In the case of pest control, many ecologists now conclude that we can avoid the repetitive use of toxic chemicals such as insecticides and herbicides by allowing for a greater interplay among living things. We must allow more room for natural spontaneity, for the diverse biological forces that make up an ecological situation. "European entomologists now speak of managing the entire plant-insect community," observes Robert L. Rudd… "Although numbers of individuals will constantly change, no one species will normally reach pest proportions. The special conditions which allow high populations of a single species in a complex ecosystem are rare events. Management of the biocenose or ecosystem should become our goal, challenging as it is."

The [management] of the biocenose in a meaningful way, however, presupposes a far-reaching decentralization of agriculture. Wherever feasible, industrial agriculture must give way to soil and agricultural husbandry; the factory floor must yield to gardening and horticulture. I do not wish to imply that we must surrender the gains acquired by large-scale agriculture and mechanization. What I *do* contend, however, is that the land must be cultivated as though it were a garden; its flora must be diversified and carefully tended, balanced by a fauna and tree shelter appropriate to the region. Decentralization is important, moreover, for the development of the agriculturist as well as for the development of agriculture. Food cultivation, practiced in a truly ecological sense, presupposes that the agriculturist is familiar with all the features and subtleties of the terrain on which the crops are grown. He must have a thorough knowledge of the physiography of the land, its variegated soils—crop land, forest land, pasture land—its mineral and organic content, and its microclimate, and he must be engaged in a continuing study of the effects produced by new flora and fauna. He must develop his sensitivity to the land's possibilities and needs while he becomes an organic part of the agricultural situation. We can hardly hope to

achieve this high degree of sensitivity and integration in the food cultivator without reducing agriculture to a human scale, without bringing agriculture within the scope of the individual. To meet the demands of an ecological approach to food cultivation, agriculture must be rescaled from huge industrial farms to moderate-sized units.

The same reasoning applies to a rational development of energy resources. The Industrial Revolution increased the *quantity* of energy used by man. Although it is certainly true that preindustrial societies relied primarily on animal power and human muscles, complex energy patterns developed in many regions of Europe, involving a subtle integration of resources such as wind and water power, and a variety of fuels (wood, peat, coal, vegetable starches and animal fats).

The Industrial Revolution overwhelmed and largely destroyed these regional energy patterns, replacing them first with a single energy system (coal) and later with a dual system (coal and petroleum). Regions disappeared as models of integrated energy patterns—indeed, the very concept of *integration through diversity* was obliterated... many regions became predominantly mining areas, devoted to the extraction of a single resource, while others were turned into immense industrial areas, often devoted to the production of a few commodities. We need not review the role this breakdown in true regionalism has played in producing air and water pollution, the damage it has inflicted on large areas of the countryside, and the depletion of our precious hydrocarbon fuels...

We could try to re-establish earlier regional energy patterns, using a combined system of energy provided by wind, water, and solar power. We would be aided by devices more sophisticated than any known in the past.

Solar devices, wind turbines, and hydroelectric resources taken singly do not provide a solution for our energy problems and the ecological disruption created by conventional fuels. Pieced together as a mosaic, as an organic energy pattern developed from the potentialities of a region, they could amply meet the needs of a decentralized society. In sunny latitudes we could rely more heavily on solar energy than on combustible fuels. In areas marked by atmospheric turbulence, we could rely more heavily on wind devices; and in suitable coastal areas or inland regions with a good network of rivers, the greater part of our energy would come from hydroelectric installations...

As in the case of agriculture, however, the application of ecological principles to energy resources presupposes a far-reaching decentralization of society and a truly regional concept of social organization. To maintain a large city requires immense quantities of coal and petroleum. By contrast, solar, wind, and tidal energy reach us

mainly in small packets; except for spectacular tidal dams, the new devices seldom provide more than a few thousand kilowatt-hours of electricity. It is difficult to believe that we will ever be able to design solar collectors that can furnish us with immense blocks of electric power produced by a giant steam plant; it is equally difficult to conceive of a battery of wind turbines that will provide us with enough electricity to illuminate Manhattan Island. If homes and factories are heavily concentrated, devices for using clean sources of energy will probably remain mere playthings; but if urban communities are reduced in size and widely dispersed over the land, there is no reason why these devices cannot be combined to provide us with all the amenities of an industrialized civilization. To use solar, wind, and tidal power effectively, the megalopolis must be decentralized. A new type of community, carefully tailored to the characteristics and resources of a region, must replace the sprawling urban belts that are emerging today.

To be sure, an objective case for decentralization does not end with a discussion of agriculture and the problems created by combustible energy resources. The validity of the decentralist case can be demonstrated for nearly all the "logistical" problems of our time. Let me cite an example from the problematical area of transportation...

It is fairly well known that gasoline-powered vehicles contribute enormously to urban air pollution, and there is a strong sentiment to "engineer" the more noxious features of the automobile into oblivion. Our age characteristically tries to solve all its irrationalities with a gimmick—afterburners for toxic gasoline fumes, antibiotics for ill health, tranquilizers for psychic disturbances. But the problem of urban air pollution is too intractable for gimmicks; perhaps more intractable than we care to believe. Basically air pollution is caused by high population densities—by an excessive concentration of people in a small area. Millions of people, densely concentrated in a large city, necessarily produce serious *local* air pollution merely by their day-to-day activities. They must burn fuels for domestic and industrial reasons; they must construct or tear down buildings (the aerial debris produced by these activities is a major source of urban air pollution); they must dispose of immense quantities of rubbish; they must travel on roads with rubber tires (the particles produced by the erosion of tires and roadway materials add significantly to air pollution). Whatever pollution-control devices we add to automobiles and power plants, the improvements these devices will produce in the quality of urban air will be more than canceled out by future megalopolitan growth...

To sum up the critical message of ecology: if we diminish variety in the natural world, we debase its unity and wholeness; we destroy the forces making for natural har-

mony and for a lasting equilibrium; and, what is even more significant, we introduce an absolute retrogression in the development of the natural world that may eventually render the environment unfit for advanced forms of life. To sum up the reconstructive message of ecology: if we wish to advance the unity and stability of the natural world, if we wish to harmonize it, we must conserve and promote variety. To be sure, mere variety for its own sake is a vacuous goal. In nature, variety emerges spontaneously. The capacities of a new species are tested by the rigors of climate, by its ability to deal with predators, and by its capacity to establish and enlarge its niche. *Yet the species that succeeds in enlarging its niche in the environment also enlarges the ecological situation as a whole*. To borrow E. A. Gutkind's phrase, it "expands the environment," both for itself and for the species with which it enters into a balanced relationship.

How do these concepts apply to social theory? To many readers I suppose, it should suffice to say that, inasmuch as man is part of nature, an expanding natural environment enlarges the basis for social development. But the answer to the question goes much deeper than many ecologists and libertarians suspect. Again, allow me to return to the ecological principle of wholeness and balance as a product of diversity. Keeping this principle in mind, the first step toward an answer is provided by a passage in Herbert Read's *The Philosophy of Anarchism* [Selection 1]. In presenting his "measure of progress," Read observes: "Progress is measured by the degree of differentiation within a society. If the individual is a unit in a corporate mass, his life will be limited, dull, and mechanical. If the individual is a unit on his own, with space and potentiality for separate action, then he may be more subject to accident or chance, but at least he can expand and express himself. He can develop—develop in the only real meaning of the world—develop in consciousness of strength, vitality, and joy"…

What first strikes us is that both the ecologist and the anarchist place a strong emphasis on spontaneity. The ecologist, insofar as he is more than a technician, tends to reject the notion of "power over nature." He speaks instead of "steering" his way though an ecological situation, of *managing* rather than *recreating* an ecosystem. The anarchist, in turn, speaks in terms of social spontaneity, of releasing the potentialities of society and humanity, of giving free and unfettered rein to the creativity of people. Both, in their own way, regard authority as inhibitory, as a weight limiting the creative potential of a natural and social situation. Their object is not to *rule* a domain, but to *release* it. They regard insight, reason and knowledge as means for fulfilling the potentialities of a situation, as facilitating the working out of the logic of a situation, not as replacing its potentialities with preconceived notions or distorting their development with dogmas.

Turning to Read's words, what strikes us next is that both the ecologist and the anarchist view differentiation as a measure of progress… to both the ecologist and the anarchist, an ever-increasing unity is achieved by growing differentiation. *An expanding whole is created by the diversification and enrichment of its parts*.

Just as the ecologist seeks to expand the range of an ecosystem and promote a free interplay between species, so the anarchist seeks to expand the range of social experience and remove all fetters to its development. Anarchism is not only a stateless society but also a harmonized society which exposes man to the stimuli provided by both agrarian and urban life, to physical activity and mental activity, to unrepressed sensuality and self-directed spirituality, to communal solidarity and individual development, to regional uniqueness and worldwide brotherhood, to spontaneity and self-discipline, to the elimination of toil and the promotion of craftsmanship…

An anarchist society should be a decentralized society, not only to establish a lasting basis for the harmonization of man and nature, *but also to add new dimensions to the harmonization of man and man*. The ancient Greeks, we are often reminded, would have been horrified by a city whose size and population precluded a face-to-face, often familiar, relationship between citizens. There is plainly a need to reduce the dimensions of the human community—partly to solve our pollution and transportation problems, partly also to create *real* communities. In a sense, we must *humanize* humanity. Electronic devices, such as telephones, telegraphs, radios, television receivers, and computers should be used as little as possible to mediate the relations between people. In making collective decisions… all members of the community should have an opportunity to acquire in full the measure of anyone who addresses the assembly. They should be in a position to absorb his attitudes, study his expressions, and weigh his motives as well as his ideas in a direct personal encounter and through face-to-face discussion.

Our small communities should be economically balanced and well rounded, partly so that they can make full use of local raw materials and energy resources, partly also to enlarge the agricultural and industrial stimuli to which individuals are exposed. The member of a community who has a predilection for engineering, for instance, should be encouraged to steep his hands in humus; the man of ideas should be encouraged to employ his musculature; the "inborn" farmer should gain a familiarity with the workings of a rolling mill. To separate the engineer from the soil, the thinker from the spade, and the farmer from the industrial plant promotes a degree of vocational overspecialization that leads to a dangerous measure of social control by specialists. What is equally important, professional and vocational specialization

prevents society from achieving a vital goal: the humanization of nature by the technician and the naturalization of society by the biologist.

I submit that an anarchist community would approximate a clearly definable ecosystem—it would be diversified, balanced, and harmonious. It is arguable whether such an ecosystem would acquire the configuration of an urban entity with a distinct centre, such as we find in the Greek *polis* or the medieval commune, or whether, as Gutkind proposes, society would consist of widely dispersed communities without a distinct center. In any case, the ecological scale for any of these communities would be determined by the smallest ecosystem capable of supporting a population of moderate size.

A relatively self-sufficient community, visibly dependent on its environment for the means of life, would gain a new respect for the organic interrelationships that sustain it. In the long run, the attempt to approximate self-sufficiency would, I think, prove more efficient than the exaggerated national division of labour that prevails today. Although there would doubtless be many duplications of small industrial facilities from community to community, the familiarity of each group with its local environment and its ecological roots would make for a more intelligent and more loving use of its environment. I submit that, far from producing provincialism, relative self-sufficiency would create a new matrix for individual and communal development—a oneness with the surroundings that would vitalize the community.

The rotation of civic, vocational, and professional responsibilities would stimulate the senses in the being of the individual, creating and rounding out new dimensions in self-development...

If the ecological community is ever achieved in practice, social life will yield a sensitive development of human and natural diversity, falling together into a well-balanced, harmonious whole. Ranging from community through region to entire continents, we will see a colourful differentiation of human groups and ecosystems, each developing its unique potentialities and exposing members of the community to a wide spectrum of economic, cultural, and behavioural stimuli. Falling within our purview will be an exciting, often dramatic, variety of communal forms—here marked by architectural and industrial adaptations to semi-arid ecosystems, there to grasslands, elsewhere by adaptation to forested areas. We will witness a creative interplay between individual and group, community and environment, humanity and nature... Differences among people will be respected, indeed fostered, as elements that enrich the unity of experience and phenomena... the "external," the "different," the "other" will be conceived of as individual parts of a whole all the

richer because of its complexity... Freed from an oppressive routine, from paralyzing repressions and insecurities, from the burdens of toil and false needs, from the trammels of authority and irrational compulsion, individuals will finally, for the first time in history, be in a position to realize their potentialities as members of the human community and the natural world.

49. Daniel Guérin: Anarchism Reconsidered (1966)

Daniel Guérin (1904-1988) was a libertarian communist active in French radical politics from the 1930s onward. He was an anti-fascist, anti-colonialist, and an advocate of sexual liberation. Coming from a Marxist perspective, in the late 1950s he developed an interest in anarchism which culminated in his 1965 publication, Anarchism: From Theory to Practice *(English translation, with a forward by Noam Chomsky (Selection 55), published in 1970), and his 1969 anthology of anarchist writings,* Ni Dieu Ni Maitre *(English edition:* No Gods, No Masters, *San Francisco, AK Press, 1998). The following excerpts are from his contemporaneous essay, "Twin Brothers—Enemy Brothers," translated by Paul Sharkey and reprinted in Guerin's* A la Recherche d'un Communisme Libertaire *(In Search of Libertarian Communism, Paris: Spartacus, 1984).*

ROUGHLY SPEAKING, THERE ARE TWO LEVELS at which anarchism remains relevant.

For a start, a good century ago, it discerned and denounced in prophetic fashion the risks of authoritarian deviation by dictatorial Marxism, rooted in an all powerful State run by a minority claiming a monopoly on knowledge of the processes of history.

Then, in place of this travesty of communism against which it sounded the alert in good time, it proposed another one which I shall describe as libertarian, rooted in contrary notions, driven from the grassroots up and not from the top down, and looking to the creative initiative of the individual and the spontaneous participation of the broad masses.

Today the blemishes of the first type of "socialism" are sensible even in those countries which have afforded them the status of dogmas. In the realm of production, it has been noticed that it provides a very mediocre return. And in order to correct its excesses, they have been reverting, as in Yugoslavia, unwittingly and in an unspoken way to the Proudhon school [of worker self-management].

What has anarchism to offer us in terms of things of service to the construction of the future society?

For one thing, anarchism, ever since Proudhon, has acted as the advocate of labour combination, what we today describe as self-management.

Libertarians do not want to see the economy run by private capitalism. Similarly they reject State control, for the proletarian revolution would, as they see it, be empty of all content if the workers were to fall under the sway of new tyrants—the bureaucrats.

Self-management is labour democracy in the factory. The worker wears two hats: he is simultaneously the producer, confined to his specialization, and co-manager of the firm. He thus ceases to be alienated. He is freed from wage slavery. He receives his aliquot portion of the firm's profits.

But the aim is not to introduce some sort of collective mastery, imbued with a selfish mentality. All of the self-managing ventures would have to be in fellowship and interdependent. Serving the common interest should be their sole concern. They would have to abide by some overall plan. And that planning would not be bureaucratic, as it is under State communism, but driven from below and regulated in concert by the delegates from the various production units.

Another of anarchism's constructive factors is federalism.

The idea of federation did not sprout from the head of some theoretician. Proudhon merely deduced it from the experience of the French Revolution, when it had germinated spontaneously. In fact, in the vacuum created by the collapse of the old, absolutist State, the municipalities had attempted, through federation, to rebuild national unity from below. The Feast of Federation on 14 July 1790 had marked a voluntary unity—a unity all the more solid than the one imposed by the whim of the Prince.

Proudhonian federalism is unity without constraint, which is to say, a freely embraced pact (susceptible to revocation at any moment) between various grassroots groupings, in economic as well as administrative matters. This pyramidal federation which is secured locally, regionally and nationally, indeed internationally, weaves interconnections between both the self-managed ventures and the autonomous communes…

A third element that anarchism later added to the previous two and which rounded off the edifice is revolutionary syndicalism. If the solidarity and interdependence of the self-managing ventures are to be ensured, and if life is to be breathed into the communes as the basic administrative units, there will have to be an organization emanating directly from the working class, embracing and marshalling its various activities, and itself structured along federative lines: this was the role allotted to the trade unions—in capitalist society, they would be straightforward agencies pressing demands and challenges; in the socialist society, to this elementary function as workers' advocate is added a role—for which they must be prepared in advance

—as coordinator, articulator, stimulator and educator. Thanks to powerful labour unionism, provided of course that it has first been debureaucratized, a vital overall unity could be guaranteed without need of recourse to statist procedures. In anarcho-syndicalist Catalonia in 1936, the municipality, which is to say the township, and the local union of trade unions were as one. The CNT tended to be synonymous with the Republic.

Only in the event of the corruption and bureaucratization of the trade unions proving to be beyond remedy would it be necessary to start all over again and the requisite coordination of self-managing enterprises should be handled by an agency of a whole new sort: a federation of workers' councils sprouting from the strike committees which embrace unionized and non-unionized alike...

Anarchism prizes the individual over all else. It proposes to build a free society, starting from the free individual. Here the federalist principle comes into it again. The individual is free to seek or not to seek association, and is at all times free to withdraw from association. Such a compact is, in anarchists' eyes, sturdier and more promising than Jean-Jacques Rousseau's supposed social contract in which libertarians see nothing but imposition and social constraint.

The individual is not a means, but rather the ultimate end of society. The anarchist aims to help the individual towards full self-realization, to cultivate and draw out all of his creative potential. Society ultimately benefits as much as the individual, for it is no longer made up of passive, slavish beings, yes-men, but becomes a sum of free forces, an amalgam of individual energies.

From this postulate of freedom flows the whole of anarchist humanism, and its repudiation of religious authority as well as puritanism in morals. In the latter regard. where sexual freedom is concerned, the anarchists—long before Freud, rationalists of the René Guyon school, existentialists and situationists—were in the forefront.

By taking a bath in anarchism, today's Marxism can emerge regenerated and cleansed of its blemishes.

50. The Provos: PROVOcation (1965-66)

The Provos were a group of young Dutch anarchists who sought to provoke people into action by utilizing imaginative forms of direct action, attacking conformity, obedience and consumerism, and developing a new kind of radical politics transcending the class struggle politics of more traditional socialists and anarchists who looked to the working class as the agent of revolutionary change.

'PROVO' MAGAZINE LEAFLET

THE ANTI-BOMB MOVEMENT, WHICH SEEMED to be the only dynamic element on the Left in Holland, has disappeared up a back alley. The ban-the-bomb groups have given up their work...

The Peace Committee and the People's Committee do not seem to be able to attract many more supporters and are becoming isolated.

The annual march through Amsterdam, performed with the painful regularity and senselessness of a ritual, only just manages to keep the flame burning.

The Dutch Left will have to find new ways of achieving real results before it loses its attraction altogether. We believe that nonviolent dissidence is only incidentally appropriate to our ends because it is not happening on a large scale.

When slogans and gestures fail we have to turn to action and attack. We believe that only a revolutionary Left movement can bring about change!

This preference for direct action leads us to anarchist concepts. Anarchism propagates the most direct rebellion against all authority, whether it be democratic or communist.

The Dutch anarchist movement has been languishing since the war. We want to renew anarchism and spread the word, especially among the younger generation...

Why?

— because this capitalist society is poisoning itself with a morbid thirst for money. Its members are brought up to worship Having and despise Being.

— because this bureaucratic society is choking itself with officialdom and suppressing any form of spontaneity. Its members can only become creative, individual people through anti-social conduct.

— because this militaristic society is digging its own grave by a paranoid atomic arms build-up. Its members now have nothing to look forward to but certain death by atomic radiation.

PROVO feels it must make a choice: desperate revolt or cowering defeat. PROVO encourages rebellion wherever it can. PROVO knows it must be the loser in the end, but it cannot miss the chance to thoroughly provoke this society once more.

PROVO sees anarchism as a well of inspiration for the revolt. PROVO wants to renew anarchism and bring it to the young...

The Editorial Board

May 25, 1965

BRUSSELS PROVOCATION NO. 1

Ban-the-Bomb March, Brussels, 24 April 1966

As in previous years, thousands of demonstrators will be taken in coaches to Brussels. For the most part, they will be Sunday pacifists and occasional ban-the-bombers. They will demonstrate in a leisurely manner and then, in the evening, happy and satisfied, they will go back home.

IT IS COMPLETELY ABSURD AND RIDICULOUS, it is totally useless taking part in a ban-the-bomb march if the next day you are going to submit docilely to the authorities and the powers-that-be, who are responsible for keeping up the threat of war and the atomic hazard, or if—except for one single afternoon a year—you let yourself be incorporated into a society which, though it may not actually approve of war, nonetheless tolerates it.

To demonstrate against the bomb = TO PROVOKE THE AUTHORI TIES!

A ban-the-bomb march should be a PROVOCATION against the power structure, the authorities and the submissive and complicit crowd!

WHAT IS THE PROVOTARIAT?

What is the Provotariat? Provos, beatniks, pleiners, nozems, teddy-boys, rockers, blousons noirs, hooligans, mangupi, students, artists, misfits, anarchists, ban-the-bombers... Those who don't want a career and who lead irregular lives; those who come from the asphalt jungles of London, Paris, Amsterdam, New York, Moscow, Tokyo, Berlin, Milan, Warsaw and who feel ill-adapted to this society.

The Provotariat is the last element of rebellion in our 'developed' countries. The Proletariat is the slave of the politicians. Watching TV. It has joined its old enemy, the bourgeoisie, and now constitutes with the bourgeoisie a huge grey mass. The new class opposition in our countries is the Provotariat against this mass.

But the Provotariat is not a class—its make-up is too heterogeneous for that.

ANARCHY DEMANDS REVOLUTION

'PROVO' despairs of the coming of Revolution and Anarchy. Nevertheless it puts its faith in anarchism; for 'PROVO' anarchism is the only admissible social concept. It is 'PROVO's ideological weapon against the authoritarian forces which oppose us.

If the Provotariat (so far) lacks the strength for revolution there is still—PROVO-cation.

Provocation—with all its little pin pricks—has, in the face of circumstances, become our only weapon. It is our last chance to smash the authorities in their vital, soft parts. By our acts of provocation we force authority to tear off its mask. Uni-

forms, boots, kepis, swords, truncheons, fire hoses, police dogs, tear gas and all the other means of repression the authorities hold in reserve they must be forced to use against us. They will thus be forced to show their real nature; chin forward, eye-brows wrinkled, eyes glazed with rage, threatening left and right, commanding, forbidding, convicting.

They will make themselves more and more unpopular and the popular conscience will ripen for anarchy. THE CRISIS WILL COME. It is our last chance. A PROVOKED CRISIS FOR THE AUTHORITIES.

Such is the enormous provocation called for from the International Provotariat by 'PROVO' —Amsterdam.

PROVOKE!!!

The following excerpts are from the Provo pamphlet, "In Memoriam for Western Civiliza-tion," written by Roel van Duyn. The various "White Plans" referred to were specific action plans that the Provos tried to put into practice, such as the "White Bike Plan," where the Provos distributed white bicycles throughout Amsterdam to make them freely available to counteract automobile culture ("automobilism"). Years later, variations on the White Bike Plan have been implemented in a variety of cities, most recently Paris, with bikes being pro-vided either for free or for a reasonable fee in order to cut down on automobile pollution and congestion.

HOW TO PROVOCATE

THE PLAYING PROVOTARIAT MUST BE VERY clever in his play. But it must be a play that has the appearance of a very intelligent struggle on the basis of a revolutionary conception but, nevertheless, is a play. Because for authoritarian ethics which preaches forced labour and utility, play is not useful and voluntary labourlessness a permanent provocation. It is self-evident that the writers of letters-to-the-editor wish that we were in work camps.

Our tactic in the attack against authoritarian society must consist of a combina-tion of reformism and provocism. Against each part of the social machine we must act by constructive White Plans as well as by negative provocations. Positive and neg-ative, but in both extremes. On one side we must show by reformist White Plans how society should be, and on the other hand, we must show by provocations how the so-ciety is in reality. Our provocations must create crises so that in the confusion the White Plans have more of an opportunity to be realized. The ultimate consequence of this reform provocating tactic is the direct solidarity between the provotariats in super-cultivated countries and the proletariat in the undeveloped countries.

Against the authoritarian society we place the anarchistic one. The political accent here lies not with the authorities at the top but with the producers and consumers at the basis. They rule economic life according to the three political principles of anarchism: Federalism, antimilitarism, and collectivist property.

Against the authoritarian ethic we place the free one. We are against the ethics of monogamy because this maintains in general poor sexual relations, and we stand for the White Wife Plan of which the principle is total amoral promiscuity. Secondly the White Wife Plan is directed toward the emancipation of women…

Against the slavery of the consumer we place his being conscious. The consumer must be informed about all he consumes and the way in which it is to be consumed from the point of view of the consumer. Against the expensive and too inferior products the consumer must be brought into action.

The consumer boycott is the only form of economic resistance that shall be possible in the labourless future, when people as a whole are no longer part of the production system. To strike at production like the workers do and have done shall be impossible then. To strike at consumption is the only alternative. And also now widespread conscious consumer action can have deep consequences.

The evident forms of super-culture like nuclear armaments, the spoiling of the air and food poisoning are the greatest objects for agitation, because they are evidently faulty. Even the authorities can make nuclear armaments under false pretences, because everybody knows that the preparation for an atomic war is a crime against humanity.

More and more cities start to close their centres against private automobile traffic.

The White Bike Plan is an effective provocation because an enormous army of workers is involved in the auto-industry: one of seven Americans. By accentuating the White Bike as a public means of transport it is also a provocation of authoritarian private property. Traffic is also the eternal pretext of the authorities to maintain public order.

The White Chimney Plan has the same effect. It accentuates fresh air as collective property and resists against exploiting this collective property by big industry and automobilism.

And these provocations are only the beginning; or should the provos accept without resistance the pollution of their food, of their soil and water?

…[O]ur provocations in the immediate future… must focus on

1. the making of consumer consciousness and

2. the resistance against the planologic catastrophe by actions against cars, the increase of people and pollution. Concerning world politics the provotariat in

the welfare states has to play the role of the fifth column of the enormous armies of the hungry proletarians in the underdeveloped countries.

THIS MUST BE THE BASIS OF PROVOMONDO!

Roel van Duyn

November 12, 1966

THE WHITE BIKE PLAN

Amsterdamers:

The asphalt terror of the motorized bourgeoisie has lasted long enough. Human sacrifices are made daily to this latest idol of the idiots: car power. Choking carbon monoxide is its incense, its image contaminates thousands of canals and streets.

PROVO'S BICYCLE PLAN will liberate us from the car monster. PROVO introduces the WHITE BICYCLE, a piece of PUBLIC PROPERTY…

The white bicycle is never locked. The white bicycle is the first free communal transport. The white bicycle is a provocation against capitalist private property, for the white bicycle is anarchistic. The white bicycle can be used by anyone who needs it and then must be left for someone else. There will be more and more white bicycles until everyone can use white transport and the car peril is past. The white bicycle is a symbol of simplicity and cleanliness in contrast to the vanity and foulness of the authoritarian car. In other words:

A BIKE IS SOMETHING, BUT ALMOST NOTHING!

WHITE SCHOOL PLAN

CALL TO ACTION!

Hanging over your head all the time is the threat of:

—getting kicked out of school, temporarily or for good;

— all kinds of penal measures such as disciplinary work and detention, and sometimes even physical punishment like getting beat up, having hair pulled, being kicked, etc.

The time has come for secondary school pupils to act in unison to shake themselves free of the crushing yoke of dogmatic conservatism by means of several planned 'white' actions.

They must take the democratic process within the schools into their own hands, because the educational leaders, both inside and outside the schools, are clinging to obsolete standards that hinder full concentration on studies and poison the atmosphere in which this happens.

An important aspect of this democratic process is the student-teacher relationship. The headmaster always sticks to the attitude of 'The party is always right,' a frustrating influence on the personality, which is noticeable in the level of achievement. A school is primarily a living community in which one is supposed to associate on a basis of equality.

As a revolutionary answer to the problem we propose to establish the S.O.S., STICHTING OPSTANDIGE SCHOLIEREN (Institute of Revolutionary Pupils), which in turn will launch the WHITE SCHOOL PLAN.

Whenever headmasters will not listen to the demands we make under the White School Plan, we shall be forced to press them home by means of large-scale actions such as school strikes, boycotting of teachers, sit-ins, sit-downs (with or without smoke bombs), inflammatory leaflets…

51. The Cohn-Bendit Brothers: It is for Yourself that You Make the Revolution (1968)

Gabriel and Daniel Cohn-Bendit were brothers associated with the Noir et Rouge *anarchist publishing group in France. They were also influenced by radical socialist publications, such as Cornelius Castoriadis' and Claude Lefort's* Socialisme ou Barbarie, *and the Situationists. In May and June 1968, Daniel Cohn-Bendit was at the forefront of the student revolt in France that led to street barricades, university and factory occupations and a general strike that almost brought down the government. As the Cohn-Bendit brothers themselves noted, these events were not the "brilliant invention" of "naïve prodigies," as Claude Lefort put it, "but the result of arduous research into revolutionary theory and practice," representing "a return to a revolutionary tradition" that the Left had long since abandoned, namely anarchism. The following excerpts are taken from their 1968 book,* Le gauchisme—remède a la maladie sénile du communisme, *or* Leftism—remedy for the senile disease of Communism *(the title is a parody of Lenin's* Leftism—an Infantile Disorder*). It has recently been republished by AK Press under its original English title,* Obsolete Communism: The Left-Wing Alternative.

A SOCIETY WITHOUT EXPLOITATION IS inconceivable where the management of production is controlled by one social class, in other words where the division of society into managers and workers is not totally abolished. Now, the workers are told day after day that they are incapable of managing their own factory, let alone society, and they have come to believe this fairy tale. This is precisely what leads to their alienation in a capitalist society, and this is precisely why socialists must do their utmost to restore the people's autonomy and not just doctor the economic ills of the West.

It is not by accident that liberals, Stalinist bureaucrats and reformists alike, all reduce the evils of capitalism to economic injustice, and exploitation to the unequal distribution of the national income. And when they extend their criticism of capitalism to other fields, they still imply that everything would be solved by a fairer distribution of wealth. The sexual problems of youth and the difficulties of family life are ignored—all that apparently needs to be solved is the problem of prostitution. Problems of culture come down to the material cost of dispensing it. Of course, this aspect is important, but a man is more than a mere consumer, he cannot only get fed, he can get fed up as well. While most of man's problems are admittedly economic, man also demands the right to find fulfillment on every other possible level. If a social organization is repressive it will be so on the sexual and cultural no less than on the economic planes.

As our society becomes more highly industrialized, the workers' passive alienation turns into active hostility. To prevent this happening, there have been many attempts to 'adapt the workers,' 'give them a stake in society,' and quite a few technocrats now think this is the only hope of salvaging 'the democratic way of life.'

But however comfortable they may make the treadmill, they are determined never to give the worker control of the wheel. Hence many militants have come to ask themselves how they can teach the workers that their only hope lies in revolution. Now, this merely reintroduces the old concept of the vanguard of the proletariat, and so threatens to create a new division within society. The workers need no teachers; they will learn the correct tactics from the class struggle. And the class struggle is not an abstract conflict of ideas, it is people fighting in the street. Direct control can only be gained through the struggle itself. Any form of class struggle, over wages, hours, holidays, retirement, if it is pushed through to the end, will lead to a general strike, which in turn introduces a host of new organizational and social problems. For instance, there cannot be a total stoppage of hospitals, transport, provisions, etc., and the responsibility for organizing these falls on the strikers. The longer the strike continues, the greater the number of factories that have to be got going again. Finally the strikers will find themselves running the entire country.

This gradual restoration of the economy is not without its dangers, for a new managerial class may emerge to take over the factories if the workers are not constantly on their guard.

They must ensure that they retain control over their delegated authorities at all times. Every function of social life—planning, liaison and coordination—must be taken up by the producers themselves, as and when the need arises.

It is certain that the managerial class will do everything they can to prevent a real revolution. There will be intimidation and violent repression, prophets both new and old of every shape and form will be held up to bamboozle the workers. There will be election campaigns, referenda, changes in the cabinet, electoral reforms, red herrings, bomb plots and what have you. At the same time, the experts will preach about the dire threat to the national economy and international prestige of the country. And should the workers turn a deaf ear to them, and persist in restarting production under their direct control, the managerial class will end up, as always, by calling in the army and police. This is precisely what happened in France in 1968, and not for the first time either…

Contemporary history has shown that the abolition of the private ownership of the means of production, essential though it is, does not necessarily mean the end of exploitation. Under capitalism, wages and prices fluctuate more or less with the law of supply and demand. Hence we are led to believe that the amelioration of the workers' lot is a simple marketing (or planning) problem, and that all our pressing social questions can be solved by 'dialogues' between officials or parliamentary representatives.

Similarly the wage system hides the reality of exploitation by suggesting that pay is simply a matter of productive capacity—but how do you evaluate the productive capacity of, say, a schoolteacher?

In the capitalist system, the only standard of value is money, hence the worker himself has a price tag that fits him neatly into a social pigeon hole and is set apart from the rest. He has become just another commodity, not a man but an economic abstraction, whose relationship with other men is governed by arbitrary laws over which he has no control. The time each worker spends on a particular job is expressed in working hours; it is only when the workers themselves take control, and appropriate the fruits of their own production, that work will be determined by real needs and not by blind and arbitrary market forces. Social relationships will no longer be vertical—from top to bottom, from director to worker—but horizontal, between equal producers working in harmony. And the product of their toil will no longer be appropriated by parasitic organisms, but shared out fairly between one and all.

All this is doubtless a far cry from the general strike of May and June which, though it gave spontaneous expression to popular disgust at the present system and showed the workers their real power on a scale unprecedented in recent French history, failed precisely because the workers themselves failed to take the next logical step: to run the economy by themselves as free and equal partners. As Coudray puts it in *La brèche*: 'It should be said firmly and calmly: in May, 1968, in France, the indus-

trial proletariat, far from being the revolutionary vanguard of society, was its dumb rearguard. In May, 1968, the most conservative, the most mystified stratum of society, the one most deeply ensnared in the traps of bureaucratic capitalism, was the working class, and more particularly that fraction of the working class which belongs to the Communist Party and the CGT.'

Now this failure cannot be explained simply in terms of treachery by the working-class organizations, for it is basically due to the erosion of initiative within the capitalist system. The ideological submissiveness and servility of the wage-slaves must not be condemned, which serves no purpose, nor deplored, which helps to engender a moral superiority, nor accepted, which can only lead to complete inaction —it must be fought by an active and conscious assault, if necessary by a minority, on the system in every sphere of daily life.

The differences between the revolutionary students and the workers spring directly from their distinct social positions. Thus few students have had real experience of grinding poverty—their struggle is about the hierarchical structure of society, about oppression in comfort. They do not so much have to contend with a lack of material goods as with unfulfilled desires and aspirations. The workers on the other hand, suffer from direct economic oppression and misery—earning wages of less than 500 francs per month, in poorly ventilated, dirty and noisy factories, where the foreman, the chief engineer and the manager all throw their weight about and conspire to keep those under them in their place.

French society in general, and Gaullist society in particular, is but the expression of modern bureaucratic capitalism, which must constantly expand or disintegrate. Hence the State must increasingly intervene to prevent stagnation. This in no way removes the inner contradictions of capitalism, or stops it from wasting resources on a gigantic scale. True, capitalism has been able to raise real wages, indeed it must do so if it is to foist its mass-produced rubbish on the working class, but it is quite incapable of harnessing the forces of production to rational goals—only socialism can do that.

Meanwhile, the increasing bureaucratization and automation of the economy is helping to split the producing class more and more into distinct strata: unskilled workers who serve as mere robots, skilled craftsmen, staff grades, technical experts, scientists and so on, each with special interests and grievances of their own. As a result, workers in the lowest and highest categories do not seem to have any common interests—other than unmasking the trickery of a system that robs Peter to pay Paul, and going on to see that the only solution to their individual problems is a joint

one—revolution and a new society, in which objective logic and necessity will decide the claims of all.

This solution can only be reached by the association of all the non-exploitative categories of industry: manual workers as well as intellectuals, office workers and technicians. Every attempt to achieve workers' management by excluding any one category is bound to fail, and will merely help to reintroduce bureaucratic methods of control. Modern society has become 'proletarianized' to the extent that the old 'petty bourgeois' class is disappearing… most people have been transformed into wage earners and have been subjected to the capitalist division of labour. However, this proletarianization in no way represents the classical Marxist image of a society moving towards two poles, a vast mass of increasingly impoverished workers and a handful of immensely rich and powerful capitalists. Rather society has been transformed into a pyramid, or, more correctly, into a complex set of bureaucratic pyramids. As a result, there are not the two poles of Marx but a whole Jacob's ladder, and there are no signs that this will be reversed. Hence the revolutionary movement must learn to translate the language of yesterday into the language of today. Just as it was difficult to explain collectivization to the peasantry in the unmechanized Russia at the time of the Revolution, so it is difficult in the modern world of increasingly specialized skills to put across to the workers the idea of direct control. Now this specialization is, in fact, just another aspect of the capitalist principle of divide and rule, since most skills can be taught much more widely than they are today, and there is no reason why the workers should not pool their information.

Capitalists, on the other hand, cannot do this because they work in competition. Moreover, few of them can even produce their own blueprints, and this applies equally well to all the ministers and permanent secretaries, who only endorse the reports of their experts. And even these work in separate groups, each concentrating on a special field and each using jargon appropriate to that field. The ruling class deliberately fosters this proliferation of tongues, and as long as they are allowed to have their way, the workers will continue to be kept in ignorance, and hence remain like sailors who dare not mutiny because the art of navigation is kept a secret from them.

The revolutionary students can play a very important part in changing this picture. Having been trained as future managers, they are in a position to make their knowledge available to all. To that end, the 'critical university' must be transformed into a people's university. If only a handful of 'technocrats' proclaim loudly enough that the monopoly of knowledge is a capitalist myth, the workers will not be long in realizing that they are being led by the nose, and that knowledge is theirs for the asking.

The events of May and June have demonstrated that when driven into a corner, the capitalists will use violence to defend their bureaucratic hold on society. Part of the hierarchy is concerned with maintaining political domination, another with administrative domination, a third with economic domination, but all are agreed to preserve the system. Or rather, all were agreed until the spontaneity and freedom released by the student movement blew like a breath of fresh air through all the petrified institutions, organizations and professional bodies of France, and forced many who had been among the staunchest defenders of the system to question its basis for the first time. A case in point is the action of schoolteachers, who came from far and wide to join in the deliberation of the far-left militants of the Federation of National Education when, only two months earlier, the Federation had found it quite impossible to interest them in even the most tempting pedagogical debates. Now, teachers appeared in their thousands to discuss such fundamental problems as pupil participation, the dangers of a repressive environment, the fostering of the child's imagination, and allied topics.

It is difficult not to adopt a paternalistic tone when speaking of the struggle of high school boys and girls, whose refusal to be cowed often expressed itself in childish ways, all the more touching for that. As they occupied their schools, forced their teachers to enter into a dialogue with them, and joined the students on the barricades, often without fully appreciating what the struggle was about, they matured almost overnight. They had been spoon-fed on Rousseau and *Emile* for years, and at last they realized that it is not enough just to read about freedom in education.

Moreover, as they came home at night and were faced with utter lack of understanding by their parents, were threatened and locked up, they began to question the whole basis of French family life. Having once tasted freedom in action, they would not submit to the authority of those who had never dared to question the power of the State, and had meekly become conscripts at the age of eighteen, to be sent off to fight in the colonies. The liberty these parents refused to give to their children, the children now took for themselves.

The same kind of courage and determination was also shown by many technicians and staff of the ORTF (French Radio and Television). True, the majority of them were not 'revolutionaries' but they nevertheless challenged the authorities, if only by refusing to continue as slavish dispensers of State-doctored information. In so doing, they sabotaged the system at its moment of greatest danger, and robbed it of one of its chief ideological weapons. The ORTF strike highlighted how much can be achieved if just a handful of technicians begin to question society, and showed that

what had previously passed as objectivity of information and liberty of expression was no more than a farce.

The 'premature' Revolution of 1968 has introduced an entirely new factor into the revolutionary process: the entry into the struggle of youth, often privileged, but in any case disgusted with present society and thus acting as rallying points for the toiling masses. The crisis of our culture, the break-up of all true values and the crushing of individuality will continue for as long as capitalism and its basic contradictions are allowed to persist. We have just lived through a major tremor, a 'cultural crisis' of capitalist 'life,' a crisis in which the exploited themselves not only transformed society but also transformed themselves, so much so that when the struggle starts up again it is bound to be carried to a higher stage.

The maturation of socialist thought can never be a purely objective process (because no social progress is possible without human activity, and because the idea that the revolution is preordained by the logic of events is no less ridiculous than trying to forecast it from the stars). Nor is it purely subjective in the psychological sense. It is a historical process which can only be realized in action, in the class struggle. It is not guaranteed by any law, and though probable, it is by no means inevitable. The bureaucratization of society explicitly poses the problem of management, by whom, for whom and by what means. As bureaucratic capitalism improves the general standard of living, it becomes possible to turn the workers' attention to the vacuity of their present lives (as seen, for instance, in their sexual, family, social and work relationships). Individuals find it increasingly difficult to solve this problem by applying the norms they have been taught, and even when they do conform they do so without any real conviction. Many will go on to invent new responses to their situation, and in so doing they assert their right to live as free men in a vital community. The real meaning of revolution is not a change in management, but a change in man. This change we must make in our own lifetime and not for our children's sake, for the revolution must be born of joy and not of sacrifice...

There is no such thing as an isolated revolutionary act. Acts that can transform society take place in association with others, and form part of a general movement that follows its own laws of growth. All revolutionary activity is collective, and hence involves a degree of organization. What we challenge is not the need for this but the need for a revolutionary leadership, the need for a party...

The emergence of bureaucratic tendencies on a world scale, the continuous concentration of capital, and the increasing intervention of the State in economic and social matters, have produced a new managerial class whose fate is no longer bound up with that of the private ownership of the means of production.

It is in the light of this bureaucratization that the Bolshevik Party has been studied. Although its bureaucratic nature is not, of course, its only characteristic, it is true to say that Communists, and also Trotskyists, Maoists and the rest, no less than the capitalist State, all look upon the proletariat as a mass that needs to be directed from above. As a result, democracy degenerates into the ratification at the bottom of decisions taken at the top, and the class struggle is forgotten while the leaders jockey for power within the political hierarchy.

The objections to Bolshevism are not so much moral as sociological; what we attack is not the evil conduct of some of its leaders but an organizational set-up that has become its one and only justification.

The most forceful champion of a revolutionary party was Lenin, who in his *What is to be done?* argued that the proletariat is unable by itself to reach a 'scientific' understanding of society, that it tends to adopt the prevailing, i.e., the bourgeois, ideology.

Hence it was the essential task of the party to rid the workers of this ideology by a process of political education which could only come to them from without. Moreover, Lenin tried to show that the party can only overcome the class enemy by turning itself into a professional revolutionary body in which everyone is allocated a fixed task. Certain of its infallibility, a Party appoints itself the natural spokesman and sole defender of the interests of the working class, and as such wields power on their behalf—i.e., acts as a bureaucracy.

We take quite a different view: far from having to teach the masses, the revolutionary's job is to try to understand and express their common aspirations; far from being Lenin's 'tribune of the people who uses every manifestation of tyranny and oppression… to explain his Socialist convictions and his Social Democratic demands,' the real militant must encourage the workers to struggle on their own behalf, and show how their every struggle can be used to drive a wedge into capitalist society. If he does so, the militant acts as an agent of the people and no longer as their leader.

The setting up of any party inevitably reduces freedom of the people to freedom to agree with the party.

In other words, democracy is not suborned by bad leadership but by the very existence of leadership. Democracy cannot even exist within the Party, because the Party itself is not a democratic organization, i.e., it is based upon authority and not on representation. Lenin realized full well that the Party is an artificial creation, that it was imposed upon the working class 'from without.' Moral scruples have been swept aside: the party is 'right' if it can impose its views upon the masses and wrong if it fails to do so. For Lenin, the whole matter ends there. In his *State and Revolution*,

Lenin did not even raise the problem of the relationship between the people and the party. Revolutionary power was a matter of fact, based upon people who are prepared to fight for it; the paradox is that the party's program, endorsed by these people, was precisely: All power to the Soviets! But whatever its program, in retrospect we can see that the Party, because of its basic conception, is bound to bring in privilege and bureaucracy, and we must wash our hands of all organizations of this sort. To try and pretend that the Bolshevik Party is truly democratic is to deceive oneself, and this, at least, is an error that Lenin himself never committed.

What then is our conception of the role of the revolutionary? To begin with, we are convinced that the revolutionary cannot and must not be a leader. Revolutionaries are a militant minority drawn from various social strata, people who band together because they share an ideology, and who pledge themselves to struggle against oppression, to dispel the mystification of the ruling classes and the bureaucrats, to proclaim that the workers can only defend themselves and build a socialist society by taking their fate into their own hands, believing that political maturity comes only from revolutionary struggle and direct action.

By their action, militant minorities can do no more than support, encourage, and clarify the struggle. They must always guard against any tendency to become a pressure group outside the revolutionary movement of the masses. When they act, it must always be with the masses, and not as a faction.

For some time, the 22 March Movement was remarkable only for its radical political line, for its methods of attack—often spontaneous—and for its non-bureaucratic structure. Its objectives and the role it could play became clear only during the events of May and June, when it attracted the support of the working class. These militant students whose dynamic theories emerged from their practice, were imitated by others, who developed new forms of action appropriate to their own situation. The result was a mass movement unencumbered by the usual chains of command. By challenging the repressive nature of their own institution—the university—the revolutionary students forced the state to show its hand, and the brutality with which it did so caused a general revulsion and led to the occupation of the factories and the general strike The mass intervention of the working class was the greatest achievement of our struggle; it was the first step on the path to a better society, a path that, alas, was not followed to the end. The militant minorities failed to get the masses to follow their example: to take collective charge of the running of society. We do not believe for a single moment that the workers are incapable of taking the next logical step beyond occupying the factories—which is to run them on their own. We are sure that they can do what we ourselves have done in the

universities. The militant minorities must continue to wage their revolutionary struggle, to show the workers what their trade unions try to make them forget: their own gigantic strength. The distribution of gasoline by the workers in the refineries and the local strike committees shows clearly what the working class is capable of doing once it puts its mind to it.

During the recent struggle, many student militants became hero-worshippers of the working class, forgetting that every group has its own part to play in defending its own interests, and that, during a period of total confrontation, these interests converge.

The student movement must follow its own road—only thus can it contribute to the growth of militant minorities in the factories and workshops. We do not pretend that we can be leaders in the struggle, but it is a fact that small revolutionary groups can, at the right time and place, rupture the system decisively and irreversibly.

During May and June, 1968, the emergence of a vast chain of workers' committees and sub-committees bypassed the calcified structure of the trade unions, and tried to call together all workers in a struggle that was their own and not that of the various trade union bureaucracies. It was because of this that the struggle was carried to a higher stage. It is absurd and romantic to speak of revolution with a capital "R" and to think of it as resulting from a single, decisive action. The revolutionary process grows and is strengthened daily not only in revolt against the boredom of a system that prevents people from seeing the 'beach under the paving stones' but also in our determination to make the beach open to all.

If a revolutionary movement is to succeed, no form of organization whatever must be allowed to dam its spontaneous flow. It must evolve its own forms and structures...

Every small action committee, no less than every mass movement which seeks to improve the lives of all men must resolve:

(1) to respect and guarantee the plurality and diversity of political currents within the revolutionary mainstream. It must accordingly grant minority groups the right of independent action—only if the plurality of ideas is allowed to express itself in social practice does this idea have any real meaning;

(2) to ensure that all delegates are accountable to, and subject to immediate recall by those who have elected them, and to oppose the introduction of specialists and specialization at every step by widening the skill and knowledge of all;

(3) to ensure a continuous exchange of ideas, and to oppose any control of information and knowledge;

(4) to struggle against the formation of any kind of hierarchy;

(5) to abolish all artificial distinctions within labour, in particular between manual and intellectual work, and discrimination on grounds of sex;

(6) to ensure that all factories and businesses are run by those who work in them;

(7) to rid ourselves, in practice, of the Judaeo-Christian ethic with its call for renunciation and sacrifice. There is only one reason for being a revolutionary—because it is the best way to live.

Reaction, which is bound to become more and more violent as the revolutionary movement increases its impact on society, forces us to look to our defences. But our main task is to keep on challenging the traditional bureaucratic structures both in the government and also in the working-class movements.

How can anyone represent anyone else? All we can do is to involve them. We can try and get a few movements going, inject politics into all the structures of society, into the Youth Clubs, Youth Hostels, the YMCA and the Saturday Night dance, get out on to the streets, out on to all the streets of all the towns. To bring real politics into everyday life is to get rid of the politicians. We must pass from a critique of the university to the anti-university, open to all. Our challenge of the collective control of knowledge by the bourgeoisie must be radical and intransigent.

The multiplication of nuclei of confrontation decentralizes political life and neutralizes the repressive influence of the radio, television and party politics. Every time we beat back intimidation on the spot, we are striking a blow for freedom. To break out from isolation, we must carry the struggle to every market place and not create Messianic organizations to do the job for us. We reject the policy committee and the editorial board… The type of organization we must build can neither be a vanguard nor a rearguard, but must be right in the thick of the fight. What we need is not organization with a capital "O," but a host of insurrectionary cells, be they ideological groups, study groups—we can even use street gangs.

Effective revolutionary action does not spring from 'individual' or 'external' needs—it can only occur when the two coincide so that the distinction itself breaks down. Every group must find its own form, take its own action, and speak its own language. When all have learnt to express themselves, in harmony with the rest, we shall have a free society.

Reader… put on your coat and make for the nearest cinema. Look at their deadly love making on the screen. Isn't it better in real life? Make up your mind to

learn to love. Then, during the interval, when the first advertisements come on, pick up your tomatoes or, if you prefer, your eggs, and chuck them. Then get out into the street, and peel off all the latest government proclamations until underneath you discover the message of the days of May and June.

Stay awhile in the street. Look at the passersby and remind yourself: the last word has not yet been said. Then act. Act with others, not for them. Make the revolution here and now. It is your own. *C'est pour toi que tu fais la revolution* [it is for yourself that you make the revolution].

52. Jacobo Prince: Fighting for Freedom (1969)

Jacobo Prince was an Argentine anarchist active in the Argentine Anarcho-Communist Federation, which later became the Argentine Libertarian Federation. During the Spanish Revolution and Civil War, he went to Spain, where he became an editor of the CNT paper, Solidaridad Obrera, *and joined the Peninsular Committee of the Iberian Anarchist Federation (FAI). After the war he returned to Argentina, where he opposed the Peronist dictatorship. He was one of the first Latin American anarchists to defend the Cuban anarchists against the growing repression there following Castro's seizure of power. The following passages, translated by Paul Sharkey, are taken from his essay, "The Libertarian Movement's Presence and Purposes," reprinted in* El Anarquismo en America Latina *(Caracas: Biblioteca Ayachucho, 1990), ed. A.J. Cappelletti and C.M. Rama.*

RESEARCHERS FROM A VARIETY OF PERSUASIONS and schools of thought are in general agreement that the fight for freedom, based on principles which came to be defined doctrinally as "philosophical anarchism," is a fight whose roots stretch back as far as the installation of political authority itself, which is to say, is as ancient as the establishment in human societies of authority in a state format... The religious or theological roots of authority and statism, so masterfully demonstrated by Mikhail Bakunin in his God and the State, have ensured that the rebels, the libertarians who repudiated arbitrary power, have been labelled as heretics.

The rebels, the heretics, the deniers of established authority or sacred dogma have not always been fighting for the effective eradication of the authority principle and dogmatism from human society. Historical experience and what we have been able to gather for ourselves from a period fraught with events, violent revolutions and political changes, like the period since the First World War, require that we bring an analytical approach and critical spirit to the scrutiny of the attitudes of certain rebel or insurgent movements, which, while rightly challenging the established order, do not in fact aim to supersede it and lay the groundwork for a different, more har-

monious, just and libertarian arrangement, but seek merely to substitute one group of leaders with another which, generally speaking, is struggling to the surface with a greater hunger for power and more *efficient* repressive techniques.

This critical approach to socio-political insurgency in no way amounts to a condemnation of the spirit of rebellion nor of revolutionary action as such. These days, in our high technological societies where real power, the basis for anti-social privilege, resides in and is manifested through an elaborate massification of peoples, just like centuries or millennia ago when the tyranny of the mighty was more straightforward and direct—even though, then as now, that tyranny was dependent, not upon force of arms but also upon the mental imperium of certain dogmas and superstitions—the first step, the basic pre-requisite for any movement in the direction of positive change in society consists of the negation or querying of the established order. Where there is no disquiet, no discontent, no inquisitiveness about moving beyond what already exists, there can be neither change nor progress. This conclusion holds equally true for the material order, insofar as it relates to constructive endeavour, artistic creativity, science, technology and schemes for the overhaul of society.

But, as we pointed out earlier, that prerequisite of denial and revulsion is not enough to conjure up a new social order unaided, nor indeed to effectively better the living conditions of a wide swathe of the population which finds itself dispossessed, overlooked and oppressed. The genuinely progressive or revolutionary character of a given doctrine or movement can be gauged by the extent to which it contains, in equal measure, the spirit of revolt and creative capability. In the final analysis, it is the latter that counts.

We are not thinking here of the creators of static, closed systems which spread and seep into consciousness thanks to shrewd playing to the gallery and which ultimately are imposed by force. From our libertarian vantage point, revolutionary creativity is that which liberates and opens up channels for positive social forces, which teases out free institutions and organizations that operate in the service of the individual and of all of the individuals belonging to them, rather than the other way round, when individual citizens, workers or members are subordinated to the organization, party, nation or church, or whatever name the authoritarian mode of institutionalized abstraction may go under.

To cite a few straightforward, readily understandable examples, let us say that, in our opinion, the creation and launching of labour unions governed by the rules of self-determination, federalism and action, of cultural centres free of dogma, wherein individuals, as producers, consumers or researchers, can express themselves without the

deformity imposed by authoritarian governance, are revolutionary. On the same basis, we cannot deem revolutionary, nor even "progressive," mammoth trade union or political organizations, or whatever, whose membership, no matter what size it may be, is made up only of compliant pawns passively abiding by orders handed down by a tiny band of bureaucrats—often a single person—heading up the organization in question. The fact that such orders occasionally translate into acts of violence, strikes, riots, planned uprisings, does not alter the essentially backward looking (which is to say, reactionary) character of such bodies and movements, in that their ultimate objective cannot but be to establish a new dictatorship, the chief casualties of which will include most of those who, in all good faith, helped establish it, precisely because they were dazzled by the chimera of sham revolutionary slogans.

Drawing its inspiration from the political philosophy of anarchism, the libertarian movement has at all times laid particular stress on concrete goals consonant with that ideology, as well as on fighting methods that logically have to be in harmony with those goals. Of course, *the imperative to act* did not always allow the achievement of strict conformity with that ideological essence. Thus, the use of revolutionary violence, be it individual or collective, imposed by the requirements of the struggle against the exploitation and tyranny of privileged groups, appears to fly in the face of the principles of freedom, mutual aid and nonviolence emanating from the anarchist approach to human relationships. But, and let me say this again, these are only symptoms of the imperative to act... For libertarians consistent with their own doctrine, violence can never be an end in itself, nor, for the reasons outlined, an unmistakable identifying mark of the libertarian socialist movement.

The same holds for other forms of behaviour which are formally alien to anarchist *orthodoxy*. Such as, say, acknowledgment of certain social reforms or improvements enshrined by legislation in most modern states. From the anarchist or anarcho-syndicalist viewpoint, such reforms are mere concessions extracted from the established authorities and ruling class over many decades of labour struggle, with the resultant sacrifices of several generations of militants. Even though as a matter of fact many of those in government and all rabble-rousing politicians try to capitalize upon such reforms in order to further their craving for power, the historical fact is that the latter represent gains initially made by the workers through recourse to direct action. Consequently, the defence of these gains is, to libertarians, both a necessity and a duty, every bit as legitimate as any other more spectacularly revolutionary objective. Which, needless to say, does not mean espousing a legalistic stance nor drifting into the much-feared *integration* into the establishment. The es-

sential difference separating a *reformer* acting on merely opportunistic grounds from an anarchist revolutionary clamouring for or working towards short-term gains is that, as far as the former is concerned, those gains, however insignificant, represent his only aim, independent of the whole gamut of injustices that endure, whereas the latter sees them as merely transitional stages, valuable only insofar as they are won through the deliberate action of the masses of the people and then only to the extent that they do not block the way, through some dewy-eyed conformity, to further and more telling victories for human sociability.

Something similar happens when we come to differentiate between supporters of violence or contestation as the ultimate aims of the struggle and the violence and criticism that constructive-minded revolutionaries find themselves compelled to resort to in order to *facilitate* the devising of fresh and more flawless forms of human coexistence. We should add here also, that the shock-horror displayed by some greenhorn ultra-revolutionaries with regard to anything connected with speculation or broad-brush anticipation of new forms of social living as they purport to shy away from bureaucratic planning, is nothing more than an indication of a certain revolutionary messiahism that was very fashionable towards the end of the last century but obviously obsolete since the revolutions we have been through in this one, as we stand on the threshold of the twenty first.

The important thing to stress is that the validity and vitality of libertarian ideas reside essentially in the accuracy of their critical stance *vis-à-vis* oppressive authorities, as well as in that constructive mentality rooted in the urge to move beyond the existing that has historically prompted the theorists and militants identified with such ideas...

The critical and militant endeavours of the libertarian wing of the great international labour and socialist movement that expanded thereafter—after the fifth decade of the 19th century—was forced to fight, as the saying goes, on two fronts. On the one hand, it had to direct its struggle on the terrain of theory and practice against the ruthlessly exploitative methods employed by a grasping, expanding capitalism that refused to countenance any lawful or trade union limitations upon its management of its economic ventures. As we know, that particular *economic absolutism* was largely curbed and brought to heel thanks to a long and costly struggle promoted by the workers' movement, sometimes inspired by ideologies canvassing thoroughgoing social change and at other points driven simply by a just aspiration to secure short term gains and act as a brake upon the capitalist pursuit of profit.

As far as the libertarians active within the workers' movement were concerned, it should have been directed towards more consequential aims than simply securing

short term gains: towards the abolition of the institutions and norms facilitating man's exploitation of his fellow man and the resultant establishment of fresh forms of relations involving the production and distribution of society's wealth. There is no doubt but that such revolutionary idealism, applied to the field of workers' struggles, represented one of the most effective *idées-forces* in the service of raising the dignity of the exploited classes and, but for it, many of the gains enjoyed by the workers in many countries today would probably never have been achieved. But it is no less true that in pressing home these demands, as in challenging the doctrinal foundations of capitalism, libertarians had to some extent to compromise with other segments of the labour movement and socialists and indeed with enormous masses of workers bereft of all ideology and merely eager to better their material circumstances. That fact, the search for betterment pure and simple, a resounding denial of the alleged "historical vocation" that Marxists attribute to the proletariat—and, more especially, to the industrial proletariat—has been plentifully exploited by modern rabble-rousers of every hue, even to the extent of turning labour unionism—thanks to a paternalistic statism—into the out and out opposite of the selfless revolutionary movement that its pioneers and martyrs strove to build up as a tool for genuine, positive change in society.

The consistent spokespersons for libertarian communism, who never waded into the democratic game that can only generate dictators and masses of willing slaves, have ploughed a lonely furrow and stood out from other reformers or social revolutionaries on account of this underlying rejection of authoritarianism and statism in all their many guises.

It is here, in relation to the specific point of the social struggle against statism and against the State per se as an agency supposedly representative of society, when in fact it has only ever represented and represents the interests of certain ruling groups, that we find a second front opening up, with libertarians plus a few occasionally anti-statist groups in one corner and, in the other, the vast majority of authoritarians, statists and State-worshippers—among whom virtually every one of the followers of Marxism must be counted...

Today, as we face the seventh decade of the 20th century, so to speak, when according to certain interpretations we are already living in the 21st, there are plentiful examples and experiences justifying libertarians' determined opposition to statism. But it is worth bearing in mind that that line was maintained for upwards of a hundred years at a time when parliamentary democracy and universal suffrage seemed to represent the rosiest hope of liberation as far as many men of good will were con-

cerned and, later still, when the highfalutin notion of the "dictatorship of the prole-
tariat" was regarded by many workers and revolutionaries as synonymous with
revolutionary struggle, in the wake of which victory and the ensuing elimination of
class privileges the State, dictatorship and the organized violence of the authorities
would have no further purpose and were fated to disappear and *fade away*, leaving be-
hind a free socialist society.

No need for us now to catalogue the horrors, criminality and trespasses against
the dignity of the person that humanity has had to confront in recent decades, thanks
to the handiwork of such sophistry and the failed revolutions conducted in accor-
dance with them. The broad masses, including the most enlightened and idealistic
persons among them, paid a very high price for their attachment to that magical for-
mula that promised to spare them the great exertions and mutual aid required to or-
ganize, from the bottom up, a genuinely free, fraternal, socialist society.

The aberrations of statism and of authoritarianism generally have apparently
peaked and there are telling indications that they are receding, as indicated by the
stirrings of rebellion cropping up everywhere in even the unlikeliest quarters. From
the activity of student foes of convention, rebel clerics and a few politicians in revolt
against the very dogmas in which they were schooled, to significant groups of work-
ers rediscovering the case for direct action in the old world, even under the rule of to-
talitarian regimes, there has been a flurry of unmistakable signals as to the necessity
and presence of a libertarian movement which, albeit diffuse and barely organized,
represents a hope and a fillip for those desirous of freeing humankind from the night-
mare of a dehumanized totalitarianism looming over this little planet of ours.

Reconstruir, No. 60, May-June 1969

53. Diego Abad de Santillán: Anarchism Without Adjectives (1969)

*Diego Abad de Santillán (1897-1983) was active in the Argentine and Spanish anarchist
movements in the years leading up to the Second World War and the author of many works
and articles on anarchism and the revolutionary labour movement (Volume 1, Selections 94,
125 and 128). In January 1939 he left Spain, spent time in various French concentration
camps, and then near the end of the war was able finally to return to Latin America. Even-
tually, he made his way back to Argentina, where he stayed until the death of Franco (1975),
after which he returned to Spain. The following passages, translated by Paul Sharkey, were
written for the Argentine anarchist review,* Reconstruir, *appearing under the title, "Apuntes
para una Problematica del Anarquismo," reprinted in* El Anarquismo en America Latina
(Caracas: Biblioteca Ayachucho, 1990), ed. A.J. Cappelletti and C.M. Rama. The concept of

"anarchism without adjectives" was first put forward by various Spanish anarchists, such as Ricardo Mella (1861-1925), concerned that to insist on one economic system, such as anarchist communism, as the only one compatible with anarchist ideals was its own form of dogmatism inconsistent with the libertarian principles to which all anarchists were supposed to be committed.

ANARCHISM IS NOT A POLITICAL SYSTEM, nor is it an economic system; it is a humanistic craving which does not culminate in some flawless, ideal order or structure free of conflicting interests or pursuit of power, wherein the human being will be free of problems and where life can proceed peaceably. Such earthly paradises—autocracy, kingship by the grace of God, democracy of the estates, dictatorship of the unerring leader as infallible as any Pope, dictatorship of the proletariat, dictatorship of the financial or industrial bourgeoisie, parliamentary arrangements, etc., etc.—are for others to devise and proffer as the ultimate solution. Anarchism is not tied to any of these political constructs even though it has to live and develop in that context, sometimes more fully and sometimes with lesser freedom or compelled to silence; it has no ties to them, be they good, bad or indifferent, nor does it offer a system to replace and supersede them; it is content to highlight their shortcomings, falsehoods and inadequacies; it may see more fairness in a political system that is more representative than parliaments in crisis, one that affords popular agencies access to decision-making concerning collective futures; a system operating from the ground up, from the municipalities and unions, from the world of labour, be that labour intellectual, scientific, technical or manual. But while praising this or that form of new political organization which might do away with many tensions and frictions and allow social relations to be organized on a fairer basis and wealth (the fruits of ingenuity and labour) to be distributed more equitably, it makes no binding commitment.

Anarchism is not a political recipe, some flawless program, some panacea; over and above whatever may appear ideal today, there is always something better lurking, an impeccable reference point—the ideal. It has been argued that this lack of a program is anarchism's weakness; however, it is in fact its consistent strength, its life-blood, its cornerstone; it seeks to defend man's dignity and freedom, regardless of circumstances and under every political system, past, present and future. Eventual success at the ballot-box or through insurrection does not leave it a spent force, and it will forge ahead and press on with its resistance to any form of oppression of man by the few or the many. Legally, few vestiges remain of the slavery and servitude combated down through the ages, over millennia: there is no denying that progress has been made on this specific score, and whereas, in the past, legal abolition of slavery might have been a target, anar-

chism always has before its eyes the mission of widening this focus to include a more radiant, more promising target: the reduction or elimination of fresh forms of slavery and servitude. Voluntary slavery or servitude included.

Anarchism is not wedded to any economic system; not during the Middle Ages when feudalism ruled the roost; not during the late 18th century when capitalism emerged with the steam engine and carried the day; nor when the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat was dreamt up and put into effect; it can survive and assert its right to exist alongside plough and team of oxen as readily as alongside the modern combine-harvester; its mission in the days of steam was the same as it is in the age of the electric motor or jet engine or the modern age of the computer and atomic power. Capitalism was an advance upon feudalism's farming techniques and raised the standard of living of millions and millions of sub-humans bereft of rights and possessed of nothing except the right to kow-tow to their masters, to the machine-owners or the masters who enjoyed a monopoly upon the resources of political power.

In our own day, a revolution with unimaginable implications is being triggered by scientific, technological and demographic explosions conjuring up prospects and possibilities scarcely comprehensible in the terms in which the recent or distant past conceived.

A child of his times, working with the materials of his times, Proudhon came up with a mutualist economics [Volume 1, Selections 12 & 18] through which man could develop and directly benefit more fully and fairly than under a system of monopoly capitalism geared to private profit rather than preoccupied with society; capitalism looked upon society as the potential market, merely a factor. Mikhail Bakunin in his day lobbied for a form of collectivism, which had the same aspirations [Volume 1, Chapter 6]; Peter Kropotkin devised the formula of communism [Volume 1, Chapter 8]; others proposed other means of ensuring that the product of labour remained in the producers' own hands; Gustav Landauer suggested the formation of communities operating outside of the capitalist economy [Volume 1, Selections 49, 79 & 111]; the idea of free colonies was floated and put into effect, partly at the instigation of the pre-Marxist socialism of Fourier [Volume 1, Selection 7] and Cabet and partly in order to put Kropotkin's solution to the test.

The contest between the supporters of collectivist anarchism and supporters of communism was a long and painful one; in the end, the latter carried the day as the ideal formula. Anarchism was thereby restricted to a single idea, one economic system and this made it easier to attract recruits, but it lost much of its essence. It was in Spain that the notion of an *anarchism without economic adjectives* surfaced, breathing new life into its humanistic tradition...

These days there is talk of *anarcho-syndicalism* whereby anarchist humanism is harnessed to the labour movement. This association is tantamount to an abridgement, as is anarcho-communism. There are reasons for this harnessing of anarchism alongside what later crystallized as syndicalism, because anarchists breathed life into the modern labour movement through nearly a century of heroic belligerency that took a high toll in blood, sweat and tears. Many anarchists were workers and they took upon themselves the daunting task of teaching their comrades what they did not know: that they constituted a real power if they would only join forces, if they showed solidarity with one another in the workplace, in industry, disregarding arbitrary national boundaries; essentially, they were educators and preached by example; their reward was the gallows or the firing squad and they served many years in prisons and prison farms, enduring trials, harassment and torture; workers' associations and unions were formed and schools and libraries accompanied them.

In myriad ways, a demonstration was offered of what it might be like in a society founded upon everyone's working for the benefit of all; a few recent writings—Pierre Besnard's for instance, or my own [Volume 1, Selection 125]—have summarized the prospects. It was our privilege at one point to set out how we lived in Spain and how we might be living, only to stumble across the actuality of it the next day in the agrarian collectives, with the industrial and commercial economies and public services in the hands of the workers [Volume 1, Selection 126]. These were practical, circumstantial solutions rather than well-meaning, aspirational utopias.

Be that as it may, anarchism is not syndicalism, but neither is it anti-syndicalism. It remains anarchism, without qualification. Being in favour of a change to political, economic and social structures delivering powers of decision-making over collective fate to the world of labour, is merely a current imperative designed to overcome imbalances which, in the long run, hurt us all. Just as the middle class was once upon a time incorporated into public life, shattering the ascendancy of the capitalist and financier oligarchies, the times in which we happen to be living or subsisting require that the world of labour, in the broadest sense, be incorporated into the decision-making that determines the fates of society and human beings.

Institutionalization of the labour movement, its recognition in law, gave rise to the mighty trade union organizations of our own day which involve almost half of the population of their respective countries, are run by a flourishing bureaucracy suffering the same flaws as any other bureaucracy, and in which the anarchist of yesteryear, the selfless militant and educator, has lost his traditional base; and maybe he shouldn't yearn for the sway he enjoyed back in the days of struggle and resistance which

were a feature of his presence in the unions. He will remain, and should carry on, in the workers' organizations as part and parcel of the process of production and distribution, but he will have to operate on the basis of a novel fact: that now those unions represent a power legally tied to the State in a variety of ways. His past performance belongs to history, and historians can unearth memories, deeds, attitudes and brave feats; but many of his views from the days when they played a leading part in the labour movement have lost their edge and his tactics and endeavours will have to be amended to fit in with the new trade unionism if he is to avoid the dangers of stagnation and deviation.

A century of struggle and warfare for respect and acknowledgment of the human person, a struggle in which anarchists manned the positions of greatest danger requiring the greatest sacrifice, moulded the image of the *heroic anarchist* in the public mind. No other element in the social war was able to equal the selflessness of so many thousands upon thousands of men as they enunciated their libertarian ideas. There were acts of protest and retaliation and sacrifices galore prompted by a profound solidarity with those who suffered injustice and oppression in their most extreme forms: and understanding and moral support aplenty from those who knew of their altruistic motives. They had to defend themselves against those who mobilized every resource of the state and all their wealth in order to restrict and resist just aspirations: when the government of Catalonia in Spain organized and did all in its power to sustain gangs of gunmen in order to wipe out the best known syndicalists and anarchists, and when hundreds of leading militants perished during those dark days, they resorted to defending their lives with greater determination than could be mustered by those hired guns and a situation came about in which the gun was then the ultimate argument.

In any event, the heroic deeds in which anarchists took part either as isolated individuals… or on a collective basis, left behind a picture of legend to be admired or rejected depending on one's outlook: but anarchism is, by its very essence, nonviolent and advocates nonviolence because it takes a humane approach to everything: on many counts one can sense a connection and a continuity with the early days of the Christian revolution.

An accidental emergency thrust anarchism into a war that lasted nearly three years and in which it was the main belligerent: a war in which hundreds of thousands of its personnel perished. Strictly speaking, the Spanish civil war sprang from the initial resistance to the threats from fascism in Spain, rather than from any defence of a political system to which they owed nothing, but resistance was mounted for the sake of freedoms won over many decades of sacrifice.

In recent times, events have followed one another at a dizzying rate: towards the end, the Second World War deployed the atomic bomb and thereby ushered in a new phase in history. It will take time to incubate ideas that can accommodate this new situation: today, anarchism is more relevant than ever before, more even than during the days when it was committed to the labour movement, more than during eruptions of heroics, more than during its exemplary performance in the war against fascism: it is experiencing a resurgence in modern philosophy, in theology, among sociologists and economists: among the unconventional younger generation shaking the mainstays of a society that is not a community: all of which needs to be bolstered by anarchism as a humanist banner, an anarchism without adjectives. Therein lies the root and the potential for the construction of a better world, the 21st century world in which it seems we are already living.

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54. Nicolas Walter: About Anarchism (1969)

Nicolas Walter's essay, "About Anarchism," was originally published in Colin Ward's Anarchy *magazine. It has been reprinted many times since by Freedom Press and translated into several languages. These excerpts are reproduced here with the kind permission of Christine Walter.*

MOST ANARCHISTS BEGIN WITH A LIBERTARIAN attitude towards private life, and want a much wider choice for personal behaviour and for social relationships between individuals. But if the individual is the atom of society, the family is the molecule, and family life would continue even if all the coercion enforcing it were removed. Nevertheless, though the family may be natural, it is no longer necessary; efficient contraception and intelligent division of labour have released mankind from the narrow choice between celibacy and monogamy. There is no need for a couple to have children, and children could be brought up by more or less than two parents. People could live alone and still have sexual partners and children, or live in communes with no permanent partnerships or official parenthood at all.

No doubt most people will go on practicing some form of marriage and most children will be brought up in a family environment, whatever happens to society, but there could be a great variety of personal arrangements within a single community. The fundamental requirement is that women should be freed from the oppression of men and that children should be freed from that of parents. The exercise of authority is no better in the microcosm of the family than in the macrocosm of society.

Personal relationships outside the family would be regulated not by arbitrary laws or economic competition but by the natural solidarity of the human species. Almost all of us know how to treat our fellowmen—as we would like them to treat us—and self-respect and public opinion are far better guides to action than fear or guilt. Some opponents of anarchism have suggested that the moral oppression of society would be worse than the physical oppression of the state, but a greater danger is surely the unregulated authority of the vigilante group, the lynch mob, the robber band, or the criminal gang—the rudimentary forms of the state which come to the surface when the regulated authority of the real state is for some reason absent.

But anarchists disagree little about private life, and there is not much of a problem here. After all, a great many people have already made their own new arrangements, without waiting for a revolution or anything else. All that is needed for the liberation of the individual is the emancipation from old prejudices and the achievement of a certain standard of living. The real problem is the liberation of society.

THE FREE SOCIETY

The first priority of a free society would be the abolition of authority and the expropriation of property. In place of government by permanent representatives who are subject to occasional election and by career bureaucrats who are virtually unmovable, anarchists want coordination by temporary delegates who are subject to instant recall and by professional experts who are genuinely accountable. In such a system, all those social activities which involve organization would probably be managed by free associations. These might be called councils or co-operatives or collectives or communes or committees or unions or syndicates or soviets, or anything else—their title would be irrelevant, the important thing would be their function.

There would be work associations from the workshop or small-holding up to the largest industrial or agricultural complex, to handle the production and transport of goods, decide conditions of work, and run the economy. There would be area associations from the neighbourhood or village up to the largest residential unit, to handle the life of the community—housing, streets, refuse, amenities. There would be associations to handle the social aspects of such activities as communications, culture, recreation, research, health and education.

One result of coordination by free association rather than administration by established hierarchies would be extreme decentralization on federalist lines. This may seem an argument against anarchism, but we would say that it is an argument for it. One of the oddest things about modern political thought is that wars are often blamed on the existence of many small nations when the worst wars in history have

been caused by a few large ones. In the same way, governments are always trying to create larger and larger administrative units when observation suggests that the best ones are small. The breakdown of big political systems would be one of the greatest benefits of anarchism, and countries could become cultural entities once more, while nations would disappear.

The association concerned with any kind of wealth or property would have the crucial responsibility of either making sure that it was fairly divided among the people involved or else of holding it in common and making sure that the use of it was fairly shared among the people involved. Anarchists differ about which system is best, and no doubt the members of a free society would also differ; it would be up to the people in each association to adopt whichever method they preferred. There might be equal pay for all, or pay according to need, or no pay at all. Some associations might use money for all exchange, some just for large or complex transactions, and some might not use it at all. Goods might be bought, or hired, or rationed, or free. If this sort of speculation seems absurdly unrealistic or utopian, it may be worth remembering just how much we already hold in common, and how many things may be used without payment.

In Britain, the community owns some heavy industries, air and rail transport, ferries and buses, broadcasting systems, water, gas and electricity, though we pay to use them; but roads, bridges, rivers, beaches, parks, libraries, playgrounds, lavatories, schools, universities, hospitals and emergency services are not only owned by the community but may be used without payment. The distinction between what is owned privately and what is owned communally, and between what may be used for payment and what may be used freely, is quite arbitrary. It may seem obvious that we should be able to use roads and beaches without payment, but this was not always the case, and the free use of hospitals and universities has come only during this century. In the same way, it may seem obvious that we should pay for transport and fuel, but this may not always be the case, and there is no reason why they should not be free.

One result of the equal division or free distribution of wealth rather than the accumulation of property would be the end of the class system based on ownership. But anarchists also want to end the class system based on control. This would mean constant vigilance to prevent the growth of bureaucracy in every association, and above all it would mean the reorganization of work without a managerial class…

The first need of man is for food, shelter and clothing which make life livable; the second is for the further comforts which make life worth living. The prime economic activity of any human group is the production and distribution of the things

which satisfy these needs; and the most important aspect of a society—after the personal relations on which it is based—is the organization of the necessary work. Anarchists have two characteristic ideas about work: the first is that most work is unpleasant but could be organized to be more bearable and even pleasurable: and the second is that all work should be organized by the people who actually do it.

Anarchists agree with Marxists that work in present society alienates the worker. It is not his life, but what he does to be able to live; his life is what he does outside work, and when he does something he enjoys he does not call it work. This is true of most work for most people in all places, and it is bound to be true of a lot of work for a lot of people at all times. The tiring and repetitive labour which has to be done to make plants grow and animals thrive, to run production lines and transport systems, to get to people what they want and to take from them what they do not want, could not be abolished without a drastic decline in the material standard of living; and automation, which can make it less tiring, makes it even more repetitive. But anarchists insist that the solution is not to condition people into believing that the situation is inevitable, but to reorganize essential labour so that, in the first place, it is normal for everyone who is capable of it to take a share in doing it, and for no one to spend more than a few hours a day on it; and so that, in the second place, it is possible for everyone to alternate between different kinds of boring labour, which would become less boring through greater variety. It is a matter not just of fair shares for all, but also of fair work for all.

Anarchists also agree with syndicalists that work should be run by the workers. This does not mean that the working class—or the trade unions or a working-class party (that is, a party claiming to represent the working class)—runs the economy and has ultimate control of work. Nor does it mean the same thing on a smaller scale, that the staff of a factory can elect managers or see the accounts. It means quite simply that the people doing a particular job are in direct and total control of what they do, without any bosses or managers or inspectors at all. Some people may be good coordinators, and they can concentrate on coordination, but there is no need for them to have power over the people who do the actual work. Some people may be lazy or inefficient, but they are already. The point is to have the greatest possible control over one's own work, as well as one's own life.

This principle applies to all kinds of work—in fields as well as factories, in large concerns as well as small, in unskilled as well as skilled occupations, and in dirty jobs as well as liberal professions—and it is not just a useful gesture to make workers happy but a fundamental principle of any kind of free economy. An obvious objection

is that complete workers' control would lead to wasteful competition between different workplaces and to production of unwanted things; an obvious answer is that complete lack of workers' control leads to exactly the same things. What is needed is intelligent planning, and despite what most people seem to think, this depends not on more control from above but on more information below.

Most economists have been concerned with production rather than consumption—with the manufacture of things rather than their use. Right-wingers and left-wingers both want workers to produce more, whether to make the rich richer or to make the state stronger, and the result is "overproduction' alongside poverty, growing productivity together with growing unemployment, higher blocks of offices at the same time as increasing homelessness, greater yields of crops per acre when more acres are left uncultivated. Anarchists are concerned with consumption rather than production—with the use of things to satisfy the needs of the whole people instead of to increase the profits and power of the rich and strong…

A society with any pretension to decency cannot allow the exploitation of basic needs. It may be acceptable for luxuries to be bought and sold, since we have a choice whether we use them or not; but necessities are not mere commodities, since we have no choice about using them. If anything should be taken off the commercial market and out of the hands of exclusive groups, it is surely the land we live on, the food which grows on it, the homes which are built on it, and those essential things which make up the material basis of human life—clothes, tools, amenities, fuel, and so on. It is also surely obvious that when there is plenty of any necessity everyone should be able to take what he needs; but that when there is a scarcity, there should be a freely agreed system of rationing so that everyone gets a fair share. It is clear that there is something wrong with any system in which waste and want exist side by side, in which some people have more than they need while other people go without.

Above all it is clear that the first task of a healthy society is to eliminate the scarcity of necessities—such as the lack of food in undeveloped countries and the lack of housing in advanced countries— by the proper use of technical knowledge and of social resources. If the available skill and labour in Britain were used properly, for instance, there is no reason why enough food could not be grown and enough homes could not be built to feed and house the whole population. It does not happen now because present society has other priorities, not because it cannot happen. At one time it was assumed that it was impossible for everyone to be clothed properly, and poor people always wore rags; now there are plenty of clothes, and there could be plenty of everything else too.

Luxuries, by a strange paradox, are also necessities, though not basic necessities. The second task of a healthy society is to make luxuries freely available as well, though this may be a place where money would still have a useful function—provided it were not distributed according to the ludicrous lack of system in capitalist countries, or the even more ludicrous system in communist ones. The essential point is that everyone should have free and equal access to luxury.

But man does not live by bread alone, or even by cake. Anarchists would not like to see recreational, intellectual, cultural, and other such activities in the hands of society—even the most libertarian society. But there are other activities which cannot be left to individuals in free associations but must be handled by society as whole. These are what may be called welfare activities—mutual aid beyond the reach of family and friends and outside the place of residence or work. Let us consider three of these...

Education is very important in human society, because we take so long to grow and take so long learning facts and skills necessary for social life, and anarchists have always been much concerned about the problems of education. Many anarchist leaders have made valuable contributions to educational theory and practice, and many educational reformers have had libertarian tendencies—from Rousseau and Pestalozzi to Montessori and Neill. Ideas about education which were once thought of as utopian are now a normal part of the curriculum both inside and outside the state educational system in Britain, and education is perhaps the most stimulating area of society for practical anarchists.

When people say that anarchy sounds nice but cannot work, we can point to a good primary or comprehensive school, or a good adventure playground or youth club. But even the best educational system is still under the control of people in authority—teachers, administrators, governors, officials, inspectors, and so on. The adults concerned in any educational process are bound to dominate it to some extent, but there is no need for them—let alone people not directly concerned in it at all—to control it.

Anarchists want the current educational reforms to go much further. Not only should strict discipline and corporal punishment be abolished—so should all imposed discipline and all penal methods. Not only should educational institutions be freed from the power of outside authorities, but students should be freed from the power of teachers or administrators. In a healthy education relationship the fact that one person knows more than another is no reason for the teacher having authority over the learner. The status of teachers in present society is based on age, strength, experience, and law; the only status teachers should have would be based on their

knowledge of a subject and their ability to teach it, and ultimately on their capacity to inspire admiration and respect. What is needed is not so much student power—though that is a useful corrective to teachers' power and bureaucrats' power—as workers' control by all the people involved in an educational institution. The essential point is to break the link between teaching and governing and to make education free.

This break is actually nearer in health than in education. Doctors are no longer magicians and nurses are no longer saints, and in many countries—including Britain—the right of free medical treatment is accepted. What is needed is the extension of the principle of freedom from the economic to the political side of the health system. People should be able to go to hospital without any payment, and people should also be able to work in hospitals without any hierarchy. Once again, what is needed is workers' control by all the people involved in a medical institution. And just as education is for students, so health is for patients.

The treatment of delinquency has also progressed a long way but it is still far from satisfactory. Anarchists have two characteristic ideas about delinquency: the first is that most so-called criminals are much the same as other people, just poorer, weaker, sillier or unluckier; the second is that people who persistently hurt other people should not be hurt in turn but should be looked after. The biggest criminals are not burglars but bosses, not gangsters but rulers, not murderers but mass murderers. A few minor injustices are exposed and punished by the state, while the many major injustices of present society are disguised and actually perpetrated by the state. In general punishment does more damage to society than crime does; it is more extensive, better organized, and much more effective. Nevertheless, even the most libertarian society would have to protect itself against some people, and this would inevitably involve some compulsion. But proper treatment of delinquency would be part of the education and health system, and would not become an institutionalized system of punishment. The last resort would not be imprisonment or death, but boycott or expulsion…

This might work the other way. An individual or a group might refuse to join or insist on leaving the best possible society; there would be nothing to stop him. In theory it is possible for a man to support himself by his own efforts, though in practice he would depend on the community to provide some materials and to take some products in exchange, so it is difficult to be literally self-sufficient. A collectivist or communist society should tolerate and even encourage such pockets of individualism. What would be unacceptable would be an independent person trying to exploit

other people's labour by employing them at unfair wages or exchanging goods at un-fair prices. This should not happen, because people would not normally work or buy for someone else's benefit rather than their own; and while no law would prevent ap-propriation, no law would prevent expropriation either—you could take something from someone, but he could take it back again. Authority and property could hardly be restored by isolated individuals.

A greater danger would come from independent groups. A separate community could easily exist within society, and this might cause severe strains; if such a com-munity reverted to authority and property, which might raise the standard of living of the few, there would be a temptation for people to join the secession, especially if society at large were going through a bad time.

But a free society would have to be pluralist and put up with not only differ-ences of opinion about how freedom and equality should be put into practice but also deviations from the theory of freedom and equality altogether. The only condi-tion would be that no one is forced to join such tendencies against his will, and here some kind of authoritarian pressure would have to be available to protect even the most libertarian society. But anarchists want to replace mass society by a mass of so-cieties, all living together as freely as the individuals within them. The greatest dan-ger to the free societies that have been established has been not internal regression but external aggression, and the real problem is not so much how to keep a free soci-ety going as how to get it going in the first place…

Anarchists have traditionally advocated a violent revolution to establish a free society, but some have rejected violence or revolution or both—violence is so often followed by counter-violence and revolution by counter-revolution. On the other hand, few anarchists have advocated mere reform, realizing that while the system of authority and property exists superficial changes will never threaten the basic struc-ture of society. The difficulty is that what anarchists want is revolutionary, but a revo-lution will not necessarily—or even probably—lead to what anarchists want. This is why anarchists have tended to resort to desperate actions or to relapse into hopeless inactivity.

In practice most disputes between reformist and revolutionary anarchists are meaningless, for only the wildest revolutionary refuses to welcome reforms and only the mildest reformist refuses to welcome revolutions, and all revolutionaries know that their work will generally lead to no more than reform and all reformists know that their work is generally leading to some kind of revolution. What most anarchists want is a constant pressure of all kinds, bringing about the conversion of individuals,

the formation of groups, the reform of institutions, the rising of the people, and the destruction of authority and property. If this happened without trouble, we would be delighted; but it never has, and it probably never will. In the end it is necessary to go out and confront the forces of the state in the neighbourhood, at work, and in the streets—and if the state is defeated it is even more necessary to go on working to prevent the establishment of a new state and to begin the construction of a free society instead. There is a place for every one in this process, and all anarchists find something to do in the struggle for what they want.

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55. Noam Chomsky: Notes on Anarchism (1970)

Noam Chomsky established his intellectual reputation in a series of publications on the theory of language beginning in the late 1950s. It was not until the publication of his 1968 essay on the positive role of the anarchists in the Spanish Revolution and Civil War, "Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship," that his anarchist sympathies became widely known (reprinted in American Power and the New Mandarins, *New York: Vintage, 1969). In 1970, he wrote the introduction to Daniel Guérin's* Anarchism: From Theory to Practice, *originally appearing in the* New York Review of Books, *May 21, 1970, recently reprinted in* Chomsky On Anarchism *(San Francisco: AK Press, 2005), ed. Barry Pateman (together with "Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship" and other writings and interviews on anarchism).*

A FRENCH WRITER, SYMPATHETIC TO ANARCHISM, wrote in the 1890s that "anarchism has a broad back, like paper it endures anything"—including, he noted those whose acts are such that "a mortal enemy of anarchism could not have done better."[1] There have been many styles of thought and action that have been referred to as "anarchist." It would be hopeless to try to encompass all of these conflicting tendencies in some general theory or ideology. And even if we proceed to extract from the history of libertarian thought a living, evolving tradition, as Daniel Guérin does in Anarchism, it remains difficult to formulate its doctrines as a specific and determinate theory of society and social change. The anarchist historian Rudolph Rocker... puts the matter well when he writes that anarchism is not:

> ...a fixed, self-enclosed social system but rather a definite trend in the historic development of mankind, which, in contrast with the intellectual guardianship of all clerical and governmental institutions, strives for the free unhindered unfolding of all the individual and social forces in life. Even freedom is only a relative, not an absolute concept, since it tends

constantly to become broader and to affect wider circles in more manifold ways. For the anarchist, freedom is not an abstract philosophical concept, but the vital concrete possibility for every human being to bring to full development all the powers, capacities, and talents with which nature has endowed him, and turn them to social account. The less this natural development of man is influenced by ecclesiastical or political guardianship, the more efficient and harmonious will human personality become, the more will it become the measure of the intellectual culture of the society in which it has grown.[2]

One might ask what value there is in studying a "definite trend in the historic development of mankind" that does not articulate a specific and detailed social theory. Indeed, many commentators dismiss anarchism as utopian, formless, primitive, or otherwise incompatible with the realities of a complex society. One might, however, argue rather differently: that at every stage of history our concern must be to dismantle those forms of authority and oppression that survive from an era when they might have been justified in terms of the need for security or survival or economic development, but that now contribute to—rather than alleviate—material and cultural deficit. If so, there will be no doctrine of social change fixed for the present and future, nor even, necessarily, a specific and unchanging concept of the goals towards which social change should tend. Surely our understanding of the nature of man or of the range of viable social forms is so rudimentary that any far-reaching doctrine must be treated with great skepticism, just as skepticism is in order when we hear that "human nature" or "the demands of efficiency" or "the complexity of modern life" requires this or that form of oppression and autocratic rule.

Nevertheless, at a particular time there is every reason to develop, insofar as our understanding permits, a specific realization of this definite trend in the historic development of mankind, appropriate to the tasks of the moment. For Rocker, "the problem that is set for our time is that of freeing man from the curse of economic exploitation and political and social enslavement"; and the method is not the conquest and exercise of state power, nor stultifying parliamentarianism, but rather "to reconstruct the economic life of the peoples from the ground up and build it up in the spirit of Socialism."

"But only the producers themselves are fitted for this task, since they are the only value-creating element in society out of which a new future can arise. Theirs must be the task of freeing labour from all the fetters which economic exploitation has fastened on it, of freeing society from all the institutions and procedure of politi-

cal power, and of opening the way to an alliance of free groups of men and women based on co-operative labour and a planned administration of things in the interest of the community. To prepare the toiling masses in the city and country for this great goal and to bind them together as a militant force is the objective of modern Anarcho-syndicalism, and in this its whole purpose is exhausted." [p.108]

As a socialist, Rocker would take for granted "that the serious, final, complete liberation of the workers is possible only upon one condition: that of the appropriation of capital, that is, of raw material and all the tools of labour, including land, by the whole body of the workers."[3] As an anarchosyndicalist, he insists, further, that the workers' organizations create "not only the ideas, but also the facts of the future itself" [Bakunin: Volume 1, Selection 25] in the prerevolutionary period, that they embody in themselves the structure of the future society—and he looks forward to a social revolution that will dismantle the state apparatus as well as expropriate the expropriators. "What we put in place of the government is industrial organization."

"Anarcho-syndicalists are convinced that a Socialist economic order cannot be created by the decrees and statutes of a government, but only by the solidaric collaboration of the workers with hand and brain in each special branch of production; that is, through the taking over of the management of all plants by the producers themselves under such form that the separate groups, plants, and branches of industry are independent members of the general economic organism and systematically carry on production and the distribution of the products in the interest of the community on the basis of free mutual agreements." [p. 94]

Rocker was writing at a moment when such ideas had been put into practice in a dramatic way in the Spanish Revolution [Volume 1, Chapter 23]. Just prior to the outbreak of the revolution, the anarchosyndicalist economist Diego Abad de Santillan had written [Volume 1, Selection 125]:

"...in facing the problem of social transformation, the Revolution cannot consider the state as a medium, but must depend on the organization of producers.

"We have followed this norm and we find no need for the hypothesis of a superior power to organized labour, in order to establish a new order of things. We would thank anyone to point out to us what function, if any, the State can have in an economic organization, where private property has been abolished and in which parasitism and special privilege have no place. The suppression of the State cannot be a languid affair; it must be the task of the Revolution to finish with the State. Either the Revolution gives social wealth to the producers in which case the producers organize themselves for due collective distribution and the State has nothing to do; or the Rev-

olution does not give social wealth to the producers, in which case the Revolution has been a lie and the State would continue.

"Our federal council of economy is not a political power but an economic and administrative regulating power. It receives its orientation from below and operates in accordance with the resolutions of the regional and national assemblies. It is a liaison corps and nothing else."[4]

…If one were to seek a single leading idea within the anarchist tradition, it should, I believe, be that expressed by Bakunin when, in writing on the Paris Commune [Volume 1, Selection 29], he identified himself as follows:

> I am a fanatic lover of liberty, considering it as the unique condition under which intelligence, dignity and human happiness can develop and grow; not the purely formal liberty conceded, measured out and regulated by the State, an eternal lie which in reality represents nothing more than the privilege of some founded on the slavery of the rest; not the individualistic, egoistic, shabby, and fictitious liberty extolled by the School of J.-J. Rousseau and other schools of bourgeois liberalism, which considers the would-be rights of all men, represented by the State which limits the rights of each—an idea that leads inevitably to the reduction of the rights of each to zero. No, I mean the only kind of liberty that is worthy of the name, liberty that consists in the full development of all the material, intellectual and moral powers that are latent in each person; liberty that recognizes no restrictions other than those determined by the laws of our own individual nature, which cannot properly be regarded as restrictions since these laws are not imposed by any outside legislator beside or above us, but are immanent and inherent, forming the very basis of our material, intellectual and moral being—they do not limit us but are the real and immediate conditions of our freedom.[5]

These ideas grew out of the Enlightenment; their roots are in Rousseau's *Discourse on Inequality*, Humboldt's *Limits of State Action*, Kant's insistence, in his defence of the French Revolution, that freedom is the precondition for acquiring the maturity for freedom, not a gift to be granted when such maturity is achieved. With the development of industrial capitalism, a new and unanticipated system of injustice, it is libertarian socialism that has preserved and extended the radical humanist message of the Enlightenment and the classical liberal ideals that were perverted into an ideology to sustain the emerging social order. In fact, on the very same assumptions that led classical liberalism to oppose the intervention of the state in social life, capitalist

social relations are also intolerable. This is clear, for example, from the classic work of Humboldt, *The Limits of State Action*, which anticipated and perhaps inspired Mill. This classic of liberal thought, completed in 1792, is in its essence profoundly, though prematurely, anticapitalist. Its ideas must be attenuated beyond recognition to be transmuted into an ideology of industrial capitalism.

Humboldt's vision of a society in which social fetters are replaced by social bonds and labour is freely undertaken suggests the early Marx, with his discussion of the "alienation of labour when work is external to the worker...not part of his nature...[so that] he does not fulfill himself in his work but denies himself...[and is] physically exhausted and mentally debased," alienated labour that "casts some of the workers back into a barbarous kind of work and turns others into machines," thus depriving man of his "species character" of "free conscious activity" and "productive life." Similarly, Marx conceives of "a new type of human being who *needs* his fellow men... [The workers' association becomes] the real constructive effort to create the social texture of future human relations."[6] It is true that classical libertarian thought is opposed to state intervention in social life, as a consequence of deeper assumptions about the human need for liberty, diversity, and free association. On the same assumptions, capitalist relations of production, wage labour, competitiveness, the ideology of "possessive individualism"—all must be regarded as fundamentally antihuman. Libertarian socialism is properly to be regarded as the inheritor of the liberal ideals of the Enlightenment.

Rudolf Rocker describes modern anarchism as "the confluence of the two great currents which during and since the French revolution have found such characteristic expression in the intellectual life of Europe: Socialism and Liberalism." The classical liberal ideals, he argues, were wrecked on the realities of capitalist economic forms. Anarchism is necessarily anticapitalist in that it "opposes the exploitation of man by man." But anarchism also opposes "the dominion of man over man." It insists that "*socialism will be free or it will not be at all*. In its recognition of this lies the genuine and profound justification for the existence of anarchism."[7] From this point of view, anarchism may be regarded as the libertarian wing of socialism. It is in this spirit that Daniel Guérin has approached the study of anarchism in *Anarchism* and other works… Guérin quotes [Haymarket anarchist] Adolph Fischer, who said that "every anarchist is a socialist but not every socialist is necessarily an anarchist." Similarly Bakunin, in his "anarchist manifesto" of 1865, the program of his projected international revolutionary fraternity, laid down the principle that each member must be, to begin with, a socialist.

A consistent anarchist must oppose private ownership of the means of production and the wage slavery which is a component of this system, as incompatible with the principle that labour must be freely undertaken and under the control of the producer. As Marx put it, socialists look forward to a society in which labour will "become not only a means of life, but also the highest want in life,"[8] an impossibility when the worker is driven by external authority or need rather than inner impulse: "no form of wage-labour, even though one may be less obnoxious that another, can do away with the misery of wage-labour itself."[9] A consistent anarchist must oppose not only alienated labour but also the stupefying specialization of labour that takes place when the means for developing production:

> ...mutilate the worker into a fragment of a human being, degrade him to become a mere appurtenance of the machine, make his work such a torment that its essential meaning is destroyed; estrange from him the intellectual potentialities of the labour process in very proportion to the extent to which science is incorporated into it as an independent power...[10]

Marx saw this not as an inevitable concomitant of industrialization, but rather as a feature of capitalist relations of production. The society of the future must be concerned to "replace the detail-worker of today... reduced to a mere fragment of a man, by the fully developed individual, fit for a variety of labours... to whom the different social functions... are but so many modes of giving free scope to his own natural powers."[11] The prerequisite is the abolition of capital and wage labour as social categories (not to speak of the industrial armies of the "labour state" or the various modern forms of totalitarianism since capitalism). The reduction of man to an appurtenance of the machine, a specialized tool of production, might in principle be overcome, rather than enhanced, with the proper development and use of technology, but not under the conditions of autocratic control of production by those who make man an instrument to serve their ends, overlooking his individual purposes, in Humboldt's phrase.

Anarchosyndicalists sought, even under capitalism, to create "free associations of free producers" that would engage in militant struggle and prepare to take over the organization of production on a democratic basis. These associations would serve as "a practical school of anarchism."[12] If private ownership of the means of production is, in Proudhon's often quoted phrase, merely a form of "theft" [Volume 1, Selection 8]—"the exploitation of the weak by the strong"—control of production by a state bureaucracy, no matter how benevolent its intentions, also does not create the conditions under which labour, manual and intellectual, can become the highest want in life. Both, then, must be overcome...

The consistent anarchist, then, should be a socialist, but a socialist of a particular sort. He will not only oppose alienated and specialized labour and look forward to the appropriation of capital by the whole body of workers, but he will also insist that this appropriation be direct, not exercised by some elite force acting in the name of the proletariat. He will, in short, oppose:

> …the organization of production by the Government. It means State-socialism, the command of the State officials over production and the command of managers, scientists, shop-officials in the shop.... The goal of the working class is liberation from exploitation. This goal is not reached and cannot be reached by a new directing and governing class substituting itself for the bourgeoisie. It is only realized by the workers themselves being master over production.

These remarks are taken from "Five Theses on the Class Struggle" by the left-wing Marxist Anton Pannekoek, one of the outstanding left theorists of the council communist movement. And in fact, radical Marxism merges with anarchist currents…

One might argue that some form of council communism is the natural form of revolutionary socialism in an industrial society. It reflects the intuitive understanding that democracy is severely limited when the industrial system is controlled by any form of autocratic elite, whether of owners, managers and technocrats, a "vanguard" party, or a state bureaucracy. Under these conditions of authoritarian domination the classical libertarian ideals developed further by Marx and Bakunin and all true revolutionaries cannot be realized; man will not be free to develop his own potentialities to their fullest, and the producer will remain "a fragment of a human being," degraded, a tool in the productive process directed from above.

The phrase "spontaneous revolutionary action" can be misleading. The anarchosyndicalists, at least, took very seriously Bakunin's remark that the workers' organizations must create "not only the ideas but also the facts of the future itself" in the prerevolutionary period [Volume 1, Selection 25]. The accomplishments of the popular revolution in Spain, in particular, were based on the patient work of many years of organization and education, one component of a long tradition of commitment and militancy. The resolutions of the Madrid Congress of June 1931 and the Zaragossa Congress in May 1936 [Volume 1, Selection 124] foreshadowed in many ways the acts of the revolution, as did the somewhat different ideas sketched by Santillan [Volume 1, Selection 125] in his fairly specific account of the social and economic organization to be instituted by the revolution. Guérin writes: "The Spanish revolution was relatively mature in the minds of libertarian thinkers, as in the popu-

lar consciousness." And workers' organizations existed with the structure, the experience, and the understanding to undertake the task of social reconstruction when, with the Franco coup, the turmoil of early 1936 exploded into social revolution. In his introduction to a collection of documents on collectivization in Spain, the anarchist Augustin Souchy writes:

> For many years, the anarchists and the syndicalists of Spain considered their supreme task to be the social transformation of the society. In their assemblies of Syndicates and groups, in their journals, their brochures and books, the problem of the social revolution was discussed incessantly and in a systematic fashion.[13]

All of this lies behind the spontaneous achievements, the constructive work of the Spanish Revolution.

The ideas of libertarian socialism, in the sense described, have been submerged in the industrial societies of the past half-century. The dominant ideologies have been those of state socialism or state capitalism (of an increasingly militarized character in the United States, for reasons that are not obscure).[14] But there has been a re-kindling of interest in the past few years...

Arthur Rosenberg once pointed out that popular revolutions characteristically seek to replace "a feudal or centralized authority ruling by force" with some form of communal system which "implies the destruction and disappearance of the old form of State." Such a system will be either socialist or an "extreme form of democracy...[which is] the preliminary condition for Socialism inasmuch as Socialism can only be realized in a world enjoying the highest possible measure of individual freedom." This ideal, he notes, was common to Marx and the anarchists.[15] This natural struggle for liberation runs counter to the prevailing tendency towards centralization in economic and political life...

The problem of "freeing man from the curse of economic exploitation and political and social enslavement" remains the problem of our time. As long as this is so, the doctrines and the revolutionary practice of libertarian socialism will serve as an inspiration and guide.

Notes

1. Octave Mirbeau, quoted in James Joll, *The Anarchists*, pp. 145-6.
2. Rudolf Rocker, *Anarchosyndicalism*, p. 31.
3. Cited by Rocker, ibid., p. 77. This quotation and that in the next sentence are from Michael Bakunin, "The Program of the Alliance," in Sam Dolgoff, ed. and trans., *Bakunin on Anarchy*, p. 255.

4. Diego Abad de Santillan, *After the Revolution*, p. 86. In the last chapter, written several months after the revolution had begun, he expresses his dissatisfaction with what had so far been achieved along these lines. On the accomplishments of the social revolution in Spain, see my *American Power and the New Mandarins*, chap. 1, and references cited there; the important study by Broué and Témime has since been translated into English. Several other important studies have appeared since, in particular: Frank Mintz, *L'Autogestion dans l'Espagne révolutionaire* (Paris: Editions Bélibaste, 1971); César M. Lorenzo, *Les Anarchistes espagnols et le pouvoir, 1868-1969* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1969); Gaston Leval, *Espagne libertaire, 1936-1939: L'Oeuvre constructive de la Révolution espagnole* (Paris: Editions du Cercle, 1971) [translated by Vernon Richards as *Collectives in the Spanish Revolution* (London: Freedom Press, 1975), excerpts reprinted in Volume 1, Selection 126]. See also Vernon Richards, *Lessons of the Spanish Revolution*, enlarged 1972 edition.

5. Michael Bakunin, "La Commune de Paris et la notion de l'état," reprinted in Guérin, *Ni Dieu, ni Maître*. Bakunin's final remark on the laws of individual nature as the condition of freedom can be compared to the creative thought developed in the rationalist and romantic traditions. See my *Cartesian Linguistics* and *Language and Mind*.

6. Shlomo Avineri, *The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx*, p. 142, referring to comments in *The Holy Family*.

7. Rocker, *Anarchosyndicalism*, p. 28.

8. Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme*.

9. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie*, cited by Mattick, *Marx and Keynes*, p. 306. In this connection, see also Mattick's essay "Workers' Control," in Priscilla Long, ed., *The New Left*; and Avineri, *Social and Political Thought of Marx*.

10. Karl Marx, *Capital*, quoted by Robert Tucker, who rightly emphasizes that Marx sees the revolutionary more as a "frustrated producer" than a "dissatisfied consumer" *(The Marxian Revolutionary Idea)*. This more radical critique of capitalist relations of production is a direct outgrowth of the libertarian thought of the Enlightenment.

11. Marx, *Capital*, cited by Avineri, *Social and Political Thought of Marx,* p. 83.

12. Pelloutier, "L'Anarchisme." [Volume 1, Selection 56]

13. *Collectivisations: L'Oeuvre constructive de la Révolution espagnole*, p. 8.

14. For discussion, see Mattick, *Marx and Keynes*, and Michael Kidron, *Western Capitalism Since the War*. See also discussion and references cited in my *At War With Asia*, chap. 1, pp. 23-6.

15. Arthur Rosenberg, *A History of Bolshevism,* p. 88.

56. Robert Paul Wolff: In Defence of Anarchism (1970)

Robert Paul Wolff, a respected academic and Kant scholar, shocked his colleagues when he published his philosophical essay, In Defense of Anarchism, *in 1970. Written during an era of mass civil disobedience, Wolff's questioning of the legitimacy of political authority was timely and controversial. Many scholarly attempts to refute Wolff's argument followed, lest anarchism become academically respectable. The following excerpts are reprinted here with the kind permission of the University of California Press, which republished Wolff's essay, with a new preface by the author, in 1998.*

THE FUNDAMENTAL ASSUMPTION OF MORAL philosophy is that men are responsible for their actions. From this assumption it follows necessarily, as Kant pointed out, that men are metaphysically free, which is to say that in some sense they are capable of choosing how they shall act. Being able to choose how he acts makes a man responsible, but merely choosing is not in itself enough to constitute taking responsibility for one's actions. Taking responsibility involves attempting to determine what one ought to do, and that, as philosophers since Aristotle have recognized, lays upon one the additional burdens of gaining knowledge, reflecting on motives, predicting outcomes, criticizing principles, and so forth.

The obligation to take responsibility for one's actions does not derive from man's freedom of will alone, for more is required in taking responsibility than freedom of choice. Only because man has the capacity to reason about his choices can he be said to stand under a continuing obligation to take responsibility for them...

Since the responsible man arrives at moral decisions which he expresses to himself in the form of imperatives, we may say that he gives laws to himself, or is self-legislating. In short, he is autonomous. As Kant argued, moral autonomy is a combination of freedom and responsibility; it is a submission to laws which one has made for oneself. The autonomous man, insofar as he is autonomous, is not subject to the will of another. He may do what another tells him, but not because he has been told to do it. He is therefore, in the political sense of the word, free.

Since man's responsibility for his actions is a consequence of his capacity for choice, he cannot give it up or put it aside. He can refuse to acknowledge it, however, either deliberately or by simply failing to recognize his moral condition. All men refuse to take responsibility for their actions at some time or other during their lives, and some men so consistently shirk their duty that they present more the appearance of overgrown children than of adults. Inasmuch as moral autonomy is simply the condition of taking full responsibility for one's actions, it follows that men can

forfeit their autonomy at will. That is to say, a man can decide to obey the commands of another without making any attempt to determine for himself whether what is commanded is good or wise...

Taking responsibility for one's actions means making the final decisions about what one should do. For the autonomous man, there is no such thing, strictly speaking, as a command. If someone in my environment is issuing what are intended as commands, and if he or others expect those commands to be obeyed, that fact will be taken account of in my deliberations. I may decide that I ought to do what that person is commanding me to do, and it may even be that his issuing the command is the factor in the situation which makes it desirable for me to do so. For example, if I am on a sinking ship and the captain is giving orders for manning the lifeboats, and if everyone else is obeying the captain because he is the captain, I may decide that under the circumstances I had better do what he says, since the confusion caused by disobeying him would be generally harmful. But insofar as I make such a decision, I am not obeying his command; that is, I am not acknowledging him as having authority over me. I would make the same decision, for exactly the same reasons, if one of the passengers had started to issue "orders" and had, in the confusion, come to be obeyed.

In politics, as in life generally, men frequently forfeit their autonomy. There are a number of causes for this fact, and also a number of arguments which have been offered to justify it. Most men... feel so strongly the force of tradition or bureaucracy that they accept unthinkingly the claims to authority which are made by their nominal rulers. It is the rare individual in the history of the race who rises even to the level of questioning the right of his masters to command and the duty of himself and his fellows to obey...

The moral condition demands that we acknowledge responsibility and achieve autonomy wherever and whenever possible. Sometimes this involves moral deliberation and reflection; at other times, the gathering of special, even technical, information. The contemporary American citizen, for example, has an obligation to master enough modern science to enable him to follow debates about nuclear policy and come to an independent conclusion. There are great, perhaps insurmountable, obstacles to the achievement of a complete and rational autonomy in the modern world. Nevertheless, so long as we recognize our responsibility for our actions, and acknowledge the power of reason within us, we must acknowledge as well the continuing obligation to make ourselves the authors of such commands as we may obey...

The defining mark of the state is authority, the right to rule. The primary obligation of man is autonomy, the refusal to be ruled. It would seem, then, that there can

be no resolution of the conflict between the autonomy of the individual and the putative authority of the state. Insofar as a man fulfills his obligation to make himself the author of his decisions, he will resist the state's claim to have authority over him. That is to say, he will deny that he has a duty to obey the laws of the state simply because they are the laws. In that sense, it would seem that anarchism is the only political doctrine consistent with the virtue of autonomy.

Now, of course, an anarchist may grant the necessity of complying with the law under certain circumstances or for the time being. He may even doubt that there is any real prospect of eliminating the state as a human institution. But he will never view the commands of the state as legitimate, as having a binding moral force. In a sense, we might characterize the anarchist as a man without a country, for despite the ties which bind him to the land of his childhood, he stands in precisely the same moral relationship to "his" government as he does to the government of any other country in which he might happen to be staying for a time. When I take a vacation in Great Britain, I obey its laws, both because of prudential self-interest and because of the obvious moral considerations concerning the value of order, the general good consequences of preserving a system of property, and so forth. On my return to the United States, I have a sense of reentering my country, and if I think about the matter at all, I imagine myself to stand in a different and more intimate relation to American laws. They have been promulgated by my government, and I therefore have a special obligation to obey them. But the anarchist tells me that my feeling is purely sentimental and has no objective moral basis. All authority is illegitimate, although of course not therefore equally worthy or unworthy of support, and my obedience to American laws, if I am to be morally autonomous, must proceed from the same considerations which determine me abroad.

The dilemma which we have posed can be succinctly expressed in terms of the concept of a *de jure* state. If all men have a continuing obligation to achieve the highest degree of autonomy possible, then there would appear to be no state whose subjects have a moral obligation to obey its commands. Hence, the concept of a *de jure* legitimate state would appear to be vacuous, and philosophical anarchism the only reasonable political belief for an enlightened man.

57. Paul Goodman: Freedom and Autonomy (1972)

Some of Robert Paul Wolff's critics argued that his abstract notion of moral autonomy had little to do with anarchism, which is based on more robust concepts of freedom and commu- nity. However, in the following essay written by Paul Goodman shortly before his death in 1972, Goodman explains why he also saw autonomy, not freedom, as "the chief principle of anarchism." "Freedom and Autonomy" was original published as "Just an Old Fashioned Love Song" in WIN, No. 8, February 1972, *and is reprinted in* Decentralizing Power: Paul Good- man's Social Criticism *(Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1994), ed. Taylor Stoehr. It is ex- cerpted here with the kind permission of Sally Goodman and the Goodman estate.*

MANY ANARCHIST PHILOSOPHERS START from a lust for freedom. Where freedom is a metaphysical concept or a moral imperative, it leaves me cold—I cannot think in abstractions. But most often the freedom of anarchists is a deep animal cry or a reli- gious plea like the hymn of the prisoners in *Fidelio*. They feel themselves imprisoned, existentially by the nature of things or by God; or because they have seen or suffered too much economic slavery; or they have been deprived of their liberties; or inter- nally colonized by imperialists. To become human they must shake off restraint.

Since, by and large, my experience is roomy enough for me, I do not lust for freedom... I might feel differently, however, if I were subjected to literary censor- ship, like [Russian author Alexander] Solzhenitzen. My usual gripe has been not that I am imprisoned but that I am in exile or was born on the wrong planet...

To be sure, there are outrages that take me by the throat, like anybody else, and I lust to be free of them. Insults to humanity and the beauty of the world that keep me in- dignant. An atmosphere of lies, triviality, and vulgarity that suddenly makes me sick. The powers-that-be do not know the meaning of magnanimity, and often they are simply offi- cious and spiteful; as Malatesta used to say, you just try to do your thing and they pre- vent you, and then you are to blame for the fight that ensues. Worst of all, the earth-destroying actions of power are demented; and as in ancient tragedies and histo- ries we read how arrogant men committed sacrilege and brought down doom on them- selves and those associated with them, so I sometimes am superstitiously afraid to belong to the same tribe and walk the same ground as our statesmen.

But no. Men have a right to be crazy, stupid, and arrogant. It's our special thing. Our mistake is to arm anybody with collective power. Anarchy is the only safe polity.

It is a common misconception that anarchists believe that "human nature is good" and so men can be trusted to rule themselves. In fact we tend to take the pessi- mistic view; people are not be trusted, so prevent the concentration of power. Men in

authority are especially likely to be stupid because they are out of touch with concrete finite experience and instead keep interfering with other people's initiative and making them stupid and anxious. And imagine being deified like Mao Tse Tung or Kim Il Sung, what that must do to a man's character. Or habitually thinking about the unthinkable, like the masters of the Pentagon.

To me, the chief principle of anarchism is not freedom but autonomy. Since to initiate, and do it my way, and be an artist with concrete matter, is the kind of experience I like, I am restive about being given orders by external authorities, who don't concretely know the problem or the available means. Mostly, behavior is more graceful, forceful, and discriminating without the intervention of top-down authorities, whether State, collective, democracy, corporate bureaucracy, prison wardens, deans, pre-arranged curricula, or central planning. These may be necessary in certain emergencies, but it is at a cost to vitality... By and large, the use of power to do a job is inefficient in the fairly short run. Extrinsic power inhibits intrinsic function. As Aristotle said, "Soul is self-moving."

In his recent book *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*, B.F. Skinner holds that these are defensive prejudices that interfere with the operant conditioning of people toward their desired goals of happiness and harmony. (It is odd these days to read a cracker-barrel restatement of Bentham's utilitarianism.) He misses the point.

What is objectionable about operant conditioning is not that it violates freedom but that the consequent behavior is graceless and low-grade as well as labile—it is not assimilated as second nature. He is so impressed by the fact that an animal's behavior can be shaped at all to perform according to the trainer's goal, that he does not compare the performance with the inventive, flexible and maturing behavior of the animal initiating and responding in its natural field. And incidentally, dignity is not a specifically human prejudice, as he thinks, but the ordinary bearing of any animal, angrily defended when organic integrity or own space is insulted.

To lust for freedom is certainly a motive of political change stronger than autonomy. (I doubt that it is as stubborn, however. People who do their job their own way can usually find other means than revolt to keep doing it, including plenty of passive resistance to interference.) To make an anarchist revolution, Bakunin wanted, in his early period, to rely precisely on the outcast, delinquents, prostitutes, convicts, displaced peasants, lumpen proletarians, those who had nothing to lose, not even their chains, but who felt oppressed. There were enough troops of this kind in the grim heyday of industrialism and urbanization. But naturally, people who have nothing are hard to organize and consolidate for a long effort, and they are easily seduced by a fascist who can offer guns, revenge, and a moment's flush of power.

The pathos of oppressed people lusting for freedom is that, if they break free, they don't know what to do. Not having been autonomous, they do not know how to go about it, and before they learn it is usually too late. New managers have taken over, who may or may not be benevolent and imbued with the revolution, but who have never been in a hurry to abdicate.

The oppressed hope for too much from the New Society, instead of being stubbornly vigilant to do their own things...

Anarchy requires competence and self-confidence, the sentiment that the world is for one. It does not thrive among the exploited, oppressed, and colonized. Thus, unfortunately, it lacks a powerful drive toward revolutionary change. Yet in the affluent liberal societies of Europe and America there is a hopeful possibility of the following kind: Fairly autonomous people, among the middle class, the young, craftsmen, and professionals, cannot help but see that they cannot continue so in the present institutions. They cannot do honest and useful work or practice a profession nobly; arts and sciences are corrupted; modest enterprise must be blown out of all proportion to survive; the young cannot find vocations; it is hard to raise children; talent is strangled by credentials; the natural environment is being destroyed; health is imperilled; community life is inane; neighborhoods are ugly and unsafe; public services do not work; taxes are squandered on war, schoolteachers, and politicians.

Then they may make changes, to extend the areas of freedom from encroachment. Such changes might be piecemeal and not dramatic, but they must be fundamental; for many of the present institutions cannot be recast and the tendency of the system as a whole is disastrous. I like the Marxist term "withering away of the State," but it must begin now, not afterwards; and the goal is not a New Society, but a tolerable society in which life can go on.

Chapter 7
Forms Of Freedom

58. Philip Sansom: Syndicalism Restated (1951)

Philip Sansom (1919-1999) was one of the English anarchists tried in 1945 with Marie Louise Berneri, Vernon Richards and John Hewetson for causing "disaffection" among the armed forces. He was a long time advocate of anarcho-syndicalism associated with the Freedom press group in London. The following excerpts are taken from his 1951 Freedom Press pamphlet, Syndicalism: The Workers' Next Step. Noteworthy is his point that anarcho-syndicalists looked to workers' councils answerable to the rank and file, not bureaucratic trade union organizations, as the basic unit of industrial organization, and to the commune or municipality as the basis for local organization, within a network of freely federated and decentralized groups.

ALTHOUGH SYNDICALISM AIMS AT THE organization of all the workers in industry, it does not do so in terms of the mass to the exclusion of the individual. The socialist, totalitarian, conception of the collectivity being more important than the individuals composing it, of the majority having the right to override the minority, have nothing in common with the Syndicalist conception of voluntary co-operation.

This begins with the individual worker, at his place of work, coming together with his fellows to organize the job in hand. And the smaller the unit of cooperation can be, the greater will be the control the workers have over it...

The first unit of organization, then, should be the works council... This council would consist of delegates chosen by the workers to do whatever organizational work is necessary for the smooth running of the works. If the productive unit is large and several processes are involved, each workshop, designing office or laboratory could send its delegate to the works council, instructed to carry out the wishes of the rank-and-file.

This council must never be allowed to assume managerial powers. The good Syndicalist principle of no permanent officials will guard against that, and the fact that the council is composed of *delegates*, not *representatives*, means that all major is-

sues must be decided by all the workers before the council puts them into practical shape.

The works council federates itself in two directions. First, "vertically" it links itself in a syndicate of all the works councils in the country from the *same* industry. Beginning on works level, then regional level, then national, finally international level, exchange of information, technical knowledge and mutual help, keeps all the industry in touch. The workers in a factory form their works council, all the works of that industry in a certain region send delegates to a regional council, then the regional councils send delegates to the national council, who federate with the syndicate in other countries.

Secondly, "horizontally," the works council federates with *all* the industries in its area, in the creation of a *confederation*, a federation of federations, beginning with local councils of labour, sending delegates to regional councils, sending delegates to a national council which maintains contact on the international scale.

This pattern of organization is equally capable of fulfilling both the functions of Syndicalism: —the present-day job of waging the struggle against the owners and of organizing for the expropriation of industry, and the task that follows the takeover, the running of industry in the free society.

Being decentralized, this form of organization remains flexible and sensitive. No sooner have the men on the job taken a decision than it can be put into action. No permission has to be sought from an executive miles away, but each works council, knowing its own position best, is responsible only to the workers whose wishes it carries out.

During the time of preparation, it may be possible to go for long periods without any formal organization at all. Syndicalists do not seek organization for its own sake, but simply to act as the means through which the needs of the workers and of society can be met. Today, when workers go on strike, they form a strike committee, which is functional and temporary. When the function—of organizing the strike—is completed, the strike committee dissolves, perhaps to reform, with different individuals, when next the need arises. Syndicalists approve of this. It gives experience to the widest possible number of workers and prevents too much influence passing into the hands of a few. As the functions the workers take over increase, however, more permanent committees may become necessary, but the federalist nature of he Syndicates, and the care that must be taken to ensure control *from the bottom up* all the time prevent any kind of leadership developing.

This form of organization may be thought to be complicated, but in fact it is not. The honeycomb is not more complicated a design than the spider's web, but in

the first all the cells are of equal importance and fit into each other, in the second control is maintained from the centre. Capitalism and governments have created complications where they need not exist because both are artificial complications themselves. Where common interest lies in the fulfillment of common need, coordination can be a simple matter...

Syndicates should be broad rather than narrow and should strive all the time to minimize division among workers. To which syndicate workers belong is not so important as that all the workers in any given productive unit belong to the same syndicate.

I believe that on this sort of basis can be built the only industrial pattern which will prove workable in the modern world. The satisfaction the creative worker gets from his work depends most of all on the degree of responsibility he achieves, and the worth of his product to society. The abolition of money and the profit motive, the establishment of workers' control and the decentralization of power would bring a dignity and *efficiency* quite unknown under capitalism.

Just as the Syndicates are the organizations of the producers, the Communes express the needs of the consumers. Workers, of course, are consumers as well as producers, but even in a society where useless toil had been eliminated and the millions who today work but produce nothing can turn to productive activity, there will be plenty of people who are not producers in the ordinary sense.

Housewives, children and old people are the three most obvious categories in this field. (Perhaps it is not correct to describe housewives as unproductive, for motherhood is surely creative enough! But in the ordinary sense they are so only indirectly.) And it is to assess the needs of these sections of society, as well as the general needs of society as a whole that the commune will exist. The function of the Syndicates will be to produce what is necessary, that of the commune to *assess* what is necessary.

The commune is simply a council of the people—or in very small communities, the whole people—who come together to organize those affairs which are the special concern of the locality. There again, the smaller the units can be, the more easily can everyone's voice be heard, and in the case of the village it is easily seen how a council could be established. In large towns, however, the problem is more difficult, but even here if the principle of decentralization is followed, small units can be established.

Even today every big city consists of many districts, often quite clearly defined, under the authority of Borough Councils. These, however, are controlled more and more from the central Government and in any case are dominated by middle-class tradesmen aspiring to civic honour, a political career or just the municipal contracts. But big cities are the products of centralized economies. London is the biggest city in the world, not

only because it is the capital of England, but because it is the administrative centre of a huge empire. Following a social revolution, the decentralization of control would lead to a decentralization of the physical environment. The monstrous cities of the 20th century, which create more problems of administration alone than they can ever hope to solve, would serve no useful purpose in a free, moneyless society. They are expressions in stone of the centralized power of capitalism and the State.

Anarchists and Syndicalists are not ashamed to pronounce their Regionalism. While others look to the centralized State to plan their economics, we look to the ordinary people, in their places of work and where they live, to organize all that is necessary. And we wish to see each region as nearly self-supporting as possible, so as to ease the problems of supply and demand and of distribution.

Like the Syndicates, the Communes are federal in their coordination, but I can see no reason for the establishment of regional or national councils on the same lines as the Syndicates. Where several communes are affected by a particular circumstance, as for example, the planning of a hydro-electric system, it would be perfectly easy for regional discussion to take place, but once the plan has been settled, in conjunction with the relevant Syndicates, of course, those Syndicates could be left to get on with the job.

The Communes and the Syndicates are interdependent. For the fullest possible discussion and satisfaction of municipal needs, the saving of waste and of unnecessary work, producer consumer coordination must be effected. In the planning of a building scheme, for instance, not only the architects and the builders should be consulted, but also the people who are going to live in the new buildings. Their cultural activities—the planning of their theatre, their schools, their social centres, what amenities they look for, what local habits have to be taken into account—through the Commune all this can be settled. As things are today, the products of the architect and the builder have too often been found to be lacking some quite easily provided amenity—for want of discussions with the prospective tenants.

Child welfare would become the responsibility of the Commune. While the organization of the schools could be safely left to the Teachers' Syndicate, a system of education is inadequate which does not provide for cooperation with the parents, and (by no means least) with the children themselves, as well as an integration of adult and child life.

The old folk, too, must be provided for. The abolition of the money system and its inevitable rationing by the purse would itself lift a tremendous burden from those who exist on tiny pensions, and in a society which recognized the right of all to the

satisfaction of all their needs, the fact that someone is too old to continue working would not be a reason for condemning him to a miserable pittance. Old people should have equal access to the products of society with everybody else, and in fact should not receive less attention, but more. Help in the home should be provided where necessary and indeed any special services which may be called for.

It goes without saying that a genuinely free Health Service should be available for all, and this would be organized through a Syndicate of Doctors and Nurses, in co-operation with the Commune.

The Commune, in a free society, in short, would be the basis of that society outside of industry. Anarchists today are rather chary of using the word "Communism" because of its unpleasant political association with the Stalinists and Trotskyists. In point of fact, the political Communist parties have nothing in common with the free communism which only the Anarchists advocate. Political parties look to the State; the commune must be an expression of social feeling among the people…

In the free society that will follow the social revolution, the Commune will be the means by which municipal needs find expression, and public services are provided. The Commune is an essential counterpart to the Syndicate.

59. Benjamin Péret: The Factory Committee (1952)

Benjamin Péret (1899-1959) was a surrealist poet who fought alongside the anarchists in the Spanish Revolution and Civil War. The following excerpts are taken from an article he contributed to the French Anarchist Federation paper, Le Libertaire, *in 1952, entitled, "The Factory Committee: Motor of the Social Revolution." At the time, the French trade union movement and its federation, the formerly syndicalist CGT, were controlled by the Stalinist French Communist Party. The Russian anarcho-syndicalists had faced a similar problem during the Russian Revolution, when the trade unions were affiliated with and controlled by various political parties, leading them also to advocate factory committees as the "fighting organization" of the workers (Volume 1, Selection 84). Workers' councils and factory committees were to play important roles in uprisings in the Soviet bloc, in Berlin in 1953, in the Hungarian uprising in 1956, and later in Poland.*

NO ONE WILL DENY THAT CAPITALIST society has entered a period of permanent crisis, which induces it to reassemble its weakened forces and to concentrate, more and more, all political and economic power in the hands of the state, by means of nationalizations. To this concentration of capitalist power, are we going to continue to oppose the scattered forces of the workers? To do so would be to run into definitive defeat. And one of the principal reasons for the present apathy of the working class

resides in the interminable series of defeats suffered by the social revolution throughout this century. The working class no longer has confidence in any organization because it has observed them all at work, here and there, and seen that all of them, including the anarchist organizations, have revealed themselves to be incapable of resolving the crisis of capitalism—that is to say, of assuring the triumph of the social revolution. One must not be afraid to say that all of these organizations are outdated and no longer valid. On the contrary, only this very realization—the importance of which should not be reduced by more or less circumstantial considerations, nor by blaming others for the consequences of one's own errors—provides a point of departure from which we can truly prepare ourselves to revise all doctrines... perhaps resulting in a fundamental ideological unification of the workers' movement in the direction of the social revolution. It goes without saying that I do not by any means dream of a movement whose thought would be monolithic, but a movement unified from within, and in which diverse tendencies could enjoy the most ample freedom to manifest themselves.

On the other hand, it is no less true that action is called for immediately. This action must obey two general principles: first, it must facilitate the ideological regroupment mentioned above; and second, it must cease considering the revolution as the work of future generations for whom we are supposed to make the preparations. We are faced with this dilemma: either the social revolution and a new impetus for humanity, or war and a social decomposition of which the past offers only a few pale examples. History is granting us a breathing space the duration of which we do not know. Let us make use of it to reverse the course of the present degeneration and to bring about the revolution. The present apathy of the working class is only temporary. It indicates, at this time, both the workers' loss of confidence in all organizations, and a certain detachment on their part. It depends on us, as revolutionaries, to draw the lessons, which will enable this detachment to be transformed into active revolt. The energy of the working class asks only to exert itself. Nevertheless, it is necessary to give it not only an end—it has had a presentiment of this for a long time—but also means of attaining this end. If the task of revolutionaries is to bring about a fraternal society, this necessitates, beginning immediately, an organism in which this fraternity can form and develop itself.

At the present time, it is on the factory level that workers' fraternity attains its maximum. Thus, it is there we must act, but not in clamouring for a trade union which is chimerical today, in the actual conditions of the capitalist world, and which, moreover, could only come forward AGAINST the working class, since the trade un-

ions represent now only different tendencies of capitalism. In fact, a "united front" of the unions could happen only on the eve of the revolution—and would act against the revolution since the major unions would all be equally interested in torpedoing it to assure their own survival in the capitalist state. Henceforth, as integral parts of the capitalist system, they defend this system by defending themselves. The interests of the union are essentially their own and not those of the workers.

Moreover, one of the most powerful obstacles to a workers' regroupment and a revolutionary renaissance is constituted by the apparatus of the union bureaucrats, even in the factory, beginning with the Stalinist apparatus. The enemy of the worker, today, is the union bureaucrat every bit as much as the boss, who without the union bureaucrat, would most of the time be powerless. It is the union bureaucrat who paralyzes workers' action. And thus the first watchword of revolutionaries must be: Out the door with the union bureaucrats!

But the principal enemy consists of Stalinism and its union apparatus, because it is the partisan of state capitalism—that is to say, the complete fusion of the state and unionism. It is therefore the most clear-sighted defender of the capitalist system, since it outlines, for this system, the most stable state conceivable today.

Meanwhile, one should not destroy an existing organization without proposing another in its place, better adapted to the necessities of the revolution. And it is precisely the revolution that has taken it upon itself to show us, each time that it has appeared, the instrument of its choice: the factory committee directly elected by the workers assembled on the shop-floor, and the members of which are revocable at any time. This is the only organization which is able, without alteration, to direct the workers' interests within capitalist society while looking to the social revolution; and which is also able to accomplish this revolution and, once having attained victory, to constitute the base of future society. Its structure is the most democratic conceivable, since it is directly elected in the workplace by all the workers, who control its actions from day to day and are able to recall a member of the committee, or the entire committee, at any time, and choose another. Its creation offers the minimum of risks of degeneration because of the constant and direct control that the workers are able to exercise over their delegates. Furthermore, the constant contact between elected and electors favours a maximum of creative initiative in the hands of the working class, which is thus called upon to take its destiny in its own hands and to directly lead its own struggles. This committee, which authentically represents the will of the workers, is called upon to administer the factory and to organize the workers' defence against the police and the reactionary gangs of Stalinism and traditional cap-

italism. After the victory of the revolution, it is the factory committee which must indicate to the regional, national and international leaders (these also are directly elected by the workers), the productive capacities of the factory and its needs for raw materials and manpower. Finally, the representatives of each factory would be called to form, on the regional, national and international scale, the new government, distinct from the management of the economy, and whose principal task would be to liquidate the heritage of capitalism and to assure the material and cultural conditions of its own progressive disappearance.

At once economic and political, the factory committee is the revolutionary organism *par excellence*. That is why even its establishment represents a sort of insurrection against the capitalist state and its trade union branches, because it assembles all the workers' energies against the capitalist state, and even assumes the latter's economic power. For the same reason one sees it burst forth spontaneously in moments of acute social crisis. But in our epoch of chronic crisis, it is necessary for revolutionaries to passionately defend and advocate this conception starting now if they wish, in the first place, to put an end to the meddling of union bureaucrats in the factories, and to restore to the workers the initiative of their emancipation. Let us therefore destroy the unions in the name of the factory committees, democratically elected by the workers in the plant, and revocable at any time.

Le Libertaire, September 4, 1952 (English translation: *Radical America,* Vol. IV, No. 6, August 1970)

60. Comunidad del Sur: The Production of Self-Management (1969)

In the late 1960s there was a movement in Latin America to create alternative anti-authoritarian communities as part of a broader project of social transformation. Experimental communities were created in Argentina, Bolivia and Uruguay, where the Comunidad del Sur group was based. In the following presentation from a 1969 conference in Buenos Aires on these alternative lifestyle projects, Comunidad del Sur sets forth some "Economic Guidelines" focusing on the processes of production. Translated by Paul Sharkey and reprinted in Comunidad del Sur: Una experiencia de vida cooperativa integral *(Montevideo, 1985).*

WE ARE LIVING IN AN ENTIRELY hierarchical society of continual growth where the increasing alienation of workers at work finds some compensation in "rising living standards" and where all initiative is the preserve of the "organizers." In this way they can thwart the rebellion of the exploited by locking them into the pursuit of living standards, breaking down their solidarity by introducing hierarchy and bureaucratization into every collective venture.

It seems clear that the "actual relations of production"—the relations established between individuals and/or groups in the process whereby needed goods are produced or made available to society—are the essential foundations of every society, the decision as to what to produce and how much should be made in the light of what we want to consume and how much; bearing in mind, conversely, that what we consume comes at a cost and requires a certain amount of work, which shapes our lives. Adopting this social approach, there can be no dichotomy between producer and consumer.

It seems plain that social relations (who I live with, when, the time I have available and the range of means available to me) are determined by the relations of work and production. It is for and by means of certain productive labours that we are to be moulded. If this work should rule out initiative, responsibility, association, voluntary collaboration and free exchanges between individuals, without their faculties and independence being encouraged to blossom, then the individual is not going to be able to identify with the social labour required of him. There can be no liberation of the individual during his free time until such time as liberation touches upon his productive social activity, his work. So we have to come up with fresh economic relationships:

Forms of collective ownership making these [relationships] possible, degrees of shared decision-making raising us up to a new level of living (as opposed to the one determined by capitalist society for the good of domination: a life that merely amasses consumer goods has nothing to offer in terms of comprehensive personal and social self-realization). We go to our graves without ever realizing our potential.

Creating production processes that permit expanding participation and creativity in the act of production.

Forms of payment that guarantee the chosen living standard and do not perpetuate the differences and the differentiated exploitation of capitalist society. (No wage scales—payment in accordance with needs analyzed and determined by everyone.)

As much satisfaction at work as can be achieved.

Optimum output and productivity.

Maximum leisure time.

Once remuneration can meet basic needs, the workers will have to ask themselves which is the more important: improving working conditions, a wider range of available consumer goods, or more time available for study, self-expression or recreation (playing, singing, painting, interacting with their children or youngsters in a recreational social setting).

That question is one that we will have to consider collectively rather than on an individual basis, creating real collective power over the living conditions for us all and thereby making a qualitative leap forwards.

The situation of the man-in-the-street is essentially no different under the various "private," "bureaucratic" or "militarized" capitalist systems even when these are dressed up in such contradictory notions as "state socialism" or "national liberation"; the actual relations of production under them all are similar.

The purpose of change cannot simply be to do away with private property, to abolish monopolies and above all the bureaucracies… to gradually introduce more than one improvement in exploitation methods, although the distinction between leaders and operatives in production and in social life in general remains essentially fixed and stable. The problem of change translates as the problem of equipping the people to lead society. Moving on from challenging the power of capital in production to challenging power in society as a whole—reorganizing society on the basis of institutions that people can understand and control.

Our project, one of the key props of which is alternative life groups, is a timid attempt to act out these ideas; it means to launch a range of tightly orchestrated cooperative activities that can make it feasible for them to be translated into hard and fast practice. In economic terms, it has to promote:

1. Shared and indivisible ownership. Whatever is brought into the project represents a social asset open to use by all would-be participants and is removed once and for all from the realm of private ownership and inheritance rights.

2. Production and consumption are to be planned together and coordinated one with the other, by means of mechanisms for collective decision-making.

3. Recompense shall be on the basis of needs determined by all (meaning a consciously determined standard of living).

4. Problems such as illness, incapacity, or arising from old age or infancy, that is to say, situations of economic dependency, shall be accommodated on the basis of solidarity, through the establishment of cooperatively administered solidarity funds.

5. Encouragement of the most fully extensive possible training for human beings in every field, through the facilitation of education and skills tasking (intellectual, manual and aesthetic skilling) by means of "grants," an economic expenditure to be repaid by the beneficiary as he reinvests his new skills in the project.

6. Any asset coming to the members of the project through inheritance, gift or any other avenue is to be treated as a shared asset.

7. The greatest possible facilitation of personal initiative vis-à-vis anything having to do with raising the members' standards of education and information (libraries, outings, research).

8. Work, study and training are to be integrated into the expanding time allotted for learning, research and direct creativity in the workplace...

The quantitative imperative remains the dominant consideration. In which context, we, being in charge of management, must inevitably take on the frustrating demands of accumulation. Many a time, in order to secure self-management, we find ourselves obliged to act on our own initiative and push our own needs into second place behind the demands of production and embrace a self-discipline that in our system is an imposition from without. In short, we find ourselves confronted with the stark reality that actual emancipation is still a long way off and we have to face up to that possibility and all that it entails. The aspiration, therefore, is toward a progressive and comprehensive change that requires an all out campaign if it is to encompass the whole of society.

61. Maurice Joyeux: Self-Management, Syndicalism and Factory Councils (1973)

Maurice Joyeux (1910-1991) was a well known French anarcho-syndicalist. He was imprisoned many times during the 1930s for his militant anarchist activities, participated in the Revolutionary Front's factory occupations in 1936, and spent most of the Second World War in the Montluc prison, where he participated in a mutiny (recounted in his book, Mutinerie à Montluc *(Éditions la Rue, 1971). After the war he helped rebuild the French anarchist movement. In 1953 he was involved in the revival of the Fédération Anarchiste, and in the publication of its new paper,* Le Monde Libertaire. *Joyeux and* Le Monde Libertaire *opposed the French war in Algeria, making the paper the target of the authorities who confiscated it and the fascists who blew up its office in 1961. He was friends with the existentialist writer, Albert Camus, who was sympathetic to revolutionary syndicalism. His publications include* Souvenirs d'un anarchiste *(Paris: Editions du Monde libertaire, 1986),* Ce que je crois: Réflexions sur l'anarchie *(Saint-Denis: Cahiers du Vent du chemin, 1984), and* L'anarchie dans la société contemporaine: une hérésie nécessaire? *(Paris: Casterman, 1977). In the following excerpts from his 1973 article, "L'Autogestion: Pourquoi Faire," translated by Paul Sharkey, Joyeux suggests that workers councils can work with broader based trade union organizations to coordinate production and distribution in a libertarian socialist society but by themselves would be insufficient to manage the economy, which could provide authoritarian forces with a pretext for reconstituting state power, as was done by the Bolsheviks during the Russian Revolution.*

SAYING THAT ONE SUPPORTS SELF-MANAGEMENT is now meaningless, unless at the same time one can answer three questions in an unambiguous way: 1. Self-management to what end? 2. Self-management for whose benefit? 3. Self-management, how? In plain language, when describing socialist economics, this used to mean citing the principles, determining the methodology and suggesting means.

PRINCIPLES

The principles of socialist economics, such as we anarchists conceive them, are clear. They suppose abolition of an economic system founded upon profit, surplus value and capital accumulation, taking the means of production and exchange into collective ownership, doing away with class differences, doing away with the centralist state that is the capitalist system's agent of coordination and coercion, and whittling authority down to arrangements freely entered into by partners in the building of the socialist economy.

If that is the self-management that is being touted to us, then we are all for self-management, albeit a less ambiguous term such as worker management might be used instead…

Self-management supposes that a firm is managed by all of its workforce. But self-management means nothing to that workforce unless it radically changes their living conditions, the relations in place between various categories of staff (labourers, skilled workers, white collar staff, cadres) and between the staff as a whole and the management. Running a firm in common while it retains its class structures would be tantamount to the workforce running its own alienation.

What endows a form with its class structures is wage differentials, the retention of some sort of authority that goes beyond the parameters of the task in hand, the allocation of the profits made from manufacture, the boss's claim to the surplus value created through a collective endeavour, management privileges, the dividends skimmed, not from the profits of the owner of the firm who ultimately finances it, but from the manufacturing budget, leaving the portion set aside for wages diminished, and ownership of the means of production. In short, as we anarchists see things, self-management implies the abolition of all privileges within the firm and equality across the board, economically, socially and morally. As we anarchists see it, self-management implies abolition of private or State ownership of the means of production and the transfer of these to the workers, who enjoy "possession" of them, this being handed over automatically to their successors as they leave the firm. As we anarchists see it, self-management implies the sharing of manufacturing profits across the workforce, the collectives in charge of the vital infrastructure of a world-

wide economy, and a compensation fund designed to ensure balance between branches of industry, agriculture, services... indeed, between firms themselves.

METHODOLOGY

...These days there are two suggested models of internal organization for self-managed firms. One is based on "councils," the other on "unions." The object of both of these approaches can be broken down into a series of points that can be boiled down to just two. The opposition Marxists (but not only them) ask: "In whom is 'power' within the firm to be vested?" And the anarcho-syndicalists ask: "Who is to coordinate work in the firm?" The workers' councils, some say, whereas others say the trade union organizations, although the dividing line between these two schools of thought is not necessarily related to clear cut theoretical justifications but can be gauged from the experience of fifty years of "socialist" management.

The workers' councils issue is not a new one, even if it was ruled out of Marxist orthodoxy by those who, in line with Kautsky and Lenin, opted for parliamentary democracy or democratic centralism. Rosa Luxembourg touched upon it in her polemic with Lenin but it was Pannekoek who was the paramount theoretician of managing the firm by means of workers' councils.

The workers' council suggests that the workers, enlightened about their alienation within the firm by the vanguard (i.e., "by the party of the proletariat"), take over the running of it and do so through the good offices of a council elected by everyone and subject to recall at any moment.

Leaving "the leading role of the party of the proletariat" to one side, we can agree that this proposition regarding self-management, in its "totality," fits in with the proposals of all the socialists categorized (on rather shaky grounds) as "utopian," as well as with the aspirations of workers grappling with castes, classes and hierarchies rooted in economics or authority. And the incontrovertible proof of this feeling is that, at the inception of all revolutions, this "councillist" proposition galvanizes all of the revolutionary energies of those driven by idealism. But revolutions have to take the economic context into consideration, and ours is a complex economic context, the problems of which—quite apart from the system and whether it be a bourgeois or worker system—are linked and operate in accordance with an irreversible pattern that shapes manufacture (which is to say the continuation of life) during and after the revolutionary period.

Now, there is no gainsaying the fact that, so far, the councils have failed. Even when they were successful for a time in orchestrating themselves in political terms, which was not the case in Russia nor in Hungary and only partly the case in Spain,

that orchestration covered only one political relationship between factory, commune and State, and those councils failed "because they were not up to the job" of coordinating the multiplicity of activities in the firm or trade, in the very location where success is a vital prerequisite for the introduction of socialism. And this failure in relation to production and distribution was to to be exploited by Lenin and others as a massive argument in favour of planning and state centralization, along with a whole suite of labour laws professing to be in everybody's interests and in those of the socialist nation in particular. It was the failure of the workers' councils to organize production at the level of the firm and to orchestrate exchange that gave rise to the NEP [the Bolsheviks 1921 "New Economic Policy"] which rang the death knell of a Russian economy founded upon councils or "soviets."

From its inception, the workers' movement has carved out a niche for itself outside of political ideologies. The 1869 Basle congress and Fernand Pelloutier [Volume 1, Selection 56] were the ones that devised a theory of which the Charter of Amiens remains the embodiment and which consists of the claim that the trade unions, tools of the workers' struggle in the context of the regime today, will tomorrow become the instruments of worker management… it is on the basis of trade union branches everywhere that workers can monitor the whole process of production and develop the relationships that ought, as a matter of normality, to obtain between the firm's employees, as well as the overall picture of pay scales.

Today, faced with the issue of self-management, we must shun all dogmatism and, no matter what we may think in our innermost being, should take a serious look at the benefits and drawbacks of councils and of trade unions.

True, in the eyes of many revolutionary militants, the trade unions are write-offs. The unions, or rather the union bureaucrats, mirror the stultification of the masses, their bourgeoisification, their fears of the prospect of revolution. People in the union are the same as they are outside of the union and the human problems with which self-management will have to grapple will not be any different there from the ones by which trade union organization is beset.

But, whatever its current make-up may be, trade union organization remains an extraordinary means of organization, of liaison and control. Its vertical and horizontal structures closely marshal the entire national economy and it is the most natural form of coordination for workers eager to run their firms.

Councils are spontaneous. Effervescent. They articulate what is inscribed in gold letters in the people's hearts and souls. In the din of battle they create unanimity. But, spawned by anger and by hope, they fade away at the point where people are

assailed by difficulty and doubt. And doubt is engendered by the complexity of the task they face. Councils are thrown up to meet a particular situation, a particular context. They are a flash in the pan and organizational difficulties grind them down. It is just when the councils are crumbling that left wing or right wing dictatorship comes into its own; only the trade union organization can step in at this point to change tack and turn the revolutionary flash in the pan into a coordinated endeavour. And the bureaucrats are well aware of this for, whether they be of the right or of the left, their chief concern—under cover of the wider interest—is to incapacitate the trade union organization and reduce it to slavishness. Experience should be an eye-opener for us here. Marxism, no matter whether it looks to Lenin, Guesde or Trotsky, has but one urge, the urge to turn the trade union organization into an adjunct of the State, charged with implementing in the milieu of the workers the political decisions made by the parties.

Councils or trade unions: we can argue the toss, but let us not get carried away by merely theoretical considerations. In any case, coordination within a self-managed firm requires vertical as well as horizontal structures, and as the councils create some, they will be trade union in nature, trade unions without the name, without the authority, without that sort of patina conferred upon concrete efforts by the passage of time.

Paradoxically, it is in revolutionary syndicalist circles that we find the greatest reticence about the role in self-management that anarcho-syndicalism has accorded to trade unionism. This diffidence is understandable in that every attempt at socialism around the world had resulted in the subordination of the union to politics. But that was a socialism married to democratic centralism or to parliamentary democracy. Now we anarchists see self-management as a quite different kettle of fish. Trade unionist fears of seeing the interests of the firm's workforce "forgotten about" if the trade unions get a share in management are not to be discounted, but on the other hand, we might as easily have misgivings about watching the Councils bring ongoing pressures to bear on the trade union organization to embrace a mode of management that it has had no hand in devising. And it should be noted that, to date, the logic of events has prompted every vanguard party to reduce the trade unions, by excluding them from management functions, to mere transmission belts…

If we had to sum up this matter, which the unravelling of events and experience will ultimately sort out, we could say that the council is a factor for revolution. It prompts the revolution. Keeps the torch burning. The trade union organizes production and distribution. In any case, striking some sort of a balance between the two approaches to management may produce the reconciliation that is crucial to the firm's economic well-being.

But ultimately the problem of self-management is going to be resolved in the factory. There and nowhere else will experience be evaluated. If self-management is to prove itself and have credibility, it must not be built to the prescription of an exceptional moment when revolutionary euphoria makes everything briefly feasible, but should work in normal times when the fever has abated. Which implies turning one's back on 'revolutionary' folklore and blather. The wherewithal for coordinating at the local, regional, national and indeed international level can be sorted out on the basis of the factory soundly and durably organized.

Whatever the 'political' persuasion of the firm, its underlying structure will comprise three elements. The first general characteristic determines the firm's production and overall operations; the second, vertical in nature, conveys the decisions of the first to all and sundry; and the third, horizontal in nature, ensures that there is coherence between the various operations at each level.

The workers' council, the trade union council or management council elected by whatever means may be preferred, depending on one's view of the desired structure for the firm, takes the overall decisions, deciding upon manufacture and, assisted in this by a research office, sets out the technical elements and budget. The Council's decisions should be conveyed to every stage of manufacture. This is handled by the trade union organization through its sections, which offers the advantage of monitoring operations at every stage and curtailing authority strictly to technical operations. For those who may want to keep the trade union organization out of management, this vertical coordinating element is going to have to be built up from scratch. Finally, manufacture is going to have to be coordinated at every step, either by the trade union organization or by some other, kindred set-up.

Councils or union? Given the character of our economy, I think that self-managerial activity around the country is going to embrace differing formats that will derive logically from the size of the firm, the nature of its manufacturing, its political geography or geography pure and simple, customs and usages, the technical or political grounding of the instigators, and it is at this point that the centralizing temptation, either in a democratic form (majority rule) or in a centralist form (elite rule or vanguard party rule) will again loom as a threat. Centralization is the mechanism whereby new classes will be formed and these in turn will devise privileges that need not necessarily be economic. If we are to avoid these reefs on which every socialist experiment in history has come to grief, we need to resort to a federalism that binds together the motley organizational formats of self-managing firms on the basis of two factors that constitute its founding principle - namely, self-management at the level of the firm and community access to its output...

THE HOW

Barricade, revolutionary army, guerrilla warfare, ballot box—these are the means used to date to drive out capitalism and usher in socialism. It has sometimes been said that the reverses suffered by socialism in the countries where it was introduced were a direct result of the methods employed during the revolutionary period, that they had a considerable impact and diluted its purity. This holds true for the coming to power of a revolutionary party by means of the parliamentary election system that turns everything it touches rotten, or by means of a revolutionary party whose structures, by their very nature, finally became hierarchical and authoritarian. However, we have to look elsewhere for the reasons why all so-called socialist regimes have proved powerless to build an economy based upon self-management.

The touchstone of all attempts at socialism has been the transitional period. Thought of as an interval, a breathing space for the revolution, a time for it to get itself organized and for men to adapt to the new arrangement, the intervening period, by consolidating the revolutionary situation, where thesis rubbed shoulders with antithesis, brought about no advance in the direction of revolution, but, instead, encouraged the reconstitution of a new techno-bureaucratic class determined to protect its own class privileges, these not being necessarily the same as those of the overthrown capitalist class. And even when, after that pause, after that intervening period, a country such as Yugoslavia, say, made timid efforts to redirect the economy in the direction of self-management, the clout of the state's administrative machinery and sectional interests was such that the outcome proved derisory and helped bring workers' control into disrepute...

In none of the countries supposedly bound for socialism is there any progress in the direction of the withering away of the state. Instead, they are bound for the constitution of a new ruling class which, by virtue of its being dogma-based, has all the appearances of a new nobility in terms of the facilities that public education extends to the children of the leaders. Everywhere you care to look, the transitional period has sounded the death knell of socialism. Built up like some inevitable dialectical follow-through, it has run up against human beings produced by a milieu that invested them with certain habits, needs and ambitions which managed to survive and indeed thrive in an ambiguous setting, namely, the intermediate period when a timid foray into socialism sits cheek by jowl with enduring class distinctions.

We anarchists think instead that all class privilege—without exception—should be done away with... We have to make the economic situation created by the revolution irreversible and in this regard Bakunin was spot on when he argued that

the workforce would have nothing to fear from the firm and only through it, with the help of the trade union branch that is continually at its side, and in certain circumstances, could it be sure about that...

The second point for us to consider is the rapid spread of a strike once it steps outside of the purely local framework and the official slogans in a disorganized situation... one that escalates the demands so that they relate to the very structures of the system. The general strikes complete with factory seizures that erupted in [France in] 1936 or in 1968 were not prompted by slogans coming from the trade union bodies and their leaders. In both cases, the strike began in one firm of middling significance where there was a revolutionary syndicalist presence. Initially, the strike spread quickly without support from and sometimes in defiance of the trade union leaders who, like the politicians and statemen, were found wanting. At that point, the mobilization affected not just the militants but all of the firm's workforce. During this time and prior to the union machine's regaining the upper hand, the workers believed that the strike was going to succeed. It was only when the disputes dragged on and on that the leaders managed to regain control. At which point the workers started to have their doubts about the outcome, and negotiations between the government and the trade union machinery became a possibility.

Destruction is a positive and creative act. Between one intermediate stage and another, people have swapped masters but have carried on serving masters...

Self-management, the running of industry by its workforce, has to be wholesale and it has to focus primarily on the essential economic forces in the land. It is the fruit of the utter destruction of the class economic system in all its guises, be they liberal capitalist or state-run, with its coordinating structures centralized by the state. The revolutionary struggle to tear down the system and the building of self-management should go hand in hand. There is only only one way of destroying the capitalist system while at the same time building self-management: *the self-managerial strike.*

Today we are aware of two points that should allow us to direct our revolutionary strategy. The first, as revealed to us in May '68, is the extreme fragility of the multifaceted modern capitalist system which can only respond properly when the state takes charge of coordination. In May it only took one marginal sector to step out of line for the state to come adrift and it was only indecisiveness on the part of the political parties and trade union groupings, busily scrambling for the trappings of power, that allowed it to recover, helped in this by the shortcomings and crimes of the "official" revolutionaries whom the people have been dragging around like a ball and chain for the past fifty years. The people believed in the possibility of revolution in 1968 but were afraid of it. These

days, the people would have no fear of a self-managerial revolution, but have no belief in it. If the country is to embrace the sort of economic change we propose, it has to believe in and not fear it.

So it is during the period when the state is wrong-footed and the trade union and political organization dithering that telling action is possible. This is the point at which the factories should be reclaimed for workers' control and their trade union organization. This is self-management's big moment.

The staggering phenomenon of a self-managerial strike is the same as that which distinguished the two great strikes in 1936 and 1968 that resulted in the factory seizures. With the contagion factor at work in this as in other instances, it is the feeling that one is breaking new ground and shrugging off earlier failures, rather than some obscure theoretical dissertation that no one has ever read, that would push workers in the direction of a take-over and then of getting the factories running again—under a self-managerial system. The self-managerial strike is feasible, its success dependent upon it being widespread and upon the extent of the disintegration of capitalist society by which it has been triggered.

In history, the strike has often been the overture to the unleashing of revolutionary action. It has been complementary to the struggle undertaken by the parties and it was often unleashed thanks to the parties' influence. The self-managerial strike is a different matter... the self-managerial strike raises not just the issue of pay but that of the running of firms. At which point the workers' movement is no longer trailing in the wake of the leftwing parties and their program. It confronts them instead with a *fait accompli*, foisting a *socialist, libertarian, egalitarian and self-managerial* economic organization upon them.

The self-management that the politicians would offer us lacks substance and is bereft of content. Merely a catchphrase to spice up the program. Our only chance of self-management is to roll it out at the people's behest and to unleash it nationwide with a speed equivalent to that displayed by the big strikes involving factory take-overs. Self-management's only hope is the self-managerial strike.

We anarchists are for the economy being run by the workers because we are against the capitalist system in both its liberal and state-controlled versions. We are against its coordinating agent, the state. We seek to establish economic equality as the indispensable complement to political equality, without which freedom exists only for those who can afford it. Self-management, direct management, workers' management if you prefer, strikes us as the appropriate structure for producing necessary goods with the least possible sacrifice of freedom. Self-management strikes us

as an effective means of preventing socialism from turning yet again into the tragic farce we have seen played out in Moscow, Algiers, Cairo, Beijing or elsewhere. The self-managerial strike seems to us, given the complexity of the modern economy, the most effective means of wresting the means of production and exchange from the hands of the ruling classes and also of embarking upon a self-managerial experiment nationwide, the most effective means of protecting the thought of self-management from all manner of mumbo jumbo.

Autogestion, January 1973

62. Murray Bookchin: The Forms of Freedom (1968)

While supporting workers' councils as an important part of the revolutionary struggle, Murray Bookchin was careful to point out their limitations, arguing for community assemblies as a more expansive and liberatory form of social organization. Bookchin also looked to affinity groups as catalysts of revolutionary change. The following excerpts are taken from his 1968 essay, "The Forms of Freedom," originally published in Anarchos, *No. 2, Spring 1968, and his "Note on Affinity Groups." Both are included in* Post-Scarcity Anarchism *(Palo Alto: Ramparts, 1971).*

EVERY PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP HAS A social dimension; every social relationship has a deeply personal side to it. Ordinarily, these two aspects and their relationship to each other are mystified and difficult to see clearly. The institutions created by hierarchical society, especially the state institutions, produce the illusion that social relations exist in a universe of their own, in specialized political or bureaucratic compartments. In reality, there exists no strictly "impersonal" political or social dimension; all the social institutions of the past and present depend on the relations between people in daily life, especially in those aspects of daily life which are necessary for survival—the production and distribution of the means of life, the rearing of the young, the maintenance and reproduction of life. The liberation of man—not in some vague "historical," moral, or philosophical sense, but in the intimate details of day-to-day life—is a profoundly social act and raises the problem of social forms as modes of relations between individuals.

The relationship between the social and the individual requires special emphasis in our own time, for never before have personal relations become so impersonal and never before have social relations become so asocial. Bourgeois society has brought all relations between people to the highest point of abstraction by divesting them of their human content and dealing with them as objects. The object—the commodity—takes on roles that formerly belonged to the community; exchange rela-

tionships (actualized in most cases as money relationships) supplant nearly all other modes of human relationships. In this respect, the bourgeois commodity system becomes the historical culmination of all societies, precapitalist as well as capitalist, in which human relationships are *mediated* rather than direct or face-to-face…

[T]he traditional revolutionary demand for *council* forms of organization… does not break completely with the terrain of hierarchical society. *Workers'* councils originate as *class* councils. Unless one assumes that workers are driven by their interests *as workers* to revolutionary measures against hierarchical society (an assumption I flatly deny), then these councils can be used just as much to perpetuate class society as to destroy it. We shall see, in fact, that the council form contains many structural limitations which favour the development of hierarchy. For the present, it suffices to say that most advocates of workers' councils tend to conceive of people primarily as economic entities, either as workers or nonworkers. This conception leaves the onesidedness of the self completely intact. Man is viewed as a bifurcated being, the product of a social development that divides man from man and each man from himself.

Nor is this one-sided view completely corrected by demands for workers' management of production and the shortening of the work week, for these demands leave the *nature* of the work process and the *quality* of the worker's free time completely untouched. If workers' councils and workers' management of production do not transform the work into a joyful activity, free time into a marvelous experience, and the workplace into a community, then they remain merely formal structures, in fact, *class* structures. They perpetuate the limitations of the proletariat as a product of bourgeois social conditions. Indeed, no movement that raises the demand for workers' councils can be regarded as revolutionary unless it tries to promote sweeping transformations in the environment of the work place.

Finally, council organizations are forms of mediated relationships rather than face-to-face relationships. Unless these mediated relationships are limited by direct relationships, leaving policy decisions to the latter and mere administration to the former, the councils tend to become focuses of power. Indeed, unless the councils are finally assimilated by a popular assembly, and factories are integrated into new types of community, both the councils and the factories perpetuate the alienation between man and man and between man and work. Fundamentally, the degree of freedom in a society can be gauged by the kind of relationships that unite the people in it. If these relationships are open, unalienated and creative, the society will be free. If structures exist that inhibit open relationships, either by coercion or mediation, then freedom will not exist, whether there is workers' management of production or

not. For *all* the workers will manage will be production—the preconditions of life, not the conditions of life. No mode of social organization can be isolated from the social conditions it is organizing. Both councils and assemblies have furthered the interests of hierarchical society as well as those of revolution. To assume that the forms of freedom can be treated merely as forms would be as absurd as to assume that legal concepts can be treated merely as questions of jurisprudence. The form and content of freedom, like law and society, are mutually determined. By the same token, there are forms of organization that promote and forms that vitiate the goal of freedom, and social conditions favour sometimes the one and sometimes the other. To one degree or another, these forms either alter the individual who uses them or inhibit his further development.

This article does not dispute the need for workers' councils—more properly, *factory committees*—as a revolutionary means of appropriating the bourgeois economy. On the contrary, experience has shown repeatedly that the factory committee is vitally important as an initial form of economic administration. But no revolution can settle for councils and committees as its final, or even its exemplary, mode of social organization, any more than "workers' management of production" can be regarded as a final mode of economic administration. Neither of these two relationships is *broad* enough to revolutionize work, free time, needs, and the structure of society as a whole…

However much its social position is strengthened by a system of "self-management," the factory is not an autonomous social organism. The amount of social control the factory can exercise is fairly limited, for every factory is highly dependent for its operation and its very existence upon other factories and sources of raw materials…

The fact remains that council modes of organization are not immune to centralization, manipulation and perversion. These councils are still particularistic, one-sided and mediated forms of social management. At best, they can be the stepping stones to a decentralized society—at worst, they can easily be integrated into hierarchical forms of social organization.

Let us turn to the popular assembly for an insight into unmediated forms of social relations. The assembly probably formed the structural basis of early clan and tribal society until its functions were pre-empted by chiefs and councils. It appeared as the ecclesia in classical Athens; later, in a mixed and often perverted form, it reappeared in the medieval and Renaissance towns of Europe. Finally, as the "sections," assemblies emerged as the insurgent bodies in Paris during the Great Revolution. The ecclesia and the Parisian sections warrant the closest study. Both developed in

the most complex cities of their time and both assumed a highly sophisticated form, often welding individuals of different social origins into a remarkable, albeit temporary, community of interests. It does not minimize their limitations to say that they developed methods of functioning so successfully libertarian in character that even the most imaginative utopias have failed to match in speculation what they achieved in practice…

Structurally, the basis of the Athenian polis was the ecclesia. Shortly after sunrise at each prytany (the tenth day of the year), thousands of male citizens from all over Attica began to gather on the Pnyx, a hill directly outside Athens, for a meeting of the assembly. Here, in the open air, they leisurely disported themselves among groups of friends until the solemn intonation of prayers announced the opening of the meeting. The agenda, arranged under the three headings of "sacred," "profane" and "foreign affairs," had been distributed days earlier with the announcement of the assembly. Although the ecclesia could not add or bring forward anything that the agenda did not contain, its subject matter could be rearranged at the will of the assembly. No quorum was necessary, except for proposed decrees affecting individual citizens.

The ecclesia enjoyed complete sovereignty over all institutions and offices in Athenian society. It decided questions of war and peace, elected and removed generals, reviewed military campaigns, debated and voted upon domestic and foreign policy, redressed grievances, examined and passed upon the operations of administrative boards, and banished undesirable citizens. Roughly one man out of six in the citizen body was occupied at any given time with the administration of the community's affairs. Some fifteen hundred men, chosen mainly by lot, staffed the boards responsible for the collection of taxes, the management of shipping, food supply and public facilities, and the preparation of plans for public construction. The army, composed entirely of conscripts from each of the ten tribes of Attica, was led by elected officers; Athens was policed by citizen-bowmen and Scythian state slaves.

The agenda of the ecclesia was prepared by a body called the Council of 500. Lest the council gain any authority over the ecclesia, the Athenians carefully circumscribed its composition and functions. Chosen by lot from rosters of citizens who, in turn, were elected annually by the tribes, the Council divided into ten subcommittees, each of which was on duty for a tenth of the year. Every day a president was selected by lot from among the fifty members of the subcommittee that was on duty to the polis. During his twenty-four hours of office, the Council's president held the state seal and the keys to the citadel and public archives and functioned as acting head of the country. Once he had been chosen, he could not occupy the position again.

Each of the ten tribes annually elected six hundred citizens to serve as "judges"—what we would call jurymen—in the Athenian courts. Every morning, they trudged up to the temple of Theseus, where lots were drawn for the trials of the day. Each court consisted of at least 201 jurymen and the trials were fair by any historical standard of juridical practice.

Taken as a whole, this was a remarkable system of social management; run almost entirely by amateurs, the Athenian polis reduced the formulation and administration of public policy to a completely public affair. "Here is no privileged class, no class of skilled politicians, no bureaucracy; no body of men, like the Roman Senate, who alone understood the secrets of State, and were looked up to and trusted as the gathered wisdom of the whole community," observes W. Warde Fowler. "At Athens there was no disposition, and in fact no need, to trust the experience of any one; each man entered intelligently into the details of his own temporary duties, and discharged them, as far as we can tell, with industry and integrity." Overdrawn as this view may be for a class society that required slaves and denied women any role in the polis, the fact remains that Fowler's account is *essentially* accurate.

Indeed, the greatness of the achievement lies in the fact that Athens, despite the slave, patriarchal and class features it shared with classical society, as a whole developed into a working democracy in the literal sense of the term... At its best, Athenian democracy greatly modified the more abusive and inhuman features of ancient society. The burdens of slavery were small by comparison with other historical periods, except when slaves were employed in capitalist enterprises. Generally, slaves were allowed to accumulate their own funds; on the yeoman farmsteads of Attica they generally worked under the same conditions and shared the same food as their masters; in Athens, they were indistinguishable in dress, manner and bearing from citizens—a source of ironical comment by foreign visitors. In many crafts, slaves not only worked side by side with freemen, but occupied supervisory positions over free workers as well as other slaves.

On balance, the image of Athens as a slave economy which built its civilization and generous humanistic outlook on the backs of human chattels is false—"false in its interpretation of the past and in its confident pessimism as to the future, willfully false, above all, in its cynical estimate of human nature," observes Edward Zimmerman...

In Athens, the popular assembly emerged as the final product of a sweeping social transition. In Paris, more than two millennia later, it emerged as the lever of social transition itself, as a revolutionary form and an insurrectionary force. The

Parisian sections of the early 1790s played the same role as organs of struggle as the soviets of 1905 and 1917, with the decisive difference that relations within the sections were not mediated by a hierarchical structure. Sovereignty rested with the revolutionary assemblies themselves, not above them.

The Parisian sections emerged directly from the voting system established for elections to the Estates General. In 1789 the monarchy had divided the capital into sixty electoral districts, each of which formed an assembly of so-called "active" or tax-paying citizens, the eligible voters of the city...

On July 30, 1792, the Théatre-Francais section swept aside the distinction between "active" and "passive" citizens, inviting the poorest and most destitute of the *sans-culottes* to participate in the assembly. Other sections followed the Théatre-Francais, and from this period the sections became authentic popular organs —indeed the very soul of the Great Revolution...

The sections... represented genuine forms of self-management. At the high point of their development, they took over the complete administration of the city. Individual sections policed their own neighbourhoods, elected their own judges, were responsible for the distribution of food, provided public aid to the poor, and contributed to the maintenance of the National Guard. With the declaration of war in April 1792 the sections took on the added tasks of enrolling volunteers for the revolutionary army and caring for their families, collecting donations for the war effort, and equipping and provisioning entire battalions. During the period of the "maximum," when controls were established over prices and wages to prevent a runaway inflation, the sections took responsibility for the maintenance of government-fixed prices. To provision Paris, the sections sent their representatives to the countryside to buy and transport food and see to its distribution at fair prices.

It must be borne in mind that this complex of extremely important activities was undertaken not by professional bureaucrats but, for the most part, by ordinary shopkeepers and craftsmen. The bulk of the sectional responsibilities were discharged after working hours, during the free time of the section members. The popular assemblies of the sections usually met during the evenings in neighbourhood churches. Assemblies were ordinarily open to all the adults of the neighbourhood. In periods of emergency, assembly meetings were held daily; special meetings could be called at the request of fifty members. Most administrative responsibilities were discharged by committees, but the popular assemblies established all the policies of the sections, reviewed and passed upon the work of all the committees, and replaced officers at will.

The... sections were coordinated through the Paris Commune, the municipal council of the capital. When emergencies arose, sections often cooperated with each other directly, through ad hoc delegates. This form of cooperation from below never crystalized into a permanent relationship. The Paris Commune of the Great Revolution never became an overbearing, ossified institution; it changed with almost every important political emergency, and its stability, form and functions depended largely upon the wishes of the sections...

The factors which undermined the assemblies of classical Athens and revolutionary Paris require very little discussion. In both cases the assembly mode of organization was broken up not only from without, but also from within—by the development of class antagonisms. There are no forms, however cleverly contrived, that can overcome the content of a given society. Lacking the material resources, the technology and the level of economic development to overcome class antagonisms as such, Athens and Paris could achieve an approximation of the forms of freedom only temporarily—and only to deal with the more serious threat of complete social decay. Athens held on to the ecclesia for several centuries, mainly because the polis still retained a living contact with tribal forms of organization; Paris developed its sectional mode of organization for a period of several years, largely because the *sans-culottes* had been precipitously swept to the head of the revolution by a rare combination of fortunate circumstances. Both the ecclesia and the sections were undermined by the very conditions they were intended to check—property, class antagonisms and exploitation—but which they were incapable of eliminating. What is remarkable about them is that they worked at all, considering the enormous problems they faced and the formidable obstacles they had to overcome.

It must be borne in mind that Athens and Paris were large cities, not peasant villages; indeed, they were complex, highly sophisticated urban centers by the standards of their time. Athens supported a population of more than a quarter of a million, Paris over seven hundred thousand. Both cities were engaged in worldwide trade; both were burdened by complex logistical problems; both had a multitude of needs that could be satisfied only by a fairly elaborate system of public administration. Although each had only a fraction of the population of present-day New York or London, their advantages on this score were more than canceled out by their extremely crude systems of communication and transportation, and by the need, in Paris at least, for members of the assembly to devote the greater part of the day to brute toil. Yet Paris, no less than Athens, was administered by amateurs: by men who, for several years and in their spare time, saw to the administration of a city in revolu-

tionary ferment. The principal means by which they made their revolution, organized its conquests, and finally sustained it against counterrevolution at home and invasion abroad, was the neighbourhood public assembly. There is no evidence that these assemblies and the committees they produced were inefficient or technically incompetent. On the contrary, they awakened a popular initiative, a resoluteness in action, and a sense of revolutionary purpose that no professional bureaucracy, however radical its pretensions, could ever hope to achieve… The sections provide us with a rough model of assembly organization in a large city and during a period of revolutionary transition from a centralized political state to a potentially decentralized society. The ecclesia provides us with a rough model of assembly organization in a decentralized society. The word "model" is used deliberately. The ecclesia and the sections were lived experiences, not theoretical visions. But precisely because of this they validate in practice many anarchic theoretical speculations that have often been dismissed as "visionary" and "unrealistic"…

In envisioning the complete dissolution of the existing society, we cannot get away from the question of power—be it power over our own lives, the "seizure of power," or the dissolution of power. In going from the present to the future, from "here" to "there," we must ask: what is power? Under what conditions is it dissolved? And what does its dissolution mean? How do the forms of freedom, the unmediated relations of social life, emerge from a statified society, a society in which the state of unfreedom is carried to the point of absurdity—to domination for its own sake?

We begin with the historical fact that nearly all the major revolutionary upheavals began spontaneously: witness the three days of "disorder" that preceded the take over of the Bastille in July 1789, the defence of the artillery in Montmartre that led to the Paris Commune of 1871, the famous "five days" of February 1917 in Petrograd, the uprising of Barcelona in July 1936, the takeover of Budapest and the expulsion of the Russian army in 1956. Nearly all the great revolutions came from below, from the molecular movement of the "masses," their progressive individuation and their explosion—an explosion which invariably took the authoritarian "revolutionists" completely by surprise.

There can be no separation of the revolutionary process from the revolutionary goal. *A society based on self-administration must be achieved by means of self-administration.* This implies the forging of a self (yes, literally a forging in the revolutionary process) and a mode of administration which the self can possess. If we define "power" as the power of man over man, power can only be destroyed by the very process in which man acquires power over his own life and in which he not only "dis-

covers" himself but, more meaningfully, formulates his selfhood in all its social dimensions.

Freedom, so conceived, cannot be "delivered" to the individual as the "end product" of a "revolution"—much less as a "revolution" achieved by social-philistines who are hypnotized by the trappings of authority and power. The assembly and community cannot be legislated or decreed into existence. To be sure, a revolutionary group can purposively and consciously seek to promote the creation of these forms; but if assembly and community are not allowed to emerge organically, if their growth is not instigated, developed and matured by the social processes at work, they will not be really popular forms. Assembly and community must arise from within the revolutionary process itself; indeed, the revolutionary process must be the formation of assembly and community, and with it, the destruction of power. Assembly and community must become "fighting words," not distant panaceas. They must be created as *modes of struggle* against the existing society, not as theoretical or programmatic abstractions.

It is hardly possible to stress this point strongly enough. The future assemblies of people in the block, the neighbourhood or the district—the revolutionary sections to come— will stand on a higher social level than all the present-day committees, syndicates, parties and clubs adorned by the most resounding "revolutionary" titles. They will be the living nuclei of utopia in the decomposing body of bourgeois society. Meeting in auditoriums, theaters, courtyards, halls, parks and—like their forerunners, the sections of 1793—in churches, they will be the arenas of demassification, for the very *essence* of the revolutionary process is people acting as individuals.

At this point the assembly may be faced not only with the power of the bourgeois state—the famous problem of "dual power"—but with the danger of the incipient state. Like the Paris sections, it will have to fight not only against the Convention, but also against the tendency to create mediated social forms. The factory committees, which will almost certainly be the forms that will take over industry, must be managed directly by workers' assemblies in the factories. By the same token, neighbourhood committees, councils and boards must be rooted completely in the neighbourhood assembly. They must be answerable at every point to the assembly; they and their work must be under continual review by the assembly; and finally, their members must be subject to immediate recall by the assembly. The specific gravity of society, in short, must be shifted to its base—the armed people in permanent assembly.

As long as the arena of the assembly is the modern bourgeois city, the revolution is faced with a recalcitrant environment. The bourgeois city, by its very nature

and structure, fosters centralization, massification and manipulation. Inorganic, gargantuan, and organized like a factory, the city tends to inhibit the development of an organic, rounded community. In its role as the universal solvent, the assembly must try to dissolve the city itself.

We can envision young people renewing social life just as they renew the human species. Leaving the city, they begin to found the nuclear ecological communities to which older people repair in increasing numbers. Large resource pools are mobilized for their use; careful ecological surveys and suggestions are placed at their disposal by the most competent and imaginative people available. The modern city begins to shrivel, to contract and to disappear, as did its ancient progenitors millennia earlier. In the new, rounded ecological community, the assembly finds its authentic environment and true shelter. Form and content now correspond completely. The journey from "here" to "there," from sections to ecclesia, from cities to communities, is completed. No longer is the factory a particularized phenomenon; it now becomes an organic part of the community. In this sense, it is no longer a factory. The dissolution of the factory into the community completes the dissolution of the last vestiges of propertied, of class, and, above all, of mediated society into the new polis. And now the real drama of human life can unfold, in all its beauty, harmony, creativity and joy.

AFFINITY GROUPS

The term "affinity group" is the English translation of the Spanish *grupo de afinidad*, which was the name of an organizational form devised in pre-Franco days as the basis of the redoubtable Federación Anarquista Ibérica, the Iberian Anarchist Federation. (The FAI consisted of the most idealistic militants in the CNT, the immense anarcho-syndicalist labour union.) A slavish imitation of the FAI's forms of organization and methods would be neither possible nor desirable. The Spanish anarchists of the thirties were faced with entirely different social problems from those which confront American anarchists today. The affinity group form, however, has features that apply to any social situation, and these have often been intuitively adopted by American radicals, who call the resulting organizations "collectives," "communes" or "families."

The affinity group could easily be regarded as a new type of extended family, in which kinship ties are replaced by deeply empathetic human relationships—relationships nourished by common revolutionary ideas and practice. Long before the word "tribe" gained popularity in the American counterculture, the Spanish anarchists called their congresses *asambleas de las tribus*—assemblies of the tribes. Each affinity group is deliberately kept small to allow for the greatest degree of intimacy between those who compose it. Autonomous, communal and directly democratic, the group

combines revolutionary theory with revolutionary lifestyle in its everyday behavior. It creates a free space in which revolutionaries can remake themselves individually, and also as social beings.

Affinity groups are intended to function as catalysts within the popular movement, not as "vanguards"; they provide initiative and consciousness, not a "general staff" and a source of "command." The groups proliferate on a molecular level and they have their own "Brownian movement." Whether they link together or separate is determined by living situations, not by bureaucratic fiat from a distant center. Under conditions of political repression, affinity groups are highly resistant to police infiltration. Owing to the intimacy of the relationships between the participants, the groups are often difficult to penetrate and, even if penetration occurs, there is no centralized apparatus to provide the infiltrator with an overview of the movement as a whole. Even under such demanding conditions, affinity groups can still retain contact with each other through their periodicals and literature.

During periods of heightened activity, on the other hand, nothing prevents affinity groups from working together closely on any scale required by a living situation. They can easily federate by means of local, regional or national assemblies to formulate common policies and they can create temporary action committees (like those of the French students and workers in 1968) to coordinate specific tasks. Affinity groups, however, are always rooted in the popular movement. Their loyalties belong to the social forms created by the revolutionary people, not to an impersonal bureaucracy. As a result of their autonomy and localism, the groups can retain a sensitive appreciation of new possibilities. Intensely experimental and variegated in lifestyles, they act as a stimulus on each other as well as on the popular movement. Each group tries to acquire the resources needed to function largely on its own. Each group seeks a rounded body of knowledge and experience in order to overcome the social and psychological limitations imposed by bourgeois society on individual development. Each group, as a nucleus of consciousness and experience, tries to advance the spontaneous revolutionary movement of the people to a point where the group can finally disappear into the organic social forms created by the revolution.

63. Colin Ward: Anarchy as a Theory of Organization (1966-1973)

Colin Ward first became active in the English anarchist movement in the 1940s, contributing to Freedom and many other publications. He has written on a wide variety of topics, from housing, architecture and town planning, to childhood, schooling and water resources. In 1961, Colin Ward began publishing Anarchy *magazine, "a journal of anarchist ideas," dealing with post-war developments in anarchist theory and practice, and giving expression to new anarchist sensibilities.* Anarchy *included contributions from such people as Marie Louise Berneri, Paul Goodman, Geoffrey Ostergaard, George Woodcock, Murray Bookchin and Nicolas Walter. Many of the best articles are collected in* A Decade of Anarchy, 1961-1970 *(London: Freedom, 1987), also edited by Colin Ward.*

*Along with Murray Bookchin and other communitarian anarchists, Ward has helped broaden the anarchist vision of a free society by considering the manifold forms of non-hierarchical organizations that may freely federate with one another in a complex, interwoven web of self-managed groups extending well beyond the workplace. This concept of "horizontal federation," inspired in part by Kropotkin's concept of free association (Volume 1, Selection 41), constitutes an important step beyond earlier anarchist conceptions of federation by which workers' and other libertarian organizations would federate together into larger functional and geographical units composed of recallable delegates from the constituitive groups, so that all policy making powers would reside with the individual members in each base unit (as proposed, for example, by Murray Bookchin in "The Forms of Freedom" above). The problem with these kinds of federation is that they still retain a pyramidal structure, albeit one designed to ensure that power remains at the base (being organized "from the bottom up," as Bakunin put it, "from the circumference to the centre, in accordance with the principle of liberty, and not from the top down or from the centre to the circumference in the manner of all authority": "Program of the International Brotherhood," Volume 1, Selection 21). The danger is that, particularly during times of crisis, the "administrative councils" or similar organizations at the top of the federation, which are supposed to be restricted to coordinating functions, will usurp the policy and decision making powers of the base units in order to deal quickly with emergency situations. Vernon Richards and others have argued that this is precisely what happened to the CNT and FAI in Spain during the Revolution and Civil War (*Lessons of the Spanish Revolution, *London: Freedom Press, 1953).*

In Ward's horizontal federations, the model is that of a web, not a pyramid. Unlike pyramidal forms of organization, web based federations cannot be inverted. There is no administrative group at the top of a pyramid which can reverse the power structure and transform the federation into a top down, bureaucratic organization akin to a conventional political party or repre-

sentative form of government. The following excerpts are taken from Ward's "Anarchy as a Theory of Organization," first published in Anarchy, *No. 62, April 1966, and from the conclusion to* Anarchy in Action *(London: Allen & Unwin, 1973; later reprinted by Freedom Press).*

YOU MAY THINK THAT IN DESCRIBING anarchism as a theory of organization I am propounding a deliberate paradox: "anarchy" you may consider to be, by definition, the opposite of organization. In fact, however, "anarchy" means the absence of government, the absence of authority. Can there be social organization without authority, without government? The anarchists claim that there can be, and they also claim that it is desirable that there should be…

Now all of us, except the most isolated of people, belong to a whole network of groups, based on common interests and common tasks. Anyone can see that there are at least two kinds of organization. There is the kind which is forced on you, the kind which is run from above, and there is the kind of organization which is run from below, which can't *force* you to do anything, and which you are free to join or free to leave alone. Most people have the experience of starting some club or some branch of a voluntary organization or simply a group of friends who drink together on Fridays and listen to records. We could say that the anarchists are people who want to transform all forms of human organization into that kind of purely voluntary association where people can pull out and start one of their own if they don't like it. This doesn't mean committees, votes, membership cards. For the formalized kind of voluntary organization, as you all know, only really works because of some internal gang of people who are *really* concerned with the function of the organization and are prepared to do its work…

I once… attempted to enunciate four principles behind an anarchist theory of organizations: that they should be (1) voluntary, (2) functional, (3) temporary and (4) small. They should be voluntary for obvious reasons. There is no point in our advocating individual freedom and responsibility if we are going to advocate organizations for which membership is mandatory. They should be functional for reasons which are equally obvious but are not always observed. There is a tendency for organizations to exist without a genuine function, or which have outlived their functions. They should be temporary precisely because permanence is one of those factors which hardens the arteries of an organization, giving it a vested interest in its own survival, in serving the interests of its office holders rather than in serving its ostensible functions. They should be small precisely because in small face-to-face groups, the bureaucratizing and hierarchical tendencies inherent in organization have least opportunity to develop.

But it is from this final point that our difficulties arise. If we take it for granted that a small group can function anarchically, we are still faced with the problem of all those social functions for which organization is necessary, but which require it on a much bigger scale. Well, we might say in response to this point, "If big organizations are necessary, count us out. We will get by as well as we can without them." We can say this all right, but if we are propagating anarchism as a social philosophy, we must take into account, and not evade, social facts. Better to say, "Let us find ways in which the large-scale functions can be broken down into functions capable of being organized by small functional groups and then link these groups in a federal manner." This leads us to consider an anarchist theory of federalism.

Now the classical anarchists, in considering how they envisaged the organization of a future society, thought in terms of two kinds of social institution: as the territorial unit the *commune*, a French word which you might consider as the equivalent of the word parish, or of the Russian word soviet in its original meaning, but which also has overtones of the ancient village institutions for cultivating the land in common; and the *syndicate*, another French word from trade union terminology… or workers' council as the unit of industrial organization. These were envisaged as small local units which would federate with each other for the larger affairs of life, each commune and each syndicate retaining its own autonomy, the one federating territorially and the other industrially…

Another attractive anarchist theory of organization is what we might call the theory of spontaneous order: that given a common need, a collection of people will, by trial and error, by improvisation and experiment, evolve order out of chaos—this order being more durable and more closely related to their needs than any kind of externally imposed order. Kropotkin derived this theory from his observations of the history of human society and of social biology which led to his book *Mutual Aid* [Volume 1, Selection 54], as well as from the study of the events of the French Revolution in its early stages and from the Paris Commune of 1871, and it has been observed in most revolutionary situations, in the *ad hoc* organizations which spring up after natural catastrophes, or in any activity where there is no existing organizational form or hierarchical authority. You could watch it at work in, for instance, the first Aldermaston March [Selection 33], or in the widespread occupation of army camps by squatters in the summer of 1946. Between June and October of that year, 40,000 homeless people in England and Wales, acting on their own initiative, occupied over 1,000 army camps. They organized every kind of communal service in the attempt to make these bleak huts more like home—communal cooking, laundering and nursery

facilities for instance. They also federated into a Squatters Protection Society. One remarkable feature of these squatter communities was that they were formed from people who had very little in common beside their homelessness—they included tinkers and university dons…

Another example of the theory of spontaneous organization in operation was the Pioneer Health Centre at Peckham… This was started in the decade before the war by a group of physicians and biologists who wanted to study the nature of health and of healthy behaviour instead of studying ill-health like the rest of their profession. They decided that the way to do this was to start a social club whose members joined as families and could use a variety of facilities in return for a family membership subscription and for agreeing to periodic medical examinations. In order to be able to draw valid conclusions the Peckham biologists thought it necessary that they should be able to observe human beings who were free—free to act as they wished and to give expression to their desires. There were consequently no rules, no regulations, no leaders. "I was the only person with authority," said Dr. Scott Williamson, the founder, "and I used it to stop anyone exerting any authority." For the first eight months there was chaos. "With the first member-families," says one observer, "there arrived a horde of undisciplined children who used the whole building as they might have used one vast London street. Screaming and running like hooligans through all the rooms, breaking equipment and furniture," they made life intolerable for everyone. Scott Williamson however, "insisted that peace should be restored only by the response of the children to the variety of stimulus that was placed in their way… In less than a year the chaos was reduced to an order in which groups of children could daily be seen swimming, skating, riding bicycles, using the gymnasium or playing some game, occasionally reading a book in the library… the running and screaming were things of the past."

In his book, *Health the Unknown,* about the Peckham experiment, John Comerford concluded, "A society, therefore, if left to itself in suitable circumstances to express itself spontaneously works out its own salvation and achieves a harmony of action which superimposed leadership cannot emulate."

More dramatic examples of the same kind of phenomenon are reported by those people who have been brave enough, or confident enough, to institute self-governing non-punitive communities of delinquent youngsters—August Aichhorn, Homer Lane and David Wills are examples. Homer Lane was the man who, years in advance of his time, started a community of juvenile delinquents, boys and girls, called the Little Commonwealth… Lane used to declare that "Freedom cannot

be given. It is taken by the child in discovery and invention." True to this principle, says Howard Jones, "he refused to impose upon the children a system of government copied from the institutions of the adult world. The self-governing structure of the Little Commonwealth was evolved by the children themselves, slowly and painfully to satisfy their own needs." Aichhorn was an equally brave man of the same generation as Lane who ran an institution for maladjusted children in Vienna. In his book *Wayward Youth* he gives this description of one particularly aggressive group:

"Their aggressive acts became more frequent and more violent until practically all the furniture in the building was destroyed, the window panes broken, the doors nearly kicked to pieces. It happened once that a boy sprang through a double window ignoring his injuries from the broken glass. The dinner table was finally deserted because each one sought out a corner in the playroom where he crouched to devour his food. Screams and howls could be heard from afar!"

Aichhorn and his colleagues maintained what one can only call a superhuman restraint and faith in their method, protecting their charges from the wrath of the neighbours, the police and the city authorities, and "Eventually patience brought its reward. Not only did the children settle down, but they developed a strong attachment to those who were working with them... This attachment was now to be used as the foundation of a process of re-education. The children were at last to be brought up against the limitations imposed upon them by the real world."

Time and time again those rare people who have had sufficient moral strength and the endless patience and forebearance that this method requires, have been similarly rewarded. But in daily life situations it is, or at least it appears to me, very difficult to apply.

The fact that one is not dealing with such deeply disturbed characters should make the experience less drastic, but in ordinary life, outside the deliberately protected environment, we interact with others with the aim of getting some task done, and the apparent aimlessness and time-consuming tedium of the period of waiting for spontaneous order to appear would, it seems to me, bring a great danger of some strong- man type intervening with an attempt to impose order and method, just to get something accomplished...

In 1939 and 1940 three social psychologists, Lewin, Lippitt and White, conducted experiments on the effect of different leadership techniques on behaviour in groups of 11-year-old boys. These groups were led by adults using three different methods or styles of leadership. In one method, the adult determined the policy, procedures and activities in the group; this technique was called "authoritarian." In an-

other the adult encouraged participation by members in deciding these matters and behaved in a friendly, helpful manner to the members, giving technical assistance and suggesting alternative procedures as they were needed; this technique was called "democratic." In the third, the adult leader allowed complete freedom for decisions and activity, keeping his own initiative and suggestions to a minimum; this technique was called "laissez-faire." The autocratic method was found to lead to a submissive attitude on the part of the children towards the leader, and some apathy towards the tasks before them, but little cooperation among themselves and a lack of self-control in the absence of the leader. The laissez-faire group seemed overwhelmed by the number and complexity of their problems and were able to achieve little. The democratic group were helped by their leader to find constructive channels for their efforts and so avoided the impotence to which the laissez-faire group seemed doomed. At the same time, because their efforts were largely self-directed, and they had been enabled to establish a degree of group solidarity, they were also more creative, peaceful and self-disciplined than the autocratic group. In comparing the same group under different adult leadership it was noted that reaction to a particular leadership style was also affected by the group's previous experience with other techniques. Thus one group was fairly passive under an "authoritarian" leader but after it had a leader using a "democratic" technique, a second leader using authoritarian methods was reacted to with discontent.

Now in the context of our present preoccupations we could make a number of comments about this experiment. The laissez-faire technique presumably is the one which should result in the spontaneous order phenomenon. Perhaps not enough time was allowed in the experiment for order to grow out of chaos. The "democratic" technique wasn't really democratic in that the leader was not selected by or from the group. His role in fact seems to have been the helpful but self-effacing one of the good teacher. Of course, as Muzafer Sherif points our in his commentary… a given technique may not have the same significance when exercised by an external leader and by an informal leader who is also a member of the group.

But the role of the leader does make us enquire about the nature of leadership and how it fits into an anarchist theory of organization. Anarchists believe in *leaderless groups*. If this phrase is familiar to you it is because of the paradox that what was known as the leaderless group technique was adopted in the British and Australian armies during the war, as a means of selecting leaders. The military psychiatrists learned that leader or follower traits are not exhibited in isolation. They are, as Major Gibb said, "relative to a specific social situation—leadership varied from situation to

situation and from group to group." Or as the anarchist Michael Bakunin put it a hundred years ago, "I receive and I give—such is human life. Each directs and is directed in his turn. Therefore there is no fixed and constant authority, but a continual exchange of mutual, temporary, and, above all, voluntary authority and subordination." This point about leadership was also made in the reports on the Peckham Experiment which we cited as an example of the spontaneous organization theory.

Don't be deceived by the sweet reasonableness of all this. The anarchist concept of leadership is quite revolutionary in its implications as you can see if you look around, for you see everywhere in operation the opposite concept: that of hierarchical, authoritarian, privileged and permanent leadership. There are very few comparative studies available of the effects of these two opposite approaches to the organization of work. Two of them I will mention later, another, about architects' offices, was produced a couple of years ago… The team which prepared this report found two different approaches to the design process, which gave rise to different ways of working and methods of organization. One they categorized as *centralized*, which was characterized by autocratic form of control, and the other they called *dispersed*, which promoted what they called "an informal atmosphere of free-flowing ideas." This is a very live issue amongst architects. Mr. W. D. Pile… specifies among the things he looks for in a member of the building team that: "He must have a belief in what I call the non-hierarchical organization of the work. The work has got to be organized not on the star system, but on the repertory system. The team leader may often be junior to a team member. That will only be accepted if it is commonly accepted that primacy lies with the best idea and not with the senior man." And one of our greatest architects, Walter Gropius, proclaims what he calls the technique of "collaboration among men, which would release the creative instincts of the individual instead of smothering them. The essence of such technique," Gropius declares, "should be to emphasize individual freedom of initiative, instead of authoritarian direction by a boss… synchronizing individual efforts by a continuous give and take of its members."

This leads us of course, to another cornerstone of anarchist theory, the idea of workers' control in industry…

When we are faced with the objection to the idea of workers' control on the ground of the complexity and scale of modern industry, we resort once again to the federative principle. There is nothing outlandish about the idea that large numbers of autonomous industrial units can federate and coordinate their activities. If you travel across Europe you go over the lines of a dozen railway systems—capitalist and

communist—coordinated by freely arrived at agreement between the various undertakings, with no central authority. You can post a letter to anywhere in the world, but there is no world postal authority—representatives of different postal authorities simply have a congress every five years or so…

[Stafford] Beer, in his book *Cybernetics and Management*, remarks that the fact is "that our whole concept of control is naive, primitive and ridden with an almost retributive idea of causality. Control to most people (and what a reflection this is upon a sophisticated society!) is a crude process of coercion…"

John MacEwan… seeks to contrast two models of decision-making and control:

"First we have the model current among management theorists in industry, with its counterpart in conventional thinking about government in society as a whole. This is the model of a rigid pyramidical hierarchy, with lines of 'communication and command' running from the top to the bottom of the pyramid. There is fixed delineation of responsibility, each element has a specified role, and the procedures to be followed at any level are determined within fairly narrow limits, and may only be changed by decisions of elements higher in the hierarchy. The role of the top group of the hierarchy is sometimes supposed to be comparable to the 'brain' of the system.

The other model is from the cybernetics of evolving self-organizing systems. Here we have a system of large variety, sufficient to cope with a complex, unpredictable environment. Its characteristics are changing structure, modifying itself under continual feedback from the environment, exhibiting redundancy of potential command, and involving complex interlocking control structures. Learning and decision-making are distributed throughout the system, denser perhaps in some areas than in others.

Has any social thinker thought of social organization, actual or possible in terms comparable with this model? I think so. Compare Kropotkin on that society which 'seeks the fullest development of free association in all its aspects, in all possible degrees, for all conceivable purposes: an ever-changing association bearing in itself the elements of its own duration, and taking on the forms which at any moment best correspond to the manifold endeavours of all... A society in which pre-established forms crystallized by law, are repugnant, which looks for harmony in an ever-changing and fugitive equilibrium between a multitude of varied forces, and influences of every kind, following their own course'…"

I believe that the social ideas of anarchism: autonomous groups, workers' control, the federal principle, add up to a coherent theory of social organization which is a valid and realistic alternative to the authoritarian, hierarchical institutional philos-

ophy which we see in application all around us. Man will be compelled, Kropotkin declared, "to find new forms of organization for the social functions which the State fulfils through the bureaucracy" and that "as long as this is not done nothing will be done." I think we have discovered what these new forms of organization should be; we have now to make the opportunities of putting them into practice.

ANARCHY AND A PLAUSIBLE FUTURE

The very growth of the state and its bureaucracy, the giant corporation and its privileged hierarchy, are exposing their vulnerability to noncooperation, to sabotage, and to the exploitation of *their* weaknesses by the weak. They are also giving rise to parallel organizations, counter organizations, alternative organizations, which exemplify the anarchist method. Industrial mergers and rationalization have bred the revival of the demand for workers' control, first as a slogan or a tactic like the work-in, ultimately as a destination. The development of the school and the university as broiler-houses for a place in the occupational pecking-order have given rise to the deschooling movement and the idea of the anti-university. The use of medicine and psychiatry as agents of conformity has led to the idea of the anti-hospital and the self-help therapeutic group. The failure of Western society to house its citizens has prompted the growth of squatter movements and tenants' co-operatives. The triumph of the supermarket in the United States has begun a mushrooming of food co-operatives. The deliberate pauperization of those who cannot work has led to the recovery of self-respect through Claimants' Unions.

Community organizations of every conceivable kind, community newspapers, movements for child welfare, communal households have resulted from the new consciousness that local as well as central government exploit the poor and are unresponsive to those who are unable to exert effective pressure for themselves. The 'rationalization' of local administration in Britain into 'larger and more effective units' is evoking a response in the demand for neighbourhood councils. A new self-confidence and assertion of their right to exist on their own terms has sprung up among the victims of particular kinds of discrimination—black liberation, women's liberation, homosexual liberation, prisoners' liberation, children's liberation: the list is almost endless and is certainly going to get longer as more and more people become more and more conscious that society is organized in ways which deny them a place in the sun. In the age of mass politics and mass conformity, this is a magnificent re-assertion of individual values and of human dignity.

None of these movements is yet a threat to the power structure, and this is scarcely surprising since hardly any of them existed before the late 1960s. None of

them fits into the framework of conventional politics. In fact, they don't speak the same language as the political parties. They talk the language of anarchism and they insist on anarchist principles of organization, which they have learned not from political theory but from their own experience. They organize in loosely associated groups which are *voluntary, functional, temporary* and *small*. They depend, not on membership cards, votes, a special leadership and a herd of inactive followers but on small, functional groups which ebb and flow, group and regroup, according to the task in hand. They are networks, not pyramids.

At the very time when the 'irresistible trends of modern society' seemed to be leading us to a mass society of enslaved consumers they are reminding us of the truth that the irresistible is simply that which is not resisted. But obviously a whole series of partial and incomplete victories, of concessions won from the holders of power, will not lead to an anarchist society. But it will widen the scope of free action and the potentiality for freedom in the society we have.

Chapter 8
Society Against The State

64. Pierre Clastres: Society Against the State (1974)

Pierre Clastres (1934-1977) was a French anthropologist who spent several years living in so-called "primitive" tribal societies in South America. He rejected the common view that these societies were somehow lacking because they lived without a State, and the Marxist view that the State is the product of a particular stage of economic development. As with the Chinese anarchist and anthropologist, Huang Lingshuang (Volume 1, Selection 100), he argued against the view that societies progress in a linear fashion through various stages of development, from the "savage" to "civilization." The following excerpts are taken from Society Against the State: The Leader as Servant and the Humane Uses of Power Among the Indians of the Americas *(New York: Urizen Books, 1977), translated by Robert Hurley and Abe Stein. Reprinted with the kind permission of Zone Books.*

PRIMITIVE SOCIETIES ARE SOCIETIES without a State. This factual judgment, accurate in itself, actually hides an opinion, a value judgment that immediately throws doubt on the possibility of constituting political anthropology as a strict science. What the statement says, in fact, is that primitive societies are missing something—the State—that is essential to them, as it is to any other society: our own, for instance. Consequently, those societies are incomplete; they are not quite true societies—they are not civilized—their existence continues to suffer the painful experience of a lack—the lack of a State—which, try as they may, they will never make up. Whether clearly stated or not, that is what comes through in the explorers' chronicles and the work of researchers alike: society is inconceivable without the State; the State is the destiny of every society. One detects an ethnocentric bias in this approach; more often than not it is unconscious, and so the more firmly anchored... In effect, each one of us carries within himself, internalized like the believer's faith, the certitude that society exists for the State. How, then, can one conceive of the very existence of primitive societies if not as the rejects of universal history, anachronistic relics of a remote stage that everywhere else has been tran-

scended? Here one recognizes ethnocentrism's other face, the complementary conviction that history is a one-way progression, that every society is condemned to enter into that history and pass through the stages which lead from savagery to civilization. "All civilized peoples were once savages," wrote Raynal. But the assertion of an obvious evolution cannot justify a doctrine which, arbitrarily tying the state of civilization to the civilization of the State, designates the latter as the necessary end-result assigned to all societies. One may ask what has kept the last of the primitive peoples as they are...

It has already been remarked that archaic societies are almost always classed negatively, under the heading of lack: societies without a State, societies without writing, societies without history. The classing of these societies on the economic plane appears to be of the same order: societies with a subsistence economy. If one means by this that primitive societies are unacquainted with a market economy to which surplus products flow, strictly speaking one says nothing. One is content to observe an additional lack and continues to use our own world as the reference point: those societies without a State, without writing, without history, are also without a market. But—common sense may object—what good is a market when no surplus exists? Now, the notion of a subsistence economy conceals within it the implicit assumption that if primitive societies do not produce a surplus, this is because they are incapable of doing so, entirely absorbed as they are in producing the minimum necessary for survival, for subsistence. The time-tested and ever serviceable image of the destitution of the Savages. And, to explain that inability of primitive societies to tear themselves away from the stagnation of living hand to mouth, from perpetual alienation in the search for food, it is said they are technically under-equipped, technologically inferior.

What is the reality? If one understands by technics the set of procedures men acquire not to ensure the absolute mastery of nature (that obtains only for our world and its insane Cartesian project, whose ecological consequences are just beginning to be measured), but to ensure a mastery of the natural environment *suited and relative to their needs*, then there is no longer any reason whatever to impute a technical inferiority to primitive societies: they demonstrate an ability to satisfy their needs which is at least equal to that of which industrial and technological society is so proud. What this means is that every human group manages, perforce, to exercise the necessary minimum of domination over the environment it inhabits. Up to the present we know of no society that has occupied a natural space impossible to master, except for reasons of force or violence: either it disappears, or it changes territories. The astonishing thing about the Eskimo [Inuit], or the Australians, is precisely

the diversity, imagination, and fine quality of their technical activity, the power of invention and efficiency evident in the tools used by those peoples. Furthermore, one only has to spend a little time in an ethnographic museum: the quality of workmanship displayed in manufacturing the implements of everyday life makes nearly every humble tool into a work of art. Hence there is no hierarchy in the technical domain; there is no superior or inferior technology. The only measure of how well a society is equipped in technology, is its ability to meet its needs in a given environment. And from this point of view, it does not appear in the least that primitive societies prove incapable of providing themselves with the means to achieve that end. Of course, the power of technical innovation shown by primitive societies spreads over a period of time. Nothing is immediately given; there is always the patient work of observation and research, the long succession of trials and errors, successes and failures. Prehistorians inform us of the number of millenia required by the men of the Paleolithic to replace the crude bifaces of the beginning with the admirable blades of the Solutrian. From another viewpoint, one notes that the discovery of agriculture and the domestication of plants occurred at about the same time in America and the Old World. One is forced to acknowledge that the Amerindians are in no way inferior —quite the contrary— in the art of selecting and differentiating between manifold varieties of useful plants…

The Indians devoted relatively little time to what is called work. And even so, they did not die of hunger. The chronicles of the period are unanimous in describing the fine appearance of the adults, the good health of the many children, the abundance and variety of things to eat. Consequently, the subsistence economy in effect among the Indian tribes did not by any means imply an anxious, full-time search for food. It follows that a subsistence economy is compatible with a substantial limitation of the time given to productive activities. Take the case of the South American tribes who practiced agriculture, the Tupi-Guarani, for example, whose idleness was such a source of irritation to the French and the Portuguese. The economic life of those Indians was primarily based on agriculture, secondarily on hunting, fishing, and gathering. The same garden plot was used for from four to six consecutive years, after which it was abandoned, owing either to the depletion of the soil, or, more likely, to an invasion of the cultivated space by a parasitic vegetation that was difficult to eliminate. The biggest part of the work, performed by the men, consisted of clearing the necessary area by the slash and burn technique, using stone axes. This job, accomplished at the end of the rainy season, would keep the men busy for a month or two. Nearly all the rest of the agricultural process—planting, weeding, har-

vesting—was the responsibility of the women, in keeping with the sexual division of labour. This happy conclusion follows: the men (i.e. one-half the population) worked about two months every four years! As for the rest of the time, they reserved it for occupations experienced not as pain but as pleasure: hunting and fishing; entertainments and drinking sessions; and finally for satisfying their passionate liking for warfare...

J. Lizot, who has been living for several years among the Yanomami Indians of the Venezuelan Amazon region, has chronometrically established that the average length of time spent working each day by adults, *including all activities*, barely exceeds three hours... [A]mong the Guayaki, who are nomad hunters of the Paraguayan forest... women and men spent at least half the day in almost total idleness, since hunting and collecting took place (but not every day) between six and eleven o'clock in the morning, or thereabouts. It is probable that similar studies conducted among the remaining primitive peoples would produce analogous results, taking ecological differences into account.

Thus we find ourselves at a far remove from the wretchedness that surrounds the idea of subsistence economy. Not only is man in primitive societies not bound to the animal existence that would derive from a continual search for the means of survival, but this result is even bought at the price of a remarkably short period of activity. This means that primitive societies have at their disposal, if they so desire, all the time necessary to increase the production of material goods. Common sense asks then: why would the men living in those societies want to work and produce more, given that three or four hours of peaceful activity suffice to meet the needs of the group? What good would it do them? What purpose would be served by the surplus thus accumulated? What would it be used for? Men work more than their needs require only when forced to. And it is just that kind of force which is absent from the primitive world; the absence of that external force even defines the nature of primitive society. The term, subsistence economy, is acceptable for describing the economic organization of those societies, provided it is taken to mean *not* the necessity that derives from a *lack*, an incapacity inherent in that type of society and its technology; but the contrary: the refusal of a useless *excess*, the determination to make productive activity agree with the satisfaction of needs. And nothing more. Moreover, a closer look at things will show there is actually the production of a surplus in primitive societies: the quantity of cultivated plants produced (manioc, maize, tobacco, and so on) always exceeds what is necessary for the group's consumption, it being understood that this production over and above is included in the usual time spent

working. That surplus, obtained without surplus labour, is consumed, consummated, for political purposes properly so called, on festive occasions, when invitations are extended, during visits by outsiders, and so forth.

The advantage of a metal axe over a stone axe is too obvious to require much discussion: one can do perhaps ten times as much work with the first in the same amount of time as with the second; or else, complete the same amount of work in one-tenth the time. And when the Indians discovered the productive superiority of the white men's axes, they wanted them not in order to produce more in the same amount of time, but to produce as much in a period of time ten times shorter. Exactly the opposite occurred, for, with the metal axes, the violence, the force, the power which the civilized newcomers brought to bear on the Savages created havoc in the primitive Indian world…

That force without which the Savages would never surrender their leisure, that force which destroys society insofar as it is primitive society, is the power to compel; it is the power of coercion; it is political power…

For man in primitive societies, the activity of production is measured precisely, delimited by the needs to be satisfied, it being understood that what is essentially involved is energy needs: production is restricted to replenishing the stock of energy expended. In other words, it is life as nature that—excepting the production of goods socially consumed on festive occasions—establishes and determines the quantity of time devoted to reproduction. This means that once its needs are fully satisfied nothing could induce primitive society to produce more, that is, to alienate its time by working for no good reason when that time is available for idleness, play, warfare, or festivities. What are the conditions under which this relationship between primitive man and the activity of production can change? Under what conditions can that activity be assigned a goal other than the satisfaction of energy needs? This amounts to raising the question of the origin of work as alienated labour.

In primitive society—an essentially egalitarian society—men control their activity, control the circulation of the products of that activity: they act only on their own behalf, even though the law of exchange mediates the direct relation of man to his product. Everything is thrown into confusion, therefore, when the activity of production is diverted from its initial goal, when, instead of producing only for himself, primitive man also produces for others, *without exchange and without reciprocity*. That is the point at which it becomes possible to speak of labour: when the egalitarian rule of exchange ceases to constitute the "civil code" of the society, when the activity of production is aimed at satisfying the needs of others, when the order of exchange

gives way to the terror of debt. It is there, in fact, that the difference between the Amazonian Savage and the Indian of the Inca empire is to be placed. All things considered, the first produces in order to live, whereas the second works in addition, so that others can live, those who do not work, the masters who tell him: you must pay what you owe us, you must perpetually repay your debt to us.

When, in primitive society, the economic dynamic lends itself to definition as a distinct and autonomous domain, when the activity of production becomes alienated, accountable labour, levied by men who will enjoy the fruits of that labour, what has come to pass is that society has been divided into rulers and ruled, masters and subjects—it has ceased to exorcise the thing that will be its ruin: power and the respect for power. Society's major division, the division that is the basis for all the others, including no doubt the division of labour, is the new vertical ordering of things between a base and a summit; it is the great political cleavage between those who hold the force, be it military or religious, and those subject to that force. The political relation of power precedes and founds the economic relation of exploitation. Alienation is political before it is economic; power precedes labour; the economic derives from the political; the emergence of the State determines the advent of classes.

Incompletion, unfulfillment, lack: the nature of primitive societies is not to be sought in that direction. Rather, it asserts itself as positivity, as a mastery of the natural milieu and the social project; as the sovereign will to let nothing slip outside its being that might alter, corrupt, and destroy it. This is what needs to be firmly grasped: primitive societies are not overdue embryos of subsequent societies, social bodies whose "normal" development was arrested by some strange malady; they are not situated at the commencement of a historical logic leading straight to an end given ahead of time, but recognized only *a posteriori* as our own social system. (If history is that logic, how is it that primitive societies still exist?) All the foregoing is expressed, at the level of economic life, by the refusal of primitive societies to allow work and production to engulf them; by the decision to restrict supplies to socio-political needs; by the intrinsic impossibility of competition (in a primitive society what would be the use of being a rich man in the midst of poor men?); in short, by the prohibition—unstated but said nonetheless—of inequality…

On the one hand, there are primitive societies, or societies without a State; on the other hand, there are societies with a State. It is the presence or absence of the State apparatus (capable of assuming many forms) that assigns every society its logical place, and lays down an irreversible line of discontinuity between the two types of society. The emergence of the State brought about the great typological division between Savage and Civi-

lized man; it created the unbridgeable gulf whereby everything was changed, for, on the other side, Time became History. It has often been remarked, and rightly so, that the movement of world history was radically affected by two accelerations in its rhythm. The impetus of the first was furnished by what is termed the Neolithic Revolution (the domestication of animals, agriculture, the discovery of the art of weaving and pottery, the subsequent sedentarization of human groups, and so forth). We are still living, and increasingly so, if one may put it that way, within the prolongation of the second acceleration, the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century...

The transition from nomadism to sedentarization is held to be the most significant consequence of the Neolithic Revolution, in that it made possible—through the concentration of a stabilized population—cities and, beyond that, the formation of state machines. But that hypothesis carries with it the assumption that every technological "complex" without agriculture is of necessity consigned to nomadism. The inference is ethnographically incorrect: an economy of hunting, fishing, and gathering does not necessarily demand a nomadic way of life. There are several examples, in America and elsewhere, attesting that the absence of agriculture is compatible with sedentariness. This justifies the assumption that if some peoples did not acquire agriculture even though it was ecologically feasible, it was not because they were incompetent, technologically backward, or culturally inferior, but, more simply, because they had no need of it.

The post-Columbian history of America offers cases of populations comprised of sedentary agriculturists who, experiencing the effects of a technical revolution (the acquisition of the horse and, secondarily, firearms) elected to abandon agriculture and devote themselves almost exclusively to hunting, whose yield was multiplied by the tenfold increase in mobility that came from using the horse. Once they were mounted, the tribes of the Plains of North America and those of the Chaco intensified and extended their movements; but their nomadism bore little resemblance to the descriptions generally given of bands of hunters and gatherers such as the Guayaki of Paraguay, and their abandonment of agriculture did not result in either a demographic scattering or a transformation of their previous social organization.

What is to be learned from the movement of the greatest number of societies from hunting to agriculture, and the reverse movement, of a few others, from agriculture to hunting? It appears to have been affected without changing the nature of those societies in any way. It would appear that where their conditions of material existence were all that changed, they remained as they were; that the Neolithic Revolution—while it did have a considerable effect on the material life of the human

groups then existing, doubtless making life easier for them—did not mechanically bring about an overturning of the social order. In other words, as regards primitive societies, a transformation at the level of what Marxists term the economic infrastructure is not necessarily "reflected" in its corollary, the political superstructure, since the latter appears to be independent of its material base. The American continent clearly illustrates the independence of the economy and society with respect to one another. Some groups of hunters-fishers-gatherers, be they nomads or not, present the same socio-political characteristics as their sedentary agriculturist neighbours: different "infrastructures," the same "superstructure." Conversely, the meso-American societies—imperial societies, societies with a State—depended on an agriculture that, although more intensive than elsewhere, nevertheless was very similar, from the standpoint of its technical level, to the agriculture of the "savage" tribes of the Tropical Forest; the same "infrastructure," different "superstructures," since in the one case it was a matter of societies without a State, in the other case full-fledged States.

Hence, it is the political break [*coupure*] that is decisive, and not the economic transformation. The true revolution in man's protohistory is not the Neolithic, since it may very well leave the previously existing social organization intact; it is the political revolution, that mysterious emergence—irreversible, fatal to primitive societies—of the thing we know by the name of the State. And if one wants to preserve the Marxist concepts of infrastructure and superstructure, then perhaps one must acknowledge that the infrastructure is the political, and the superstructure is the economic. Only one structural, cataclysmic upheaval is capable of transforming primitive society, destroying it in the process: the mutation that causes to rise up within that society, or from outside it, the thing whose very absence defines primitive society, hierarchical authority, the power relation, the subjugation of men—in a word, the State. It would be quite futile to search for the cause of the event in a hypothetical modification of the relations of production in primitive society, a modification that, dividing society gradually into rich and poor, exploiters and exploited, would mechanically lead to the establishment of an organ enabling the former to exercise power over the latter; leading, that is, to the birth of the State.

Not only is such a modification of the economic base hypothetical, it is also impossible. For the system of production of a given society to change in the direction of an intensification of work with a view to producing a greater quantity of goods, either the men living in that society must desire the transformation of their mode of life, or else, not desiring it, they must have it imposed on them by external violence.

In the second instance, nothing originates in the society itself; it suffers the aggression of an external power for whose benefit the productive system will be modified: more work and more production to satisfy the needs of the new masters of power. Political oppression determines, begets, allows exploitation. But it serves no purpose to evoke such a "scenario," since it posits an external, contingent, immediate origin of State violence, and not the slow fruition of the internal, socio-economic conditions of its rise.

It is said that the State is the instrument that allows the ruling class to bring its violent domination to bear on the dominated classes. Let us assume that to be true. For the State to appear, then, there would have to exist a prior division of societies into antagonistic social classes, tied to one another by relations of exploitation. Hence the *structure* of society—the division into classes—would have to precede the emergence of the State *machine*. Let me point out, in passing, the extreme fragility of that purely instrumentalist theory of the State. If society is organized by oppressors who are able to exploit the oppressed, this is because that ability to impose alienation rests on the use of a certain force, that is, on the thing that constitutes the very substance of the State, "the monopoly of legitimate physical violence." That being granted, what necessity would be met by the existence of a State, since its essence—violence—is inherent in the division of society, and, in that sense, it is already given in the oppression that one group inflicts on the others? It would be no more than the useless organ of a function that is filled beforehand and elsewhere.

Tying the emergence of the State machine to a transformation of the social structure results merely in deferring the problem of that emergence. For, then one must ask why the new division of men into rulers and ruled within a primitive society, that is, an undivided society, occurred. What motive force was behind that transformation that culminated in the formation of the State? One might reply that its emergence gave legal sanction to a private property that had come into existence previously. Very good. But why would private property spring up in a type of society in which it is unknown because it is rejected? Why would a few members want to proclaim one day: *this is mine*, and how could the others allow the seeds of the thing primitive society knows nothing about—authority, oppression, the State—to take hold? The knowledge of primitive societies that we now have no longer permits us to look for the origin of the political at the level of the economic. That is not the soil in which the genealogy of the State has its roots. There is nothing in the economic working of a primitive society, a society without a State, that enables a difference to be introduced making some richer or poorer than others, because no one in such a

society feels the quaint desire to do more, own more, or appear to be more than his neighbour. The ability, held by all cultures alike, to satisfy their material needs, and the exchange of goods and services, which continually prevents the private accumulation of goods, quite simply make it impossible for such a desire—the desire for possession that is actually the desire for power—to develop. Primitive society, the first society of abundance, leaves no room for the desire for overabundance.

Primitive societies are societies without a State because for them the State is impossible. And yet all civilized peoples were first primitives: what made it so that the State ceased to be impossible? Why did some peoples cease to be primitives? What tremendous event, what revolution allowed the figure of the Despot, of he who gives orders to those who obey, to emerge? *Where does political power come from?* Such is the mystery (perhaps a temporary one) of the origin.

While it still does not appear possible to determine the conditions in which the State emerged, it is possible to specify the conditions of its non-emergence... Faithless, lawless, and kingless: these terms used by the sixteenth century West to describe the Indians can easily be extended to cover all primitive societies. They can serve as the distinguishing criteria: a society is primitive if it is without a king, as the legitimate source of the law, that is, the State machine. Conversely, every non-primitive society is a society with a State: no matter what socio-political regime is in effect. That is what permits one to consolidate all the great despotisms—kings, emperors of China or the Andes, pharaohs—into a single class, along with the more recent monarchies—"I am the State"—and the contemporary social systems, whether they possess a liberal capitalism as in Western Europe, or a State capitalism such as exists elsewhere...

[T]here is no king in the tribe, but a chief who is not a chief of State. What does that imply? Simply that the chief has no authority at his disposal, no power of coercion, no means of giving an order. The chief is not a commander; the people of the tribe are under no obligation to obey. *The space of the chieftainship is not the locus of power*, and the "profile" of the primitive chief in no way foreshadows that of a future despot. There is nothing about the chieftainship that suggests the State apparatus derived from it...

Mainly responsible for resolving the conflicts that can surface between individuals, families, lineages, and so forth, the chief has to rely on nothing more than the prestige accorded him by the society to restore order and harmony. But prestige does not signify power, certainly, and the means the chief possesses for performing his task of peacemaker are limited to the use of speech: not even to arbitrate be-

tween the contending parties, because the chief is not a judge; but, armed only with his eloquence, to try to persuade the people that it is best to calm down, stop insulting one another, and emulate the ancestors who always lived together in harmony. The success of the endeavour is never guaranteed, for *the chief's word carries no force of law*. If the effort to persuade should fail, the conflict then risks having a violent outcome, and the chief's prestige may very well be a casualty, since he will have proved his inability to accomplish what was expected of him.

In the estimation of the tribe, what qualifies such a man to be chief? In the end, it is his "technical" competence alone: his oratorical talent, his expertise as a hunter, his ability to co-ordinate martial activities, both offensive and defensive. And in no circumstance does the tribe allow the chief to go beyond that technical limit; it never allows a technical superiority to change into a political authority. The chief is there to serve society; it is society as such—the real locus of power—that exercises its authority over the chief. That is why it is impossible for the chief to reverse that relationship for his own ends, to put society in his service, to exercise what is termed power over the tribe: primitive society would never tolerate having a chief transform himself into a despot.

In a sense, the tribe keeps the chief under a close watch; he is a kind of prisoner in a space which the tribe does not let him leave. But does he have any desire to get out of that space? Does it ever happen that a chief desires to be chief? That he wants to substitute the realization of his own desire for the service and the interest of the group? That the satisfaction of his personal interest takes precedence over his obedience to the collective project? By virtue of the close supervision to which the leader's practice, *like that of all the others*, is subjected by society—this supervision resulting from the nature of primitive societies, and not, of course, from a conscious and deliberate preoccupation with surveillance—instances of chiefs transgressing primitive law are rare: *you are worth no more than the others*. Rare, to be sure, but not unheard of: it occasionally happens that a chief tries to *play the chief*, and not out of Machiavellian motives, but rather because he has no choice; he cannot do otherwise. Let me explain. As a rule, a chief does not attempt (the thought does not even enter his mind) to subvert the normal relationship... he maintains with respect to his group, a subversion that would make him the master of the tribe instead of its servant...

There are exceptions, however, nearly always connected with warfare. We know in fact that the preparation and conduct of a military expedition are the only circumstances in which the chief has the opportunity to exercise a minimum of authority, deriving solely from his technical competence as a warrior. As soon as things

have been concluded, and whatever the outcome of the fighting, the war chief again becomes a chief without power; in no case is the prestige that comes with victory converted into authority. Everything hinges on just that separation maintained by the society between power and prestige, between the fame of a victorious warrior and the command that he is forbidden to exercise. The fountain most suited to quenching a warrior's thirst for prestige is war. At the same time, a chief whose prestige is linked with warfare can preserve and bolster it only in warfare: it is a kind of compulsion, a kind of escape into the fray, that has him continually wanting to organize martial expeditions from which he hopes to obtain the (symbolic) benefits attaching to victory. As long as his desire for war corresponds to the general will of the tribe, particularly that of the young men, for whom war is also the principal means of acquiring prestige, as long as the will of the chief does not go beyond that of the tribe, the customary relations between the chief and the tribe remain unchanged. But the risk of an excessive desire on the part of the chief with respect to that of the tribe as a whole, the danger to him of going too far, of exceeding the strict limits allotted to his office, is ever present. Occasionally a chief accepts running that risk and attempts to put his personal interest ahead of the collective interest. Reversing the normal relationship that determines the leader as a means in the service of a socially defined end, he tries to make society into the means for achieving a purely private end: *the tribe in the service of the chief, and no longer the chief in the service of the tribe*. If it "worked," then we would have found the birthplace of political power, as force and violence; we would have the first incarnation, the minimal form of the State. But it never works…

[T]he unfortunate thing about a primitive warrior's life is that the prestige he acquires in warfare is soon lost if it is not constantly renewed by fresh successes. The tribe, for whom the chief is nothing more than the appropriate tool for implementing its will easily forgets the chief's past victories. For him, nothing is permanently acquired, and if he intends to remind people, whose memory is apt to fail, of his fame and prestige, it will not be enough merely to exalt his old exploits: he will have to create the occasion for new feats of arms. A warrior has no choice: he is obliged to desire war. It is here that the consensus by which he is recognized as chief draws its boundary line. If his desire for war coincides with society's desire for war, the society continues to follow him. But if the chief's desire for war attempts to fall back on a society motivated by the desire for peace—no society *always* wants to wage war—then the relationship between the chief and the tribe is reversed; the leader tries to use society for his individual aim, as a means to his personal end. Now, it should be kept in

mind that a primitive chief is a chief without power: how could he impose the dictates of his desire on a society that refuses to be drawn in? He is a prisoner of both his desire for prestige and his powerlessness to fulfill that desire. What may happen in such situations? The warrior will be left to go it alone, to engage in a dubious battle that will only lead him to his death. That was the fate of the South American warrior Fousiwe. He saw himself deserted by his tribe for having tried to thrust on his people a war they did not want. It only remained for him to wage that war on his own, and he died riddled with arrows. Death is the warrior's destiny, for, primitive society is such that *it does no permit the desire for prestige to be replaced by the will to power*. Or, in other words, in primitive society the chief, who embodies the possibility of a will to power, is condemned to death in advance. Separate political power is impossible in primitive society; there is no room, no vacuum for the State to fill…

The essential feature… of primitive society is its exercise of absolute and complete power over all the elements of which it is composed; the fact that it prevents any one of the sub-groups that constitute it from becoming autonomous; that it holds all the internal movements—conscious and unconscious—that maintain social life to the limits and direction prescribed by the society. One of the ways (violence, if necessary, is another) in which society manifests its will to preserve that primitive social order is by refusing to allow an individual, central, separate power to arise. Primitive society, then, is a society from which nothing escapes, which lets nothing get outside itself, for all the exits are blocked. It is a society, therefore, that ought to reproduce itself perpetually without anything affecting it throughout time.

There is, however, one area that seems to escape, at least in part, society's control: the demographic domain, a domain governed by cultural rules, but also by natural laws; a space where a life that is grounded in both the social and the biological unfolds, where there is a "machine" that operates according to its own mechanics, perhaps, which would place it beyond the social grasp.

There is no question of replacing an economic determinism with a demographic determinism, of fitting causes (demographic growth) to necessary effects (transformation of the social organization), and yet one cannot fail to remark, especially as regards America, the sociological consequence of population size, the ability the increase in densities has to unsettle (I do not say destroy) primitive society. In fact it is very probable that a basic condition for the existence of primitive societies is their relatively small demographic size. Things can function on the primitive model only if the people are few in number. Or, in other words, in order for a society to be primitive, it must be numerically small. And, in effect, what one observes in the Sav-

age world is an extraordinary patchwork of "nations," tribes, and societies made up of local groups, that take great care to preserve their autonomy within the larger group of which they are a part, although they may conclude temporary alliances with their nearby "fellow-countrymen," if the circumstances—especially those having to do with warfare—demand it. This atomization of the tribal universe is unquestionably an effective means of preventing the establishment of socio-political groupings that would incorporate the local groups and, beyond that, a means of preventing the emergence of the State, which is a unifier by nature.

65. Michael Taylor: Anarchy, the State and Cooperation (1976)

Michael Taylor is the author of Community, Anarchy and Liberty *(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), in which he develops the argument that "anarchy, liberty, equality and community form a coherent set." The following excerpts are taken from his earlier work,* Anarchy and Cooperation *(London: John Wiley & Sons, 1976), republished as* The Possibility of Cooperation *(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), in which he suggests that anarchy promotes cooperation, while the state causes it to atrophy. Reprinted with the kind permission of Cambridge University Press.*

[DAVID] HUME ARGUES THAT IN LARGE societies life without government is appalling, but that in small societies this need not be the case. Therefore, he says, people in a large society need, and will in fact establish, a government. When the argument is put this way, however, a radically different conclusion suggests itself: that large societies should be (or will be) disaggregated into smaller societies, and the enlargement of societies and the destruction of small ones should be (or will be) resisted... [T]he larger the society, the less likely it is that there will be voluntary cooperation in the provision of public goods and in the solution of other collective action problems, principally because of the increased difficulty of conditional cooperation. If the relations between the members of a smaller group are those characteristic of community, then the usual range of positive and negative sanctions, including informal social sanctions, that are most effective in small communities, can also help to maintain cooperation in the absence of the state (though it should not then be called 'voluntary'), both directly and... indirectly through bolstering conditional cooperation.

In view of this, it is perhaps ironical that the state should be presented as the saviour of people... for historically the state has undoubtedly played a large part in providing the conditions in which societies could grow and indeed in systematically *building* large societies and destroying small communities. The state has in this way acted so as to make itself even more necessary.

Of course, states were not alone in causing the decline of community and it is difficult to disentangle their contributions from those of other causes such as the expansion of industrial capitalism; but that the state had an important independent effect there can be no doubt.

I am not thinking so much of the very origin of the long process of state formation, when the normal process of fissioning that is characteristic of stateless societies is inhibited. Such fissioning, whereby a part of a community breaks away and establishes a replica society elsewhere, ensures that the society continues to be composed of small communities. When this is no longer possible, communities must grow in size or become joined to others. This is part of the process that leads to the *emergence* of a state. But what I have more in mind is the 'self-building' of states through the intentional destruction or absorption or weakening of (small) communities and the concomitant construction or extension or strengthening of nations or other larger societies, which can only be communities in a much weaker sense. This is as true of the growth of the earliest states and of the modern European states as it is of many nations made independent since the Second World War, where the new states have often quite consciously set about weakening loyalty to ethnic and other groups within the proto-nation in order to build a single 'national solidarity.'

The state, then, has in this way tended to exacerbate the conditions which are claimed (in the liberal theory) to provide its justification and for which it is supposed to be the remedy. It has undermined the conditions which make the principal alternative to it workable and in this way has made itself more desirable.

…[P]ositive altruism and voluntary cooperative behaviour *atrophy* in the presence of the state and *grow* in its absence. Thus, again, the state exacerbates the conditions which are supposed to make it necessary. We might say that the state is like an addictive drug: the more of it we have, the more we 'need' it and the more we come to 'depend' on it.

Men who live for long under government and its bureaucracy, courts and police, come to rely upon them. They find it easier (and in some cases are legally bound) to use the state for the settlement of their disputes and for the provision of public goods, instead of arranging these things for themselves, even where the disputes, and the publics for which the goods are to be provided, are quite local. In this way, the state *mediates* between individuals; they come to deal with each other through the courts, through the tax collector and the bureaucracies which spend the taxes. In the presence of a strong state, the individual may cease to care for, or even think about, those in his community who need help; he may cease to have any desire to

make a direct contribution to the resolution of local problems, whether or not he is affected by them; he may come to feel that his responsibility to society has been discharged as soon as he has paid his taxes (which are taken coercively from him by the state), for these taxes will be used by the state to care for the old, sick and unemployed, to keep his streets clean, to maintain order, to provide and maintain schools, libraries, parks, and so on. The state releases the individual from the responsibility or need to cooperate with others directly; it guarantees him a secure environment in which he may safely pursue his private goals, unhampered by all those collective concerns which it is supposed to take care of itself. This is a part of what Marx meant when he wrote (in 'On the Jewish Question') of state-enforced security as 'the assurance of egoism.'

The effects of government on altruism and voluntary cooperation can be seen as part of the general process of the destruction of small societies by the state... The state, as we have seen, weakens local communities in favour of the larger national society. In doing so, it relieves individuals of the necessity to cooperate voluntarily among themselves on a local basis, making them more dependent upon the state. The result is that altruism and cooperative behaviour gradually decay. The state is thereby strengthened and made more effective in its work of weakening the local community. Kropotkin has described this process in his *Mutual Aid*. All over Europe, in a period of three centuries beginning in the late fifteenth century, states or proto-states 'systematically weeded out' from village and city all the 'mutual aid institutions,' and the result, says Kropotkin, was that:

"The State alone... must take care of matters of general interest, while the subjects must represent loose aggregations of individuals, connected by no particular bonds, bound to appeal to the Government each time that they feel a common need.

The absorption of all social functions by the State necessarily favoured the development of an unbridled, narrowminded individualism. In proportion as the obligations towards the State grew in numbers the citizens were evidently relieved from their obligations towards each other."

Under the state, there is no *practice* of cooperation and no growth of a sense of the interdependence on which cooperation depends; there are fewer opportunities for the spontaneous expression of direct altruism and there are therefore fewer altruistic acts to be observed, with the result that there is no growth of the feeling of assurance that others around one are altruistic or at least willing to behave cooperatively—an assurance that one will not be let down if one tries unilaterally to cooperate.

A part of this argument has recently been made by Richard Sennett [in *The Uses of Disorder*]. Sennett's interest is in reversing the trend towards 'purified' urban and suburban communities through the creation of cities in which people would learn to cope with diversity and 'disorder' through the necessity of having to deal with each other directly rather than relying on the police and courts and bureaucracies. The problem, he says, is "how to plug people into each others' lives without making everyone feel the same." This will not be achieved by merely devolving the city government's power onto local groups:

"Really decentralized power, so that the individual has to deal with those around him, in a milieu of diversity, involves a change in the essence of communal control, that is, in the refusal to regulate conflict. For example, police control of much civil disorder ought to be sharply curbed; the responsibility for making peace in neighbourhood affairs ought to fall to the people involved. Because men are now so innocent and unskilled in the expression of conflict, they can only view these disorders as spiralling into violence. Until they learn through experience that the handling of conflict is something that cannot be passed on to the police, this polarization and escalation of conflict into violence will be the only end they can frame for themselves."

In his remarkable study of blood donorship, *The Gift Relationship*, Richard Titmuss has given us an example of how altruism generates altruism—of how a man is more likely to be altruistic if he experiences or observes the altruism of others or if he is aware that the community depends (for the provision of some public good) on altruistic acts... In England and Wales, all donations are purely voluntary (with the partial exception of a very small amount collected under pressure from prison inmates). In the United States, only 9 per cent of donations were purely voluntary in 1967 (and the percentage was falling)...

[T]he voluntary donation of blood... approximate[s] as closely as is perhaps possible to the ideal of pure, spontaneous altruism: for it is given impersonally and sometimes with discomfort, without expectation of gratitude, reward or reciprocation (for the recipient is usually not known to the donor), and without imposing an obligation on the recipient or anyone else; and "there are no personal, predictable penalities for not giving; no socially enforced sanctions of remorse, shame or guilt"...

Now, if there is any truth in the general argument about the growth and decay of altruism which was put forward above, we should at least expect that the *growth* of voluntary donations should be greater in a country in which non-voluntary donations are absent than in one where they are present, and even that voluntary donations

should *decline* with time in a country where a very large proportion of donors were non-voluntary. This is precisely what has happened in the countries which Titmuss examines. In the developed countries the demand for blood has risen very steeply in recent years, much more steeply than the population. Yet in England and Wales, from 1948 to 1968, supply has kept pace with demand, and there have never been serious shortages. On the other hand, in the United States, in the period 1961-7 for which figures are available, supply has not kept pace with demand and there have been serious shortages; even more significantly, those blood banks which paid more than half of their suppliers collected an increasing quantity of blood in this period, while the supply to other banks *decreased*. In Japan, where the proportion of blood which is bought and sold has risen since 1951 from zero to the present 8 per cent, shortages are even more severe than in the United States.

These differences, between England and Wales on the one hand and America and Japan on the other, are consistent with the hypothesis that altruism fosters altruism (though of course they do not confirm it). Support (also inconclusive) for this explanation of the growth of blood donations in England comes from some of the responses to a question included in Titmuss's 1967 survey of blood donors in England: 'Could you say why you first decided to become a blood donor?' Many people, it appears, became blood donors as a result of experiencing altruism: they or their friends or relatives had received transfusions. For example:

> To try and repay in some small way some unknown person whose blood helped me recover from two operations and enabled me to be with my family, that's why I bring them along also as they become old enough. (Married woman, age 44, three children, farmer's wife.)

> Some unknown person gave blood to save my wife's life. (Married man, age 43, two children, self-employed window cleaner.)

Some responses hint at an altruism resulting from an appreciation of the *dependence* of the system on altruism and of people's dependence on each other:

> You can't get blood from supermarkets and chain stores. People themselves must come forward, sick people can't get out of bed to ask you for a pint to save their life so I came forward in hope to help somebody who needs blood. (Married woman, aged 23, machine operator.)

Peter Singer… has drawn attention to some experiments which also support the hypothesis that altruism is encouraged by the observation of altruism. He mentions an experiment in which a car with a flat tire was parked at the side of the road with a

helpless-looking woman standing beside it. Drivers who had just passed a woman in a similar plight but with a man who had stopped to change her wheel for her (this scene having of course been arranged by the experimenters) were significantly more likely to help than those who had not witnessed this altruistic behaviour. Singer himself writes: 'I find it hardest to act with consideration for others when the norm in the circle of people I move in is to act egotistically. When altruism is expected of me, however, I find it much easier to be genuinely altruistic'...

It has often been argued that the choice of the scope and form of social institutions (such as the state) must be based on 'pessimistic' assumptions, so that they will be 'robust' against the worst possible conditions (such as a society of egoistic or even negatively altruistic individuals) in which they might be required to operate. It is assumed in such arguments that if an institution can 'work' (or work better, in some sense, than the alternatives) when everyone is, for example, egoistic, then it will certainly do the same when some or all people are positively altruistic. But if the institutions themselves affect individual preferences—affect the content of the assumptions from which their relative desirability has been deduced—then this approach is inappropriate and may be dangerously misleading. If there is any truth in the arguments I have been making—if the state is in part the cause of changes in individual preferences—then we cannot deduce from the structure of these preferences that the state is desirable. Indeed, it is not even clear in this case what it means to say that the state is desirable.

66. Louis Mercier Vega: The Modern State (1970)

In the following excerpts, translated by Paul Sharkey, from Louis Mercier Vega's essay, "Yesterday's Societies and Today's," Mercier Vega analyses the composition of the modern state, emphasizing the role of the "technobureaucracy." Reprinted in L'increvable anarchisme *(Paris: UGE, 1970; Bordeaux: Analis, 1988, 2nd ed., preface by A. Bertolo).*

A NEW VERSION OF THE STATE has emerged. That which, in terms of the 19th century libertarian critique, looked monstrous even then, has been overtaken in terms of might and means and privileges. The state, once an instrument of power, a weapon in the armoury of the property-owners, the lawful embodiment of inequalities and denounced as such, has, in a variety of instances, in many countries, turned into a power in itself and its administrative machinery has become the ruling class.

The requirements of the struggle for world hegemony, for territorial expansion, to conquer markets or sources of raw materials, the scale of the problems needing resolution if a decline or disintegration of the country is to be averted, have also helped endow states with wider and wider powers extending into ever more varied realms.

The great revolutionary convulsions, promptly exploited by political machines with designs on absolute power, spawned totalitarian regimes in which *raison d'état* no longer represented the interests of former ruling classes or castes but those of a new social stratum whose very function is to direct and manage society and which doggedly rejected partnership, counter-balances and controls in any form. The new nature of power determined the form of ownership and the direction of the economy.

Such new developments did not apply exclusively to societies which had fallen under totalitarian rule, but were becoming typical of trends emerging in bourgeois democratic societies, once the requirements of competition—commercial or military—or the impact of economic crisis, called for novel solutions. Not just in Stalinist Russia and not just in Hitler's Germany but, to a lesser extent, in Nasser's Egypt, the Mexico of the Institutional Revolutionary Party or a Peru governed by a "progressive" military junta, but everywhere, under regimes subscribing to the most contrasting ideologies or moral codes, in spite of different sorts of class balances, the great distinguishing feature of the age is the growing role of the state, and its corollary, the formation of a new ruling class identified with the state and incapable of conceiving of power in terms that do not envisage the state as intermediary...

It has not been the case that the state has been democratized or that its essential character has in any way been modified by the fact that those in government, the civil service or technicians purporting to be from the working class or to be its appointees, have gained access to it. To be more specific, the changes that have come about in the make-up of state personnel, in the growing role of state agencies, have done nothing to alter the essential relationship between the state and the working class. The carrot of a Ministry of Labour was meant to draw attention away from the Ministry of the Interior's stick, but most times experience has shown that the former proves to be an illusion whereas the latter is anything but merely symbolic.

As for theories about the state's withering away once "worker power" has been consolidated, that is, once the party has achieved sole mastery, such theories are today barely defensible or even presentable. The weakening of the power of the state is less likely to be the result of its becoming progressively redundant, than of the sudden intrusion of countervailing forces lining up against it...

"[I]t is vital that we distinguish, in terms of antagonistic conflicts, three classes simultaneously opposed to one another: a class that is ruled, a class that rules and a class on its way up...

The exploited class, or rather the spectrum of exploited classes, comprises those who, in the social division of labour, are engaged in manual endeavours in the

broadest sense. To a greater or lesser extent, depending on the idiosyncrasies of the national economic structure, it embraces proletarians (wage labour in agriculture, industry and the service sector, including employees whose functions are wholly executive), a number of the lower echelons of autonomous workers whose 'autonomy' is effectively confined to their 'self-management' of their own exploitation, and finally the urban and rural sub-proletariat (the unemployed, the under-employed, the marginalized, etc.) The old masters make up the capitalist bourgeoisie whose privileges are rooted in private ownership of the means of production and who exploits primarily (but not exclusively) in accordance with its own particular production relations, which is to say, by extorting surplus value from wage labour against the backdrop of a market in manpower and produce. In countries of advanced capitalism the techno-bureaucrats, the 'new masters' in the self-styled socialist countries, share control with the powers-that-be, in a dynamic relationship that is continually tilting in their favour" [Federated Anarchist Groups (GAF) of Italy]…

In a marvellous illustration of the darkest forecasts of anarchist thinkers, the state has become omnipresent, octopus-like, over-bearing, even to the extent of spawning its own ruling social strata and displaying an ability to clip the wings of vested interests. In a number of countries, in the Middle East and in Latin America alike, the state has turned into the largest proprietor and most significant entrepreneur. The contest to capture it fills most of the political and social pages of the newspapers. While it might not be stated in so many words, it is taken as a matter of course that a society can function in the absence of capitalism, without an oligarchy, even without a peasantry, but that it cannot ever cope without a state…

[Q]uarrels, tensions and wars are only exceptionally portrayed in purely technical language—market gains, the quest to secure or protect essential raw materials, control of lines of communications, diversion from domestic problems, expansion, the quest for hegemony—but are continually being dressed up as principle and swathed in ideological or moral justifications. Information regarding the hard facts is restricted or deemed a state secret and information is instead confined to propaganda warfare and even turns into a weapon of war…

Each country represents an illustration of the non-existence of moral or ideological principle in the overall confrontation and in the contest for hegemony. Yet each situation offers the respective propaganda machines fresh grist for the mounting of campaigns of solidarity, protest and indignation. And there has been indeed a never-ending fresh supply of grist aplenty to feel indignant about. So much so that in the end it has led to the creation of organizations specializing in indignation, an indignation that is most often blind in one eye and well-orchestrated…

With no state behind them, nor the prospect of capturing one ahead of them, anarchists have been obliged to grope and stumble their way towards a refinement of their approach and have sometimes been caught up in splendid-looking ventures that the passage of time showed to be questionable. Sometimes, they have clung to words: but they have almost always kept faith with their *raison d'être*. And above all, they have managed to steer clear of the pitfalls of formalism, namely, the tendency to lump imperialisms together on the basis that they are much the same and indistinguishable from one another.

None of them has expressed any remorse for having taken part in some upheaval or popular revolution: none has ever seen fit to advocate turning the clock back. The struggle against the Bolshevization and then Stalinization of Russia—for years they were the only ones fighting that fight on the basis of the interests of the workers and peasants—has never, at any point, considered restoration of bourgeois rule. Their efforts have been designed to afford workers maximum freedom and responsibility. Their fight against U.S. super-capitalism and technocratic bureaucracy has avoided the mindlessness of anti-Americanism. Their fight has taken due account of the vital freedoms which have been secured in the United States, not in order to pour scorn upon them but in order to build upon them and extend them into the economic realm.

Jacobo Prince [Selection 52], one of the greatest adornments of Argentinean anarchism, his body broken by a bullet he took in his student days and who, for fifty years now, has relentlessly encouraged the libertarian movement even through the most tragic circumstances, has encapsulated in a few words what has so often seemed nebulous and unfathomable: "We have several forms of imperialism to fight against and we should not mix them up."

The quest for clarity that this suggests has led to the dropping of any illusions the libertarian movement might have had regarding the chances of its pursuing a policy on a par with the great powers, pretending by some sort of wordplay to add some sort of decisive or even additional weight to the balance of power, but to give its full attention and all of its resources to the practice of social struggles and internationalism, in the firm belief that it represents the only chance of a third force, a tactic that boils down to zeroing in on factors that are underestimated or scorned from the commanding heights, for it is at the point where desertion appears in the ranks that the end of war becomes inevitable.

Analysis of society's evolution, of the role of the state and the nature of international rivalries, does not point to any optimistic conclusions. So there is nothing odd

in the sight of the anarchist movement torn between a pessimistic retreat into the margins, with the eruption of despairing, violent acts of protest, and the hard slog designed to create a revolutionary force that expands on contact with day-to-day experiences, without losing its skepticism, nor the urge to build up organizational forms and practices of direct democracy until such time as it can knit together new networks of social relationships.

67. Nico Berti: The New Masters (1976)

Giampietro "Nico" Berti is the author of numerous writings on anarchism, such as Il pensiero anarchico dal Settecento al Novecento *(Manduria: Piero Lacaita Editore, 1998) and an imposing biography of Malatesta,* Errico Malatesta e il movimento anarchico italiano e internazionale, 1872-1932 *(Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2003). The following excerpts, translated by Paul Sharkey, are from his article, "Anarchist Anticipations of the New Masters," in which he reviews the anarchist analysis of the rise of the "new class," the techno-bureaucracy, relating this analysis to the anarchist critique of the role of science in society, and the more general anarchist critique of hierarchy and domination, or "power as such."*

[F]ROM 1920-1925 ON… THE RULE OF the techno-bureaucratic class had become a fact of life in the USSR… in the capitalist world too, socio-economic structures progressively and swiftly changed from the 1920s onwards and in the course of the changes the "new class" gained strength and spread its privilege and its rule. Both systems (the new, so-called "socialist" system and the late-capitalist one) displayed a growing convergence in the new relations of domination and exploitation which anarchists had anticipated and intuitively grasped. The new masters based their power upon a sort of "intellectual ownership" of the means of production, i.e., on possession of the expertise required for the running of large economic and political aggregations. Their style of exploitation is not exercised individually (like that of the bourgeoisie) but rather collectively, by the class, such that we can properly speak in terms of "class ownership."

Such "ownership" therefore defines the nature of the new ruling class, a class primarily committed to those activities in the realm of brain-work which correspond to leadership functions in the hierarchical division of social labour. Thus, the socio-productive form of the vertical division of labour—the division between brain-work and manual toil—ends up as the structure underpinning the mechanism of the new exploitation, which is to say, techno-bureaucratic rule. In the most complete form of that rule, which is to say in the self-styled "socialist" states, the new ruling class can, by dint of its "intellectual ownership," wield a monopoly over the

running of the means of production and thereby exploit the workforce. It does not directly claim for itself some privileged share of goods and services, the way the capitalists used to do, but does it indirectly, through the State, which impounds that "class" quota for subsequent distribution to its own techno-bureaucratic functionaries in accordance with their ranking and position in the hierarchy, which is to say, *in accordance with the hierarchical ranking of the intellectual task performed*...

[T]o what extent and in what way did anarchist thought anticipate this radical, historical change in the mechanics of inequality and exploitation?

[T]he answer may be found, on the one hand, in its age-old critique of *power as such*, and, on the other, in its equally age-old theoretical polemic against authoritarian socialism and, in particular, against its Marxist inspired incarnation.

While analysis of the first derives from a criterion informing the anarchist critique of all power, the second, by contrast, emerges from scrutiny of the *organic and necessary relationship existing between authoritarian socialist ideology and the historical-social use of science in the hierarchical division of labour into manual and intellectual labour*. That division... underpinning the mechanics of the new form of techno-bureaucratic exploitation, nurtures a process whereby science, in the sense of *socially meaningful* knowledge, is deified and monopolized for the purposes of political control...

[S]cience, like any other field of human endeavour, is, in anarchism's opinion, liable to potentially alienating developments... should the proper relationship between science and man be turned on its head and should man, who starts out as the subject-creator, become the object-creature: instead of science being in the service of man, we find man in the service of science...

If in fact science is depicted as a "mission" and "ideal" to the extent that it is no longer a means but an end in itself, if the capacity to control and keep it in check is swapped for belief in a new *duty*, even should such *duty* have all the hallmarks of science now, then the *sacredness* that goes hand in hand with any form of alienation resurfaces here in new clothing but in essentially the same substance (the *sacredness* deriving from the fact that anything higher than me, anything over which I have no power, says Stirner [Volume 1, Selection 11], has an inevitable tendency to become deified in the many guises of myth).

However, there is no contradiction between myth and science, between faith and science: alienation springs not so much from the object concerned as from *the relationship between that object and the individual*. If that relationship remains authoritarian and hierarchical... no object, no matter how much potential for liberation and breakthrough it may encapsulate, can counter the drift towards a new alienation...

According to Bakunin, science is "always an abstraction, and, for that very reason, in a way, a negation of real life." In support of this contention, he argues that science is incapable of grasping the living individuality of any being. It deals instead in "generalities, rather than with Peter or James, rather than with any particular individual" [*God and the State*, Volume 1, Selection 24].

The root cause of the alienation and thus of the potential deification of science lies therefore, as far as Bakunin is concerned, in its intrinsic limitation: abstraction. This is an insurmountable hurdle that always leaves science falling somewhat short of life itself. But it is on that very basis that a process of deification can arise, the moment a dichotomy appears between science as a whole and society as a whole, between real life and the life of the intellect, between the masses and the elite. Plainly, at this point the emphasis shifts from the philosophical nature of the problem to the more productive and concrete political dimension. Here, Bakunin shifts the discourse onto the terrain of history, stipulating that opinion on science inevitably relates to scientists and their organization.

By virtue of an effective monopoly on learning, the knowledgeable "as such, remain on the outside of social life, assuredly (making up) a separate caste presenting many analogies with the priestly caste. Scientific abstraction is their God, living, flesh-and-blood persons the victims and they themselves the consecrated, licensed performers of the sacrifice."

The analogy drawn by Bakunin between the "religious caste" and the "scientific caste" is obviously rooted at the only point which, in his view, they share in common: an effective monopoly over their own respective "calling" and their own respective expertise. Here too, as with Stirner—albeit coming at it from a different angle—the nature of the beast, in terms of whatever liberating potential it may possess, is not sufficient assurance upon which to graft the process of human liberation. What determines the fate of that liberation is the way it is tackled, for it can only be tackled "from below," which is to say, through responsible popular participation that breaks down and subverts the authoritarian roles inherent in any monopoly. This is because the world of science, while taking as its reference point the living material world and being the overall abstract expression of it, is limited as compared with life "which alone spontaneously creates all things and real entities" and there is no way around that limitation. Because science "creates nothing; it merely registers and acknowledges life's creations"…

Faithful to the main foundations of its own ideology, anarchism rejects all government, including scientific government…

The basis of that repudiation is traceable not just to a methodological adherence to the negation of *all* power, but also, in this instance, to identification of its potentially mystifying character. Precisely on account of its anonymity and universality, science stands for a sheer power that seems to be beyond challenge or censure. Unchallengeable and beyond censure on account of its being "objective," in that that objectivity is suggestive of and conjures up an image of "democracy." ...*Hence the possibility of power being used and abused by a science that is more widespread now than in any other time in history: its parameters set by the highest achievements of the human consciousness.* In response to such power which might potentially be exercised through the practice of planning in every sphere—this being part and parcel of the techno-bureaucratic ideology—anarchism has countered with an alternative theory of comprehensive pluralism reaching into every aspect of society and culture by way of the spontaneous, unfettered expression of the authentic manifestations of collective and individual life.

At this point, the contrast is between two divergent ideological outlooks that foresee the predominant historical developments in this century. On the one hand, we have power's tendency to opt for ever greater centralization, a tendency that will culminate, as we have said, in a shift from capitalist domination into techno-bureaucratic rule, and, on the other, subversive activity by the oppressed masses aimed at arresting that trend, activity that will translate into a multi-faceted flourishing of social struggles and in the ongoing advocacy of self-management and self-education. At the heart of this contest there is a further, more deep-seated ideological watershed that separates the theoretical motivations of the respective camps.

Once again, on the one hand we have, tacked on... to the myth of technical efficiency through planning and the *supposed neutrality* of the actual deployment of science and the "democratism" of such deployment, etc... theories about natural inequalities and a resultant "aristocracy of the intellect;" on the other hand, besides notions such as pluralism or spontaneity, more notions that have wider implications, such as social equality and rejection of all aristocracy, including an aristocracy founded upon merit and intelligence, are emphasized...

[Bakunin's] analysis crystallizes around... talk of the possibility of a society organized and governed in accordance with scientific and rational principles. By which I mean in accordance with pre-established models imposed by some sort of an academy of learned experts genuinely motivated by a concern for goodness and truth...

[T]he Bakuninist objection pursues two separate lines that come together into a single critique, for on the one hand he denounces the nonsensicality of such a gov-

ernment with all of its authoritarian implications, and on the other notes, on the basis of its very effectiveness, that science as the realm of ongoing hypotheses and researches would be finished.

Hence the Bakuninist admonition, designed to preach "*the revolt of life* against science, or rather against the *government* of science" [Volume 1, Selection 24]. Bakunin sees in that revolt a human guarantee and bulwark of freedom against the authoritarian implications of government by science: however that revolt has more than just that end in mind because it is mounted not "in order to destroy science – that would be high treason to humanity—but to remand it to its place so that it can never leave it again"; by which he means acknowledgment of science's proper function which should not be *prescriptive* of life but merely *regulatory.*

However, alongside these ideological justifications of the government of science, there is another important thesis to which we referred briefly above, one that results in acknowledgment of such government as an objective and necessary fact: *the theoretical construct of natural inequality and the resultant aristocracy of the intellect.* With the intellectual-meritocratic factor now standing not so much for *historical as for a natural inequality*, it not merely overrides any earlier ideological justification for social and human hierarchy but establishes and specifies within that hierarchy a number of absolutely unalterable features. It is plain, in fact, that, whereas the historical impediments are all, given the right determination, susceptible to elimination, those which are natural in character are, by contrast, irremovable: even accepting the feasibility of going against nature, what historical, social, political or human forces would be equal to the task? In other words, who could pit his own order against the natural order?

According to Bakunin the "self-styled aristocracy of the intellect" represents, historically speaking, "the last refuge of the will to rule.".. The last refuge because, once every historical justification of inequality has been refuted and demolished, all that remains is the nature alibi which, were it true, would make the building of a libertarian society an impossibility. If men's basic characteristics, attitudes and capabilities are hierarchically unequal independently of the sum of all the other factors classified under the heading "social conditioning," that is, if such diversity can be ascribed exclusively to nature, it would have left and leaves no avenue for the achievement of equality. Socio-economic tinkering mirroring that order would prove to be hierarchically just and necessary. That, for instance, is how the Saint-Simonian ideology and authoritarian socialism as a whole—which Kropotkin places [in *Modern Science and Anarchism*] under the microscope as the eminently meritocratic theoretical

model—see society. Indeed, Saint-Simonianism, which advocates a society led by a government "made up of a hierarchy of the 'talents'—the leaders in the fields of science, the arts, industry" constitutes, from the anarchist point of view, an extremely anti-egalitarian ideological reference point.

The singling out of the intellectual-meritocratic factor therefore represents the key justification of "natural inequality" and of the resultant ideology of government by science. However, in this context there is also a quite theoretical or rather general and abstract identification of the potential of such power, which we have described as *sheer power*. The point now is to move beyond that identification to an analysis that defines the key points in its translation into political, economic and social terms, which is to say, how the shift is made from government by science to government by scientists; the leap from the *sheer power* of the former to the *historical power* of the latter. What are the socio-political forces that have made this leap which anarchism first forecast and later characterized as the switch from capitalist domination to techno-bureaucratic rule? Who is it, Elisée Reclus used to wonder [in *Evolution, Revolution and the Anarchic Ideal*], "who are on the march to power in order to replace those privileged by birth or fortune with a new caste styling itself the intelligentsia?"—only to answer his own question: "(those) who have also campaigned for the political leadership of society for the benefit of men of genius, which is to say for their own personal benefit. The expression 'government by mandarins' has been uttered bluntly." So the property of the "new class" is therefore *intellectual property*, affording it access to the *sheer power* of science which is then managed directly to further its own privileges and fortunes…

Analysis of the vertical division of labour into the manual and the intellectual is required for any investigation of the *consistent* cause of social inequality and thus the incubator of hierarchical arrangements into classes…

The division of work into the intellectual and the manual is mirrored in social divisions. This divorce between science and labour constitutes the source of classes: "work is no longer broken up according to its broader aspects and variety, nor into its *component parts* as in subcontracting, but rather into its constituent parts, intellect and brawn" [Proudhon, *De la Création de l'Ordre dans l'Humanité*]. In bourgeois society, the latter translates as labour force, as commodity, on account of the negligible value (in the eyes of the capitalist market) attributed to the social function it performs…

"Given that…"—Bakunin writes—"…the primary source of the dogma that men are politically unequal was done away with by the great [1789 French] revolution, the current contempt for labour has to be put down to a second factor, namely,

nothing less than the separation that has been created and which remains in full force today, between intellectual labour and manual labour and which, reproducing the old inequality in a new format, still divides the social world into two camps: a minority privileged, not so much these days by the force of law as by the force of capital, and the majority forced into drudgery, not now by the iniquitous rights granted by lawful privilege but by hunger"…

The hierarchical gradations of this divorce represent the warp and weft of the social and economic fabric that, in historical bourgeois society, still translates into capital and labour-power, into proletariat and bourgeoisie. "But, since human labour *viewed in its totality* breaks down into two parts, one wholly intellectual and adjudged exclusively noble, which encompasses the sciences and arts, ideas, design, invention, calculation, government and the general or hierarchical direction of the work force, and the other wholly manual, confined to simple mechanical, unintelligent, brainless action, *profiting from this economic and social law of the division of labour*, capital's privileged, including those who on account of the meagreness of their individual abilities might have the least entitlement to it, take charge of the former and leave the latter to the people."

[C]lasses… are not defined in terms of their historico-social aspects, but rather on the basis of the *relationship obtaining between them,* a relationship that always runs from the bottom to the top, from the base to the apex: the Bakuninian definition is a definition of the *authoritarian relationship between the classes*, the anarchist definition of inequality… In this regard, Bakunin goes on, "as long as there are two or more degrees of instruction for the various strata of society, *there will of necessity be classes*, that is, economic and political privileges for a tiny number of the fortunate and slavery and wretchedness for the greater number." The general model of the recurrent formation of authority is now revealed in its entirety. There is a logical and necessary interdependency between the monopoly on science and the division of labour, between the division of labour and classes. From which it follows that the capitalist-bourgeois form of rule constitutes but one of the historical and variable series of exploitation, of the hierarchical mode of the division of labour, and the *structural and constant* aspect of inequality.

In [Bakunin's] view, in fact, a society released from capitalist oppression but retaining, unaltered, the vertical separation between intellectual functions and manual functions would soon be likely to reconstruct all social hierarchy because: "The one who knows more will *naturally* rule over the one who knows less; and if between two classes just this one difference in education and upbringing existed, it would be

enough to produce all the others in short order" ["Integral Education," Volume 1, Selection 64].

Thus there emerges the overall anarchist polemic against authoritarian socialism as the vehicle of the ideology of statist collectivism. *In advocating only the abolition of private ownership of the means of production, the latter leaves untouched the hierarchical division of social functions—which gives rise to 'intellectual ownership' of these.* Such 'ownership' addresses the distinction between 'simple' work and 'complex' work partly on the basis of the Marxist analysis of labour value. "They (the authoritarian socialists) pretend that an hour's work of an engineer, an architect or a doctor, must be considered as equivalent to two or three hours' work of a blacksmith, a mason, or a hospital nurse… Well, to establish this distinction… would mean dividing society into two very distinct classes—the aristocracy of knowledge above the horny-handed lower orders—the one doomed to serve the other… (and all this with) the *sanction of the Social Revolution*" [Kropotkin, *The Conquest of Bread*, Volume 1, Selection 33]…

Following the same tack, [Francesco Saverio] Merlino writes that the characteristics of the new ruling class spring from the realm of administration and from the vertical division of labour into the manual and the intellectual. The new leaders of statist socialism "are to organize work, public services, an administration and a bureaucracy—and how!—and will be able, by means of a levy or something else, to introduce into the distribution of the products of labour distinctions and inequalities corresponding to those that obtain between their respective functions and those of the humble manual labourers."

Identification of the technical and scientific aspect inherent in intellectual supervisory functions, the impossibility of separating or nullifying their political significance as far as the authoritarian usage of their handling is concerned, which is to say an entirely political and ideological reading of the operation of the technical and scientific organization of the body of society and, more generally, society's overall organization, now becomes all of a piece with analysis of the historical conditions that facilitate the rise of the "new class"…

Contrary to the renowned Marxist "bi-polar" model which stresses the irreconcilable contrast between bourgeois and proletariat, this system is not defined in terms of legal ownership of the means of production but rather in terms of broader *domination-dependency* relationships obtaining between social classes. Meaning that it does not spring *directly* from a specific and particular historical context—capitalist society—but rather from the *widespread and ongoing* relationship obtaining in *every* society where there is inequality and exploitation: from the universal phenomenon of a recurrent, mil-

lennia-old and ever-present contrast between freedom and authority, and between equality and hierarchy—namely, the ongoing reproduction of *power as such*.

So, for instance, as far as the theory and practice of the *dictatorship of the proletariat* is concerned, represented as both a new and as the final form of power, justified (according to its theorists and apologists) in Russia by extraordinary historical circumstances, the anarchist analysis looks again at the consistent *traits* common to all historically constituted authorities. Authority tends to perpetuate itself by means of a dynamic discernible in other modern revolutions, not just because, in the particular instance of this dictatorship, the proletariat is invoked "the way the *people* is in democratic regimes," but partly because while it is a fact that "today it *also* helps defend the revolution from its external enemies… tomorrow it will serve to foist the wishes of the dictators upon the workers, bring the revolution to a halt and consolidate new interests that are being established which the new privileged class needs to defend against the masses…" [Malatesta].

[Regarding] the new emphasis given to the "neutral" character which the techno-bureaucratic ideology ascribes to the practice of the administration of "things"… Malatesta elaborates: "When Friedrich Engels, perhaps to ward off the anarchist critique, stated that once classes disappear the State proper has no further *raison d'être* and turns from the government of men to the administration of things, he was not indulging in some vacuous play on words. Whoever has dominion over things has dominion over men; whoever governs production governs the producer; whoever measures consumption lords it over the consumer." Libertarian forms of the *governance* of things do not exist; there are as many ways of administering things as there are ways of administering men. The science of administration, which is one of the forms of expertise that encapsulates the techno-bureaucracy's intellectual property, also underpins the laws of monopoly, just as scientific advancement generally underpins the laws of monopoly capitalism. Monopoly of the administration of things signifies, in political terms, dominion over things: so the administrative state and the science of administration are a further mystified form of power because, as Saverio Merlino reminds us, between "administration and domination there is no contradiction," so that if the former is centred in the hands of a specialist caste, the consequence is assuredly "a frightful despotism."

However, we ought to highlight immediately the basic theoretical ambiguity underlying the ideological justification of government by experts. With respect to this particular aspect of techno-bureaucratic rule, by which I mean power exercised over men through anonymous control over things, we are faced with a plain and ir-

reconcilable contradiction. The separation imposed and implemented between the two targets of domination, men and things, is indirectly mirrored in the totalitarian bent operationally displayed in the planning practice which deludes itself that it governs people's material surroundings with the consensus of the latter. One utopian and fatuous aspect of techno-bureaucratic rule is the ethereal and tedious value that it places on man, cut off from the very conditions of his existence. Once again we have to point to a paradoxical indication of the techno-bureaucratic outlook: the division to which we have referred implicitly leaves the individual autonomous *vis-à-vis* the material world, when such autonomy does not actually exist. Placing man in an imposed, ready-made material setting amounts to feeding the conditions whereby he will revolt, or at least feel disaffected from the powers-that-be. Theoretical ambiguity therefore implies a functional shortcoming: as the consensus shrinks, recourse to direct control becomes inevitable; the science of administration becomes one with military science.

The fatuous techno-bureaucratic claim to plan and administer things in a "neutral" way, the inevitable political, economic and scientific centralization of the functions of command and thus of power over men by means of anonymous administration of things, the depersonalization imposed by this oppressive social mechanism, are thus extraordinarily well encapsulated by [Carlo] Cafiero: the despotism of the masters of the State (the techno-bureaucrats) "would equal the political despotism of the present state plus the sum of the economic despotism of all the capitalists whose capital would be taken over by the people's state: all of it multiplied by the increasing centralization required by the new state which is both political and economic… And in order to meet the requirements of this ghastly new monster what monstrous new bureaucratic machine would it be necessary to create? What army of employee-initiates in the highly complicated mysteries of government? A class distinct from and higher than the people and therefore tyrannical and odious."

The political arrangement expressing this consensus is therefore founded "seemingly upon the dictatorship of the masses, but is in reality such that the masses have no power other that what is required to ensure universal servitude in accordance with the principles borrowed from the old regime: Undivided power; rampant centralization; systematic demolition of all individual, corporative or local thinking suspected of secessionism, inquisitorial policing" [Proudhon, *On the Political Capacity of the Working Classes*].

This contradiction within techno-bureaucratic power lifts the veil from and highlights the other grounds upon which command is justified, grounds more politi-

cal than scientific... Bakunin says [in *Statism and Anarchy*] that Marxism's historical evolution will result in rule "by a new and very narrow aristocracy of genuine or pseudo-experts. Given its lack of education, the people will be completely excused from the worries of government and indeed will, en bloc, join the body of those who are governed. Some liberation! The Marxists appreciate the contradiction and, knowing that a government of experts, the most offensive and despicable sort of government the world has to offer, will, regardless of all the outward show of democracy, prove to be an out-and-out dictatorship, draw consolation from the idea that that dictatorship is going be only temporary and short-lived. They claim that its only intention will be to educate and elevate the people economically and politically to a level at which all government would very quickly become redundant."

Here let us sum up the two key points of this polemic against the fallaciousness of the Marxist thesis. First, power is awarded on the basis of a social inequality in terms of education; second, power is awarded for the purpose of educating the uneducated. These two points are closely connected in the sense that one offers the justification for the other. In fact, the educational vocation is imposed by the lack of education. But education, as far as anarchism is concerned, extends far beyond schooling. It is a complex process where man grows socially, civilly, politically and culturally; whereas instruction is the acquisition of a degree of learning that is, ultimately, always only partial, or, if you prefer, specialized. So, on the basis that the lower orders are lacking in such expertise, those who do possess it, the experts, expand their calling: turning from trainers into educators, from experts, politicians, technicians, into rulers. Here we have the *trespass made by science which switches from being a regulator of the life of society into the determining factor therein*. A trespass that finds its own vehicle in the historical formation of the "political party of the proletariat."

In Bakunin's view, such a party, inevitably setting itself up as the organism that produces and monopolizes "revolutionary science" on account of its being led in the final analysis by an elite of intellectuals, was merely reproducing in the actual practice of revolutionary endeavour that *division into intellectual direction and manual implementation that the final goal of communism was intended to banish*. So, in the Marxian scheme of things, there proved to be a difference in nature between means and intended ends. Bakunin encapsulated this contradiction thusly: "They [the Marxists] say that this state yoke, this dictatorship is a transitional measure necessary to achieve the comprehensive emancipation of the people: anarchy or freedom is the end, the State and dictatorship the means. So for the popular masses to be emancipated they first have to be subjugated"...

In fact, the "party," by virtue of the intellectual-leadership role it performed, would in practice have dominion over the popular classes to whom the man-ual-performative role of the labourer was being assigned. The socio-political conse-quences of such practice would have been, in Bakunin's view, extremely noxious: inured to obedience during the revolutionary process, they would have found them-selves after the revolution's arrival back under the orders of a "new class."

This Bakuninian line was reprised about thirty years later by the Polish libertar-ian Jan Waclaw Machajski. In a little pamphlet issued in 1898, entitled *The Evolution of Social Democracy*, he summarized Bakunin's broad inklings in a more precise and de-tailed formulation. Socialism is not the ideology of the manual workers, but rather that of a "new middle class on the march towards power, a class made up of intellec-tuals, members of the liberal professions, technicians and employees." The western socialist parties, for all their official revolutionary verbiage, are in fact—the Polish revolutionary wrote—law-abiding progressive parties advocating political and social reforms, having ceased to be genuinely revolutionary organizations bent upon the destruction of privilege in all its guises.

This slide into "respectability" was, in his view, a product of the following fac-tor: far from being determined by the working class base, the politics of such parties mirrored the interests of the new middle class made up of intellectual workers, a stratum of society on the rise towards privilege "and looking for its place in the sun at the expense of the old propertied classes of the landowners and capitalists." A su-perior education "represents their particular 'capital,'" and the source of their new-found privilege.

The first step in their assumption of control is to be political democracy and the second, nationalization of the economy. In order to achieve these they look to the support of the manual workers who are cast in the role of an "army of manoeuvers." Having won the confidence of the workers through the aid afforded them at the out-set of the industrial age in their struggle for improved living conditions, the intellec-tuals are in a position to dangle before them the socialist ideal of equality. In actual fact, the classless society promised by the "déclassé" intellectuals is nothing but a propaganda ploy, a sort of proletarian religion hiding the true aim of the socialist vanguard. In fact, the latter is a socialism that turns out to be "a hierarchical arrange-ment of the state take-over of all industry." The bourgeois-capitalist class is to give way to the "functionaries," managers and engineers whose salary scales, well above the wage levels of manual workers, will set the standard for the new, privileged rul-ing class.

The introduction of this arrangement is initially represented as a phase of "gradual transition," although it will quickly turn out to be *permanent* because the superseding of capitalism does not of itself mean an automatic beginning to socialist construction, in the sense of greater freedom and equality...

[While] the *elite* in *overall* charge of the workers' movement may be a *direct* expression of the latter's historical strength, and therefore, in the Marxist interpretation, an expression of a global, universal viewpoint, it is still, as such, an *elite*, which is to say a class formally separate from and more highly ranked than the proletariat. In which sense it becomes a vehicle for the reproduction of the general, ongoing relations of domination-dependency obtaining between classes and thus the historical and particular expression of an overall, universal avatar of *power as such*. "Moreover"—writes Merlino—"supposing that the working class were to seize power, it would actually be wielded in their name by a tiny number of individuals who would tend to turn back into a ruling, propertied class, which would bring us back to the existing state of affairs." This because "those who govern constitute a class themselves" from which it follows that "*no government can be revolutionary*." If the relations of domination and dependency are reproduced, that implies a reversion to the essential equivalence between all forms of authority and power. These are unchanged and exist (assuming that hierarchical structures—party, State, etc.,—survive) *no matter what* the historical protagonist that employs them—be it the *socialist State* or the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*. As far as anarchism is concerned, these are above all else a *State* and a *dictatorship*, meaning that the former terms are structurally independent of any historical superimposition of the latter.

Bakunin concludes from this that: "The so-called people's State will be nothing other than the mass of the population despotically governed by a new and very narrow aristocracy of actual or pseudo-scientists... that will [concentrate] all commerce and industry, agricultural as well as scientific production, in their own hands and will split the mass of the populace into two armies, one industrial and one agricultural, under the direct control of State engineers who will make up a new, politico-scientific privileged caste"...

The fusion between political power and economic power thereby becomes inescapable: social construction is rooted in a *totalitarian and monolithic* foundation endowed with a single, autonomous decision-making centre that arrogates to itself every decision relating to public or private concerns. Unlike the bourgeois system that endorses a separation of powers, it "fails to separate *politics* and *political economy*, fails to turn these into two separate and contrasting orders, and instead asserts

that their principles are identical and strives to make a synthesis of them" [Proudhon]. From the vantage point of the manual workers, this represents a further system of exploitation: the masses would find themselves both economically and "politically disadvantaged" [Merlino].

This "industrial barracks" takes shape against the backdrop of a process of economic planning wherein all production and consumption is organized "on the basis of laws and regulations."

The inexorable supersession of capitalism follows from this very same slow but inexorable and progressive "death of the market." The society that emerges from this supersession is not a socialist society but, as the anarcho-syndicalist Christian Cornelissen remarked, a sort of *State capitalism*.

Interrogations, No. 6, March 1976

68. Noam Chomsky: Intellectuals and the State (1977)

In the following essay, Noam Chomsky relates Bakunin's critique of the "new class" to the role of intellectuals in capitalist societies. Originally delivered as a lecture, "Intellectuals and the State" was published in pamphlet form and republished in Towards a New Cold War *(New York: Pantheon, 1982).*

WHAT ARE THE TYPICAL ROLES OF THE intelligentsia in modern industrial society? There is a classic analysis of this question in the works of Bakunin, about a century ago. He may have been the first to suggest the concept of a "new class" in reference to those who were coming to control technical knowledge. In a series of analyses and predictions that may be among the most remarkable within the social sciences, Bakunin warned that the new class will attempt to convert their access to knowledge into power over economic and social life. They will try to create: "the reign of scientific intelligence, the most aristocratic, despotic, arrogant and elitist of all regimes. There will be a new class, a new hierarchy of real and counterfeit scientists and scholars, and the world will be divided into a minority ruling in the name of knowledge, and an immense ignorant majority. And then, woe unto the mass of ignorant ones" [Bakunin, L'Empire Knouto-Germanique et la Révolution Sociale].

Though a passionately committed socialist himself, Bakunin did not spare the socialist movement the force of his critique: "The organization and the rule of the society by socialist savants," he wrote, "is the worst of all despotic governments"… For the proletariat, the new regime "will, in reality, be nothing but a barracks" under the control of a Red bureaucracy. But surely it is "heresy against common sense and historical experience" to believe that "a group of individuals, even the most intelligent

and best-intentioned, would be capable of becoming the mind, the soul, the direct-ing and unifying will of the revolutionary movement and the economic organization of the proletariat of all lands." In fact, the "learned minority, which presumes to ex-press the will of the people," will rule in "a pseudo-representative government" that will "serve to conceal the domination of the masses by a handful of privileged elite."

As for liberal capitalism, it develops in the direction of increased state central-ization, while the "sovereign people" will submit to the "intellectual governing mi-nority, who, while claiming to represent the people, unfailingly exploits them." "The people," Bakunin wrote, "will feel no better if the stick with which they are being beaten is labelled 'the people's stick.'" Under either evolving system of gover-nance—state socialist or state capitalist—"the shrewd and educated" will gain privi-leges while "regimented workingmen and women will sleep, wake, work, and live to the beat of a drum."

A century later, Bakunin's new class has become a grim feature of contemporary reality. State centralization has indeed proceeded in capitalist society, along with and always closely linked to centralization of ownership and control in the economic institutions that set many of the basic conditions for social life. By the turn of the cen-tury there were already close links in the United States between corporate ownership and control on the one hand, and university-based programs in technology and in-dustrial management on the other... And in more recent times there has been an in-creasing flow of technical intelligentsia through universities, government, foundations, management, major law firms that represent broad interests of corpo-rate capitalism, and in general through the tightly linked network of planning and so-cial control. Spokesmen for the new class never tire of telling us how the people rule, while concealing the real workings of power. The real and counterfeit scientists have been responsible for innumerable atrocities themselves and for the legitimation of many others, while wielding the people's stick.

I need not dwell on the performance of Bakunin's Red bureaucracy when they have succeeded in centralizing state power in their hands, riding to power on a wave of popular movements that they have proceeded to dismantle and finally destroy.

I might also mention in this connection the penetrating studies by the Dutch Marx-ist scientist Anton Pannekoek. Writing in the late 1930s, and then under the German oc-cupation, he discussed "the social ideals growing up in the minds of the intellectual class now that it feels its increasing importance in the process of production: a well-ordered organization of production for use under the direction of technical and scientific ex-perts." These ideals, he pointed out, are shared by the intelligentsia in capitalist societies

and by Communist intellectuals, whose aim is "to bring to power, by means of the fighting force of the workers, a layer of leaders who then establish planned production by means of State-Power." They develop the theory that "the talented energetic minority takes the lead and the incapable majority follows and obeys." Their natural social ideology is some version of state socialism, "a design for reconstructing society on the basis of a working class such as the middle class sees it and knows it under capitalism"—tools of production, submissive, incapable of rational decision. To this mentality, "an economic system where the workers are themselves masters and leaders of their work... is identical with anarchy and chaos"...

The emergence of a new class of scientific intelligentsia has been extensively discussed—though with a very different attitude towards the phenomenon described—by Western analysts of "postindustrial society"; for example, Daniel Bell, who believes that "the entire complex of social prestige and social status will be rooted in the intellectual and scientific communities," or John Kenneth Galbraith, who holds that "power in economic life has over time passed from its ancient association with land to association with capital and then on, in recent times, to the composite of knowledge and skills which comprises the technostructure." Both have expressed high hopes for the new "educational and scientific estate," Bakunin's new class, ruling in the name of knowledge. But I must emphasize that Pannekoek did not conclude that since the technical intelligentsia make decisions on behalf of others in capitalist democracy, they therefore hold power.

One may, I think, note a kind of convergence, in this regard at least, between so-called socialist and capitalist societies. Lenin proclaimed in 1918 that "*unquestioning submission* to a single will is absolutely necessary for the success of labour processes that are based on large-scale machine industry... today the Revolution demands, in the interests of socialism, that the masses *unquestioningly obey the single will* of the leaders of the labour process" (emphasis in original); "there is not the least contradiction between soviet (i.e., socialist) democracy and the use of dictatorial power by a few persons." And two years later: "The transition to practical work is connected with individual authority. This is the system which more than any other assures the best utilization of human resources."

Consider, in comparison, the following dictum:

"Vital decision-making, particularly in policy matters, must remain at the top. God—the Communist commentators to the contrary—is clearly democratic. He distributes brain power universally, but He quite justifiably expects us to do something efficient and constructive with that priceless gift. That is what management is all about. Its me-

dium is human capacity, and its most fundamental task is to deal with change. It is the gate through which social, political, economic, technological change, indeed change in every dimension, is rationally spread through society ... the real threat to democracy comes not from overmanagement, but from undermanagement. To undermanage reality is not to keep it free. It is simply to let some force other than reason shape reality ... if it is not reason that rules man, then man falls short of his potential."

In short, reason demands submission to centralized management: This is true freedom, the realization of democracy. Apart from the reference to God, it would be hard to tell whether the quote is from Lenin, or—as indeed is the case—Robert McNamara, a typical example of the scientific and educational estate in State capitalist democracy.

Science has also been called upon to explain the need for submission to the talented leadership of those whom Isaiah Berlin has called "the secular priesthood." For example, Edward Thorndike, one of the founders of experimental psychology and a person with great influence on American schools, solemnly explained in 1939 the following grand discovery: "It is the great good fortune of mankind that there is a substantial positive correlation between intelligence and morality, including good will toward one's fellows. Consequently our superiors in ability are on the average our benefactors, and it is often safer to trust our interests to them than to ourselves. No group of men can be expected to act one-hundred percent in the interest of mankind, but this group of the ablest men will come nearest to the ideal."

Earlier he had explained that "the argument for democracy is not that it gives power to men without distinction, but that it gives greater freedom for ability and character to attain power," as we have repeatedly witnessed.

Think what this means in a capitalist democracy. Some complex of characteristics tends to enhance wealth and power (it also doesn't hurt to have rich parents), including political power, which is closely linked to success in the private economy. This collection of characteristics—some combination of avarice, lack of concern for one's fellows, energy and determination, a certain style of cleverness, etc.—is "nearest to the ideal," and democracy permits the people so endowed to rise to power, which is good, because they are our benefactors, given the correlation between intelligence and morality.

Suppose we add a standard assumption that is central to many of the modern justifications for meritocracy, and to much of economic theory as well: People labour only for reward; the natural state for humans is to vegetate. It then follows that talent should be rewarded, for the benefit of all, since otherwise the talented and moral (re-

call the correlation) will not bestir themselves to act as our benefactors. The message, for the great mass of the population, is straightforward: "You are better off if you are poor. Accept powerlessness and poverty for your own good." One might note the importance of this lesson when other techniques of social control fail, for example, the promise of endless growth, which has served for a long period to induce conformity and obedience.

The secular priesthood has noticed that democracy poses some problems for the realization of the rule of reason, in which everyone submits willingly to their benefactors. One problem is that in a democracy, the voice of the people is heard. Therefore, it is necessary to find ways to ensure that the people's voice speaks the right words. The problem was faced in an interesting essay by the well-known political scientist Harold Lasswell in the early 1930s. He wrote that the rise of democracy—or, as he put it, "the displacement of cults of simple obedience by democratic assertiveness"—"complicated the problem of eliciting concerted action," a problem perceived early by "military writers." The spread of schooling "did not release the masses from ignorance and superstition but altered the nature of both and compelled the development of a whole new technique of control, largely through propaganda." With the rise of democracy, "propaganda attains eminence as the one means of mass mobilization which is cheaper than violence, bribery or other possible control techniques." Propaganda, he explained, "as a mere tool is no more moral or immoral than a pump handle." It may be employed for good ends or bad. "Propaganda is surely here to stay; the modern world is peculiarly dependent upon it for the coordination of atomized components in times of crisis and for the conduct of large-scale 'normal' operations." It is "certain that propaganda will in time be viewed with fewer misgivings." He went on to point out that "the modern conception of social management is profoundly affected by the propagandist outlook" in its task of eliciting "concerted action for public ends." The propagandist outlook respects individuality, but: "this regard for men in the mass rests upon no democratic dogmatisms about men being the best judges of their own interests. The modern propagandist, like the modern psychologist, recognizes that men are often poor judges of their own interests... With respect to those adjustments which do require mass action the task of the propagandist is that of inventing goal symbols which serve the double function of facilitating adoption and adaptation."

Management must cultivate "sensitiveness to those concentrations of motive which are implicit and available for rapid mobilization when the appropriate symbol is offered." The modern propagandist "is able and anxious to apply the methods of

scientific observation and analysis to the processes of society" and "to direct his creative flashes to final guidance in action," since in creating symbols he is "no phrasemonger but a promoter of overt acts."

It would seem to follow that no moral issue is posed when a benevolent authority manipulates "men in the mass" by appropriate forms of propaganda. This Leninist idea is a typical doctrine of the new class and is an example of the convergence of which I spoke earlier...

In fact, in a capitalist democracy the pump handle will generally be operated by those who control the economy, and it comes as no great surprise to learn that they have fully comprehended this message, most notably in the "public relations" industry which has flourished ever since the potential for indoctrination was effectively demonstrated during the First World War. "Public relations," we learn from a leading spokesman for industry, "is nothing more than the mass production of personal good manners and good morals." And a vast effort has been expended to ensure that Americans have both—as these are defined by our benefactors.

The leading figure in the public relations field, Edward Bernays, has had interesting things to say about these matters. "Leaders... of major organized groups... with the aid of technicians... who have specialized in utilizing the channels of communication, have been able to accomplish scientifically what we have termed 'the engineering of consent,'" he explained in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* in 1947—at a time when a vast propaganda campaign was undertaken by government and industry, which has not flagged since. The phrase "engineering of consent," Bernays continues: "quite simply means the application of scientific principles and tried practices to the task of getting people to support ideas and programs... The engineering of consent is the very essence of the democratic process, the freedom to persuade and suggest... A leader frequently cannot wait for the people to arrive at even general understanding... democratic leaders must play their part in... engineering... consent to socially constructive goals and values."

Once again, it is business and its representatives in government who will, in practice, judge what is "socially constructive."

Who has this freedom to persuade and to suggest, which is the essence of the democratic process? Evidently, it is not evenly distributed—nor should it be, given the correlation between intelligence and morality. One estimate of how the freedom to persuade is distributed appeared in the leading business journal *Fortune* in 1949, where it was claimed that "nearly half of the contents of the best newspapers is derived from publicity releases; nearly all the contents of the lesser papers... are di

rectly or indirectly the work of [public relations] departments." The editors went on to make the now familiar point that "it is as impossible to imagine a genuine democracy without the science of persuasion as it is to think of a totalitarian state without coercion." Indoctrination is to democracy what coercion is to dictatorship—naturally, since the stick that beats the people is labeled "the people's stick."

With such insights as these we begin to gain a better picture of one major role of the intelligentsia in a capitalist democracy. Contrary to the illusions of the postindustrial theorists, power is not shifting into their hands—though one should not underestimate the significance of the flow of trained manpower from university to government and management for many decades. But the more significant function of the intelligentsia is ideological control. They are, in Gramsci's phrase, "experts in legitimation." They must ensure that beliefs are properly inculcated, beliefs that serve the interests of those with objective power, based ultimately on control of capital in the state capitalist societies. The well-bred intelligentsia operate the pump handle, conducting mass mobilization in a way that is, as Lasswell observed, cheaper than violence or bribery and much better suited to the image of democracy.

Chapter 9
Science And Technology

69. George Woodcock: The Tyranny of the Clock (1944)

George Woodcock (1912-1995) was active in the English anarchist movement during the war, contributing to numerous anarchist publications, as well as his own literary journal, Now. *He was an active war resister, and for a time had to go underground. He helped edit* Freedom *with Marie Louise Berneri after the imprisonment of Richards, Hewetson and Sansom in 1945 for "disaffecting" the troops. He wrote numerous essays on politics, art, literature and anarchism, including* Anarchy or Chaos *(London: Freedom Press, 1944), in which he argued that*

> ...the conflict between groups of national states is the less important aspect of this war. What matters is not that England is fighting Germany, or America fighting Japan, that the Nazis are oppressing the Poles or the British sahibs oppressing the Indians. These in themselves are terrible facts, but expressed in this way they do not represent the real nature of the war. What is real to the workers, to individual men and women outside the privileged classes, is the manner in which the war is being used in a counter-revolutionary manner to strengthen authority and crush freedom in every country in the world. The significant war is not in reality the horizontal one between England and Germany, but the vertical one between the rulers of England, Germany, Russia, America, on one side, and on the other side the ruled throughout the world.

In 1949 Woodcock returned to Canada, eventually becoming an esteemed man of letters and the author of many books, including his 1962 publication, Anarchism: A History of Libertarian Ideas and Movements. *"The Tyranny of the Clock," in which Woodcock analyzes modern technology, as symbolized by the clock, as a form of domination, was originally published in 1944 in Dwight Macdonald's* politics, *for which Woodcock was the London correspondent.*

IN NO CHARACTERISTIC IS EXISTING society in the West so sharply distinguished from the earlier societies, whether of Europe or the East, than in its conception of time. To the ancient Chinese or Greek, to the Arab herdsman or Mexican peon of to-day, time is represented in the cyclic processes of nature, the alternation of day and night, the passage from season to season. The nomads and farmers measured and still measure their day from sunrise to sunset, and their year in terms of the seedtime and harvest, of the falling leaf and the ice thawing on the lakes and rivers. The farmer worked according to the elements, the craftsman for so long as he felt it necessary to perfect his product. Time was seen in a process of natural change, and men were not concerned in its exact measurement. For this reason civilizations highly developed in other respects had the most primitive means of measuring time, the hour glass with its trickling sand or dripping water, the sundial, useless on a dull day, and the candle or lamp whose unburnt remnant of oil or wax indicated the hours. All these devices where approximate and inexact, and were often rendered unreliable by the weather or the personal laziness of the tender. Nowhere in the ancient or medieval world were more than a tiny minority of men concerned with time in the terms of mathematical exactitude.

Modern, Western man, however lives in a world which runs according to the mechanical and mathematical symbols of clock time. The clock dictates his movements and inhibits his actions. The clock turns time from a process of nature into a commodity that can be measured and bought and sold like soap or sultanas. And because, without some means of exact time keeping, industrial capitalism could never have developed and could not continue to exploit the workers, the clock represents an element of mechanical tyranny in the lives of modern men more potent than any individual exploiter or any other machine...

The clock, as Lewis Mumford has pointed out, represents the key machine of the machine age, both for its influence on technology and its influence on the habits of men. Technically, the clock was the first really automatic machine that attained any importance in the life of men. Previous to its invention, the common machines were of such a nature that their operation depended on some external and unreliable force, such as human or animal muscles, water or wind. It is true that the Greeks had invented a number of primitive automatic machines, but these were used, like Hero's steam engine, for obtaining 'supernatural' effects in the temples or for amusing the tyrants of Levantine cities. But the clock was the first automatic machine that attained a public importance and a social function. Clock-making became the industry from which men learnt the elements of machine making and gained the technical skill that was to produce the complicated machinery of the industrial revolution.

Socially the clock had a more radical influence than any other machine, in that it was the means by which the regularization and regimentation of life necessary for an exploiting system of industry could best be attained. The clock provided the means by which time—a category so elusive that no philosophy has yet determined its nature—could be measured concretely in more tangible forms of space provided by the circumference of a clock dial. Time as duration became disregarded, and men began to talk and think always of 'lengths' of time, just as if they were talking of lengths of calico. And time, being now measurable in mathematical symbols, became regarded as a commodity that could be bought and sold in the same way as any other commodity.

The new capitalists, in particular, became rabidly time-conscious. Time, here symbolizing the labour of workers, was regarded by them almost as if it were the chief raw material of industry. 'Time is money' became one of the key slogans of capitalist ideology, and the timekeeper was the most significant of the new types of official introduced by the capitalist dispensation.

In the early factories the employers went so far as to manipulate their clocks or sound their factory whistles at the wrong times in order to defraud their workers a little of this valuable new commodity. Later such practices became less frequent, but the influence of the clock imposed a regularity on the lives of the majority of men which had previously been known only in the monastery. Men actually became like clocks, acting with a repetitive regularity which had no resemblance to the rhythmic life of a natural being. They became, as the Victorian phrase put it, 'as regular as clockwork.' Only in the country districts, where the natural lives of animals and plants and the elements still dominated life, did any large proportion of the population fail to succumb to the deadly tick of monotony.

At first this new attitude to time, this new regularity of life, was imposed by the clock-owning masters on the unwilling poor. The factory slave reacted in his spare time by living with a chaotic irregularity which characterized the gin-sodden slums of early nineteenth century industrialism. Men fled to the timeless world of drink or Methodist inspiration. But gradually the idea of regularity spread downwards among the workers. Nineteenth century religion and morality played their part by proclaiming the sin of 'wasting time.' The introduction of mass-produced watches and clocks in the 1850s spread time-consciousness among those who had previously merely reacted to the stimulus of the knocker-up or the factory whistle. In the church and in the school, in the office and the workshop, punctuality was held up as the greatest of virtues.

Out of this slavish dependence on mechanical time which spread insidiously into every class in the nineteenth century there grew up the demoralizing regimenta-

tion of life which characterizes factory work today. The man who fails to conform faces social disapproval and economic ruin. If he is late at the factory the worker will lose his job or even, at the present day [1944—while wartime regulations were in force], find himself in prison. Hurried meals, the regular morning and evening scramble for trains or buses, the strain of having to work to time schedules, all contribute to digestive and nervous disorders, to ruin health and shorten life.

Nor does the financial imposition of regularity tend, in the long run, to greater efficiency. Indeed, the quality of the product is usually much poorer, because the employer, regarding time as a commodity which he has to pay for, forces the operative to maintain such a speed that his work must necessarily be skimped. Quantity rather than quality becomes the criterion, the enjoyment is taken out of work itself, and the worker in his turn becomes a 'clock-watcher,' concerned only when he will be able to escape to the scanty and monotonous leisure of industrial society, in which he 'kills time' by cramming in as much time-scheduled and mechanized enjoyment of cinema, radio and newspapers as his wage packet and his tiredness allow. Only if he is willing to accept the hazards of living by his faith or his wits can the man without money avoid living as a slave to the clock.

The problem of the clock is, in general, similar to that of the machine. Mechanical time is valuable as a means of co-ordination of activities in a highly developed society, just as the machine is valuable as a means of reducing unnecessary labour to the minimum. Both are valuable for the contribution they make to the smooth running of society, and should be used insofar as they assist men to co-operate efficiently and to eliminate monotonous toil and social confusion. But neither should be allowed to dominate men's lives as they do today.

Now the movement of the clock sets the tempo of men's lives—they become the servant of the concept of time which they themselves have made, and are held in fear, like Frankenstein by his own monster. In a sane and free society such an arbitrary domination of man's functions by either clock or machine would obviously be out of the question. The domination of man by the creation of man is even more ridiculous than the domination of man by man. Mechanical time would be relegated to its true function of a means of reference and co-ordination, and men would return again to a balanced view of life no longer dominated by the worship of the clock. Complete liberty implies freedom from the tyranny of abstractions as well as from the rule of men.

70. Paul Goodman: Science and Technology (1960)

In these excerpts, Paul Goodman distinguishes between technology and science and proposes various criteria for evaluating technology, emphasizing human scale and the satisfaction of human needs. Originally published as "The Human Uses of Science," Commentary, *No. 30 (December 1960). Reprinted in* Decentralizing Power: Paul Goodman's Social Criticism *(Montreal: Black Rose, 1994), ed. Taylor Stoehr.*

AT PRESENT THE VERY WORD "TECHNOLOGY" is used not so much to refer to practical arts as to the application of fairly up-to-date scientific concepts to the mass production of goods and services. It would be awkward to call carpentry "technology," and it would be wrong to call medicine "technology," but wallboard, canned foods, ship radar, and the manufacture—and prescription?—of penicillin are parts of our technology. Marxist philosophers have insisted on an indissoluble relation, if not formal identity, between science and technology; and in a background sense, this is, in my opinion, true. Especially experimental science would not much exist among peoples who lack elaborate industrial arts; they would not have the data, they would not have the techniques, and they would not consider it important. (Yet such peoples might be excellent naturalists and mathematicians, like the Greeks. And in social psychology, with its techniques of rhetoric and pedagogy, all peoples, of course, have plenty of experimental evidence of behavior—a point that is often overlooked.)

A dangerous confusion occurs, however, when contemporary science and the current style of technology come to exist in people's minds as one block, to be necessarily taken as a single whole. The effect of this is that political arguments for some kind or complex of technology, which indeed has been made possible by modern science, are illogically strengthened by the science itself. Contrariwise, if anybody opposes the mass production, the export to underdeveloped countries, or the widespread domestic use of certain machines, technical complexes, or therapies, he is sure to be "refuted" as an obscurantist, an irrationalist or aesthete, a pessimist or a Luddite... Because the adventure of modern science must be pursued, it is concluded that there are no choices in the adoption of scientific technology. This is an error in reasoning, but unfortunately there are powerful vested interests in business and politics throughout the world... that want to reinforce this error and probably believe it.

The criteria for the practice of science and the practice of technology are distinct. One may affirm that the most absolute freedom and encouragement—including a blank check—should be given to the pursuit of scientific knowledge, and yet that the mass application of this knowledge to industrial arts, communications, pedagogy, medicine,

etc., should be highly selective and discriminating, and even, at present, rather grudging in some departments and regions. I want to affirm both propositions and go on to suggest some political, moral, and psychological criteria for choosing technologies. (What an odd sound such a reasonable proposal has today!)

My reasons for praising science are, of course, the classical ones, but let me spell them out for the pleasure of it. The pursuit of natural truth is a transcending good that justifies itself, like compassion, social justice, fine art, or romantic love. No superior standard exists by which to limit such pursuits, even though the sky falls. The life of research and theory is one of the forms of human happiness. The submission of the intellect to nature is a kind of humble prayer. Scientific habits are positive virtues, and, negatively, science is the chief antidote to illusion, prejudice, and superstition. The adventure of discovery is itself romantic and delights the animal spirits; conversely, any restriction of curiosity and inquiry very soon proves to be psychologically depressing and morally disastrous, leading to trickery and lies. Sometimes (certainly at present) we may fear that the discovery of truth is dangerous or inopportune; nevertheless, we must risk it.

I have not mentioned the final proposition in the classical eulogy of science: that science is useful, it finds out all kinds of things for the general welfare. Precisely in our times, thoughtful scientists might, on reflection, deny this. "The invention of flight, for example, is probably, on balance, a curse" (John Ullmann). From Hiroshima on, many scientists, for instance those associated with the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, have shouldered responsibility for the spectacularly bad consequences of their work. This certainly does not mean that they give up studying nuclear physics; it does mean that they try to select and control the technical applications.

When we turn to technical applications we are in the realm of prudence and choice, we weigh and balance values, take account of consequences, and realize that consequences are often incalculable. But—apart from the recent cases of the [nuclear] bombs and fall-out, some smoke control, and the traditional cautiousness of medical men—there have been almost no criteria in this field beyond cost and marketability (and legality). On the contrary, the policy in advanced countries has been "as much as possible of all the latest," and the policy in backward countries is now "all of it, as quickly as possible." Yet this technology determines our ways of life. Ideally we should pay the most serious attention to selecting each particular innovation for mass adoption, and to continually reviewing the technology we have. At least we should be ruthless in halting the further proliferation of those machines and their complexes that have demonstrably become ruinous, like the cars and roads.

Start with the criterion of Utility. And consider the limiting case of Afro-Asian regions of dire poverty and drudgery, populous and industrially backward. What capital and technicians are useful?

The demand of the Western-trained leaders in these regions (it is hard to know what the people would choose) is to industrialize totally on advanced Western models as quickly as possible, and attain something like the American standard of living. The policy to accomplish this may be to concentrate at once on heavy industry, steel mills, machine tools; or, less radically, to devote part of the production to native goods for export, to build up a balance of trade. Either way, the policy means hard work without immediate rewards, curtailment of consumption, a stringent and likely totalitarian dictatorship both for work-discipline and for very long-range planning, a corresponding increase of the bureaucracy, the enforcing of new work habits, the disruption of the age-old community forms, occasional famines, sometimes the need to repress tribal revolts. Further, there are bound to be immense mistakes; nor is it surprising if, at the end of the process, much has been created that is already outmoded, and even more that does not, after all, suit the native conditions, materials, and uses. Such things could be documented again and again from the history of the industrialization of Russia, India, Israel, China, the Congo, etc., etc.

This policy is understandable as a reaction of despair to economic and political colonialism, leading people to produce bombers and bombs before anything else. Importantly, however, it is an illusion sprung from a superstitious notion of what it means to be modern and scientific. As such, it is abetted by foreign promoters who are interested in exporting pipelines, mining machinery, and paved roads. But also governments and international agencies, claiming to have only benevolent aims, willingly go along with it. Yet if there were no wish to make profits or wield political influence, it would certainly be more useful to restrict the import of technology, specifically to give each region as soon as possible a self-supporting livelihood: the industries and techniques directly necessary for the maximum mass production of basic subsistence, food, shelter, medicine, and clothing where it is essential. And otherwise hands off…

To make people quickly self-supporting would be a far cheaper gift and in the long run a safer investment. People would be better off almost at once and could then think up the advantages that come marginally next in order. They could make their own community adjustments to the new conditions. In the production of subsistence goods there cannot be great mistakes, for people know the values involved. Less prior training is required. Less is wasted on politicians and policemen; it is more difficult for grafters to take their toll. People come to a higher standard according to

their own style and choice, and therefore can develop a living culture out of what they have, instead of suffering a profound alienation. And the relation of means and ends is fairly direct, so that people are not mystified.

For such a policy, the primary technicians required are geographers and physicians, to ascertain the health and resources of each region, then engineers and anthropologically trained craftsmen-teachers and agronomists There is not so much need for geologists, metallurgists, etc, nor for economists and urbanists. And no need at all for geopoliticians, promoters, and commissars.

If we turn, next, to our own, the most advanced country, the need for selection is equally obvious, though less drastic. It is now generally conceded that much of our production for consumption is humanly useless, of poor quality, wasteful and demoralizing. (Meantime, economically, 30 percent of our people live in hardship, there is a critical shortage of housing, and so forth.) But in discussing the Affluent Society, let us by-pass utility as a familiar topic, and develop other criteria.

Efficiency, among us, tends to be measured solely in terms of a particular machine—e.g., gasoline per mile—or in terms of a particular complex of industrial operations—e.g., using the by-products. But if we look at our production more philosophically, in larger wholes and more remote effects, we see that some of our most cherished technical assumptions lead to inefficiency. We centralize as if the prime mover were still a huge steam engine that had to keep hot. For instance, it can be demonstrated that, except in highly automated factories where labor cost is small compared to fixed capital, or in heavy mining attached to its site, for the most part large industrial plants and concentrations of industry are less efficient than smaller ones that assemble parts machined in small shops; it is cheaper to transport the parts than the workers, a worker wastes more than an hour a day going to work and parking, etc. (No doubt an important reason for the concentration of big plants has nothing to do with technical efficiency, but with managerial control. I would strongly urge the unions to ask for some of that travel time to be paid, as the mine workers asked for portal-to-portal pay. Maybe that would lead to more efficient planning. As it is, however—for a reason that quite escapes me—a workman cannot count his carfare or fuel as a business expense against his income tax!) Certainly in the layout of cities, almost any kind of neighborhood plan and community-centered production would be far more efficient than our suburbs.

Similarly, by the evident principle that as the unit cost of production falls, the unit cost of distribution rises, it is likely that much of the vast technology of food processing and transportation is inefficient. Back in the thirties, when times were

harder, Ralph Borsodi showed experimentally that, using domestic electrical appara-
tus, it was cheaper in hours and minutes of effort to grow and can one's own toma-
toes than to buy the national brands—not to speak of the quality; other items, e.g.,
wheat and bread, were cheaper not on an individual but on a small co-operative ba-
sis; and still other items were cheaper maximum-mass-produced and nationally dis-
tributed. (I don't think anybody has ever tried to prove that our actual system of
price-controlling semi-monopolies is good for anything at all.) My conclusion is not
that we ought to produce every item in the most efficient way—we have a surplus
and it is not necessary to be all that efficient—but rather that, since our economists
do not habitually survey alternate possibilities and make an accounting, our national
housekeeping has become slovenly. Because of our slovenliness, we fall in bondage
to the supermarket, we cannot get going a co-operative movement, our goods are
poor in quality.

A more human-scaled production has obvious political and cultural advantages;
it allows for more flexible planning, it is more conducive to scientific education and
invention. We complain of the deadening centralism and conformity, and we put up
with them because they are "efficient." But they are inefficient.

We hear rhetoric on the theme of learning to master the machine lest the machine
master us. Let us consider a couple of criteria for the selection of technology and the us-
ers of technology that directly address this problem. If possible, the operation of a ma-
chine should be Transparent and Comprehensible to its users. This can be aided by the
design and casing of the machine, and by the education of the users. An important corol-
lary is that a machine ought to be *repairable* by its *user*. Our present plight is that, in the
use of cars, telephones, electricity and gas systems, radio equipment, refrigeration, etc.,
etc., the mass of people are in bondage to a system of service men for even trivial repairs.
The service men notoriously take advantage, but much worse is the tendency of the man-
ufacturers to build obsolescence and nonrepairability *into* the machinery. (This is a nega-
tive criterion indeed! But it is inevitable that a caste possessing mysterious knowledge
will shear the sheep.) What is the consequence? Psychologically, we have developed an
anxious climate in which we don't know how to buy because we can't judge quality. It
would be very different if we began to introduce the convention that a consumer must
learn to take apart a machine and know how it works before he is encouraged to buy
it—much as some of us still frown on an adolescent who cannot fix his broken bicycle.
To make an analogy: considering the quantity of cars and mileage, there are remarkably
few automobile accidents, but this is because the Americans have been tested and know
how to drive.

Fifty years ago, the twin ideas of Progressive Education (learning by doing) and Functionalism in planning and design were matured to meet just this problem of making people more adequate to their new technological means, and of molding the new means into a shape and style more able to be grasped. Both movements, and also the related pragmatic philosophy, were criticized as antihumanistic, as abandoning classical education and traditional canons of beauty. But their principle was precisely humanistic, to reintegrate the new scientific specialism with the common intellectual and moral life… The British biologist Patrick Geddes, when he championed these ideas fifty years ago, however, saw that we must also select among the technologies. He was in the moral tradition of Ruskin, Morris, and the Garden City planners; they had experienced the profound dehumanization of the coal towns. But Geddes imagined that history was on his side, for the "neotechnology" of electricity had come to replace the "paleotechnology" of coal and steam. Electricity satisfied the criterion of cleanliness (Amenity); and its easy transmission allowed ubiquitous sources of power, therefore we could plan more freely, e.g., for the culture of cities (the phrase is Lewis Mumford's, a disciple of Geddes). Some of what Geddes hoped for has come about; but on the whole the "forces of history" have not helped us much, in the absence of positive political and moral selection. And by a melancholy irony—history is good at creating melancholy irony—most of us followers of Geddes wryly praise the hideous old slums over the neotechnological slums, for they had more human scale and pullulation of life!

Finally, let us turn to some uncritical applications of science in biology and psychology. The most obvious illustration is the craze for antibiotic drugs. These have been mass produced and promoted—with a simply fascinating lack of corresponding reduction in price—with a now conceded disregard of the organism as a whole. A powerful therapy, indicated for emergencies (e.g., for a dangerous mastoiditis), is used for a quick cure of minor or really systemic infections. Similarly, central-system sedatives and tranquilizers are administered with disregard to malnutrition, bad living habits, and bad environment. Meantime, the scientific "untechnological" tradition of medicine, from Hippocrates on—diet, exercise, natural living, airs, and places—is neglected; and the crucial factor of resistance to disease, the profoundest secret in medicine (just as prevention is its glory), is not studied. Mass immunity to a host of particular symptoms seems to be the sought-for goal, rather than the optimum possible health of each particular organism. But the aim of medicine is not, as such, to increase the average life span of a population—a person can be kept alive as a vegetable for years—but to foster the quality of life. If we want a single word for the

criterion of selection that is here being abused, it is perhaps Relevance to the thing being treated.

The irrelevant application of technology to psychology is too rich to cope with; it would carry us away. Let us just mention the usual typical items. Dr. Skinner of Harvard has invented a machine that is useful for reinforcing appropriate responses, so it is now to be mass produced as a teaching machine, though it is irrelevant to the chief factors in either teaching or learning. (The purpose is to save money on teachers and have even bigger classes.) A new computer is installed in Iowa that can score millions of standard tests in very little time, so my boy's class is interrupted to take these tests, and the curriculum will surely be modified for the convenience of a mechanical scorer. In a town in Maine a well-financed research project, involving seventeen variables and plenty of work for the rented computer, discovers that boys tend to elect shop and girls tend to elect cooking; the author of the report comments "We used to think that this was so, now we know." What criterion is being violated here?

Perhaps it is Modesty: to have as few machines, methods, products (and research projects) as possible. Space is limited; people are multiplying; but the machines have multiplied most, with overpowering effect. The bridges and roads are more impressive than the rivers they span and the places they connect. Most immodest of all are the techniques of communication that have cluttered up the void and silence with images and words. It is now the rule that books are written to keep presses running, and the more radio channels we tap, the more drivel will be invented to broadcast.

Thus I have touched on half a dozen criteria for the humane selection of technologies: utility, efficiency, comprehensibility, repairability, ease and flexibility of use, amenity and modesty. These values are esteemed by scientists and engineers; they are common ground between science and the humanities; they do not entail any conflict. Why are they not generally evident in our "scientific" society?

71. Paul Feyerabend: Against Method (1975)

Paul Feyerabend (1924-1994) is perhaps best known for his radical critique of science, despite having once been a prominent proponent of "eliminative materialism" (the doctrine that reduces reality to the material entities postulated by scientific theory, denying even self-consciousness). His subsequent "epistemological anarchism" had two aspects. On the one hand, he argued that science was just one way of conceiving reality that could not be shown to have any more validity than any other world view or cosmogony, which leads to a kind of "ontological anarchism" (see in particular Feyerabend's Farewell to Reason, *London:*

Verso/New Left Books, 1987). On the other hand, he argued that with respect to the scientific method adopted to prove a new scientific theory that was incompatible with preceding theories, "anything goes." This "methodological" anarchism has been denounced by some people as some kind of moral relativism. Feyerabend's point was that scientific theorists cannot be bound by the rules or laws of the old science because it is precisely the old science that they seek to overturn. Despite Feyerabend's philosophical radicalism, politically he was more of a liberal than an anarchist, drawing on John Stuart Mill's defence of freedom of expression in support of tolerance of opposing points of view (for example, in Science in a Free Society, *London: New Left Books, 1978)). Feyerabend had only a superficial acquaintance with anarchist ideas and associated anarchism with violence, revealing the degree to which his political views remained well within conventional boundaries. Like Bakunin (Volume 1, Selection 24), Feyerabend opposed "government of science," but instead of seeking the abolition of the state and other authoritarian institutions, merely called for their separation. However, his rejection of "universal ideas such as 'Truth,' 'Reason,' 'Justice,' 'Love' " echoes Max Stirner's denunciation of such concepts as "spooks" or "wheels in the head" that are used to dominate the individual (Volume 1, Selection 11). The following excerpts are taken from Feyerabend's* Against Method: Outline of an anarchistic theory of knowledge *(London: Verso, 1975), reprinted with the kind permission of the publisher.*

EPISTEMOLOGICAL ANARCHISM DIFFERS BOTH from skepticism and from political (religious) anarchism. While the skeptic either regards every view as equally good, or as equally bad, or desists from making such judgments altogether, the epistemological anarchist has no compunction to defend the most trite, or the most outrageous statement. While the political or the religious anarchist wants to remove a certain form of life, the epistemological anarchist may want to defend it, for he has no everlasting loyalty to, and no everlasting aversion against, any institution or any ideology. Like the Dadaist, whom he resembles much more than he resembles the political anarchist, he 'not only has no programme, [is] against all programmes' [Hans Richter, Dada: Art and Anti-Art], though he will on occasion be the most vociferous defender of the status quo, or of his opponents: 'to be a true Dadaist, one must also be an anti-Dadaist.' His aims remain stable, or change as a result of argument, or of boredom, or of a conversion experience, or to impress a mistress, and so on. Given some aim, he may try to approach it with the help of organized groups, or alone; he may use reason, emotion, ridicule, an 'attitude of serious concern' and whatever other means have been invented by humans to get the better of their fellow men. His favourite pastime is to confuse rationalists by inventing compelling reasons for unreasonable doctrines. There is no view, however 'absurd' or 'immoral,' he refuses to

consider or to act upon, and no method is regarded as indispensable. The one thing he opposes positively and absolutely are universal standards, universal laws, universal ideas such as 'Truth,' 'Reason,' 'Justice,' 'Love' and the behaviour they bring along, though he does not deny that it is often good policy to act as if such laws (such standards, such ideas) existed, and as if he believed in them. He may approach the religious anarchist in his opposition to science and the material world, he may outdo any Nobel Prize winner in his vigorous defence of scientific purity. He has no objection to regarding the fabric of the world as described by science and revealed by his senses as a chimera that either conceals a deeper and, perhaps, spiritual reality, or as a mere web of dreams that reveals, and conceals, nothing…

'The realization that reason and anti-reason, sense and nonsense, design and chance, consciousness and unconsciousness [I would add, humanitarianism and anti-humanitarianism] belong together as a necessary part of a whole—this was the central message of Dada,' writes Hans Richter. The epistemological anarchist agrees, though he would not express himself in such a constipated manner…

The idea that science can, and should, be run according to fixed and universal rules, is both unrealistic and pernicious. It is *unrealistic*, for it takes too simple a view of the talents of man and of the circumstances which encourage, or cause, their development. And it is *pernicious*, for the attempt to enforce the rules is bound to increase our professional qualifications at the expense of our humanity. In addition, the idea is *detrimental to science*, for it neglects the complex physical and historical conditions which influence scientific change. It makes our science less adaptable and more dogmatic: every methodological rule is associated with cosmological assumptions, so that using the rule we take it for granted that the assumptions are correct. Naive falsificationism takes it for granted that the laws of nature are manifest and not hidden beneath disturbances of considerable magnitude. Empiricism takes it for granted that sense experience is a better mirror of the world than pure thought. Praise of argument takes it for granted that the artifices of Reason give better results than the unchecked play of our emotions. Such assumptions may be perfectly plausible *and even true*. Still, one should occasionally put them to a test. Putting them to a test means that we stop using the methodology associated with them, start doing science in a different way and see what happens… All methodologies have their limitations and the only 'rule' that survives is 'anything goes'…

The rise of modern science coincides with the suppression of non-Western tribes by Western invaders. The tribes are not only physically suppressed, they also lose their intellectual independence and are forced to adopt the bloodthirsty religion

of brotherly love—Christianity. The most intelligent members get an extra bonus: they are introduced into the mysteries of Western Rationalism and its peak—Western Science. Occasionally this leads to an almost unbearable tension with tradition (Haiti). In most cases the tradition disappears without the trace of an argument, one simply becomes a slave both in body and in mind. Today this development is gradually reversed—with great reluctance, to be sure, but it is reversed. Freedom is regained, old traditions are rediscovered, both among the minorities in Western countries and among large populations in non-Western continents. *But science still reigns supreme*. It reigns supreme because its practitioners are *unable to understand*, and *unwilling to condone*, different ideologies, because they have the *power* to enforce their wishes, and because they *use* this power just as their ancestors used *their* power to force Christianity on the peoples they encountered during their conquests. Thus, while an American can now choose the religion he likes, he is still not permitted to demand that his children learn magic rather than science at school. There is a separation between state and church, there is no separation between state and science.

And yet science has no greater authority than any other form of life. Its aims are certainly not more important than are the aims that guide the lives in a religious community or in a tribe that is united by a myth. At any rate, they have no business restricting the lives, the thoughts, the education of the members of a free society where everyone should have a chance to make up his own mind and to live in accordance with the social beliefs he finds most acceptable. The separation between state and church must therefore be complemented by the separation between state and science.

We need not fear that such a separation will lead to a breakdown of technology. There will always be people who prefer being scientists to being the masters of their fate and who gladly submit to the meanest kind of (intellectual and institutional) slavery provided they are paid well and provided also there are some people around who examine their work and sing their praise. Greece developed and progressed because it could rely on the services of unwilling slaves. We shall develop and progress with the help of the numerous *willing* slaves in universities and laboratories who provide us with pills, gas, electricity, atom bombs, frozen dinners and, occasionally, with a few interesting fairy-tales. We shall treat these slaves well, we shall even listen to them, for they have occasionally some interesting stories to tell, but we shall *not* permit them to impose their ideology on our children in the guise of 'progressive' theories of education. We shall not permit them to teach the fancies of science as if they were the only factual statements in existence. This separation of science and state

may be our only chance to overcome the hectic barbarism of our scientific-technical age and to achieve a humanity we are capable of but have never fully realized...

The image of 20th century science in the minds of scientists and laymen is determined by technological miracles such as colour television, the moon shots, the infra-red oven, as well as by a somewhat vague but still quite influential rumour, or fairy-tale, concerning the manner in which these miracles are produced.

According to the fairy-tale the success of science is the result of a subtle, but carefully balanced combination of inventiveness and control. Scientists have *ideas*. And they have special *methods* for improving ideas. The theories of science have passed the test of method. They give a better account of the world than ideas which have not passed the test.

The fairy-tale explains why modern society treats science in a special way and why it grants it privileges not enjoyed by other institutions...

State and science... work closely together. Immense sums are spent on the improvement of scientific ideas. Bastard subjects such as the philosophy of science which have not a single discovery to their credit profit from the boom of the sciences. Even human relations are dealt with in a scientific manner, as is shown by education programs, proposals for prison reform, army training, and so on. Almost all scientific subjects are compulsory subjects in our schools. While the parents of a six year old child can decide to have him instructed in the rudiments of Protestantism, or in the rudiments of the Jewish faith, or to omit religious instruction altogether, they do not have a similar freedom in the case of the sciences. Physics, astronomy, history *must* be learned. They cannot be replaced by magic, astrology, or by a study of legends.

Nor is one content with a merely *historical* presentation of physical (astronomical, historical, etc.) facts and principles. One does not say: *some people believe* that the earth moves round the sun while others regard the earth as a hollow sphere that contains the sun, the planets, the fixed stars. One says: the earth *moves* round the sun—everything else is sheer idiocy...

Even bold and revolutionary thinkers bow to the judgment of science. Kropotkin wants to break up all existing institutions—but he does not touch science. Ibsen goes very far in unmasking the conditions of contemporary humanity—but he still retains science as a measure of the truth. Evans-Pritchard, Levi-Strauss and others have recognized that 'Western Thought,' far from being a lonely peak of human development, is troubled by problems not found in other ideologies—but they exclude science from their relativization of all forms of thought. Even for them science is a *neutral structure* containing *positive knowledge* that is independent of culture, ideology, prejudice.

The reason for this special treatment of science is, of course, our little fairy-tale: if science has found a method that turns ideologically contaminated ideas into true and useful theories, then it is indeed not mere ideology, but an objective measure of all ideologies. It is then not subjected to the demand for a separation between state and ideology.

But the fairy-tale is false… There is no special method that guarantees success or makes it probable. Scientists do not solve problems because they possess a magic wand—methodology, or a theory of rationality—but because they have studied a problem for a long time, because they know the situation fairly well, because they are not too dumb (though that is rather doubtful nowadays when almost anyone can become a scientist), and because the excesses of one scientific school are almost always balanced by the excesses of some other school. (Besides, scientists only rarely solve their problems, they make lots of mistakes, and many of their solutions are quite useless.) Basically there is hardly any difference between the process that leads to the announcement of a new scientific law and the process preceding passage of a new law in society: one informs either all citizens or those immediately concerned, one collects 'facts' and prejudices, one discusses the matter, and one finally votes. But while a democracy makes some effort to *explain* the process so that everyone can understand it, scientists either *conceal* it, or bend *it*, to make it fit their sectarian interests.

No scientist will admit that voting plays a role in his subject. Facts, logic, and methodology alone decide—this is what the fairy-tale tells us. But how do facts decide? What is their function in the advancement of knowledge? We cannot *derive* our theories from them. We cannot give a *negative* criterion by saying, for example, that good theories are theories which can be refuted, but which are not yet contradicted by any fact. A principle of falsification that removes theories because they do not fit the facts would have to remove the whole of science (or it would have to admit that large parts of science are irrefutable). The hint that a good theory *explains more* than its rivals is not very realistic either. True: new theories often predict new things—but almost always at the expense of things already known. Turning to logic we realize that even the simplest demands *are not* satisfied in scientific practice, and *could not be* satisfied, because of the complexity of the material. The ideas which scientists use to present the known and to advance into the unknown are only rarely in agreement with the strict injunctions of logic or pure mathematics and the attempt to make them conform would rob science of the elasticity without which progress cannot be achieved. We see: facts alone are not strong enough for making us accept, or reject, scientific theories, the range they leave to thought is *too wide*; logic and methodology

eliminate too much, they are *too narrow*. In between these two extremes lies the ever-changing domain of human ideas and wishes. And a more detailed analysis of successful moves in the game of science ('successful' from the point of view of the scientists themselves) shows indeed that there is a wide range of freedom that *demands* a multiplicity of ideas and *permits* the application of democratic procedures (ballot-discussion-vote) but that is actually closed by power politics and propaganda. *This is where the fairy-tale of a special method assumes its decisive function.* It conceals the freedom of decision which creative scientists and the general public have even inside the most rigid and the most advanced parts of science by a recitation of 'objective' criteria and it thus protects the big-shots (Nobel Prize winners; heads of laboratories, of organizations such as the AMA, of special schools; 'educators'; etc.) from the masses (laymen; experts in non-scientific fields; experts in other fields of science): only those citizens count who were subjected to the pressures of scientific institutions (they have undergone a long process of education), who succumbed to these pressures (they have passed their examinations), and who are now firmly convinced of the truth of the fairy-tale. This is how scientists have deceived themselves and everyone else about their business, but without any real disadvantage: they have more money, more authority, more sex appeal than they deserve, and the most stupid procedures and the most laughable results in their domain are surrounded with an aura of excellence. It is time to cut them down in size, and to give them a more modest position in society.

This advice, which only few of our well-conditioned contemporaries are prepared to accept, seems to clash with certain simple and widely-known facts.

Is it not a fact that a learned physician is better equipped to diagnose and to cure an illness than a layman or the medicine-man of a primitive society? Is it not a fact that epidemics and dangerous individual diseases have disappeared only with the beginning of modern medicine? Must we not admit that technology has made tremendous advances since the rise of modern science? And are not the moon-shots a most impressive and undeniable proof of its excellence? These are some of the questions which are thrown at the impudent wretch who dares to criticize the special position of the sciences.

The questions reach their polemical aim only if one assumes that the results of science *which no one will deny* have arisen without any help from non-scientific elements, and that they cannot be improved by an admixture of such elements either. 'Unscientific' procedures such as the herbal lore of witches and cunning men, the astronomy of mystics, the treatment of the ill in primitive societies, are totally without

merit. *Science alone* gives us a useful astronomy, an effective medicine, a trustworthy technology. One must also assume that science owes its success to the correct method and not merely to a lucky accident. It was not a fortunate cosmological guess that led to progress, but the correct *and cosmologically neutral* handling of data. These are the assumptions we must make to give the questions the polemical force they are supposed to have. Not a single one of them stands up to closer examination.

Modern astronomy started with the attempt of Copernicus to adapt the old ideas of Philolaos to the needs of astronomical predictions. Philolaos was not a precise scientist, he was a muddleheaded Pythagorean... the consequences of his doctrine were called 'incredibly ridiculous' by a professional astronomer such as Ptolemy. Even Galileo, who had the much improved Copernican version of Philolaos before him, says: 'There is no limit to my astonishment when I reflect that Aristarchus and Copernicus were able to make reason to conquer sense that, in defiance of the latter, the former became mistress of their belief' (*Dialogue*, 328). 'Sense' here refers to the experiences which Aristotle and others had used to show that the earth must be at rest. The 'reason' which Copernicus opposes to their arguments is the very mystical reason of Philolaos combined with an equally mystical faith ('mystical' from the point of view of today's rationalists) in the fundamental character of circular motion... modern astronomy and modern dynamics could not have advanced without this unscientific use of antediluvian ideas...

Of course—not every mixture of scientific and non-scientific elements is successful (example: Lysenko). But science is not always successful either. If mixtures are to be avoided because they occasionally misfire, then pure science (if there is such a thing) must be avoided as well. (It is not the *interference* of the state that is objectionable in the Lysenko case, but the *totalitarian* interference that kills the opponent instead of letting him go his own way.)

Combining this observation with the insight that science has no special method, we arrive at the result that the separation of science and non-science is not only artificial but also detrimental to the advancement of knowledge. If we want to understand nature, if we want to master our physical surroundings, then we must use *all* ideas, *all* methods, and not just a small selection of them. The assertion, however, that there is no knowledge outside science... is nothing but another and most convenient fairy-tale. Primitive tribes have more detailed classifications of animals and plants than contemporary scientific zoology and botany, they know remedies whose effectiveness astounds physicians (while the pharmaceutical industry already smells here a new source of income), they have means of influencing their fellow men

which science for a long time regarded as non-existent (Voodoo), they solve difficult problems in ways which are still not quite understood (building of the pyramids; Polynesian travels), there existed a highly developed and internationally known astronomy in the old Stone Age, this astronomy was factually adequate *as well as* emotionally satisfying, *it solved both physical and social problems* (one cannot say the same about modern astronomy) and it was tested in very simple and ingenious ways (stone observatories in England and in the South Pacific; astronomical schools in Polynesia…). There was the domestication of animals, the invention of rotating agriculture, new types of plants were bred and kept pure by careful avoidance of cross fertilization, we have chemical inventions, we have a most amazing art that can compare with the best achievements of the present. True, there were no collective excursions to the moon, but single individuals, disregarding great dangers to their soul and their sanity, rose from sphere to sphere to sphere until they finally faced God himself in all His splendour while others changed into animals and back into humans again. At all times man approached his surroundings with wide open senses and a fertile intelligence, at all times he made incredible discoveries, at all times we can learn from his ideas.

Modern science, on the other hand, is not at all as difficult and as perfect as scientific propaganda wants us to believe. A subject such as medicine, or physics, or biology appears difficult only because it is taught badly, because the standard instructions are full of redundant material, and because they start too late in life. During the war, when the American Army needed physicians within a very short time, it was suddenly possible to reduce medical instruction to half a year (the corresponding instruction manuals have disappeared long ago, however. Science may be simplified during the war. In peacetime the prestige of science demands greater complication.) And how often does it not happen that the proud and conceited judgment of an expert is put in its proper place by a layman! Numerous inventors built 'impossible' machines. Lawyers show again and again that an expert does not know what he is talking about. Scientists, especially physicians, frequently come to different results so that it is up to the relatives of the sick person (or the inhabitants of a certain area) to decide *by vote* about the procedure to be adopted. How often is science improved, and turned into new directions by non-scientific influences! It is up to us, it is up to the citizens of a free society to either accept the chauvinism of science without contradiction or to overcome it by the counterforce of public action. Public action was used against science by the Communists in China in the fifties, and it was again used, under very different circumstances, by some opponents of evolution in

California in the seventies. Let us follow their example and let us free society from the strangling hold of an ideologically petrified science just as our ancestors freed us from the strangling hold of the One True Religion!

The way towards this aim is clear. A science that insists on possessing the only correct method and the only acceptable results is ideology and must be separated from the state, and especially from the process of education. One may teach it, but only to those who have decided to make this particular superstition their own. On the other hand, a science that has dropped such totalitarian pretensions is no longer independent and self-contained, and it can be taught in many different combinations (myth and modern cosmology might be one such combination). Of course, every business has the right to demand that its practitioners be prepared in a special way, and it may even demand acceptance of a certain ideology (I for one am against the thinning out of subjects so that they become more and more similar to each other; whoever does not like present-day Catholicism should leave it and become a Protestant, or an Atheist, instead of ruining it by such inane changes as mass in the vernacular). That is true of physics, just as it is true of religion, or of prostitution. But such special ideologies, such special skills have no room in the process of *general education* that prepares a citizen for his role in society. A mature citizen is not a man who has been *instructed* in a special ideology, such as Puritanism, or critical rationalism, and who now carries this ideology with him like a mental tumour, a mature citizen is a person who has learned how to make up his mind and who has then *decided* in favour of what he thinks suits him best. He is a person who has a certain mental toughness (he does not fall for the first ideological street singer he happens to meet) and who is therefore able *consciously to choose* the business that seems to be most attractive to him rather than being swallowed by it. To prepare himself for his choice he will study the major ideologies as *historical phenomena*, he will study science as a historical phenomenon and not as the one and only sensible way of approaching a problem. He will study it together with other fairy-tales such as the myths of 'primitive' societies so that he has the information needed for arriving at a free decision. An essential part of a general education of this kind is acquaintance with the most outstanding propagandists in all fields, so that the pupil can build up his resistance against all propaganda, including the propaganda called 'argument.' It is only *after* such a hardening procedure that he will be called upon to make up his mind on the issue rationalism- irrationalism, science-myth, science-religion, and so on. His decision in favour of science—assuming he chooses science—will then be much more 'rational' than any decision in favour of science is today. At any rate—science and the

schools will be just as carefully separated as religion and the schools are separated today. Scientists will of course participate in governmental decisions, for everyone participates in such decisions. But they will not be given overriding authority. It is the *vote of everyone concerned* that decides fundamental issues such as the teaching methods used, or the truth of basic beliefs such as the theory of evolution, or the quantum theory, and not the authority of big-shots hiding behind a nonexisting methodology. There is no need to fear that such a way of arranging society will lead to undesirable results. Science itself uses the method of ballot, discussion, vote, though without a clear grasp of its mechanism, and in a heavily biased way. But the rationality of our beliefs will certainly be considerably increased.

72. Richard Kostelanetz: Technoanarchism (1968)

Richard Kostelanetz is a writer, artist, critic, editor and cultural commentator sympathetic to anarchism. In this essay from 1968, reprinted in Political Essays: From 1959-1998 *(New York: Autonomedia, 1999), he argues that instead of rejecting modern technology, anarchists should try to utilize it for libertarian ends. Reprinted with the kind permission of the author.*

THE ANARCHIST TRADITION CLEARLY HAS more relevance now than either Marxist or conservative thinking; and the recent influence of, say, Paul Goodman's essays suggests, if nothing else, that an essentially anarchist critique of bureaucratic systems, social grandiosity, and power concentrations strikes much sympathetic response. Few would disagree with Goodman's primary contention that "over-centralization is the disease of modern times." Key developments of modern society reveal the particular pertinence of certain traditionally anarchist concerns, such as the diffusion of social power, an appropriate scale for human organization, the boundaries of personal privacy, individual responsibility in collective situations, reasons for civil disobedience, and the elimination of genuine choice. The world is filled with evidence for William Godwin's contention that government corrupts society.

However, as a nominal anarchist, which is to say that I carry no card, I find that today's anarchist philosophers are deficient on two major issues. They make the archaic mistake of regarding technology as culturally pernicious, as a common theme in anarchistic thought portrays the human spirit and its creations rescuing man from his machines. To Sir Herbert Read, modern anarchism's most distinguished publicist, abstract art represents typically "an estimable reaction to the mechanization of life." In a second fallacy, most contemporary anarchists regard urban life as contrary to human nature and personal realization; for in anarchist metaphysics the city represents centralization, while rural life epitomizes decentralization.

The idea of the city as centralizing draws glibly upon the fact of human concentration. However, the city as an environment has an effect quite different from what this mythology suggests. Variety defines life in all metropolises, even those with comparatively homogenous populations: and that distinctly urban quality we call "cosmopolitan" depends upon access to a rich diversity of cultural spheres. This explains why, as Marshall McLuhan observed, "The city as a total environment is the ungraded and unstructured school *in excelsis*, [accelerating the development of] human consciousness by stepping up the intensity of human interface." For another thing, an urban community usually makes far fewer demands upon its citizens' thought and behaviour than rural life, in part because urban authorities are less concerned with encouraging the right way (as is more prevalent in small communities) than with discouraging the wrong ones. Urban life is therefore less constricting, and social relationships can be more various and plentiful, as generations of, say, both single young women and homosexuals have always known. If the lady in the provinces is not married by her middle twenties, having exhausted the potential candidates at home, the city offers the most feasible alternative to isolated spinsterhood; and to the homosexual the city promises not only an escape from organized scorn but also a larger selection of possible companions. As Harvey Cox observes in *The Secular City*, "The anonymity of the city helps preserve the privacy which is essential to human life."

Indeed, this greater variety of choice is precisely the characteristic quality and the greatest advantage of urban life, for it is the nature of numbers to support a greater collection of life-styles and activities; and in pluralistic diversity, notwithstanding the limitations in physical space, ultimately lies cultural decentralization. Typically, whereas a town of a few thousand cannot underwrite a performing theater, the city of over a million can support several. One reason why the standardized fare of Hollywood movies and television is more influential in rural areas stems from the lack of accessible competition; and this fact in turn partially explains why rural communities seem more thoroughly integrated into the dominant society—and why its people feel more intimately related to established federal power than city dwellers. No one living in the city can fail to acquire the crucial awareness that people are more various than similar, that a diversity of viewpoints naturally exists, and that tolerance of eccentricity is socially necessary. As an urban anarchist I for one would sooner see, to paraphrase McLuhan, the world become a global city than a "global village."

Though technology has always served to extend man's physical functioning, the machines of the first industrial revolution had a centralizing and dehumanizing effect upon society The enterprises of capitalism collected a succession of jobs within

an organized production line and assigned to each labourer (and each machine) a repetitive task; and both the real machines and the machine-like human labourer were programmed to produce a thoroughly standardized product. Centralization of effort and materials was a reasonable prerequisite to this kind of mass-production, in order to distribute the total effort and to overcome counterproductive disorganization. Deleterious as this new kind of work was, the facts remain that agrarian labour prior to technology could be just as repetitious and demeaning as the assembling line and that certain anarchist visions (often just implied) of an earlier bucolic society of craftsmen represent a falsification of history. In pre-industrial society, work was harder, labour took much longer, disease was more prevalent and debilitating; so that no culture could support more than a small percentage of itself as craftsmen. (Indeed, seeds and dirt still possess no particular power, anti-urban romanticism notwithstanding, for making arduous work more enlightening than exhausting.) Furthermore, over the course of history, repetitive, semi-skilled work has progressively succumbed to old-style technologies, which can perform a rote task far cheaper, faster, and more reliably (as well as amenably) than human labour; and automation serves to remove such labour from human touch. Secondly, the tasks that today's automatic machinery cannot do are largely those requiring taste and judgment; and precisely because such jobs require various kinds of operations, they demand competences that are more intelligent than manual, as well as more general (and truly humane) than specialized.

The scarcely acknowledged truth is that the new machines of the second industrial revolution are so radically different from traditional mechanization that they have an entirely different impact upon both labour and its produce. Computer-assisted automation includes a capability contrary to standardization, for in the machine's memory capacity is the power to vary key specifications in the course of the production line—items such as the colour of the car, the shape of the tail pipe, the addition or exclusion of certain "extras," all without any human intervention. Precisely because these details can be programmed in advance of the actual production process, the customer can literally specify all the available variables of his own car before it is physically produced… This revolution in production returns the process of manufacture to its premechanical condition of personalized attention.

Another implication of contemporary technology escaping anarchist thought so far is that more profit can be made by organizing machines than by exploiting nature or man. Automation elaborates Henry Ford's practical dictum that the most effective way to cut cost lies not in cheaper material or even cheaper labour but

through a more efficient production process; for comprehensive automation largely eliminates human labour that was inefficient to the process, as well as volatile and deadening to the worker, in addition to establishing a production process so autonomous that it can easily produce twenty-four hours a day with minimum supervision. Moreover, the machines can change so rapidly from one kind of specification to another that the cost of the end-product lies not in change-over (and, thus, individual idiosyncrasy) as in the old machinery or human labour, but in the availability of various selected materials. Beyond that, the industries of automation, such as data processing and electronic communications, possess unprecedented capabilities for increasing their volume without significantly increasing their operating costs, completely repudiating the pieties of first-industrial cost-economics (and, thus, its critics too). Here the cost of the basic plant and the computers (usually obtained on a lease) is so considerably more than the cost of making the end product, essentially paper, that rather than hire more workers to cope with increased demand, the excess volume now literally vanishes into the machine.

The elimination of labourious work means that less people are needed to sustain productivity and, then, that non-industrial crafts would become more prominent in materially affluent societies. It follows that the anarchist tradition is more relevant to both these new realities than either the conservative or the Marxist, both of which assume an economics of scarcity and the necessity of specialized work. Anarchism, in contrast, favours not more work for man but less, regarding play (or self-initiated avocations) as more congenial to man's nature and, in contrast, specialized education and/or narrow experience as betraying a human being's innate generalized competence. "Industrialism has released the artist from the necessity of making anything useful," wrote the communitarian Eric Gill in 1931, and precisely by freeing more people from the necessity of productivity, automation increasingly permits everyone his artistic or craftsmanly pursuits. This is one reason why artists today, as a sensitive cultural barometer, are generally more predisposed to technology than their predecessors were; and given their own predispositions, artists are also more inclined to recognize how this second industrial revolution autonomously contributes to traditional anarchist designs. Only by mechanizing everything, can we recognize what remains unmechanizable.

Most anarchist writers regard the new technologies of electronic communication as a centralizing force, for in the standardized output of a television set they see the pernicious mind-control of a passive audience. It is true that television currently offers little variety and even less choice; so that, say, in New York City on any week-

day at eleven in the evening, roughly the same news program is running on several channels. However, this standardization has less to do with the intrinsic capabilities of the medium than its customary use, for most American urban television stations appeal to the majority of the available audience for most hours of the day—house-wives on weekday afternoons, football loving men on autumn weekend afternoons. However, the television set is by nature pluralistic, the mere availability of different channels suggesting that programming could be more various than similar. That fact explains why the experience of finding exactly the same public event, such as a Presidential address or a moon-shot, on all channels invariably amuses, or annoys, an American viewer. The problem now is that television has yet to emulate the example of American radio, where the stations have implicitly agreed to divide the potential audience, as each one creates a particular style of programming that regularly appeals to a definite type of (minority) taste. In New York City, for instance, one radio station plays classical music most of the day, another favours more "serious" and contemporary music, a third specializes in Spanish programs, a fourth "soft" rock and roll, a fifth "hard rock," a sixth semi-classical, a seventh jazz, and so on. Each of these stations will sustain its particular identity (and loyal audience) for most of its programming hours...

The reason why television stations, in contrast, function so unanimously has as much to do with executive insecurity as sheer expense; for the operating costs of a television station, whether privately or state owned, inevitably exceed those of a radio outlet. However, intrinsic in technological advance is unending ephemeralization—the process of doing more with less—which works to reduce both the size and the cost of any electronic operation. Progress of this kind would induce commercial modesty and, thus, more experimentation of all sorts. For one example, a more economical method of video-taping, as well as cheaper and more portable cameras, would decrease an individual station's dependence upon network programming, enabling each outlet more feasibly to produce its own shows and patronize esoteric sources, just as a video-recorder at home endows an individual viewer with an independent capacity to store a program either for a more congenial time or repetitive viewing. Cable television promises not only to increase the number of available stations (as it eschews transmissions through the heavy traffic of the air) and provide more accurate reception; but also to reduce the per station costs of transmission, especially if someone adds new channels to an existing cable network; and in certain rural localities a central cable imports all the stations of the major nearby city further disseminating, in addition to the networks, an essentially urban outlook that is pluralist and perhaps incipiently anarchist. ("Any high-

way eatery with its TV set, newspaper, and magazines," noted Marshall McLuhan, "is as cosmopolitan as New York or Paris.") It seems likely that within a decade television stations, especially those in the larger cities, will discard majority-minded fare for more particularized programming; and even though one or two channels will intentionally become "art houses," so to speak, most will probably continue, alas, to specialize in a certain kind of trash.

Anarchist thought must assimilate two industrial paradoxes that contradict earlier pieties. It must be understood that while the centralization of certain functions may be necessary, the decreased cost of a complicated product, whether mechanical or informational, increases its availability and ultimately functions to decentralize and democratize both its purchase and its use. A second industrial paradox is that the much-praised "decentralization" of divisions in a large corporation... actually diffuses personal responsibility and perhaps decreases the guidance of humane concern. In practice, this form of organization makes the chief of each division (usually a company vice-president) ultimately responsible for its performance; and since his division's success supports his own claims for higher position (or even continued service), this high-incentive circumstance can induce the sub-chief to act ruthlessly, if not illegitimately, within his own domain, often outside the knowledge of his over burdened superiors or the general public. At this level, for instance, lies the motivation for cutting costs, say, in the possible protection against pollution or industrial accidents, or for fixing prices in collaboration with one's immediate competitors...

"Throughout society," notes Paul Goodman, "the centralizing style of organization has been pushed so far as to become ineffectual, economically wasteful, humanly stultifying, and ruinous to democracy." Since the real dehumanizer is not technology but uncaring bureaucracy, decentralization (advocated by both otherwise contrary strains of anarchism) remains this philosophy's most persuasive theme. "The only remedy," Goodman continues, "is a strong admixture of decentralization." Every cartel, if not all unjustified alliances, should be broken apart, and there are even strong cases to be made for decentralizing the pursuit of knowledge, especially scientific research, where excessively great faith is now placed in corporate organization. Independence and competition preserve difference and mobility, as well as providing incentive for self-improvement; and they create preconditions for a dynamic, evolving situation which is on most counts superior to a static one...

It is impossible for anarchists to stop the development of technology nor would it be desirable to do so; but nothing is more imperative for anarchist philosophy today than recognizing the new realities and opportunities that fresh technology

creates. The true contemporary relevance of anarchism lies in positing not an ideology or even obvious (but impractical and ultimately inadvisable) "solutions," such as dismantling the machines, but in offering values to inform both public policy and technological usage. Criticism of cities will not alleviate air pollution, for instance, as effectively and painlessly as less deleterious technologies of energy production, or better technologies of pollutant-removal or the dispersion of urban industry or a comprehensive anarchist concern with the most appropriate relationship between environment and man (plus technology). It should follow that discussions of contemporary society that fail to consider such technological advances as the computer and metallic alloys are comparable to analyses of sexual mores that fail to acknowledge the loop or the pill, both of which, incidentally, fulfill an early anarchist ideal (especially advocated by John Humphrey Noyes) of separating the pleasures of sex from the responsibilities of procreation.

In a world that is continually transforming under our feet, traditional ideals and modes of understanding suffer the threat of archaic irrelevance; so that if the evolutionary and decentralizing humanitarian values of anarchism are to remain germinal, as I think they should, then anarchist philosophy must acknowledge the new conditions as they arise. The current impotence of certain anarchists lies, in contrast, primarily in their pious and rather unexamined objections to technological development and the new world it creates, in addition to a naïve idealization of the craftsman's work (and the society encouraging it). That accounts for why some veteran anarchists, like Goodman in his late 1960s essays, risk irony and misunderstanding by calling themselves "conservative." This development reflects the sense that, as Irving Louis Horowitz observed in the conclusion to his anthology *The Anarchists* (1963), that, "The anarchist never confronted the problems of a vast technology, and ignored them by trying to find his way back to a system of production that was satisfying to the individual producer, rather than feasible for a growing mass society." The neglected reality is that technologies have such a pervasive impact upon the environment that they constitute a kind of second nature, perhaps by now as powerful as primary nature, so a new anarchist philosophy must encompass second nature too, regarding it as similarly cordial if not ultimately harmonious, as initial nature. And if only to identify its commitment to the last third of the twentieth century, perhaps this new attitude should be christened "Technoanarchism."

Note: In response to Horowitz's above quoted claim that the anarchists failed to confront the problem of mass technology (a claim which itself is inaccurate; anarchists confronted the issue of mass technology but generally refused to embrace it, see, for example, Kropotkin's Fields, Fac-

tories and Workshops, *Volume 1, Selection 34, and Gustav Landauer,* For Socialism, *Volume 1, Selection 79), David Watson has written in* Against the Megamachine *(Brooklyn: Autonomedia) that "Horowitz's argument is compelling, but it is posed backwards. Technology has certainly transformed the world, but the question is not whether the anarchist vision of freedom, autonomy, and mutual cooperation is any longer relevant to mass technological civilization. It is more pertinent to ask whether freedom, autonomy, or human cooperation themselves can be possible in such a civilization. I don't think that they can, which is why the anarchist vision does remain 'more relevant than ever'" (pages 165-166).*

73. Ivan Illich: Political Inversion (1976)

In this essay, Ivan Illich (1926-2002) argues for a radical inversion of institutional purposes and rejects Kostelanetz's call for a new "techno-anarchism." Although Illich never identified himself as an anarchist, he was close to Paul Goodman, with whom he shared many ideas regarding contemporary industrial societies. The degree to which Illich was influenced by Goodman is brought out in a series of interviews reviewing his life's work, in which he keeps coming back to conversations with Goodman when describing the development of his own ideas. See Ivan Illich in Conversation, *ed. David Cayley (Toronto: House of Anansi, 1992). Goodman was opposed to* Compulsory Mis-education *(New York: Vintage, 1964), while Illich advocated* Deschooling Society *(New York: Harper & Row, 1971). They were both critical of current technology, bureaucratic institutions, ever increasing consumption and unsustainable growth, arguing in favour of human scale organization and technology comprehensible to and controlled by ordinary people, concepts that Illich referred to as "conviviality" and "convivial tools." He deals with these ideas in greater detail in* Tools for Conviviality *(New York: Harper & Row, 1973). His critique of modern medicine and the health care industry is most fully developed in* Limits to Medicine—Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Health *(Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1976). "Political Inversion" is included in* Imprisoned in the Global Classroom *(London: Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative, 1976) and is reprinted here with the kind permission of the Illich estate.*

INDIVIDUALS NEED TOOLS TO MOVE and dwell. They need remedies for their diseases and resources to communicate with one another. Some of these things people cannot make for themselves. They depend on being supplied with objects and services which vary from culture to culture. Some people depend on the supply of shoes and others on the supply of ovens. Some need to get aspirins and others printing presses.

People do not need only to obtain things; they need above all the freedom to make things among which they can live, to give shape to them according to their own taste, and to put them to use in caring for and about others. Prisoners often have ac-

cess to more things and services than other members of their families, but they have no say in how things are to be made and cannot decide what to do with them. Their punishment consists in being deprived of what I shall call conviviality.

I choose the term conviviality to designate the contrary of institutionalized productivity. I want it to mean autonomous and creative intercourse among persons, and intercourse of persons with their environment, and this in contrast with the conditioned response of persons to the demands made upon them by others or by their milieu. I consider conviviality individual freedom realized in mutual personal interdependence and, as such, an intrinsic ethical value. I believe that without conviviality life becomes meaningless and persons wither. I believe that as conviviality in any society is reduced below a certain level, no level of industrial productivity can effectively satisfy the needs of the members.

Present institutional purposes, hallowing productivity as they do at the expense of conviviality, are a major factor in the amorphousness and meaninglessness plaguing contemporary society. A schoolroom, a hospital, an urban intersection in Czechoslovakia can hardly be distinguished from one in the U.S. or Turkey or Argentina. Tie-ups on access-roads to a capital do not depend on the number of cars per one hundred inhabitants; they are as bad in Rio as they are on Long Island. Undoubtedly the central lane reserved for the party bureaucrats (and emergency vehicles) in Moscow will disappear under the onslaught of products from the new Fiat Factory in the Urals. And the more people in any society think that one must have a car, the less prone they are to take hitchhikers in their empty seats. Conviviality declines with rising productivity.

Since the mid-sixties everyone is beginning to be conscious of the way in which proliferation of goods is spoiling the physical environment. Rising productivity in the supply of manufactured goods has irreversible results in depletion and pollution, because the world's resources are limited and cannot support systems of production which make unlimited use of them. But the inevitable accumulation of durable junk in a constantly obsolescent society is so obvious that I do not want to labour it now.

Rather I intend to extend the concept of entropy. A school of thought is developing according to which the necessity of upper per capita limits in all areas of physical consumption can best be demonstrated by the evidence that world-wide production of energy must be held within certain parameters. On the order of magnitude of these parameters there might be considerable disagreement. (See the three fall issues of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist*.) But most people would agree with the assistant director for energy and environment, Executive Office of President Nixon, that we will soon approach them. He says:

The exhaustion of energy resources is not itself apt to be the crux of the problem. It is the impact on air, water and land in utilizing these tremendous volumes with present technology which is really troublesome, for the environmental and health and safety problems are present, no matter which forms of energy we examine... What seems to me dangerous is that the changes will be gradual and that man will adjust to more and more pollution in a synthetic environment cut off from any natural surroundings. As Rene Dubos has stated, perhaps the greater danger is that man will survive, but gradually lose much of his humaneness.

What I do want to call attention to is a parallel process in the service sector: the fact that rising productivity and supply of services results in the irrecuperable loss of conviviality. It deprives persons of their own potency, of their freedom, and society of the memory that these could once have been treasured.

This reversal of institutional purposes, i.e., from conviviality to productivity, is equally typical for societies where the producer is told that he is in the saddle. It is also used as a measurement of the level of development a society has achieved. Societies in which most people depend for most of their goods and services on the personal whim, kindness or skill of another are called 'underdeveloped,' while those in which living has been transformed into a process of ordering from an all-encompassing store-catalogue are called 'advanced.'

Every aspect of these advanced societies (be they capitalist, Marxist, or whatever) has become part of a larval system for escalating production and consumption that is necessary to justify and pay for it. The classical society of capitalist accumulation is being transformed into a consumer society. The very nature of consumption is in the process of change: intangible merchandise (such as information, education, health) is assuming an ever greater place in the march of progress and its cost rises even more rapidly than that of tangible merchandise (goods). Finally the ethic of conspicuous consumption gives way to the obsessive compulsion to produce insofar as the syndicates aspire to the ethic of the 'leisure mass.'

For this reason, criticism of bad management, official dishonesty, and technological lag simply distract the public attention from the issue which counts. Equally distracting is the suggestion that productivity pursued under the tutelage of a planning board which protects the interests of a majority would lead to less frustrating results than productivity sky-rocketing under the pressure of dissatisfied consumers. Attempts to improve the quality of products, or the equity of their distribution, will only increase pollution, impotency, and overdetermination and rob not only the rich, but also the poor, of conviviality, which now is still their primary treasure.

The progress of science is frequently blamed for this functional shift of institutions from frameworks for action to factories of goods, a shift which in several European languages is reflected in a simultaneous linguistic shift from verb to substantive for the designation of their purpose. For example the activity of housing oneself is reduced to that of purchasing a home; the activity of educating children is reduced to their being given an 'education' (a term called 'vicious' by Voltaire); to go somewhere means to be seated in some mode of transportation.

No doubt it is true that scientific discoveries are now used to render supply-funnels for commodities more copious and allow them to crowd off the scene toolshops for independent enterprise. But all this is not the fault of scientific input in itself. It is rather the result of the intent with which science is applied. Science could be equally well used to increase the tool-kit available to every man, endowing individuals and transient gatherings of associates to constantly re-create their environment with undreamt of freedom and formerly unthinkable self-expression.

In 1945 30% of all houses in Massachusetts were owner-built, at least to some extent; today the figure is down to 19%. Certainly new materials and handy tools could have made possible an increase rather than a decline of housing as an activity expressed by those who want to dwell there.

The number of medicines and knowledge about their usefulness and their side-effects has grown immensely in the last two generations. Yet in the same time information about them has become increasingly restricted; even the Merck Manual is now inaccessible to the layman. Increasingly medicines are considered mysterious and dangerous unless prescribed by a doctor, who does his prescribing quite possibly over a phone.

Books have become cheaper to produce than they ever have been. Yet the number of books purchased yearly by a high school graduate in the U.S. has fallen constantly over the last two decades and is now lower than any comparably developed country. One should think that this would lead at least to the use of other educational devices outside of 'programs,' be they offered in school or over TV. Instead the populace is so thoroughly trained to desire only what is packaged and channeled through a delivery hook-up that most of what all citizens know is acquired in audiences numbered by the millions when a station finds it profitable to program it.

I believe that we are now near the point at which frustration created by several of these institutions will become unbearable. This happens as the attempts to improve either the quality of the product or the equity with which they serve their clients proves futile. At this point the political atmosphere will be ripe to redefine the purpose which

institutions should serve in a technological age. Present institutions provide clients with predetermined goods. Desirable institutions ought to enable creative people to meet their own needs. Present institutions have made commodities out of health, education, housing, transportation, and welfare. We need arrangements which permit modern man to engage in the activities of healing and health maintenance, learning and teaching, moving and dwelling. I propose to set a legal limit to the tooling of society in such a way that the toolkit necessary to conviviality will be accessible for the autonomous use of a maximum number of people. In other words, we make conviviality the criterion for the level of productivity of society's tooling.

If science were thus used to increase the power of the individual to create his milieu and to care for each other, this would provide the leverage through which institutional purposes could be inverted. It would make it possible to substitute the question: 'What tools do people need and what do they have to know if they want to heal or if they want to care for those in the process of being healed?' for the current concern with the delivery of anonymous health services.

But such an inversion of institutional purposes cannot be the result of market pressure, nor can the managers of our industries who are used to wielding the power by which they provide people with commodities be expected to turn into switchboard managers of a market. The decision to limit the use of technology to increase productivity for the profit of industry and instead to increase the use of technology in a way which actually competes with and contradicts the ideals of an industrial society, this decision is the most important challenge for radical politics and legislation during the seventies. The translation of this social imperative into political terms can be clearly projected.

Politics is the formal structure and process by which a given society expresses and enforces the values it happens to accept. All present political systems, be they labeled liberal, Marxist, or conservative, express and enforce productivity at the expense of conviviality. They provide goods with clients rather than people with goods. Individuals are forced to pay for and use things they do not need; they are allowed no effective part in the process of choosing, let alone producing them. Products multiply for the sake of proliferation, which keeps the process of production expanding.

What I want to propose is a radically new politics, a politics that will enforce the individual's right to use only what he needs, to play an increasing part as an individual in its production, and to guarantee an environment so simple and transparent that all men most of the time have access to all the things which are useful to care for themselves and for others. Such politics would have as its major goal an inversion of present institutional purposes.

Just because I define politics as I do, I take it seriously. And I believe that very soon, as a result of the recognition of the frustration caused by present institutional purposes, the time will be ripe for a political restructuring of the relationship between production and consumption, certainly for the reverse of what Marx foresaw and hoped for in 1843: a society full of useful things and useless people. I look forward to a society, and so to a political structure, that will enable creative persons to meet their needs both as producers and as users.

As it is, it has become almost senseless to oppose the political left to the right. You cannot tell a liberal from a conservative unless he wears a button. The economists of socialist and capitalist countries do the same with different rhetoric. The public budget of rich and poor countries shows mainly quantitative differences. New politics has come to mean new ways of getting more of the same.

Present political platforms appeal to their following by proposing a set of goods and services the economy shall provide if and when the party gets into power. Each party presents a different profile of the minimum quanta it promises to provide for everybody. Each tailors its promises to the probable consensus of a particular group of voters. The political platform consists in promising every citizen to provide as a pedestal a jumble of tangible and intangible products which will permit him finally to live as a human being. By doing so politics becomes a process by which the voters agree on what is insufficient, leaving undetermined what amount of consumption of public resources shall be considered good enough, while not imposing any limits on what ought to be considered excessive, as long as its use by a person can somehow be justified as being for the common good.

The alternative to such a political platform would be one which offers a profile of upper limits on the resources which any individual may use either in his own or in the public interest, something which seems to be logically antecedent to the promise of a guaranteed minimum quantum for everybody. Such alternate politics would generate a consensus on what society considers enough for a person, and good enough for everybody over a long period of time. The guarantee of a foundation or base satisfactory to each depends on the imposition of a ceiling for all.

One clear example of the need for maximum limits and an obvious danger in their misapplication is seen in the already-mentioned area of pollution. The late sixties produced a vast amount of data on the threat to our physical environment. An excellent summary and selective bibliography can be found in Garrett De Bell, *The Environmental Handbook*, Ballantine Books, New York, 1970. Also R.P. Sangster, *Ecology: A Selected Bibliography*, Council of Planning Librarians Exchange Bibliography, No. 170. Much more im-

portant for my argument is a recent trend in literature on the subject, which shows how the arguments of conservationists are already used for politically conservative purposes. James Ridgeway, *Politics of Pollution*, Dutton, New York, 1970, provides evidence of the U.S. government complicity with industry in exploiting public concern with pollution for anti-social purposes. Richard Neuhaus, in *Defense of People: Ecology and the Seduction of Radicalism*, Macmillan, New York, 1971, elaborates on an important theme: the myth of ecology as a non-partisan and apolitical rallying point for all men of good will, which threatens to short-circuit the political process and leaves the present power brokers with more authority than ever to direct national destinies. I consider Neuhaus' warning central to our theme. Pollution increases and its destructive effects become more visible. Fear of further pollution can become a new demagogic tool to deny the large masses (who are minimal consumers) any further rise in their standards of consumption, while providing increased power for technocrats, which they will need to keep the poor in their place. But I also believe that the evidence of rising pollution can serve to rally an enormous majority of people to a political platform which would set upper limits for per-capita consumption and pollution, limits which would seriously reduce present living standards for a minority, and which would be for most people now alive far beyond their wildest dreams.

Our political imagination is now challenged to find a process by which a commitment to personal austerity, to voluntary poverty, can be translated into democratically enforceable programs. Unfortunately since the time of Stalin it has become difficult to claim the socialist label for such politics.

In February of 1931 the U.S. depression hit bottom, Trotsky and Bukharin had been defeated and Stalin launched the USSR on the road of ruthless industrialization. He gave the reason why: 'We are 50 or 100 years behind the advanced countries. We must make good the lag in 10 years.'

Stalin translated 'the control over the means of production' to mean the increase of productivity by new means used for the control of the producer. Since then, a socialist policy is one which serves the productivity of a socialist country.

Stalin's interpretation of this fundamental Marxist goal has since then served as a form of blackmail against socialists and the left. This can be clearly seen in relation to formerly colonial countries, to which Lenin assigned a 'revolutionary' role. Stalin's principle permits the interpretation of whatever increases the amount of schooling, the increase of the road system, and the productivity of extraction and manufacture as revolutionary. To be on the left has come to mean either to champion the nation which lags in production or to help the minority which lags in consumption to catch up.

The rebirth of a meaningful left, both national and international, depends on the ability to learn to distinguish the control of the means and of the mode of production in the service of people from the control of people for the purpose of raising output at all cost and then worrying how to distribute it in a fair way. New technologies have rendered production so powerful that social control of benefits is illusory unless it extends to the control of 'what' is industrially produced and 'if' it is needed. Such a social inversion of goals, if it is successfully expressed in a political formulation of maxima rather than minima, will demand a comparable inversion of the major institutions of society: education, health-care, transportation, housing, etc.

I hope to deal in subsequent pages with a variety of reasons for which it has become difficult to make political proposals aimed at the self-limitation of technology as the basic condition for the creation of a new left. The main reason is that our political imagination is mesmerized by alternatives for the production of more things for more people and thus is paralyzed when we try to focus on a possible inversion of this political goal. New and radical politics means to make the need for upper limits of per capita consumption into the center of our world-wide aspirations, in order to plan a technology for man's use which replaces the present technology which subordinates human needs to ever increasing productivity.

There are strategic reasons for choosing 'de-schooling' as the first step in a more general program of institutional inversion. Most people have school behind them. The world's majority knows that it has been irremediably excluded from satisfactory schooling. Others who did go through a 'good' school know that they have been hurt in the process. And finally most who were benefitted in some way by school know that they did not learn in school what helped them to do their job, and also that whatever school contributed to their success was probably not the subject matter they were taught. Agreement on the need to disestablish schools can be reached.

In previous articles written for the *New York Review of Books*, I have shown that education based on *output* of a school system is bound to fail. Inevitably the economic costs of such education grow faster than the GNP which they are supposed to boost. This is true for all countries, rich and poor, during the sixties. Quantifiable education produced by schools serves as a rationale to correlate productivity and income on a world-wide basis. Inevitably also a society which defines education as a commodity discourages learning from participation in everyday life and creates a rationale for an environment in which fewer people have access to the facts and tools that shape their lives. This is so because information becomes shrouded in a secrecy

which dissolves only for those who pass through an appropriate graded ritual of initi-ation, and because tools are made scarce and reserved to the few to whom informa-tion is reserved, supposedly for the purpose of making their products plentiful. In summary, I have shown that schools, by creating a hierarchy of knowledge-capital-ists, whether the particular society considers itself socialist or not, alienates men from other men by reducing interaction in the relationships between professionals and their clients, and also alienates man from his environment by making the con-sumer into a marginal participant in the processes by which his needs are satisfied. In these articles I hope also to have shown that the translation of education into the process of accumulating certified shares of the knowledge stock serves to rationalize access to the scarce upper levels of a consumer society and to justify a technocratic organization which each year produces more expensive and therefore scarcer goods, which in turn are reserved primarily for the knowledge capitalists who hold a high rank in the technocracy.

I have argued that the present crisis in education will only be accentuated by a further increase in the output of schools. I am not surprised that since then we have obtained considerable evidence that the crisis which I described principally in the forms in which it now appears in the U.S. on the one side and in poor countries on the other has moved to the center of attention also in countries whose GNE (Gross Na-tional Education) lies between these two.

The crisis in education can be solved only through an inversion of the institu-tional structure of agencies which now serve it. It can be overcome only if the present schools, with or without walls, which prepare or authorize programs for students, are replaced by new institutions which are more like libraries and matching services and which empower the learner to find access to the tools and the encounters which he needs to learn to fit his own choices.

Schools enable a teacher to establish classes of subjects and to impute the need for them to classes of people called pupils. The inverse of schools would be opportu-nity networks which permit individuals to state their present interest and seek a match for it.

It is relatively easier for an adult to imagine a world without schools, however, than it is for him to foreswear the need of a hospital, but to do the first might lead to the second. *It is evident that the structural inversion of our major institutions will either happen for several of them more or less together or it will not happen at all.* It cannot hap-pen as long as people have not become aware of the illusion which modern econom-ics foster. Once the veil of illusion has been thrown aside, all major institutions as at

present constituted become vulnerable. As the school is already undergoing inversion, possibly the health services monolith is next most accessible, with transportation and housing becoming open to attack at the same time.

The application of such an inversion of social goals through the politics of maximum rather than minimum limits would, as I shall develop further, find its expression through the inversion of the structure of the institutions which now deliver to us education, health, welfare, or other goods.

Schools, hospitals and armies not only look alike everywhere in the world; the economic reasoning underlying their planning as well comes only in different shades of the same colour. Nixon's advisors differ from those appointed by Brezhnev, Franco, and unfortunately also Castro, mostly in that they are less candid in the statement of their metaphysics.

Economists provide us with the axiom on which all their reasoning is based. This axiom states that frustration is the inevitable outcome of satisfaction and that there cannot be enough of a good thing but only more. The Council of Economic Advisors in this year's report to the President sum up the reason why: 'If it is agreed that economic output is a good thing, it follows by definition that there is not enough of it.' In this view man is a bottomless trashcan, an incurable consumer and a compulsive producer. Productive institutions have the sole purpose of providing him with operant conditioning for the escalating exploitation which guarantees their further growth.

The C.E.A. acknowledges that there might be a limit to the ills growth could cure. 'The growth of GNP has its costs and beyond some point these are not worth paying.' But the C.E.A. does not waste any effort toward determining this point. In fact growth-economics provides no method of pinpointing the level at which planned costs outgrow planned benefits, since both are subsumed under the same category of 'institutional outputs.' Therefore all the Council does is to state that further growth cannot be stopped. 'The existing propensities of the population and the policies of the government constitute claims upon GNP itself that can only be met by rapid economic growth.' The C.E.A. declares itself incompetent either to challenge the de facto dictatorship of the consumer or to change the policies enacted by those industrial managers whom the consumer has selected to exercise his dictatorship.

Western economists explain the need for open-ended growth as the consensus of the unlimited wants of consumers, which the party wanting to stay in power has to meet. Socialist economists explain the same need for unlimited growth as the manifestation of historical progress. In fact the advancement of the society to higher

forms of production is used to justify the dictatorship of a victorious proletariat which the party officials represent. They presume to dictate higher production for its own sake, rather than for the presumed satisfaction of their constituency.

The Western economist speaks in the name of Ford and Ford's captive consumer-mass. The growth maniac socialist speaks in the name of a producer-class and advocates that this class aspire to become as soon as possible its own most exploited client. Both seem to agree on one point: the fundamental historical evolution is that of technology, which involves a growth of productivity as irreversible as it is irresistible.

As already mentioned, modern nations tend to look alike and this in at least three ways: they use identical tools; they use the same toolkit; and they use the same methods to distribute their outputs. Schools are tools to produce education; hospitals are tools to produce health-services; and mass-circulation papers or programs the tools to provide daily information. These tools depend on each other. The growth of the medical profession depends on the output level of medical schools, just as the number of medical schools depends on the availability of teaching hospitals. Finally access to the more costly services of both hospitals and schools depends on some form of legalized gamble. The medical profession, its place among other professions, and the lottery which gives access to its service, differ from country to country only in name and in niceties, like flags differ from each other.

Under [President] Johnson, a religious war about the name of the medical gamble came to an end in the U.S. Americans agreed to call their distribution system henceforth an 'insurance plan.' Since then different model plans were designed and they are now proposed to the public that it may choose one of them as a monopoly. Whichever model wins, the benefit accrues to the medical profession. Politics thus has become the art of playing on the same set of instruments the tune which each party hopes will bewitch the majority. The 1972 elections might become the first in history staked on a popularity contest between two publicity campaigns both organized to provide a monopoly for the same industrial complex called 'health.'

It is of the nature of a national health insurance to channel tax resources for spending under the control of doctors. It is equally in its nature to re-enforce the idea that the doctor's services are priceless, and also that he alone ought to decide how much of them is desirable for each patient.

Compulsory health insurance is the first step towards compulsory health treatment. Until now the citizen was just considered immoral if he did not play at a lottery called health insurance with an open drawing date. In the new game he must play—and the doctor's house must win.

When medical insurance becomes obligatory and provides access to potentially unlimited treatment, should professional reasons make it desirable, it becomes a regressive tax. Those who die quickest get the least service, and those who die slowly get the most questionable service. Medical costs per capita rise steeply as death approaches. Doctors and their institutions are encouraged to concentrate their services on the clinical consolation of the dying. Insurance provides the medical profession with more resources for life-prolongation, drawn from a society which becomes less healthy in the process of producing them. Compulsory health insurance thus opens the door for unending extortion by the medical profession.

All this, of course, is true only as long as no upper limit is set on the per capita outlay of public expenditure. Public control of the medical complex stands and falls with the honesty with which the need for such a limit is faced. Lay boards with the power to hire or fire doctors and set their maximum fees do control individual dishonesty; they cannot curb the hubris of a doctor who considers the death of a patient after a serious cancer operation as a defeat of his profession. If doctors trained with public resources and treatments provided from tax-funds were restricted to the use on their own recognizances of a limited set of treatments, the public could control the medical industry. Without facing this decision, the discussion of alternate insurance plans which guarantee everybody a minimum and also, but only if the doctor wants it, the infinite, is meaningless.

As things stand, health insurance guarantees services of unknown quality and quantity. It is advertised as a way to provide individuals with more power over their own destiny. In fact it provides them with as much choice among certified professionals as they have among politicians when they go to vote. At best an insurance gives the insured the choice to commit himself and his destiny to the intake officer in the medical complex. It remains with the doctor to determine the mix of consumer goods which will be packaged for the service of his patient. The doctor sets the tune at which hospitals, drugs, psychotherapy, and if necessary, the straight jacket will be orchestrated for the consumption of the beneficiary. What he shall get will be determined for him when somebody else decides the time to do so has come.

This cannot be changed as long as the insurance scheme is set up to deliver the output of a growth-industry to a client; its outputs *by definition* are scarce.

The doctor like the economist is dedicated to the principle that medical services are good and therefore by definition, always insufficient. His traditional ethics will tell him that he should leave nothing undone for the patient. Hundreds of years ago this meant a nightwatch at his bedside. Today it might mean the transfer of a ter-

minal cancer patient from the operating room to the intensive care unit. There the doctor can pump resources into a dying body to force it to survive his tour of duty. The doctor becomes a sinister copy of the economist bent on all-purpose growth at all costs, especially if this can postpone collapse until after the next man takes over. If the patient resists the physician's care, he calls his psychiatric colleague to help him overcome such terminal consumer resistance.

Individual doctors will condemn this caricature of a healer who has transformed himself into an artist of maximum torture through optimum treatment. They do know that regular sleep, a balanced diet, and no smoking would add many more years to the life of each of their patients than all the services they can provide. But personal modesty and common sense cannot free the doctor from the dynamics of an institutional complex which shapes his environment and that of his client. The monopoly of hospitals over the care of people who have to stay in bed is reflected in the architecture of modern homes. It has become unfeasible to be sick at home, and embarrassing to stay there waiting for death.

The fact remains that under the pressure of the health professions the maintenance of health, assistance in the restoration of health after an accident or during a crisis, and finally terminal life-prolongation have been monopolized by one industry, somewhat in the manner in which age-specific custodial care, certification, social initiation and instruction were packaged together by schools. In this process the length of time during which a person remains a patient or actual client of the doctor by staying alive has become the most significant measurable dimension of health. Life expectancy has become the most cherished proof of the increase of health in a population, even though its increase has little or nothing to do with the intake of medical services, except among the dying.

As a result of all this, an ageing population has come to translate 'health' into a life-prolonging commodity. A population thus fed on statistics has transformed ageing into the consumption of a lengthening life-expectancy which can be achieved by drinking of the medical fountain of geriatrics. Even the best of doctors, however, will find it difficult to avoid his patient's lumping together under the designation 'medical care' the declining relief he can offer and the growing pain and frustration which he can provide.

In the United States the outlay for health services increased in a few years by 12%, higher than the inflation in all other sectors. The increase in favour of the first years of life is even more marked and that for illnesses in the last two years of life the most exorbitant of all. I do not know of any study which reveals by what factor it

would be necessary to multiply the medical output for men over 45 in 1900 to arrive at the sum spent today on their treatment and hospitalization. But census information indicates that the life expectancy of a 45 year old man in the USA in 1900 was 24.8 years more. In 1968 the life expectation of a man of the same age was 27.5 years [more]. The probability that they spend those added weeks in hospitals, asylums, or homes for the aged has also increased disproportionately.

A society which defines medicine as the art of life-extension deserves to be governed by economists who define themselves as the architects of sustained and unlimited growth. Both the medical and the economic enterprise thus conceived are the outgrowth of an illusion from which people suffer who deny the human need for upper limits because they are compelled to evade the necessity of facing death. A swelling GNP is the proper idol for people who demand from their doctors not to help them to heal but to keep them alive. It is the ultimate symbol of value in a society which defines its growing anxiety in terms of its burgeoning wealth. Belief in the value of the GNP provides the final solution to the troublesome challenge, i.e., the need to measure benefits in a culture in which all that is desirable can somehow be reduced to wealth.

Psychologically growth economics cannot be separated from a medicine which finds its principle achievements in the avoidance of death. GNP is a concept homologous with life expectancy. It represents that grand total of the market value of all benefits plus the expenditures incurred to protect society from the unwanted side effects which result from the production of these benefits. A rising GNP gauges the state of a nation as medical bills do the health of a man.

The doctor is trained to provide increasing pains at increasing cost, just as the economist stimulates increasing demand to produce increasing sales. Dr. Mendelsohn estimates that 90% of Chicago's outlay for public and private medicine and for treatment of clients actually increases suffering rather than healing or soothing it.

The economist does literally provide for our society the abstract definition of its original sin, just as metaphysicians and theologians provided it for other times. The economist formulates the anthropology which fits our society in the most abstract terms, and defines man as a being who finds happiness in paying the highest possible price for his own operant conditioning to escalating frustration. Institutional output thus becomes the 'good' because in Walden III [an allusion to B.F. Skinner's behaviourist 'utopia,' Walden II, in *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*] by definition consumers want to increase the frustration they can obtain from it.

In many areas of everyday life, as already noted, frustration grows faster than habituation to it. In some cases frustration has already reached a critical point. A wave of dissatisfaction with schools swept over some countries in the late sixties. This led the U.S. to the establishment of some ten thousand alternative educational centers. In Peru it led to the first legal attempt to disestablish schools and prohibit any discrimination based on previous school attendance. Analogous waves of sudden disenchantment with industrial complexes less sacred than school will be rising during the next few years.

There are already indications that the frustration of the public is reaching the critical level with the institutions that produce health, transportation, food-processing, and housing. But so long as that frustration re-enforces the dependence of our society on the unrestrained pursuit of the utmost institutional output, considered as a panacea, the remedy will produce only deception.

In the perspective in which I here envisage our society, the 'technological solutions' and the 'politico-economic' solutions, which are generally opposed to each other, are seen as two complementary props of unlimited growth. It makes no difference that the control of the quality of merchandise be the result of organized consumer pressure directed by a student of Ralph Nader or that the same amelioration be the result of a humanitarian decision of a puritan bureau-technocrat. And what is even more decisive, it makes little difference if the transition from the organization of private services toward that of public services be done under the impulsion of technocrats or of ideologues. For example, the passing of the era of the private car and even of transportation by individual vehicle is probably very close for reasons of economy, efficacy and ecology. It is of little importance to my argument whether public transportation more rapid still be established by the conspiracy of an international capitalist conglomerate or by political principle.

I hope I will be understood, therefore, if I choose as a model of those who fight for more satisfactory consumption certain students of Ralph Nader and, on the other hand, as models of those who struggle for more rational production, Mr. Buckminster Fuller.

These advocates of modernization as the remedy for the crisis in our institutions take two distinct reactionary roads. Each claims to lead through a revolution, and each in fact support the *modus quo*. Each of these so-called revolutions shifts the blame for the dysfunction of our institutions onto a different scapegoat and neither indicts the institutional purpose itself. The first so-called revolution speaks for the consumer, and blames the price and the quality of commodities on the manufac-

turer. Its proponents would like to take over Ford's department of design and of pricing. The promoters of the second, the scientific or technological revolution, go a step further, to a point of myth-making that justifies calling their proposals 'technosophic.' They want, for instance, to achieve a breakthrough in the entire transportation industry which would provide them with more speed, and they do not care if they get it with or without cars. In more general terms, they propose to make our institutions serve their present ultimate purposes by providing them with more powerful tools.

I will show that each of these two revolutions advocates a more thorough espousal of our present world view, in which our needs can be satisfied only by tangible or intangible commodities which we consume. Each of the two movements provides new legitimacy for the present mode of production which I have already described as operational re-enforcement of the consumer's willingness to accept rising hardship for diminishing, though more ardently pursued, satisfaction.

First, 'Naderism' or the counter-revolution of the consumer. Cars are costly. They are unsafe. They do pollute. It is easy to blame the car manufacturer for the high price, the unreliable performance, and the unchecked side-effects. It is expedient to organize frustrated consumers, even though at first this is dangerous, as Nader had to learn, and ultimately futile.

Disciplined addicts can force the Mafia to peddle pure drugs. They cannot blame the junkey for selling a narcotic. The leader of the consumer revolt of the future might ride to the presidency on the prototype of a durable, non-polluting family plane. I imagine that he will smoke ten filter cigarettes and advocate a 'pure drug law' applicable to all commodities. He will campaign on the platform that the way to have your cake and eat it too is to make it grow not only bigger but also sweeter.

If the manufacturers of cars, of medical services, or of professional teaching were enlightened in their self-interest, they would support such a crusade which does their consumer research for them. Ownership of a car does guarantee the right to move. If the roads are good, it guarantees the right to move fast. But this is no more guarantee for good locomotion than access to a hospital is a guarantee for medical care. Just as in the case of health, more goods can mean less benefits. The higher the speed at which a man habitually moves, the greater today the amount of time he uses to get from one place to another. In 1948 the Interstate Highway system opened for traffic. Since then the percentage of vehicles travelling faster than 60 mph. on all main rural roads in the USA has tripled from 16 to 45 per cent. The time spent by each American in a car has grown and his time spent on the go by other

means has increased even more. The maximum speed occasionally available to the member of a society is an indicator of the amount of time spent travelling. Americans spend more time travelling than Poles, and Poles spend more time travelling than Brazilians, just as a member of the jet set spends more time away from home than an ordinary citizen. Cheaper, safer, and non-polluting cars travelling on wider and straighter roads at higher speeds would enable their owners to spend more time safely packaged up on the go. Ford can be blamed for undesirable cars and then will produce desirable cars. Ford cannot be blamed for the fact that the increased output of cars increases the distresses of transportation.

The technosophic counterrevolution can be called the Buckminster Fuller syndrome, whose exponents blame the distressing nature of transportation on a conspiracy between Mr. Ford and his clients. They rightly claim that this unholy alliance for mutual exploitation keeps cars on the road and builds more roads with the tax-payer's money. These technosophs would like to do away with cars in order to improve transportation. For instance, they would like to see 'future gravitrains falling of their own weight along underground channels and then swooping up again on a combination of their own momentum and pneumatic air, all of which would be practical with the development of cheap laser tunneling.' This idea comes from the Secretary of Transportation of the USA, Mr. Volpe. Proposals for public transportation, while discrediting the car, support the commitment of the society to provide more speed at all cost.

Some technosophs are simple technocrats; they are all the men on duty in Washington and Moscow. They provide their employers with more power or profits and maintain their legitimacy by claiming that this power is used to serve the majority.

Others describe themselves as the prophets of a man-made paradise; these call themselves techno-anarchists. They have fallen victim to the illusion that it is possible to socialize the technocratic imperative. They would make their followers believe that the maximum technically possible is not simply the maximum desirable for a few, but that it can also provide everybody with maximum benefits at minimum cost. Of course this is true, but only if the client wants the specific thing the technosoph tells him he wants.

The spokesmen for the consumer and the technosoph are both reactionary, but the latter more profoundly so. A consumer revolution succeeds if the consumer gets what he needs from the shelf of a supermarket, from the docket of a court, or from the catalogue of a university. Its success is the result of a conspiracy between salesmen and customer to provide good air-conditioners, useful degrees, and properly la-

belled drugs and to control the shareholder or aparatchik. As durable junk accumulates in and out of use, the consumer still maintains real options. People may prefer clean air while bicycling to work and avoid highways on which survival depends on air-conditioning. Employers may accept competence acquired in apprenticeship in lieu of certificates proving assistance at classes. Organized consumers, students, or welfare recipients provide a messy, though effective support for a chaotic, but powerful production system. The legal recognition of their sundry demands re-enforces the legal protection of the producers. The consumer can have a kind of victory, then, although it is only a temporary one.

'Technosophic' solutions deprive the consumer of even that chance. I recently attended a meeting in which the utilization of satellites for diagnostic ends was discussed. In the not too distant future we will be able to transmit the clinical data of a patient from any phone in Latin America to a system of central information and obtain in response diagnostic indications. Before receiving these, supplementary information must be obtained about the quantity of money available for the treatment, of little consequence whether it comes from public or private resources.

Any political success of a technosophic establishment, therefore, represents a step forward into a world where basic choices are fewer. Such a success is always a result of a collusion between government and an industrial complex; a conspiracy between a particular group of consumers and a particular industry is not sufficient to support its cost.

Whenever a technosophic 'solution' is adopted, this means that the party in power has committed the nation far beyond its mandate to govern, and that it has decided on what shall be made feasible on the advice of some scientific group holding secret knowledge of what is possible at an escalating cost. The adoption of a technological 'solution' means a political commitment without recourse to vote.

Once minimum speed is guaranteed to commuters, each person could be forced to use it, whether he likes it or not, as witness the minimum allowable speed now on many highways. The pattern which urbanization would take would impose the demand, without the need of a new breed of officers pressing truant commuters into a train. From now on, each victory for a new 'system' will be equivalent to a move towards a society in which each man is encapsuled in multiple compulsory insurance of his consumption. The government would make sure that he gets the speed, housing, medical care, or constant re-schooling experts need to progress. Each of these steps will require another enormous investment borrowed from the future and would amount to a new re-enforcement of our present mode of production. This, of course,

goes far beyond simple consumer protection; it means mandatory consumption and addiction to the straight stuff, with only the freedom left to take more, not less.

To go from the present transportation-maze to gravitrains, or from our school-system to life-long re-education, or from the clinical labs to the diagnostic satellite follows the same logic as progress from bombers to MIRV [multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle—a nuclear missile with multiple warheads]. To start developing the prototype is already a political decision, costly, monopolistic, and irreversible. It is also an overkill of problems now created by our institutions. Just as the use of MIRV guarantees for everybody equally effective extinction (not safety), so would life-long re-education provide everybody with constant re-assignment to his place in a meritocracy, and speedier transportation would compel everybody to longer trips, shorter stays, and no way to get somewhere with his feet.

The technosoph promises to increase the output of our institutions by eliminating their current product; he provides transportation at a higher speed and for everybody. But this transportation is 'better' only for those clients who let the new system translate being 'better' [to] mean being as much as possible on the move at the highest feasible speed, rather than being at rest somewhere.

What the guarantee of minima means can best be illustrated by looking again at the oldest profession first entrusted with offering a minimum. Once the graduates of teachers' colleges were given a public monopoly to decide what constitutes good education, they had to use it to disqualify learning which happened outside their control. Schools became the only legitimate recipients for public funds destined for education. Inevitably learning was translated into 'education,' and this in turn became a commodity which could be obtained only from accredited schools. The guarantee of a minimum education was translated into the obligation to attend a minimum number of years. Soon dropouts, forced into the nether world destined for the so-called a-social, would be denied jobs. But the guarantee does not work only against him who does not use it. The monopoly of schools over education made education into an intangible commodity. It turned the result of learning into an invisible software, which is guaranteed by the code number given on the certificate. Those pupils who obtain only the legal minimum find out that they wasted their time in school: what they acquired is devalued on the market because others have more or a newer program.

Schools were not originally created with the intent of creating an industrial complex for the production of knowledge; they were meant to give everybody a chance to learn. But they became a form of compulsory insurance of every child's fu-

ture productivity. The governments of the world all established the monopoly of a profession, giving them the right to decide how much of their expert treatment each citizen should get. Soon the profession could also decide how much of its treatment a concrete individual needed, and finally it could use its power to give it to him or to her. 'Insurance' of minimum requirements of any service is always a form of social control which permits the manager to manipulate economic flow by determining the level of that minimum. Universal insurance thus is a way of using the gambling instinct of a population to make compulsory consumption attractive.

Nader and Fuller only re-enforce what we now have. They do so on three matching levels. Their converging demands re-enforce the purpose of politics, strengthen the legitimacy of further professional specialization, and by this double support cement the industrial shape of all our institutions. They heighten the demand for insurance for all, for more specialized doctors or school teachers and unlimited delivery of healthcare services or educational software.

First, both of them support the appeal the politician now uses: the promise of a classless society made up of a luxury class with cake for all, and the moon, too, for those who reach out for it. Second, both Nader and Fuller play into the hand of the professions who alone know the secret formula necessary to accomplish this magic: the formula needed for the miraculous multiplication of cakes and the formula needed to satisfy every one with cake and a vicarious moonwalk in exchange for this freedom to do each what he wants. And finally, the consumer-defender and the spokesman of unlimited production both build an airtight shell for our present world view according to which the mere fact of scientific advancement renders a trend irreversible which transforms all community enterprise into industries evaluated by measuring their outputs.

Both Nader and Fuller suggest that output could be an even better thing than it is today, and I cannot see what else this would mean but that there would be even less 'enough' of it. I have shown that economists spell out the metaphysics on the basis of which contemporary men are willing to agree. Political parties have built on this seeming evidence the economists provide. They have become publicity firms for the same cornucopia and they compete for the right to use their banners and slogans to shove it down the throat of their client. On a world-wide scale, capitalists and communists share the crypto-Stalinist fallacy. Major powers try to impose on each other their particular way of insuring minimum consumption levels for the masses. So powerfully has Stalinism corrupted our social imagination that we cannot conceive that an alternate institutional structure could be used in a technological society.

Our present technocopia is a society in which specialized producers monopolize the purpose of all major institutions, and growing productivity justifies their growing power. A political left, to be meaningful, would have to forego the various attempts to render our present institutions viable. It would have to focus on the task of inverting their trends towards rising productivity which renders conviviality dysfunctional. A hospital now has the purpose of providing the sick with professional and paraprofessional services and of excluding any relative, girl friend, or child who would want to care for and about his sick neighbour. Tolerable institutions would be those in which the productive and the convivial purpose temper each other. Such would be health centers from which the sick having a neighbour could be well cared for at home. The concerned friend could find the tools to care better for them and perhaps someone to show them how to use those tools.

Our present institutions are high-pressure productions funnels which by their very structure contribute to the proliferation of increasing levels of subordinate professions and paraprofessions. Desirable institutions would by their very structure make it encumbent upon their managers to enable non-specialists to teach, to heal, to move, or to house each other in the hope that people who once have been engaged in any of these specialized activities will soon initiate others to the role provisionally still in the hand of a specialist.

For example, such institutions might well preclude certain types of brain surgery. At a recent meeting I overheard a group of neurosurgeons make a surprising statement. They agreed that most of those special techniques by which they could contribute to healing and for which operating rooms could in fairness be provided in Latin America could be taught to a responsible peasant girl with a steady hand and intelligence in a matter of months. I repeated this statement to a group which included another doctor, a psychiatrist, and a neuro-surgeon. The last mentioned contradicted his colleagues, called them irresponsible. For the time being I accepted his correction. But later in the evening, this same man privately explained to me why some neuro-surgeons make irresponsible statements. He said that his was a frequently frustrating profession, that sometimes looking back on a week's work of several multi-hour operations, one had to admit that practically all his patients had died, and that, of those who survived the intervention, few would be able to live everyday lives. We parted as friends, he agreeing with me that at least in Latin America, and for the moment, medical resources could well be spent in an alternate way.

Convivial institutions providing tools which non-specialists can learn to use when the need for them arises inevitably impose limits on the tools which fit this pur-

pose. It is quite easy to paint a scenario of alternate toolkits which would fit most of the needs of countries in which the majority of people needing tonsillectomies, bone setting, or appendectomies cannot now get them. It is less easy to render restrictions on the medical toolkit plausible to citizens of countries which have access to high technology. One of the reasons for this difficulty is that most people are not aware of the cost they now pay in health-destruction in order to be allowed the high levels of health-service intake which they now 'enjoy.'

On this point it is significant that 70% of all advanced medicines which came onto the U.S. market in the period between 1945 and 1970 were again withdrawn from the market at the time the seventeen year patent protection had run out, and it had ceased to be in the interest of the manufacturer to push the product at all cost. Some might have been purposely withdrawn because the manufacturer wanted to push a new, more expensive product for which he could again claim mysterious qualities and a monopoly over another seventeen year period.

The marketing of tranquilizers by Hoffman-La Roche is a good example. First La Roche brought Librium onto the market. Just before patent-protection ran out, the almost equivalent Valium was intensely advertised as an advanced and more sophisticated product. In bulk the production cost per kg. is near $100. Packaging in 5 to 10 mg. doses of this weight might cost about $800. The marketing price in Canada is nearly $13,000. Now Valium is being replaced in the La Roche publicity by Nobrium, advertised as a cure-all for anxiety associated with almost any sickness. Evidence is lacking that any of these drugs, in the cases *where their use is indicated*, is superior to the cheap generics such as barbiturates. (See article by Peter Burich in *Guardian Weekly*, June 26th 1971.)

But much more frequently an item is withdrawn because at best it has not proven superior to a centuries-old cure and, at worst, its side-effects were by then amply documented and rendered further sales impossible. If Americans, Germans, and Frenchmen understood that they serve as human guinea pigs for extended testing of medicines which are still too expensive for the majority of poor people, they might awaken to the advantages the limitation on the pharmacopia might mean for them.

In its present production-oriented structure, medical care translates into longer survival for a few, notwithstanding a biosphere which is corrupted by doctors, geneticists, and the factories which produce medical supplies. And for the majority in rich countries, medical dispensations serve the purpose for which Coca is used in lieu of salaries by the mine-owners of Bolivia: as a drug which keeps the Indian going deeper into the pits and happily unaware of his hunger.

The present structure of medical institutions is built on the concept of indefinite backup and referral, by which both economic and human costs are escalated out of sight. Most alternate schemes for the delivery of medical services are nothing but rearrangements of backup agencies. Some want neighbourhood health-centers in which paraprofessionals can set bones, others arrangements by which the layman can do it, but all want a hierarchy of places to which a sick man can be transferred (with or without the company of an advocate from his neighbourhood) so that nothing which science considers feasible might be left undone for his sake.

Radically reasonable politics would seek broad popular agreement on what medical care ought to be considered good enough. Without such an agreement, there is no way to insure a re-organized health-care system against being as impersonal as what we have, even though under a new name.

The fact that limits must be set on the amount of medical services available per capita is clear, if for no other reason than in order not to impose on the doctor the duty in each case of determining when the patient is allowed to die. How such limits are to be set, and how the measurement of the height of the ceiling ought to be achieved is less clear.

How one could reach political agreement on an upper limit can better be illustrated in the case of the speed at which a society agrees locomotion of persons is fast enough, not only for commuters but equally for ambulances, policemen, and the campaigning politicians as well.

At present the search for open-ended speed has made of vehicles a second type of luxury home for a minority. As I have indicated, this same open-endedness of speed forces the majority of people in a 'mobile' society to switch from fixed to moving cages several times a day. In this process, the act of 'dwelling' becomes a luxury.

It ought to be possible to determine a level of speed at which most people compelled to use vehicles will spend least time in movement (which is something different from cruising), while depletion, pollution, and destruction of health are kept to a minimum. The search for such a level has to start from the insight into the present structure of transportation. The time spent moving, as I have shown, increases with the consumption of speed by a society while, at the same time, locomotion between two points, both of which are desirable, becomes the privilege of fewer and fewer people. Commitment to more speed blinds us to the obvious. Such escalation only further increases time spent commuting at rising levels of pollution, depletion, and unhealthy living.

The optimum level of speed would be a compromise between minimum time spent daily moving between equally attractive home and work places at minimum levels of pollution and with the maximum choice, at minimum personal cost, and abstention from the use of mechanical transportation altogether. A truly radical political platform which presents its voters with a well-reasoned choice of one among various possible profiles of upper limits for consumption should certainly contain such a speed limit.

The first reaction I get when discussing this matter with people who in principle follow my argument is that such an upper limit would have to be developed by experts. I doubt that this is true. Some very simple considerations will show that this speed limit within metropolitan areas would be somewhere in the order of 15 or 20 miles per hour. If people living in any of the major U.S. metropolitan areas were guaranteed effective locomotion permitting them to cover 15 miles in any given hour from any point to any point, they would be moving faster and better than they are now. We know that this could be achieved by banning private cars from the streets of New York, and that the saving in taxes which could result would make it possible for the city to provide transportation at minimum prices.

Searching for the coincidence of an optimum and a maximum speed for two states of Mexico, both poor, rural, and with difficult terrain, to our great surprise we arrived at figures not significantly different from those which would meet the same criteria in New York. Surprising at first, this result indicates that technological dimensions which fit simultaneously the three criteria of ecological 'cleanliness,' sociological 'fairness,' and psychological 'desirability' are within a human rather than a cosmic range.

In the state of Chiapas live 11/4 million persons. During the last year not more than 10,000, which means less than 1% of them, moved more than once during the year over a distance of twelve miles in the period of one hour. During each of the last thirty-five years, a sum of money was spent constructing roads for heavy vehicles, cars, and gasoline, with only a part of which it would be possible to provide 80% of all villages with access-trails and a supply of mechanical mules so ample that it would be practically unlimited. These simple vehicles powered by 2 HP motors capable also of driving dynamos, pumps, and plows could be built profitably within the state and made in a highly repair-intensive, durable form. Of course, this would mean a political decision to proscribe speeds above 12 miles per hour and to avoid all further expenditure for building an infrastructure for those few who now occasionally engage in such consumption.

The setting of upper limits on certain dimensions is not only necessary (as in the case of medical services) and can be discussed in quantitative terms (as I lave shown in the case of speeds of locomotion). It is also the only way of providing the majority with what they need to survive.

John Turner shows clearly that the present attempt of the Mexican government to produce desirable housing by minimum standards has created an unbearable crisis in housing. By government regulation, the minimum house built according to minimum criteria set by the government costs seven annual incomes of an average wage earner, or the median monthly income if the house be rented rather than built. Such standards render it impossible for between 50% and 80% of the population already 'living' in Mexico City to 'dwell' there, that is, to comply with the basic minimum standards.

Moreover, minimum standards in housing discouraged the building of low rent, low cost, high density tenements in which most people formerly lived in the central parts of the city, paying something like 15% of their income for shelter. It also discouraged high investment of money or labour in self-help housing which risks being condemned. Thus the cost of slum dwelling increases while its quality further declines.

Government regulations which determine minimum standards for products play right into the hands of the building industry, even when this industry is government controlled. Such regulations effectively lower the total quality of housing as an activity while they render the commodity of housing scarce. Those who produce the commodity get higher salaries or can provide more employment on their staff if they build more and cheaper houses. But almost inevitably even the cheapest house is a commodity for which the poorer half of the population cannot pay.

According to the same study, owner-built houses in the long run are 67% to 89% cheaper than buying in the public sector. In addition, the owner has a maximum incentive, obtains cheap labour, often on the basis of labour exchange. His neighbour works for him during the hours he could not gainfully employ other wise, and the beneficiary later on works for his neighbour. And above all the builder builds according to his taste and gets satisfaction from dwelling in the shell he has built. He can use the house for several purposes, as a home and a shop, while the public standard commodity does not permit the use of an adjoining cubicle as a pigsty, candy-shop, or shoemaker's workplace.

The only way to improve the process by which most people (in Latin America anyway) shelter themselves, since they cannot get access to professionally-built housing, is to abandon the attempt to provide 'projects' and use the available re-

sources to guarantee people access to plots, tools, materials, and credit. If public resources are to be used for this purpose, it does not make any sense to discuss the lower limits unless upper limits are set on a society-wide basis.

Nobody can provide housing for people, but least of all can anybody provide work, as long as work itself is translated totally as the result of production in a productive institution, and therefore becomes the scarcest of all commodities in a technologically powerful society.

My proposal of a radical new politics setting an upper limit to consumption is not simply neo-Luddite. I do not propose the diminution in numbers of quality of the tools of life. What I do propose is a radical re-evaluation of the part they play in society and the individual's social life.

A society which sets lower limits to the goods and services provided to its members (whether in term of quality or quantity) does not thereby contribute to the conviviality of their lives. On the other hand, a politics of upper limits would supply the individual with maximum power to determine what tools were adapted to his life, to produce and use them for himself and others. A radical new politics would be a politics of conviviality.
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74. Murray Bookchin: Ecotechnology and Ecocommunities (1976-82)

In the following excerpts from "The Concept of Ecotechnologies and Ecocommunities," Habitat International *(Pergamon Press, 1976, reprinted in* Toward and Ecological Society *(Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1980)), and* The Ecology of Freedom *(Palo Alto: Cheshire Books, 1982), Murray Bookchin argues that a truly ecological technology must be a libertarian technology grounded in nonhierarchical communities imbued with an ecological ethic and sensibility of unity in diversity, social creativity and personal autonomy, giving concrete expression to the concept of humanity as "nature rendered self-conscious."*

ECOTECHNOLOGY... CAN SCARCELY BE exemplified by a statuesque solar collector or a dramatic wind generator reared in splendid isolation from the ecosystem in which it is located. If the word "ecotechnology" is to have more than a strictly technical meaning, it must be seen as the very ensemble itself, functionally integrated with human communities as part of a shared biosphere of people and nonhuman life forms. This ensemble has the distinct goal of not only meeting human needs in an ecologically sound manner—one which favours diversity within an ecosystem—but of consciously promoting the integrity of the biosphere. The Promethean quest of using technology to "dominate nature" is replaced by the ecological ethic of using technology to harmonize humanity's relationship with nature.

Human consciousness, in effect, is placed in the service of both human needs and ecological diversity. Inasmuch as human beings are themselves products of the natural world, human self-consciousness could be described in philosophical terms as nature rendered "self-conscious," a natural world guided by human rationality toward balanced or harmonious ecological as well as social ends. This philosophical vision has a historical pedigree in the western intellectual tradition. It reaches back to Hellenic philosophy as the concept of a world *nous*, a concept which, in Fichte's stirring prose, envisions consciousness "no longer as that stranger in Nature whose connection with existence is so incomprehensible; it is native to it, and indeed one of its necessary manifestations."

Ecocommunity, in turn, could scarcely be exemplified by any urban aggregate or, for that matter, any rural household that happens to acquire its resources from solar and wind installations. If the word "ecocommunity" is to have more than a strictly logistical and technical meaning, it must describe a decentralized community that allows for direct popular administration, the efficient return of wastes to the countryside, the maximum use of local resources—and yet it must be large enough to foster cultural diversity and psychological uniqueness. The community, like its technology, is itself the ensemble of its libertarian institutions, humanly-scaled structures, the diverse productive tasks that expose the individual to industrial, craft, and horticultural work, in short, the rounded community that the Hellenic polis was meant to be in the eyes of its great democratic statesmen. It is within such a decentralized community, sensitively tailored to its natural ecosystem, that we could hope to develop a new sensibility toward the world of life and a new level of self-consciousness, rational action, and foresight…

A blending of ecotechnologies and ecocommunities would more closely resemble a balanced, rationally-guided ecosystem than a passive ensemble of physical surroundings with the "appropriate technology" to sustain it. Indeed, until our estranged species with its increasing sense of alienation toward any earthly surroundings can achieve this balanced, rationally guided ecosystem, it is doubtful if we can meaningfully describe any environment as a suitable habitat for people, much less a truly human one.

THE ECOLOGY OF FREEDOM (1982)

The historic problem of technics lies not in its size or scale, its "softness" or "hardness," much less the productivity or efficiency that earned it the naive reverence of earlier generations; the problem lies in how we can *contain* (that is, absorb) technics within an emancipatory society. In itself, "small" is neither beautiful nor ugly; it is merely small. Some of the most dehumanizing and centralized social systems were fashioned out of

very "small" technologies; but bureaucracies, monarchies, and military forces turned these systems into brutalizing cudgels to subdue humankind and, later, to try to subdue nature. To be sure, a large-scale technics will foster the development of an oppressively large-scale society; but every warped society follows the dialectic of its own pathology of domination, irrespective of the scale of its technics...

Unfortunately, a preoccupation with technical size, scale, and even artistry deflects our attention away from the most significant problems of technics—notably, its ties with the ideals and social structures of freedom…

Initially, a libertarian is distinguished from an authoritarian technics by more than just the scale of production, the kind or size of implements, or even the way in which labour is organized, important as those may be. Perhaps the most crucial reason for what produces this distinction is the emergence of an *institutional* technics: the priestly corporation; the slowly emerging bureaucracies that surround it; later the monarchies and the military forces that preempt it; indeed, the very belief systems that validate the entire hierarchical structure and provide the authoritarian core of an authoritarian technics. Lavish material surpluses did not produce hierarchies and ruling classes; rather, hierarchies and ruling classes produced lavish material surpluses. Mumford may be perfectly correct in observing that one of the earliest machines to appear in history was not an inanimate ensemble of technical components but a highly animate "megamachine" of massed human beings whose large-scale, coordinated labour reared the huge public works and mortuaries of early "civilizations." But the growing religious and secular *bureaucracies* were even more technically authoritarian. Indeed, they were the *earliest* "machines" that eventually made the "megamachine" possible—that mobilized it and directed its energies toward authoritarian ends…

A liberatory technology presupposes liberatory institutions; a liberatory sensibility requires a liberatory society. By the same token, artistic crafts are difficult to conceive without an artistically crafted society, and the "inversion of tools" is impossible without a radical inversion of all social and productive relationships…

Technology and freedom do not "coexist" with each other as two separate "realms" of life. Either technics is used to reinforce the larger social tendencies that render human consociation technocratic and authoritarian, or else a libertarian society must be created that can absorb technics into a constellation of emancipatory human and ecological relationships…

In equating "living well" with living affluently, capitalism has made it extremely difficult to demonstrate that freedom is more closely identified with personal *auton-*

omy than with affluence, with empowerment over life than with empowerment over things, with the emotional security that derives from a nourishing community life than with a material security that derives from the myth of a nature dominated by an all-mastering technology...

We share a common organic ancestry with all that lives on this planet. It infiltrates those levels of our bodies that somehow make contact with the existing primordial forms from which we may originally have derived. Beyond any structural considerations, we are faced with the need to give an ecological *meaning* to these buried sensibilities. In the case of our design strategies, we may well want to enhance natural diversity, integration, and function, if only to reach more deeply into a world that has been systematically educated out of our bodies and innate experiences...

The principal message of an ecological technics is that it is integrated to create a highly interactive, animate and inanimate constellation in which every component forms a supportive part of the whole. The fish tanks, "sun tubes," and ponds that use fish wastes to nourish the plant nutriment on which they live are merely the simplest examples of a wide-ranging ecological system composed of a large variety of biota —from the simplest plants to sizable mammals—that have been sensitively integrated into a biotechnical ecosystem...

To think ecologically for design purposes is to think of technics as an *ecosystem*, not merely as cost effective devices based on "renewable resources." Indeed, to think ecologically is to include *nature's* "labour" in the technical process, not only humanity's. The use of organic systems to replace machines wherever possible—say, in producing fertilizer, filtering out sewage, heating greenhouses, providing shade, recycling wastes, and the like—is a desideratum in itself. But their economic wisdom aside, these systems also sensitize the mind and spirit to nature's own powers of generation. We become aware that nature, too, has its own complex "economy" and its own thrust toward ever-greater diversity and complexity. We regain a new sense of communication with an entire biotic world that inorganic machines have blocked from our vision...

Hence, an ecologically oriented technical imagination must seek to discover the "Way" of things as ensembles, to sense the subjectivity of what we so icily call "natural resources," to respect the attunement that should exist between the human community and the ecosystem in which it is rooted. This imagination must seek not merely a means for resolving the contradictions between town and country, a machine and its materials, or the functional utility of a device and its impact on its natural environment. It must try to achieve their artistic, richly coloured, and highly

articulated integration. Labour, perhaps even more than technics, must recover its own creative voice. Its abstract form, its deployment in the framework of linear time as a *res temporalis*, its cruel objectification as mere, homogeneous energy, must yield to the concreteness of skill, to the festiveness of communal activity, to a recognition of its own subjectivity. In this broad revitalization of the natural environment, of work, and of technics, it would be impossible for the technical imagination to con-fine itself to the traditional imagery of a lifeless, irreducible, and passive material substrate. We must close the disjunction between an orderly world that lends itself to rational interpretation and the subjectivity that is needed to give it meaning. The technical imagination must see matter not as a passive substance in random motion but as an active substance that is forever developing—a striving "substrate" (to use an unsatisfactory word) that repeatedly interacts with itself and its more complex forms to yield variegated, "sensitive," and meaningful patterns...

To reinfuse the "artificial crafts" with the "natural arts" is not just a cardinal pro-ject for social ecology; it is an ethical enterprise for rehumanizing the psyche and demystifying *techné*. The rounded person in a rounded society, living a total life rather than a fragmented one, is a precondition for the emergence of individuality and its historic social hallmark, autonomy. This vision, far from denying the need for community, has always presupposed it. But it visualizes community as a *free* commu-nity in which *inter*dependence, rather than dependence or "independence," provides the many-sided social ingredients for personality and its development...

Today, when the assembly line visibly risks the prospect of collapsing under the mass neuroses of its "operatives," the issue of disbanding the factory—indeed, of re-storing manufacture in its literal sense as a manual art rather than a muscular "mega-machine"—has become a priority of enormous social importance. Taxing as our metaphors may be, nature is a biotic "industry" in its own right. Soil life disassem-bles, transforms, and reassembles all the "materials" or nutrients that make the exis-tence of terrestrial vegetation possible. The immensely complex food web that supports a blade of grass or a stalk of wheat suggests that biotic processes can re-place many strictly mechanical ones. We are already learning to purify polluted water by deploying bacterial and algal organisms to detoxify the pollutants, and we use aquatic plants and animals to absorb them as nutrients. Relatively closed aquacultural systems in translucent solar tubes have been designed to use fish wastes as nutrients to sustain an elaborate food web of small aquatic plants and ani-mals. The fish, in turn, feed upon the very vegetation which their wastes nourish. Thus, natural toxins are recycled through the food web to ultimately provide nutri-

ents for edible animals; the toxic waste products of fish metabolism are reconverted into the "soil" for fish food.

Even simple mechanical processes that involve physical movement—for instance, air masses circulated by pumps—have their non-mechanical analogue in the convection of air by solar heat. Solar green houses adjoined to family structures provide not only warmth and food but also humidity control by vegetation. Small, richly variegated vegetable plots, or "French-intensive gardens," not only obviate the need for using industrially produced fertilizers and toxic biocides; they also provide an invaluable and productive rationale for composting domestic kitchen wastes. Nature's proverbial "law of return" can thus be deployed not only to foster natural fecundity but also to provide the basis for ecological husbandry.

One can cite an almost unending variety of biotic alternatives to the costly and brutalizing mechanical systems that drive modern industry. The problem of replacing the latter by the former is far from insurmountable. Once human imagination is focused upon these problems, human ingenuity is likely to be matched only by nature's fecundity. Certainly, the techniques for turning a multitude of these substitutions into realities are very much at hand. The largest single problem we face, however, is not strictly technical; indeed, the problem may well be that we regarded these new biotic techniques as *mere* technologies. What we have not recognized clearly are the social, cultural, and ethical conditions that render our biotic substitutes for industrial technologies ecologically and philosophically *meaningful*. For we must arrest more than just the ravaging and simplification of nature. We must also arrest the ravaging and simplification of the human spirit, of human personality, of human community, of humanity's idea of the "good," and humanity's own fecundity within the natural world. Indeed, we must counteract these trends with a sweeping program of social renewal...

A purely *technical* orientation toward organic gardening, solar and wind energy devices, aquaculture, holistic health, and the like would still retain the incubus of instrumental rationality that threatens our very capacity to develop an ecological sensibility. An environmentalistic technocracy is hierarchy draped in green garments; hence it is all the more insidious because it is camouflaged in the colour of ecology. The most certain test we can devise to distinguish environmental from ecological techniques is not the size, shape, or elegance of our tools and machines, but the social ends that they are meant to serve, the ethics and sensibilities by which they are guided and integrated, and the institutional challenges and changes they involve. Whether their ends, ethics, sensibilities, and institutions are libertarian or merely lo-

gistical, emancipatory or merely pragmatic, communitarian or merely efficient—in sum, ecological or merely environmental—will directly determine the rationality that underpins the techniques and the intentions guiding their design. Alternative technologies may bring the sun, wind, and the world of vegetation and animals into our lives as participants in a common ecological project of reunion and symbiosis. But the "smallness" or "appropriateness" of these technologies does not necessarily remove the possibility that we will keep trying to reduce nature to an object of exploitation. We must resolve the ambiguities of freedom *existentially*—by social principles, institutions, and an ethical commonality that renders freedom and harmony a reality...

But what kind of associations could we expect to find in our future ecological society? While the kinship tie or the blood oath is a more strictly biological basis for association than any form we know, it is patently too parochial and restrictive, in view of our modern commitment to a universal *humanitas*. Indeed, it is fair to ask whether the *strictly* biological is necessarily more "natural" than the human social attributes produced by natural evolution. Our very concept of nature may be more fully expressed by the way in which biological facts are *integrated structurally* to give rise to more complex and subtle forms of natural reality. Society itself may be a case in point, at least in terms of its abiding basic elements, and human associations that extend beyond the blood tie may reflect more complex forms of natural evolution than the highly limited biological kinship relations. If human nature is part of nature, the associations that rest on universal human loyalties may well be expressions of a richer, more variegated nature than we hitherto have been prepared to acknowledge.

In any case, it is apparent that we score a much richer ecological advance over the conventional biological wisdom of early humanity when we relate on the basis of a simple affinity of tastes, cultural similarities, emotional compatibilities, sexual preferences, and intellectual interests. Nor are we any the less natural for doing so. Even more preferable than the blood-related family is the commune that unites individuals by what they choose to like in each other rather than what they are obliged by blood ties to like. Conscious cultural affinity is ultimately a more creative basis for association than the unthinking demands of kin loyalties. The rudiments of an ecological society will probably be structured around the commune—freely created, human in scale, and intimate in its consciously cultivated relationships—rather than clan or tribal forms that are often fairly sizable and anchored in the imperatives of blood and the notion of a common ancestry. It is not "retribalization" that an ecological society is likely to seek but rather recommunalization with its wealth of creative libertarian traits.

On a still larger scale, the Commune composed of many small communes seems to contain the best features of the *polis*, without the ethnic parochialism and political exclusivity that contributed so significantly to its decline. Such larger or composite Communes, networked confederally through ecosystems, bioregions, and biomes, must be artistically tailored to their natural surroundings. We can envision that their squares will be interlaced by streams, their places of assembly surrounded by groves, their physical contours respected and tastefully landscaped, their soils nurtured caringly to foster plant variety for ourselves, our domestic animals, and wherever possible the wildlife they may support on their fringes. We can hope that the Communes would aspire to live with, nourish, and feed upon the life-forms that indigenously belong to the ecosystems in which they are integrated.

Decentralized and scaled to human dimensions, such ecocommunities would obey nature's "law of return" by recycling their organic wastes into composted nutriment for gardens and such materials as they can rescue for their crafts and industries. We can expect that they would subtly integrate solar, wind, hydraulic, and methane-producing installations into a highly variegated pattern for producing power. Agriculture, aquaculture, stockraising, and hunting would be regarded as crafts—an orientation that we hope would be extended as much as possible to the fabrication of use-values of nearly all kinds. The need to mass-produce goods in highly mechanized installations would be vastly diminished by the communities' overwhelming emphasis on quality and permanence. Vehicles, clothing, furnishings, and utensils would often become heirlooms to be handed down from generation to generation rather than discardable items that are quickly sacrificed to the gods of obsolescence. The past would always live in the present as the treasured arts and works of generations gone by.

We could expect that work, more craftlike than industrial, would be as readily rotated as positions of public responsibility; that members of the communities would be disposed to deal with one another in face-to-face relationships rather than by electronic means. In a world where the fetishization of needs would give way to the freedom to choose needs, quantity to quality, mean-spirited egotism to generosity, and indifference to love, we might reasonably expect that industrialization would be seen as an insult to human physiological rhythms and that physically onerous tasks would be reworked into collective enterprises more festive than labourious in nature. Whether several ecocommunities would want to share and cojointly operate certain industrial entities—such as a small-scale foundry, machine shop, electronic installation, or utility—or whether they would want to return to more traditional but often technically exciting means of producing goods is a decision that belongs to fu-

ture generations. Certainly, no law of production requires that we retain or expand the gigantic, highly centralized and hierarchically organized plants, mills, and offices that disfigure modern industry. By the same token, it is not for us to describe in any detail how the Communes of the future would confederate themselves and coordinate their common activities. Any institutional relationship of which we could conceive would remain a hollow form until we knew the attitudes, sensibilities, ideals, and values of the people who establish and maintain it...

Our technics can be either catalysts for our integration with the natural world or the chasms separating us from it. They are never ethically neutral. "Civilization" and its ideologies have fostered the latter orientation; social ecology must promote the former. Modern authoritarian technics have been tested beyond all human endurance by a misbegotten history of natural devastation and chronic genocide, indeed, biocide. The rewards we can glean from the wreckage they have produced will require so much careful sifting that an understandable case can be made for simply turning our backs on the entire heap. But we are already too deeply mired in its wastes to extricate ourselves readily. We have become trapped in its economic logistics, its systems of transportation and distribution, its national division of labour, and its immense industrial apparatus. Lest we be totally submerged and buried in its debris, we must tread cautiously—seeking firm ground where we can in the real attainments of science and engineering, avoiding its lethal quagmire of weaponry and its authoritarian technics of social control.

In the end, however, we must escape from the debris with whatever booty we can rescue, and recast our technics entirely in the light of an ecological ethics whose concept of "good" takes its point of departure from our concepts of diversity, wholeness, and a nature rendered self-conscious—an ethics whose "evil" is rooted in homogeneity, hierarchy, and a society whose sensibilities have been deadened beyond resurrection. Insofar as we hope to resurrect ourselves, we are obliged to use technics to bring the vitality of nature back into our atrophied senses. Having lost sight of our roots in natural history, we must be all the more careful in dealing with the means of life as forms of nature: to discern our roots in the sun and wind, in minerals and gases, as well as in soil, plants, and animals. It is a challenge not to be evaded—notably, to see the sun as part of our umbilical cord to power just as we discern its role in the photosynthetic activities of plants.

Chapter 10
Sexual Revolution

75. Marie Louise Berneri: Wilhelm Reich and the Sexual Revolution (1945)

In her article "Sexuality and Freedom," originally published in George Woodcock's Now *in 1945, Marie Louise Berneri (Selections 4 & 15) reviews the pioneering work of Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957), focusing on Reich's then recent publication,* The Function of the Orgasm *(New York: Orgone Institute Press, 1942). Reich had come to the attention of anarchists with his previous publication,* The Mass Psychology of Fascism *(1933), in which Reich drew the connections between sexual repression, family structure and authoritarianism (see Volume 1, Selection 119). Reich's work is similar to that of the earlier radical psychoanalyst, Otto Gross (Volume 1, Selection 78), but he placed much greater emphasis on the role of sexual inhibition in mass neuroses. Paul Goodman and Daniel Guérin were influenced by his work (compare Selections 35, 37, 76 & 77), as was the libertarian educator, A.S. Neill (see Selection 46). His work received greater attention with the advent of various sexual liberation movements in the 1960s, but some men confused sexual liberation with making women sexually available, giving rise to a new wave of the feminist movement, and renewed interest in anarchist ideas of personal liberation, dealt with below in the selections from Penny Kornegger and Carol Ehrlich.*

"THE PROBLEM OF SEXUALITY PERMEATES by its very nature every field of scientific investigation." This is too often ignored by revolutionaries who are willing to discuss Marx's economic doctrines or Kropotkin's sociological theories, but who regard with the greatest suspicion the work of psychoanalysts. Yet the existence of mass neuroses is only too obvious today. It is glaringly displayed in the cult of leadership which has taken an acute form in the totalitarian states, but which is equally evident in so-called democratic countries. It has given rise to outbursts of public sadism, in the glamourized versions of Hollywood producers or, in their crudest form, at [the Nazi concentration camps] Buchenwald and Belsen. It appears more obviously in the numerous cases of war neurosis, sadism, impotence and frigidity.

To reduce these problems to a question of family allowances, maternity benefits or old age pensions is ridiculous; to resolve it in terms of insurrection, of overthrow of the ruling class and the power of the State, is not enough. Human nature is a whole. The worker is not merely the producer in the factory or the field; he is also the lover, the father. The problems which he faces in his home are no less important than those at his place of work. By trying to separate biological and psychological problems from the sociological ones, we not only mutilate our theories, but are bound to reach false conclusions…

As a whole, Dr. Reich's work has been ignored by left-wing and revolutionary movements. It has been left to the forces of reaction, both on the right and on the left, to recognize in him an enemy of authoritarian society. A violent newspaper campaign which lasted about ten months was carried out against Dr. Reich in Norway in 1938. He emigrated to America, but even there he was not free from police persecution. On the 12th December, 1941, at 2 o'clock in the morning, he was taken out of his bed by agents of the FBI… and taken to Ellis Island. Not until the 5th January was he released unconditionally [he was arrested again in 1956, his books were banned and burned, and he died in a U.S. federal prison]. His publications have been banned by the Communists as well as by the Fascists, by the Socialists as well as by the Liberals. The explanation for this unpopularity is that Dr. Reich has attacked dictatorship under whatever name it disguised itself. In the October, 1944, issue of the international *Journal of Sex Economy* he reasserts his belief that, "Even after the military victory over German fascism, the fascist human structure will continue to exist in Germany, Russia, America and everywhere else."

Though Dr. Reich has been described as a Marxist, he declares, as Marx did before him, "I am not a Marxist," and indeed he bitterly attacks the followers of Marx who have distorted the thought and the scientific discoveries of their master. Reich can be called a Marxist in as much as he adheres to the laws of economics formulated by Marx… but his conception of the State is nearer that of Bakunin than that of Marx. In the article quoted above he declares:

"*State and Society mean two basically different social facts.* There is a state which is above or against Society as best exemplified in the fascist totalitarian state. There is society without a state, as in the primitive democratic societies. There are state organizations which work essentially in the direction of social interests, and there are others which do not. What has to be remembered is that 'state' does not mean 'society.'"…

[I]n the work-democracy advocated by Dr. Reich the state would not exist ("The 'well-ordered legal state' is an illusion, not a reality"), goods would be produced for

needs and not for profit, each individual would be responsible for his own existence and social function.

Dr. Reich's understanding of the economic structure of society prevented him from falling into the errors of most psychoanalysts, who have seen in the Soviet Union or in planned authoritarianism the hope of a free and happy society. Reich realized the need to introduce "psychological methods into sociological thinking." Marx had concerned himself with the problem of work in relation to man, Freud with the role sexuality played in the conscious and unconscious of man. Reich tried to solve the conflict between these two scientific systems, or perhaps it is better to say that he tried to find a point of contact between them...

For Reich the central phenomenon of sexuality is the *orgasm*; it "is the focal point of problems arising in the fields of psychology as well as physiology, biology and sociology." The title of the book [*The Function of the Orgasm*] is obviously chosen in defiance of those who think that sexuality is offensive and the book itself has been written, declares Dr. Reich, not without humour, at an age when he has not yet lost his illusions regarding the readiness of his fellows to accept revolutionary knowledge. Reich had before him the example of Freud who in later years watered down his theories on sexuality, so as to contradict his own earlier work. Reich has been expelled from the Association of the psychoanalysts and their publications have been barred to him, as he was accused of attaching too much importance to sexuality. He knows therefore how the pressure of hypocritical and moralistic society can bring scientists to change their views so as to make them palatable to the general public.

Reich adheres to the basic psychoanalytical concepts, but he refused to follow the psychoanalytic school when it relegated sexuality to a secondary role so as to gain approval even in reactionary quarters. Theodore P. Wolfe, who translated Dr. Reich's book from German into English, points out that:

"Freud's original theory of sex was revolutionary and evoked the most violent reactions. The story of psychoanalysis is essentially the story of never ending attempts to allay these reactions on the part of a shocked world, and, to make psychoanalysis socially acceptable, sexuality had to be robbed of its real significance and to be replaced by something else. Thus, Jung replaced it by a religious philosophy, Adler by a moralistic one, Rank by the 'Trauma of Birth,' etc."...

Dr. Reich, on the other hand, adheres to Freud's original etiological formula of the neurosis, "*the neurosis is the result of a conflict between instinctual demands and opposing social demands.*" In order to understand neuroses therefore one must study both sexuality and social forces...

He gathered his material not merely in the drawing room of the psychoanalyst, but also in working class clinics, in mass meetings, by a daily contact with the people. His conclusions were bound to be different from those of psychoanalysts whose patients came from sheltered bourgeois families.

This does not mean that he found that neuroses are petit bourgeois ailments. On the contrary, the working class is as prone to neurosis as the more sheltered classes, and among it the neuroses take a violent and brutal aspect undisguised by intellectual niceties. From this vast clinical experience and from statistics which he obtained, Reich formed the conclusion that the vast majority of the population suffers from neurosis in a more or less attenuated form. All these neuroses are due *without exception* to a disturbance in the sex life of the man or woman. This became apparent to Reich, particularly in the case of men, only when he had strictly defined what healthy sexual life is. "Psychic health," he discovered, "depends upon *orgastic potency*, that is, on the capacity for surrender in the acme of sexual excitation in the natural sexual act."

Before Reich, psychoanalysts had considered men sexually healthy who could have sexual intercourse, and they could therefore claim that neurotics could have a normal sexual life. Reich by analyzing in great detail the orgasm reflex ["the unitary involuntary contraction and expansion of the total organism in the acme of the sexual act"] found that no neurotic is able to be orgastically potent. He further established that the widespread existence of neurosis today is due to the sexual chaos brought about by a society based on authority. It is not found in human history before the development of the patriarchal social order, and it is still nonexistent today in free societies, where:

> The vital energies, under natural conditions, regulate themselves spontaneously, without compulsive duty or compulsive morality. The latter are a sure indication of the existence of antisocial tendencies. Antisocial behaviour springs from *secondary drives which owe their existence to the suppression of natural sexuality.*

> The individual brought up in an atmosphere which negates life and sex acquires a *pleasure-anxiety* (fear of pleasurable excitation) which is represented physiologically in chronic muscular spasms. This pleasure-anxiety is the soil on which the individual re-creates the life-negating ideologies which are the basis of dictatorship... The average character structure of human beings has changed in the direction of impotence and fear of living, so that authoritarian dictatorships can establish themselves by pointing to existing human attitudes, such as lack of responsibility and infantilism.

How have men succeeded in crushing their instincts for love and life? Are they biologically unable to experience pleasure and enjoy freedom? The causes, say Reich, are not biological, but economic and sociological. It is the compulsive family and compulsive morality which have destroyed the natural self-regulation of the vital forces. [Bronislaw] Malinowski's study of the sexual life of savages in the South Sea islands [*Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co. Inc., 1922)] has shown that sexual repression is of sociological and not biological nature. It has further destroyed the Freudian concept of the biological nature of the Oedipus conflict, by showing that the child-parent relationship changes with the social structure of society. The Oedipus complex of the European does not exist among the Trobriand Islanders.

This is an all important point as, if sexual repression is biologically determined, it cannot be abolished, but if it is determined by social factors, then a change in those social factors will put an end to it. Malinowski observed that:

"Children in the Trobriand islands know no sex repression and no sexual secrecy. Their sex life is allowed to develop naturally, freely and unhampered *through every stage of life, with full satisfaction...* The society of the Trobrianders knew... no sexual perversions, no functional psychoses, no psychoneuroses, no sex murder."... At the time when Malinowski made his studies of the Trobriand islanders, there was living a few miles away, on the Amphlett Islands, a tribe with patriarchal authoritarian family organization. The people inhabiting these islands were already showing all the traits of the European neurotic, such as distrust, anxiety, neuroses, perversions, suicide, etc.

The conclusion from these observations is that, "The determining factor of the mental health of a population is the condition of its natural love life."

A further important fact arises out of Malinowski's studies. Among the Trobriand Islanders there is one group of children who are not allowed sexual freedom because they are predestined for an economically advantageous marriage. These children are brought up in sexual abstinence and they show neuroses and a submissiveness which do not exist among the other children. From this Reich concludes:

Sexual suppression is an essential instrument in the production of economic enslavement. Thus, sexual suppression in the infant and the adolescent is not, as psychoanalysis—in agreement with traditional and erroneous concepts of education—contends, the prerequisite of cultural development, sociality, diligence and cleanliness; *it is the exact opposite.*

This is corroborated by the observations carried on by Reich on his own patients. When neurotic patients were restored to a healthy sex-life, their whole character al-

tered, their submissiveness disappeared, they revolted against an absurd moral code, against the teachings of the Church, against the monotony and uselessness of their work. They refused to submit to a marriage without love which gave them no sexual satisfaction, they refused to carry on with work where they did not have to use their initiative and creative powers. They felt the need to assert their *natural rights* and to do so they felt that a *different kind of society* was needed.

"To the individual with a genital structure, sexuality is a pleasurable experience and nothing but that; work is joyous vital activity and achievement. To the morally structured individual, work is burdensome duty or only a means of making a living... *the therapeutic task consisted in changing the neurotic character into a genital character, and in replacing moral regulation by self regulation*."

Dr. Reich shows in case reports how this was done. He had observed that "the essence of a neurosis is the *inability of the patient to obtain gratification*" (in the sense of orgastic potency defined above). Freud had declared before him in his earlier works "*the energy of anxiety is the energy of repressed sexuality*," but the psychoanalysts thought that the disturbance of genitality was one symptom among others, while Reich established that it was *the* symptom of neurosis:

"*The energy source of the neurosis lies in the differential between accumulation and discharge of sexual energy.* The neurotic psychic apparatus is distinguished from the healthy one by the constant presence of undischarged sexual energy.

Freud's therapeutic formula is correct but incomplete. The first prerequisite of cure is, indeed, to make the repressed sexuality conscious. However, though this alone may effect the cure, it need not of necessity do so. It does so only if at the same time *the source of energy, the sexual stasis* (damming up of sexual energy), is eliminated; in other words, *only if the awareness of instinctual demands goes hand in hand with the capacity for full orgastic gratification*. In that case the pathological psychic growths are deprived of energy at the source."

In his description of the formation of actual neurosis (which he calls stasis neurosis ["somatic disturbances which are the immediate result of the stasis of sexual energy"]) and psychoneurosis, Reich begins by stating that sexual excitation is definitely a *somatic* process and that neurotic conflicts are of a *psychic* nature. A slight psychic conflict will produce a slight somatic stasis or damming up of sexual energy which in its turn will reinforce the conflict, which will reinforce the stasis. The original conflict is always in existence in the sexual child-parent conflict, and if this is nourished by the actual stasis it gives rise to neurosis and psychoneurosis. But the actual stasis can be eliminated by positive sexual gratification, so that the original psy-

chic conflict lacks energy to transform itself into a neurosis. The cycle between the psychic conflict and the somatic stasis must be interrupted, even if it is only by gratification through masturbation. For the patient to obtain sexual gratification, it is necessary to destroy his character armour against his sexuality. Dr. Reich has elaborated a technique of *character-analytic vegetotherapy* ["so-called because the therapeutic goal is that of liberating the bound-up vegetative energies and thus restoring to the patient his vegetative motility"]. Its fundamental principle is the restoring of bio-psychic motility by means of dissolving rigidities (armourings) of the character and musculature. The term 'rigidity' must be taken literally; it is by a contraction of his muscles, particularly around his sexual organs, by holding back his breath, that the neurotic builds himself an armour against sexual pleasurable excitation.

Considering the tremendous number of neuroses in existence today, it will be obvious that Dr. Reich does not believe that his vegetotherapy can be applied to all of them, but he has attached a particular importance to the development of the *prophylaxis of the neuroses*. His experience in sex hygiene clinics, the statistics gathered in mass meetings and youth groups, convinced him that the situation called for "*extensive social measures for the prevention of the neuroses*." His practical suggestions are very interesting, but it is impossible to discuss them here. Suffice to say that Dr. Reich wants to see the complete liberation of the child and adolescent sexuality from the oppression of the authoritarian family, of the church, of the school. He wants to see the adult freed from compulsive marriage and compulsive morality. He wants a return to instinctual life, to reason, which he qualifies by saying, "*That which is alive is in itself reasonable*."

This freedom of love, of work, of science can be obtained, he thinks, in a "work democracy, that is a democracy on the basis of a *natural* organization of the work process." How this work democracy is to be attained and what shape it is going to take, are still left rather vague, but that it will be a free society there can be no doubt. "*Natural moral behaviour presupposes freedom of the natural sexual process*." And again:

"The social power exercised by the people... will not become manifest and effective until the working and producing masses of the people become psychically independent and capable of taking full responsibility for their social existence and capable of rationally determining their lives themselves."

Had Dr. Reich witnessed the formation of industrial and agricultural collectives in Spain [Volume 1, Selection 126] during the revolution it is probable that his "work democracy" would have taken a more concrete shape. He also seems to consider the development of industry as a factor in the sexual emancipation of men. This as well is

probably due to his lack of knowledge of agricultural countries such as Spain and Italy where neuroses seem to be far less numerous than in industrialized countries.

The only practical examples he gives of "genuine democratic endeavour" are the "labour management committees" in the U.S.A., where workers participate in the management of production and distribution. The example is unfortunate; it is true that the workers share the responsibility in the management, but they are not their own masters. The capitalist is always there and can dictate to them.

Dr. Reich does not look at the world through pink glasses. He sees all its corruption and misery, all its absurdity and ugliness, but he does not despair. He has confidence in that which is alive because he knows that man is only anti-social, submissive, cruel or masochistic because he lacked the freedom to develop his natural instincts.

76. Daniel Guérin: Sexual Revolution

Daniel Guérin argued that a libertarian social revolution must be at the same time a sexual revolution. Patriarchal society oppressed women and gay men. State socialist regimes persecuted homosexuals. Both the revolutionary and the homosexual desired freedom. The ultimate goal should therefore be the "total liberation of every human being, including homosexuals." The following excerpts from Guérin's writings are taken from David Berry's essay, "For a dialectic of homosexuality and revolution," in Gert Hekma (ed.), Past and Present of Radical Sexual Politics *(Amsterdam: Mosse Foundation, 2004), revised as "Workers of the world, embrace! Daniel Guérin, the labour movement and homosexuality," in* Left History, *Vol. 9, No. 2 (Spring/Summer 2004). Reprinted with the kind permission of David Berry.*

SEXUAL REPRESSIVENESS APPEARED WITH the beginnings of class society and the institution of private property and patriarchy. It was installed by a particular social group, that of polygamous chiefs, in whose hands, thanks to the accumulation of dowries paid by their wives, economic power now resided. In modern times, such repression remains indispensable in order to safeguard the two essential institutions of society: monogamous marriage and the family. It constitutes one of the means of economic enslavement. The sexual revolution is only possible through social revolution. 'Hommage à Wilhelm Reich'

I insist on maintaining that the homosexual cannot and must not be seen as a separate problem, and that the liberation of the homosexual must not be seen as the egoistic demand of a minority. Homosexuality is just a particular form, a variation, of sexuality and must be considered in the broadest context... The prejudice with which this mode of behaviour is besmirched derives, in large part, from patriarchal society's

depreciation of femininity, considered as "inferior." Seen in this way, the cause of the homosexual is the cause of woman. 'La répression de l'homosexualité en France'

[Society] has been happy to reduce woman to the level of a doll, a "bimba," a sexual object, a pin-up girl, while simultaneously accentuating the opposite traits in the male—macho, conceited, boorish and tyrannical... Bourgeois society, built on the family, will not readily give up on one of its last ramparts...

Patriarchal society, resting on the dual authority of the man over the woman and of the father over the children, accords primacy to the attributes and modes of behaviour associated with virility. Homosexuality is persecuted to the extent that it undermines this construction. The disdain of which woman is the object in patriarchal societies is not without correlation with the shame attached to the homosexual act. It is doubtless his femininity, his *betrayal of virility*, supposedly superior, for which the invert is not forgiven. *Homosexualité et Révolution*.

We live in post-patriarchal societies in which virility is valued more highly than femininity. One could almost say that the more heterosexual a man is, the more he despises women. Certain men are not forgiven for betraying masculinity by desiring boys. 'Entretiens avec Daniel Guérin,' *Homo 2000,* No. 4, 3e trimestre 1979

Many intolerant and aggressive homophobes are nothing more than homosexuals who have painfully repressed their natural tendencies and secretly envy those who have chosen to give their own desire free rein...

It certainly seems that... heterosexuals, conditioned by society, are bisexuals without realizing it or who censor themselves, or who, quite simply, only allow the heterosexual aspect of their lovemaking to show. *Homosexualité et Révolution*

One only has to read the admirable analysis offered by Frantz Fanon, in his *Black Skin, White Masks*, of the permanent dread of the Black in the face of the White's racial prejudice to understand to what extent the fate of the homosexual resembles that of the man of colour. The writer Richard Wright, as heterosexual as they come, sympathized equally with the comparable condition of the Black, the Jew and the "queer." 'Sur le racisme anti-homosexuel'

The problem in reality is not homosexuality. It is, above and beyond that, the problem of sexual liberation, or rather, more generally even than that, it is the problem of freedom. Eroticism is one of the instruments of freedom. There is within it, in the words of Simone de Beauvoir, a principle which is hostile to society, or, more precisely, hostile to a society in which man oppresses man, hostile to the authoritarian society. In *Carmen*, the song goes: Love is a gypsy child/It has never, ever obeyed laws.

We must not wait for the Revolution, we must not wait for the proletariat to have taken power, and assume that this will automatically bring about sexual liberation. *Homosexualité et Révolution*

Even at the present time, in capitalist societies, partial victories over obscurantism should not be underestimated, far from it. I see no difference between wage increases, improvements in prison regimes and in civil rights (the emancipation of women, for example) and the struggle against the repression of homosexuals, a struggle which must be fought straightaway...

I am thinking above all of those who are imprisoned as "common criminals" for having tried to satisfy their sexuality by an act which was an expression of their true selves. I am also thinking of all those homosexuals who find great difficulty in coming to terms with themselves, in bearing the social reprobation of which they are the object, and who are haunted by the idea of suicide. I have received some deeply distressing letters from such people. The most urgent thing, since we are not going to transform the world tomorrow, is to help such unfortunate people rediscover a taste for life. *Plexus*, No. 26 (July 1969)

The recent emancipation, the commercialization of homosexuality, the superficial pursuit of pleasure for pleasure's sake have created a whole generation of "gay" young men, profoundly apolitical, obsessed with gadgets, frivolous, characterless, incapable of any serious reflection, uncultured, good for nothing but "cruising," corrupted by the specialist press, the mushrooming of gay bars and so on, and by the libidinous small ads, in a word a million miles from any conception of class struggle...

In any case, the gains won against homophobia by its victims can only be limited and fragile. On the other hand, the crushing of class tyranny would open the way to the total liberation of every human being, including homosexuals.

The task therefore is to ensure that there is as great a convergence as possible between homosexuality and revolution.

The proletarian revolutionary must understand, or must be convinced, that, even if he does not see himself as directly implicated, the emancipation of the homosexual concerns him just as much as, for example, the emancipation of women and of people of colour. As for the homosexual, he must understand that his liberation can be total and irreversible only if it is achieved within the context of social revolution, in other words, only if the human race succeeds not just in liberalizing attitudes, but far more than this, in transforming everyday life...

To my mind, the homophobic prejudice, in all its hideousness, will not be countered only by means which I would call 'reformist,' by persuasion, by concessions to

our heterosexual enemies; it will be possible to eradicate it definitively, as with racial prejudice, only through an antiauthoritarian social revolution. Indeed despite its liberal mask, the bourgeoisie has too great a need, in order to perpetuate its hegemony, of the domestic values of the family, cornerstone of the social order. It cannot deprive itself of the help provided for it by, on the one hand, the glorification of marriage and the cult of procreation, and on the other, the support given it by the Churches, determined adversaries of free love and of homosexuality... The bourgeoisie as a whole will never entirely lift its ban on dissident sexualities. The whole edifice will have to be swept away in order to achieve the complete liberation of man in general (a generic term which includes both sexes), and of the homosexual in particular. *Homosexualité et Révolution*

Revolutionaries have proven themselves to be no more tolerant than the bourgeois with regard to homosexuality. They have, it is true, an excuse: they distrust the homosexuals in their ranks because the latter are reputed to be vulnerable to blackmail and to pressure from the police, and are therefore "dangerous" for the movement which, in the eyes of such activists, is more important than respect for the human individual. But they do not realize that their intolerance itself contributes to perpetuating the state of affairs which is at the root of their concern: by virtue of the fact that they also cast their stone at homosexuals, they are helping to consolidate the very taboo which makes homosexuals easy prey for the blackmailers and for the police. The vicious circle will only be broken when progressive workers adopt both a more scientific and a more humane attitude towards homosexuality. *Kinsey et la sexualité*

The intransigence of the so-called "communist" regimes in this regard takes much more shocking forms than that of the capitalist countries. It is paradoxical and scandalous that the zealots of so-called "scientific" socialism should display such crass ignorance of scientific facts. It is tragic that a morbid puritanism be allowed to so disfigure the natural and polymorphous eroticism of an entire generation. 'Sur le racisme anti-homosexuel,' *Masques, Revue des homosexualités,* No. 6 (Autumn 1980)

The reason is that the homosexual, whether he knows or wishes it or not, is potentially asocial, an outsider, and therefore a virtual subversive. And as these totalitarian regimes have consolidated themselves by resuscitating traditional family values, he who loves boys is considered a danger to society...

Whatever some class-struggle prudes may say, homosexuality... has never diminished the revolutionary's commitment and combativity, on condition, of course, that excess and promiscuity are avoided. *Homosexualité et Révolution*

A Marxism which sought to emancipate man without including sexuality in its analysis and liberating man on the sexual level as well would be disfiguring itself, it would be incomplete. A purely biological or purely clinical sexology which paid no attention to the social context and to dialectical materialist analysis would produce only half-truths. *Essai sur la révolution sexuelle*

[Kinsey, therefore] encourages us to pursue simultaneously both the social revolution and the sexual revolution, until human beings are liberated completely from the two crushing burdens of capitalism and puritanism…

Only a true libertarian communism, antiauthoritarian and antistatist, would be capable of promoting the definitive and concomitant emancipation both of the homosexual and of the individual exploited or alienated by capitalism. *Homosexualité et révolution.*

The libertarian critique of the bourgeois regime is not possible without a critique of bourgeois mores. The revolution cannot be simply political. It must be, at the same time, both cultural and sexual and thus transform every aspect of life and of society… I am against any society, even a socialist one, which maintains sexual taboos. The revolt of the spring of '68 rejected all the faces of subjugation. If the generation of May discovered Reich, it was because he campaigned at one and the same time for the social revolution and the sexual revolution. *Le Monde*, 15 November 1969

The great utopian [Fourier] wants to see no form of attraction repressed for, an ancestor of Freud, he is too well aware of the psychological damage done by the constriction of the instincts and how unhappy we are when we are struggling against ourselves. Even more serious than the individual suffering caused by the repression of the passions are the effects on society. If they are held in check, they immediately reappear in a more harmful form which Fourier called "recurrent," and it is then and only then that they create disorder: "Any dammed up passion produces its counter-passion which is as harmful as the natural passion would have been beneficial"…

Thus the curse which Proudhon was to put on Eros on the pretext of protecting industry had been refuted in advance: in Harmony [Fourier's utopia], the more each individual's tastes are satisfied, the better the community will be served. 'Le nouveau monde amoureux de Fourier,' *Arcadie*, Nos. 168 & 169 (1967 & 1968)

The Ancients believed in the myth according to which, in the beginning, there existed a bisexual being who was cut into two halves, each half corresponding to one of the sexes. This image has always remained very strong with me, and today, at the age of 74, I have still not been able to come to terms with the idea that there are two separate sexes. For me, it is quite incomprehensible and it seems to me that this is a result of a kind of amputation carried out on this original being…

[There is] a tendency towards unification, towards a reconciliation of the sexes, through sensitivity, creativity, intelligence. I think the society of the future will be a bisexual society. 'Géographie passionnelle d'une époque'

The time will come... when women and men will no longer form two opposed species, when love of both sexes will be recognized as the most natural form of love. *Eux et lui*

77. Paul Goodman: The Politics of Being Queer (1969)

In these excerpts, Paul Goodman describes how his bisexuality gave energy to his anarchism, utopianism and pacifism. He saw promiscuity as something which helped to break down class boundaries, but was critical of homosexuals who were apolitical or reactionary, arguing that "freedom is indivisible." Originally published as "Memoirs of an Ancient Activist," WIN, V (November 15, 1969), a revised version entitled "The Politics of Being Queer" appears in Nature Heals: The Psychological Essays of Paul Goodman *(New York: Free Life Editions, 1977), ed. Taylor Stoehr.*

IN ESSENTIAL WAYS, MY HOMOSEXUAL NEEDS have made me a nigger. Most obviously, of course, I have been subject to arbitrary brutality from citizens and the police; but except for being occasionally knocked down, I have gotten off lightly in this respect, since I have a good flair for incipient trouble and I used to be nimble on my feet. What makes me a nigger is that it is not taken for granted that my out-going impulse is my right. Then I have the feeling that it is not my street.

I don't complain that my passes are not accepted; nobody has a claim to be loved (except small children). But I am degraded for making the passes at all, for being myself. Nobody likes to be rejected, but there is a way of rejecting someone that accords him his right to exist and is the next best thing to accepting him. I have rarely enjoyed this treatment.

Allen Ginsberg and I once pointed out to Stokely Carmichael how we were niggers, but he blandly put us down by saying that we could always conceal our disposition and pass. That is, he accorded us the same lack of imagination that one accords to niggers; we did not really exist for him. Interestingly, this dialogue was taking place on (British) national TV, that haven of secrecy. More recently, since the formation of the Gay Liberation Front, Huey Newton of the Black Panthers has welcomed homosexuals to the revolution, as equally oppressed.

In general in America, being a queer nigger is economically and professionally not such a disadvantage as being a black nigger, except for a few areas like government service, where there is considerable fear and furtiveness. (In more puritanic re-

gimes, like present day Cuba, being queer is professionally and civilly a bad deal. Totalitarian regimes, whether communist or fascist, seem to be inherently puritanic.) But my own experience has been very mixed. I have been fired three times because of my queer behavior or my claim to the right to it, and these are the only times I have been fired. I was fired from the University of Chicago during the early years of Robert Hutchins; from Manumit School, an off-shoot of A. J. Muste's Brookwood Labor College; and from Black Mountain College. These were highly liberal and progressive institutions, and two of them prided themselves on being communities.—Frankly, my experience of radical community is that it does not tolerate my freedom. Nevertheless, I am all for community because it is a human thing, only I seem doomed to be left out.

On the other hand, so far as I know, my homosexual acts and the overt claim to them have never disadvantaged me much in more square institutions. I have taught at half a dozen State universities. I am continually invited, often as chief speaker, to conferences of junior high school superintendents, boards of Regents, guidance counsellors, task forces on delinquency, etc., etc. I say what I think is true—often there are sexual topics; I make passes if there is occasion: and I seem to get invited back. I have even sometimes made out—which is more than I can say for conferences of SDS [Students for a Democratic Society] or the Resistance. Maybe the company is so square that it does not believe, or dare to notice, my behavior; or more likely, such professional square people are more worldly… and couldn't care less what you do, so long as they don't have to face anxious parents and yellow press…

On the whole, although I was desperately poor up to a dozen years ago—I brought up a family on the income of a share cropper—I don't attribute this to being queer but to my pervasive ineptitude, truculence, and bad luck. In 1945, even the Army rejected me as "Not Military Material" (they had such a stamp) not because I was queer but because I made a nuisance of myself with pacifist action at the examination and also had bad eyes and piles.

Curiously, however, I have been told… my sexual behavior used to do me damage in… the New York literary world. It kept me from being invited to advantageous parties and making contacts to get published… What I myself noticed in the 30s and 40s was that I was excluded from the profitable literary circles dominated by Marxists in the 30s and ex-Marxists in the 40s because I was an anarchist. For example, I was never invited to PEN or the Committee for Cultural Freedom.—When CCF finally got around to me at the end of the 50s, I had to turn them down because they were patently tools of the CIA…

To stay morally alive, a nigger uses various kinds of spite, which is the vitality of the powerless. He may be randomly destructive, since he feels he has no world to lose, and maybe he can prevent the others from enjoying their world. Or he may become an in-group fanatic, feeling that only his own kind are authentic and have soul. There are queers and blacks belonging to both these parties. Queers are "artistic," blacks have "soul." (This is the kind of theory, I am afraid, that is self-disproving; the more you believe it, the stupider you become; it is like trying to prove that you have a sense of humour.) In my own case, however, being a nigger seems to inspire me to want a more elementary humanity, wilder, less structured, more variegated, and where people pay attention to one another. That is, my plight has given energy to my anarchism, utopianism, and Gandhianism. There are blacks in this party too.

My actual political stance is a willed reaction-formation to being a nigger. I act that "the society I live in is mine," the title of one of my books...

In their in-group, Gay Society, homosexuals can get to be fantastically snobbish and a-political or reactionary. This is an understandable ego-defense: "You gotta be better than somebody," but its payoff is very limited. When I give talks to the Mattachine Society [a gay rights group], my invariable sermon is to ally with all other libertarian groups and liberation movements, since freedom is indivisible. What we need is not defiant pride and self-consciousness, but social space to live and breathe. The Gay Liberation people have finally gotten the message of indivisible freedom, but they have the usual fanaticism of the Movement.

But there is a positive side. In my observation and experience, queer life has some remarkable political values. It can be profoundly democratizing, throwing together every class and group more than heterosexuality does. Its promiscuity can be a beautiful thing (but be prudent about V.D.)

I have cruised rich, poor, middle class, and petit bourgeois; black, white, yellow, and brown; scholars, jocks, Gentlemanly C's, and dropouts; farmers, seamen, railroad men, heavy industry, light manufacturing, communications, business, and finance; civilians, soldiers and sailors, and once or twice cops... There is a kind of political meaning, I guess, in the fact that there are so many types of attractive human beings; but what is more significant is that the many functions in which I am professionally and economically engaged are not altogether cut and dried but retain a certain animation and sensuality...

In most human societies, of course, sexuality has been one more area in which people can be unjust, the rich buying the poor, males abusing females, sahibs using niggers, the adults exploiting the young. But I think this is neurotic and does not give

the best satisfaction. It is normal to befriend and respect what gives you pleasure. St. Thomas, who was a grand moral philosopher though a poor metaphysician, says that the chief human use of sex—as distinguished from the natural law of procreation—is to get to know other persons intimately. That has been my experience.

A criticism of homosexual promiscuity, of course, is that, rather than democracy, it involves an appalling superficiality of human conduct, so that it is a kind of archetype of the inanity of mass urban life. I doubt that this is generally the case, though I don't know; just as, of the crowds who go to art galleries, I don't know who are being spoken to by the art and who are being bewildered further—but at least some are looking for something. A young man or woman worries, "Is he interested in me or just in my skin? If I have sex with him, he will regard me as nothing": I think this distinction is meaningless and disastrous; in fact I have always followed up in exactly the opposite way and many of my lifelong personal loyalties had sexual beginnings. But is this the rule or the exception? Given the usual coldness and fragmentation of community life at present, my hunch is that homosexual promiscuity enriches more lives than it desensitizes. Needless to say, if we had better community, we'd have better sexuality too.

I cannot say that my own promiscuity (or attempts at it) has kept me from being possessively jealous of some of my lovers—more of the women than the men, but both. My experience has not borne out what Freud and Ferenczi seem to promise, that homosexuality diminishes this voracious passion, whose cause I do not understand. But the ridiculous inconsistency and injustice of my attitude have sometimes helped me to laugh at myself and kept me from going overboard…

As a rule I don't believe in poverty and suffering as a way of learning anything, but in my case the hardship and starvation of my inept queer life have usefully simplified my notions of what a good society is. As with any other addict who cannot get an easy fix, they have kept me in close touch with material hunger. So I cannot take the Gross National Product very seriously, nor status and credentials, nor grandiose technological solutions, nor ideological politics, including ideological liberation movements. For a starving person, the world has got to come across in kind. It doesn't. I have learned to have very modest goals for society and myself: things like clean air, green grass, children with bright eyes, not being pushed around, useful work that suits one's abilities, plain tasty food, and occasional satisfying nookie.

A happy property of sexual acts, and perhaps especially of homosexual acts, is that they are dirty, like life: as Augustine said, *Inter urinas et feces nascimur*: we're born among the piss and shit. In a society as middle class, orderly, and technological as

ours, it's good to break down squeamishness, which is an important factor in what is called racism, as well as in cruelty to children and the sterile exiling of the sick and aged. And the illegal and catch-as-catch-can nature of much homosexual life at present breaks down other conventional attitudes. Although I wish I could have had my parties with less apprehension and more unhurriedly, yet it has been an advantage to learn that the ends of docks, the backs of trucks, back alleys, behind the stairs, abandoned bunkers on the beach, and the washrooms of trains are all adequate samples of all the space there is. For both bad and good, homosexual life retains some of the alarm and excitement of childish sexuality.

It is damaging for societies to check any spontaneous vitality. Sometimes it is necessary, but rarely; and certainly not homosexual acts which, so far as I have heard, have never done any harm to anybody. A part of the hostility, paranoia, and automatic competitiveness of our society comes from the inhibition of body contact. But in a very specific way, the ban on homosexuality damages and depersonalizes the educational system. The teacher-student relation is almost always erotic.—The only other healthy psychological motivations are the mother-hen relevant for small children and the professional who needs apprentices, relevant for graduate schools.—If there is fear and to-do that erotic feeling might turn into overt sex, the teacher-student relation lapses or, worse, becomes cold and cruel. And our culture sorely lacks the pedagogic sexual friendships, homosexual, heterosexual, and lesbian, that have starred other cultures. To be sure, a functional sexuality is probably incompatible with our mass school systems. This is one among many reasons why they should be dismantled…

[A]n evil of the hardship and danger of queer life in our society, as with any situation of scarcity and starvation, is that we become obsessional and one-track-minded about it. I have certainly spent far too many anxious hours of my life fruitlessly cruising, which I might have spent sauntering for other purposes or for nothing at all, pasturing my soul…

On balance, I don't know whether my choice, or compulsion, of a bisexual life has made me especially unhappy or only averagely unhappy. It is obvious that every way of life has its hang-ups, having a father or no father, being married or single, being strongly sexed or rather sexless, and so forth; but it is hard to judge what other people's experience has been, to make a comparison. I have persistently felt that the world was not made for me, but I have had good moments. And I have done a lot of work, have brought up some beautiful children, and have gotten to be 58 years old.

78. Peggy Kornegger: Anarchism: The Feminist Connection (1975)

Peggy Kornegger edited and wrote for the American feminist magazine The Second Wave, *in which her influential essay, "Anarchism: the Feminist Connection," first appeared (Spring 1975). It has been widely reprinted since, most recently in* Quiet Rumours: An Anarcha-Feminist Anthology *(London: Dark Star).*

THE CURRENT WOMEN'S MOVEMENT AND a radical feminist analysis of society have contributed much to libertarian thought. In fact, it is my contention that feminists have been unconscious anarchists in both theory and practice for years. We now need to become consciously aware of the connections between anarchism and feminism and use that framework for our thoughts and actions. We have to be able to see very clearly where we want to go and how to get there. In order to be more effective, in order to create the future we sense is possible, we must realize that what we want is not change but total transformation.

The radical feminist perspective is almost pure anarchism. The basic theory postulates the nuclear family as the basis for all authoritarian systems. The lesson the child learns, from father to teacher to boss to God, is to OBEY the great anonymous voice of Authority. To graduate from childhood to adulthood is to become a full-fledged automaton, incapable of questioning or even thinking clearly. We pass into middle-America, believing everything we are told and numbly accepting the destruction of life all around us.

What feminists are dealing with is a mind-fucking process—the male domineering attitude toward the external world, allowing only subject/object relationships. Traditional male politics reduces humans to object status and then dominates and manipulates them for abstract "goals." Women, on the other hand, are trying to develop a consciousness of "Other" in all areas. We see subject-to-subject relationships as not only desirable but necessary. (Many of us have chosen to work with and love only women for just this reason—those kinds of relationships are so much more possible.) Together we are working to expand our empathy and understanding of other living things and to identify with those entities outside of ourselves, rather than objectifying and manipulating them. At this point, a respect for all life is a prerequisite for our very survival.

Radical feminist theory also criticizes male hierarchical thought patterns—in which rationality dominates sensuality, mind dominates intuition, and persistent splits and polarities (active/passive, child/adult, sane/insane, work/play, spontaneity/organization) alienate us from the mind-body experience as a *Whole* and from the

Continuum of human experience. Women are attempting to get rid of these splits, to live in harmony with the universe as whole, integrated humans dedicated to the collective healing of our individual wounds and schisms.

In actual practice within the Women's Movement, feminists have had both success and failure in abolishing hierarchy and domination. I believe that women frequently speak and act as "intuitive" anarchists, that is, we *approach*, or *verge on*, a complete denial of all patriarchal thought and organization. That approach, however, is blocked by the powerful and insidious forms which patriarchy takes—in our minds and in our relationships with one another. Living within and being conditioned by an authoritarian society often prevents us from making that all-important connection between feminism and anarchism. When we say we are fighting the patriarchy, it isn't always clear to all of us that that means fighting *all* hierarchy, *all* leadership, *all* government, and the very idea of authority itself. Our impulses toward collective work and small leaderless groups have been anarchistic, but in most cases we haven't *called* them by that name. And that is important, because an understanding of feminism as anarchism could springboard women out of reformism and stop-gap measures into a revolutionary confrontation with the basic nature of authoritarian politics.

If we want to "bring down the patriarchy," we need to talk about anarchism, to know exactly what it means, and to use that framework to transform ourselves and the structure of our daily lives. Feminism doesn't mean female corporate power or a woman President; it means *no* corporate power and *no* Presidents. The Equal Rights Amendment will not transform society; it only gives women the "right" to plug into a hierarchical economy. Challenging sexism means challenging *all* hierarchy—economic, political, and personal. And that means an anarca-feminist revolution…

As the second wave of feminism spread across the country in the late 60s, the forms which women's groups took frequently reflected an unspoken libertarian consciousness. In rebellion against the competitive power games, impersonal hierarchy, and mass organization tactics of male politics, women broke off into small, leaderless, consciousness-raising groups, which dealt with personal issues in our daily lives. Face-to-face, we attempted to get at the root cause of our oppression by sharing our hitherto unvalued perceptions and experiences. We learned from each other that politics is not "out there" but in our minds and bodies and between individuals. Personal relationships could and did oppress us as a political class. Our misery and self-hatred were a direct result of male domination—in home, street, job, and political organization.

So, in many unconnected areas of the U.S., C-R [consciousness-raising] groups developed as a spontaneous, direct (re)action to patriarchal forms. The emphasis on the small group as a basic organizational unit, on the personal and political, on antiauthoritarianism, and on spontaneous direct action was essentially anarchistic... The structure of women's groups bore a striking resemblance to that of anarchist affinity groups within anarcho-syndicalist unions in Spain, France, and many other countries. Yet, we had not called ourselves anarchists and consciously organized around anarchist principles. At the time, we did not even have an underground network of communication and idea-and-skill sharing. Before the women's movement was more than a handful of isolated groups groping in the dark toward answers, anarchism as an unspecified ideal existed in our minds.

I believe that this puts women in the unique position of being the bearers of a subsurface anarchist consciousness which, if articulated and concretized, can take us further than any previous group toward the achievement of total revolution. Women's intuitive anarchism, if sharpened and clarified, is an incredible leap forward (or beyond) in the struggle for human liberation. Radical feminist theory hails feminism as the Ultimate Revolution. This is true if, and only if, we recognize and claim our anarchist roots. At the point where we fail to see the feminist connection to anarchism, we stop short of revolution and become trapped in "ye olde male political rut." It is time to stop groping in the darkness and see what we have done and are doing in the context of where we want to ultimately be.

C-R groups were a good beginning, but they often got so bogged down in talking about personal problems that they failed to make the jump to direct action and political confrontation. Groups that did organize around a specific issue or project sometimes found that the "tyranny of structurelessness" could be as destructive as the "tyranny of tyranny"[Joreen, "The Tyranny of Structurelessness," *Second Wave*, Vol. 2, No. 1, and Cathy Levine, "The Tyranny of Tyranny," *Black Rose,* No. 1]. The failure to blend organization with spontaneity frequently caused the emergence of those with more skills or personal charisma as leaders. The resentment and frustration felt by those who found themselves following sparked in-fighting, guilt-tripping, and power struggles. Too often this ended in either total ineffectiveness or a backlash adherence to "what we need is more structure" (in the old male up/down sense of the word).

Once again, I think that what was missing was a verbalized anarchist analysis. Organization does not have to stifle spontaneity or follow hierarchical patterns. The women's groups or projects which have been the most successful are those which ex-

perimented with various fluid structures: the rotation of tasks and chairpersons, sharing of all skills, equal access to information and resources, non-monopolized decision-making, and time slots for discussion of group dynamics. This latter structural element is important because it involves a continued effort on the part of group members to watch for "creeping power politics." If women are verbally committing themselves to collective work, this requires a real struggle to unlearn passivity (to eliminate "followers") and to share special skills or knowledge (to avoid "leaders"). This doesn't mean that we cannot be inspired by one another's words and lives; strong actions by strong individuals can be contagious and thus important. But we must be careful not to slip into old behaviour patterns.

On the positive side, the emerging structure of the women's movement in the last few years has generally followed an anarchistic pattern of small project-oriented groups continually weaving an underground network of communication and collective action around specific issues. Partial success at leader/"star" avoidance and the diffusion of small action projects (Rape Crisis Centers, Women's Health Collectives) across the country have made it extremely difficult for the women's movement to be pinned down to one person or group. Feminism is a many-headed monster which cannot be destroyed by singular decapitation. We spread and grow in ways that are incomprehensible to a hierarchical mentality.

This is not, however, to underestimate the immense power of the Enemy. The most treacherous form this power can take is cooptation, which feeds on any short-sighted unanarchistic view of feminism as mere "social change." To think of sexism as an evil which can be eradicated by female participation in the way things are is to insure the continuation of domination and oppression. "Feminist" capitalism is a contradiction in terms. When we establish women's credit unions, restaurants, bookstores, etc., we must be clear that we are doing so for our own survival, for the purpose of creating a counter-system whose processes contradict and challenge competition, profit-making, and all forms of economic oppression. We must be committed to "living on the boundaries" [Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father*], to anti-capitalist, non-consumption values. What we want is neither integration nor a *coup d'état* which would "transfer power from one set of boys to another set of boys" [Robin Morgan]. What we ask is nothing less than total revolution, revolution whose forms invent a future untainted by inequity, domination, or disrespect for individual variation—in short, feminist-anarchist revolution. I believe that women have known all along how to move in the direction of human liberation; we only need to shake off lingering male political forms and dictums and focus on our own anarchistic female analysis...

At this point, we lack an overall framework to see the process of revolution in. Without it, we are doomed to dead-ended, isolated struggle or the individual solution. The kind of framework, or coming-together-point, that anarca-feminism provides would appear to be a prerequisite for any sustained effort to reach Utopian goals… true revolution is "neither an accidental happening nor a *coup d'état* artificially engineered from above" [Sam Dolgoff, *The Anarchist Collectives*]. It takes years of preparation: sharing of ideas and information, changes in consciousness and behaviour, and the creation of political and economic alternatives to capitalist, hierarchical structures. It takes spontaneous direct action on the part of autonomous individuals through collective political confrontation. It is important to "free your mind" and your personal life, but it is not sufficient. Liberation is not an insular experience; it occurs in conjunction with other human beings. There are no individual "liberated women."

So, what I'm talking about is a *long-term process*, a series of actions in which we unlearn passivity and learn to take control over our own lives. I am talking about a "hollowing out" of the present system through the formation of mental and physical (concrete) alternatives to the way things are. The romantic image of a small band of armed guerrillas overthrowing the U.S. government is obsolete (as is all male politics) and basically irrelevant to this conception of revolution. We would be squashed if we tried it. Besides, as the poster says, "What we want is not the overthrow of the government, but a situation in which it gets lost in the shuffle"…

The actual tactics of preparation are things that we have been involved with for a long time. We need to continue and develop them further. I see them as functioning on three levels: (1) "educational" (sharing of ideas, experiences), (2) economic/political, and (3) personal/political.

"Education" has a rather condescending ring to it, but I don't mean "bringing the word to the masses" or guilt-tripping individuals into prescribed ways of being. I'm talking about the many methods we have developed for sharing our lives with one another—from writing (our network of feminist publications), study groups, and women's radio and TV shows to demonstrations, marches, and street theatre. The mass media would seem to be a particularly important area for revolutionary communication and influence—just think of how our own lives were *mis*-shaped by radio and TV. Seen in isolation, these things might seem ineffectual, but people *do* change from writing, reading, talking, and listening to each other, as well as from active participation in political movements. Going out into the streets together shatters passivity and creates a spirit of communal effort and life energy which can help sustain *and*

transform us. My own transformation from all-american-girl to anarca-feminist was brought about by a decade of reading, discussion, and involvement with many kinds of people and politics—from the Midwest to the West and East Coasts. My experiences may in some ways be unique, but they are not, I think, extraordinary. In many, many places in this country, people are slowly beginning to question the way they were conditioned to acceptance and passivity. God and Government are not the ultimate authorities they once were. This is not to minimize the extent of the power of Church and State, but rather to emphasize that seemingly inconsequential changes in thought and behaviour, when solidified in collective action, constitute a real challenge to the patriarchy.

Economic/political tactics fall into the realm of direct action and "purposeful illegality" (Daniel Guérin's term). Anarcho-syndicalism specifies three major modes of direct action: sabotage, strike, and boycott. Sabotage means "obstructing by every possible method, the regular process of production" [Emma Goldman, "Syndicalism: Its Theory and Practice," Volume 1, Selection 59]. More and more frequently, sabotage is practiced by people unconsciously influenced by changing societal values. For example, systematic absenteeism is carried out by both blue and white collar workers. Defying employers can be done as subtly as the "slow-down" or as blatantly as the "fuck-up." Doing as little work as possible as slowly as possible is common employee practice, as is messing up the actual work process...

Sabotage tactics can be used to make strikes much more effective. The strike itself is the workers' most important weapon. Any individual strike has the potential of paralyzing the system if it spreads to other industries and becomes a general strike. Total social revolution is then only a step away. Of course, the general strike must have as its ultimate goal worker's self-management (as well as a clear sense of how to achieve and hold on to it), or else the revolution will be still-born (as in France, 1968)...

Refusal to vote, to pay war taxes, or to participate in capitalist competition and over-consumption are all important actions when coupled with support of alternative, non-profit structures (food co-ops, health and law collectives, recycled clothing and book stores, free schools, etc.). Consumerism is one of the main strongholds of capitalism. To boycott buying itself (especially products geared to obsolescence and those offensively advertised) is a tactic that has the power to change the "quality of everyday life." Refusal to vote is often practiced out of despair or passivity rather than as a conscious political statement against a pseudo-democracy where power and money elect a political elite. Non-voting can mean something other than silent

consent if we are simultaneously participating in the creation of genuine democratic forms in an alternative network of anarchist affinity groups.

This takes us to the third area—personal/political, which is of course vitally connected to the other two. The anarchist affinity group has long been a revolutionary organizational structure. In anarcho-syndicalist unions, they functioned as training grounds for workers' self-management. They can be temporary groupings of individuals for a specific short-term goal, more "permanent" work collectives (as an alternative to professionalism and career elitism), or living collectives where individuals learn how to rid themselves of domination or possessiveness in their one-to-one relationships. Potentially, anarchist affinity groups are the base on which we can build a new libertarian, non-hierarchical society. The way we live and work changes the way we think and perceive (and vice versa), and when changes in consciousness become changes in action and behaviour, the revolution has begun.

Making Utopia real involves many levels of struggle. In addition to specific tactics which can be constantly developed and changed, we need political tenacity: the strength and ability to see beyond the present to a joyous, revolutionary future. To get from here to there requires more than a leap of faith. It demands of each of us a day-to-day, long-range commitment to possibility and direct action…

I used to think that if the revolution didn't happen tomorrow, we would all be doomed to a catastrophic (or at least, catatonic) fate. I don't believe anymore that kind of before-and-after revolution, and I think we set ourselves up for failure and despair by thinking of it in those terms. I *do* believe that what we all need, what we absolutely require, in order to continue struggling (in spite of oppression of our daily lives) is HOPE, that is, a vision of the future so beautiful and so powerful that it pulls us steadily forward in a bottom-up creation of an inner and outer world both habitable and self-fulfilling for *all*. I believe that hope exists… As we speak, we change, and as we change, we transform ourselves and the future simultaneously.

It *is* true that there is no solution, individual or otherwise, *in our society*. But if we can only balance this rather depressing knowledge with an awareness of the radical metamorphoses we have experienced—in our consciousness and in our lives—then perhaps we can have the courage to continue to create what we DREAM is possible. Obviously, it is not easy to face daily oppression and still continue to hope. But *it is our only chance*. If we abandon hope (the ability to see connections, to dream the present into the future), then we have already lost. Hope is woman's most powerful revolutionary tool; it is what we give each other every time we share our lives, our work, and our love. It pulls us forward out of self-hatred, self-blame, and the fatalism which

keeps us prisoners in separate cells. If we surrender to depression and despair now, we are accepting the inevitability of authoritarian politics and patriarchal domination ("Despair is the worst betrayal, the coldest seduction: to believe at last that the enemy will prevail": Marge Piercy). We must not let our pain and anger fade into hopelessness or short-sighted semi-"solutions." Nothing we can do is enough, but on the other hand, those "small changes" we make in our minds, in our lives, in one another's lives, are not totally futile and ineffectual. It takes a long time to make a revolution: it is something that one both prepares for and lives now. The transformation of the future will not be instantaneous, but it can be *total*... a continuum of thought and action, individuality and collectivity, spontaneity and organization, stretching from what is to what can be.

79. Carol Ehrlich: Anarchism, Feminism and Situationism (1977)

Carol Ehrlich's essay, "Socialism, Anarchism, and Feminism," was first published as a pamphlet in January 1977. It was included in Reinventing Anarchy: What are anarchists thinking these days *(London: Routledge, Kegan & Paul, 1979), and in the revised edition,* Reinventing Anarchy, Again *(San Francisco: AK Press, 1996). An abridged version appeared in the American feminist magazine,* Second Wave, Vol. 5, No. 1, *and it is also included in the* Quiet Rumours *anthology. In addition to drawing the connections between anarchism and radical feminism, Ehrlich suggests utilizing Situationist concepts in developing a radical anarchist feminism, emphasizing the Situationist demand for the "reinvention of everyday life."*

ALL RADICAL FEMINISTS AND ALL SOCIAL Anarchist feminists are concerned with a set of common issues: control over one's own body; alternatives to the nuclear family and to heterosexuality; new methods of child care that will liberate parents and children; economic self-determination; ending sex stereotyping in education, in the media, and in the workplace; the abolition of repressive laws; an end to male authority, ownership, and control over women; providing women with the means to develop skills and positive self-attitudes; an end to oppressive emotional relationships; and what the Situationists have called "the reinvention of everyday life"…

But anarchist feminists are concerned with something more. Because they are anarchists, they work to end all power relationships, all situations in which people can oppress each other. Unlike some radical feminists who are not anarchists, they do not believe that power in the hands of women could possibly lead to a non-coercive society. And unlike most socialist feminists, they do not believe that anything good can come out of a mass movement with a leadership elite. In short, neither a workers' state nor a matriarchy will end the oppression of everyone. The

goal, then, is not to "seize" power, as the socialists are fond of urging, but to abolish power…

Both [radical feminism and anarcha-feminism] work to build alternative institutions, and both take the politics of the personal very seriously… Yet, it does little good to build alternative institutions if their structures mimic the capitalist and hierarchical models with which we are so familiar. Many radical feminists recognized this early: That's why they worked to rearrange the way women perceive the world and themselves (through the consciousness-raising group), and why they worked to rearrange the forms of work relationships and interpersonal interactions (through the small, leaderless groups where tasks are rotated and skills and knowledge shared). They were attempting to do this in a hierarchical society that provides no models except ones of inequality. Surely, a knowledge of anarchist theory and models of organization would have helped. Equipped with this knowledge, radical feminists might have avoided some of the mistakes they made—and might have been better able to overcome some of the difficulties they encountered in trying simultaneously to transform themselves and society. Take, for example, the still current debate over "strong women" and the closely related issue of leadership… The hostility towards the "strong" woman arose because she was someone who could at least potentially coerce women who were less articulate, less self-confident, less assertive than she. Coercion is usually far more subtle than physical force or economic sanction. One person can coerce another without taking away their job, or striking them, or throwing them in jail.

Strong women started out with a tremendous advantage. Often they knew more. Certainly they had long since overcome the crippling socialization that stressed passive, timid, docile, conformist behaviour—behaviour that taught women to smile when they weren't amused, to whisper when they felt like shouting, to lower their eyes when someone stared aggressively at them. Strong women weren't terrified of speaking in public; they weren't afraid to take on "male" tasks, or to try something new. Or so it seemed.

Put a "strong" woman in the same small group with a "weak" one, and she becomes a problem: How does she not dominate? How does she share her hard-earned skills and confidence with her sister? From the other side—how does the "weak" woman learn to act in her own behalf? How can one even conceive of "mutual" aid in a one-way situation? Of "sisterhood" when the "weak" member does not feel equal to the "strong" one?

These are complicated questions, with no simple answers. Perhaps the closest we can come is with the anarchist slogan, "a strong people needs no leaders." Those of us who have learned to survive by dominating others, as well as those of us who have learned to survive by accepting domination, need to resocialize ourselves into being strong without playing dominance-submission games, into controlling what happens to us without controlling others. This can't be done by electing the right people to office or by following the correct party line; nor can it be done by sitting and reflecting on our sins. We rebuild ourselves and our world through activity, through partial successes, and failure, and more partial successes. And all the while we grow stronger and more self-reliant...

Many women felt that in order to fight societal oppression a large organization was essential, and the larger the better. The image is strength pitted against strength: You do not kill an elephant with an air gun, and you do not bring down the patriarchal state with the small group. For women who accept the argument that greater size is linked to greater effectiveness, the organizational options seem limited to large liberal groups such as NOW or to socialist organizations which are mass organizations.

As with so many things that seem to make sense, the logic is faulty. "Societal oppression" is a reification, an overblown, paralyzing, made-up entity that is large mainly in the sense that the same oppressions happen to a lot of us. But oppressions, no matter how pervasive, how predictable, almost always are done to us by someone—even if that person is acting as an agent of the state, or as a member of the dominant race, gender, or class. The massive police assaults upon our assembled forces are few; even the police officer or the boss or the husband who is carrying out his allotted sexist or authoritarian role intersects with us at a given point in our everyday lives. Institutionalized oppression does exist, on a large scale, but it seldom needs to be attacked (indeed, seldom can be attacked) by a large group. Guerilla tactics by a small group—occasionally even by a single individual—will do very nicely in retaliation...

Social anarchists aren't opposed to structure: They aren't even against leadership, provided that it carries no reward or privilege, and is temporary and specific to a particular task. However, anarchists, who want to abolish a *hierarchical* structure, are almost always stereotyped as wanting no structure at all...

Anarchists are used to hearing that they lack a theory that would help in building a new society. At best, their detractors say patronizingly, anarchism tells us what not to do. Don't permit bureaucracy or hierarchical authority; don't let a vanguard

party make decisions; don't tread on me. Don't tread on anyone. According to this perspective, anarchism is not a theory at all. It is a set of cautionary practices, the voices of libertarian conscience—always idealistic, sometimes a bit truculent, occasionally anachronistic, but a necessary reminder.

There is more than a kernel of truth to this objection. Just the same, there are varieties of anarchist thought that can provide a theoretical framework for analysis of the world and action to change it. For radical feminists who want to take that "step in self-conscious theoretical development" [Carol Hanisch, "The Personal is Political," *Notes from the Second Year*], perhaps the greatest potential lies in Situationism.

The value of Situationism for an anarchist feminist analysis is that it combines a socialist awareness of the primacy of capitalist oppression with an anarchist emphasis upon transforming the whole of public and private life. The point about capitalist oppression is important: All too often anarchists seem to be unaware that this economic system exploits most people. But all too often socialists—especially Marxists—are blind to the fact that people are oppressed in every aspect of life: work, what passes for leisure, culture, personal relationships—all of it. And only anarchists insist that people must transform the conditions of their lives *themselves*—it cannot be done for them. Not by the party, not by the union, not by "organizers," not by anyone else.

Two basic Situationist concepts are "commodity" and "spectacle." Capitalism has made all of social relations commodity relations: The market rules all. People are not only producers and consumers in the narrow economic sense, but the very structure of their daily lives is based on commodity relations. Society "is consumed as a *whole*—the ensemble of social relationships and structures is the central product of the commodity economy" [Point-Blank!:"The Changing of the Guard"]. This has inevitably alienated people from their lives, not just from their labour; to consume social relationships makes one a passive spectator in one's life. The *spectacle*, then, is the culture that springs from the commodity economy—the stage is set, the action unfolds, we applaud when we think we are happy, we yawn when we think we are bored, but we cannot leave the show, because there is no world outside the theater for us to go to.

In recent times, however, the societal stage has begun to crumble, and so the possibility exists of constructing another world outside the theater—this time, a real world, one in which each of us directly participates as subject, not as object. The Situationist phrase for this possibility is "the reinvention of everyday life."

How is daily life to be reinvented? By creating situations that disrupt what seems to be the natural order of things—situations that jolt people out of customary ways of thinking and behaving. Only then will they be able to act, to destroy the manufactured spectacle and the commodity economy—that is, capitalism in all its forms. Only then will they be able to create free and unalienated lives.

The congruence of this activist, social anarchist theory with radical feminist theory is striking. The concepts of commodity and spectacle are especially applicable to the lives of women. In fact, many radical feminists have described these in detail, without placing them in the Situationist framework. To do so broadens the analysis, by showing women's situation as an organic part of the society as a whole, but at the same time without playing socialist reductionist games. Women's oppression is part of the over-all oppression of people by a capitalist economy, but it is not less than the oppression of others. Nor—from a Situationist perspective—do you have to be a particular variety of woman to be oppressed; you do not have to be part of the proletariat, either literally, as an industrial worker, or metaphorically, as someone who is not independently wealthy. You do not have to wait breathlessly for socialist feminist manifestoes to tell you that you qualify—as a housewife (reproducing the next generation of workers), as a clerical worker, as a student or a middle-level professional employed by the state (and therefore as part of the "new working class"). You do not have to be part of the Third World, or a lesbian, or elderly, or a welfare recipient. All of these women are objects in the commodity economy; all are passive viewers of the—spectacle. Obviously, women in some situations are far worse off than are others. But, at the same time, none are free in every area of their lives.

Women have a dual relationship to the commodity economy—they are both consumers and consumed. As housewives, they are consumers of household goods purchased with money not their own, because not "earned" by them. This may give them a certain amount of purchasing power, but very little power over any aspect of their lives. As young, single heterosexuals, women are purchasers of goods designed to make them bring a high price on the marriage market. As anything else—lesbians, or elderly single, or self-sufficient women with "careers"—women's relationship to the marketplace as consumers is not so sharply defined. They are expected to buy (and the more affluent they are, the more they are expected to buy), but for some categories of women, buying is not defined primarily to fill out some aspect of a woman's role.

So what else is new? Isn't the idea of woman-as-passive-consumer, manipulated by the media, patronized by slick Madison Avenue men, an overdone movement

cliché? Well, yes—and no. A Situationist analysis ties consumption of economic goods to consumption of *ideological* goods, and then tells us to create situations (guerrilla actions on many levels) that will break that pattern of socialized acceptance of the world as it is. No guilt-tripping; no criticizing women who have "bought" the consumer perspective. For they have indeed *bought* it: It has been sold to them as a way of survival from the earliest moments of life. Buy this: It will make you beautiful and lovable. Buy *this*: It will keep your family in good health. Feel depressed? Treat yourself to an afternoon at the beauty parlour or to a new dress.

Guilt leads to inaction. Only action, to *re-invent* the everyday and make it something else, will change social relations…

When feminists describe socialization into the female sex role, when they point out the traits female children are taught (emotional dependence, childishness, timidity, concern with being beautiful, docility, passivity, and so on), they are talking about the careful production of a commodity—although it isn't usually called that. When they describe the oppressiveness of sexual objectification, or of living in the nuclear family, or of being a Supermother, or of working in the kinds of low-level, underpaid jobs that most women find in the paid labour force, they are also describing woman as commodity. Women are consumed by men who treat them as sex objects; they are consumed by their children (whom they have produced!) when they buy the role of the Supermother; they are consumed by authoritarian husbands who expect them to be submissive servants; and they are consumed by bosses who bring them in and out of the labour force and who extract a maximum of labour for a minimum of pay. They are consumed by medical researchers who try out new and unsafe contraceptives on them. They are consumed by men who buy their bodies on the street. They are consumed by church and state, who expect them to produce the next generation for the glory of god and country; they are consumed by political and social organizations that expect them to "volunteer" their time and energy. They have little sense of self, because their selfhood has been sold to others.

It is difficult to consume people who put up a fight, who resist the cannibalizing of their bodies, their minds, their daily lives. A few people manage to resist, but most don't resist effectively, because they can't. It is hard to locate our tormentor, because it is so pervasive, so familiar. We have known it all our lives. It is our culture.

Situationists characterize our culture as a *spectacle*. The spectacle treats us all as passive spectators of what we are told are our lives. And the culture-as-spectacle covers everything: We are born into it, socialized by it, go to school in it, work and relax and relate to other people in it. Even when we rebel against it, the rebellion is often

defined by the spectacle. Would anyone care to estimate the number of sensitive, alienated adolescent males who a generation ago modelled their behavior on James Dean in *Rebel Without a Cause*? I'm talking about a *movie*, whose capitalist producers and whose star made a great deal of money from this Spectacular.

Rebellious acts then tend to be acts of *opposition* to the spectacle, but seldom are so different that they *transcend* the spectacle. Women have a set of behaviours that show dissatisfaction by being the opposite of what is expected. At the same time these acts are clichés of rebellion, and thus are almost prescribed safety valves that don't alter the theatre of our lives. What is a rebellious woman supposed to do? We can all name the behaviours—they appear in every newspaper, on prime time television, on the best-seller list, in popular magazines—and, of course, in everyday life. In a setting that values perfectionist housekeeping, she can be a slob; in a subculture that values large families, she can refuse to have children. Other predictable insurgencies? She can defy the sexual double standard for married women by having an affair (or several); she can drink; or use what is termed "locker room" language; or have a nervous breakdown; or—if she is an adolescent—she can "act out" (a revealing phrase!) by running away from home and having sex with a lot of men.

Any of these things may make an individual woman's life more tolerable (often, they make it less so); and all of them are guaranteed to make conservatives rant that society is crumbling. But these kinds of scripted insurrections haven't made it crumble yet, and, by themselves, they aren't likely to. Anything less than a direct attack upon all the conditions of our lives is not enough.

When women talk about changing destructive sex role socialization of females, they pick one of three possible solutions: (a) girls should be socialized more or less like boys to be independent, competitive, aggressive, and so forth. In short, it is a man's world, so a woman who wants to fit in has to be "one of the boys." (b) We should glorify the female role, and realize that what we have called weakness is really strength. We should be proud that we are maternal, nurturing, sensitive, emotional, and so on. (c) The only healthy person is an androgynous person: We must eradicate the artificial division of humanity into "masculine" and "feminine," and help both sexes become a mix of the best traits of each.

Within these three models, personal solutions to problems of sexist oppression cover a wide range: Stay single; live communally (with both men and women, or with women only). Don't have children; don't have male children; have any kind of children you want, but get parent and worker-controlled child care. Get a job; get a better job; push for affirmative action. Be an informed consumer; file a lawsuit; learn

karate; take assertiveness training. Develop the lesbian within you. Develop your proletarian identity. All of these make sense in particular situations, for particular women. But all of them are partial solutions to much broader problems, and none of them necessarily require seeing the world in a qualitatively different way.

So, we move from the particular to more general solutions. Destroy capitalism. End patriarchy. Smash heterosexism. All are obviously essential tasks in the building of a new and truly human world. Marxists, other socialists, social anarchists, feminists—all would agree. But what the socialist, and even some feminists, leave out is this: We must smash all forms of domination. That's not just a slogan, and it is the hardest task of all. It means that we have to see through the spectacle, destroy the stage sets, know that there are other ways of doing things. It means that we have to do more than react in programmed rebellions—we must act. And our actions will be collectively taken, while each person acts autonomously. Does that seem contradictory? It isn't—but it will be very difficult to do. The individual cannot change anything very much; for that reason, we have to work together. But that work must be without leaders as we know them, and without delegating any control over what we do and what we want to build.

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ANARCHISM
A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas
Robert Graham, editor

Continuing where Volume One left off, this anthology—broad in its geographical and intellectual scope—documents both continuity and change in anarchist ideas. In addition to English language material from England and North America, this volume also includes translations from Africa, India, Korea, Quebec, Latin America and Europe, much of which has never appeared before in English.

Topics covered include, the emergence of new anarchist currents in the aftermath of the Spanish Revolution and the Second World War, the remarkable resurgence of anarchist ideas and action during the 1960s, anarchist opposition to colonialism, war and the arms race, national liberation movements, techno-bureaucracy and the "new class", cultural transformation, art and the utopian imagination, and the social and sexual revolutions.

Contributors include Noam Chomsky, Murray Bookchin, Emma Goldman, Daniel Guérin, George Woodcock, Marie Louise Berneri, Herbert Read, Alex Comfort, Martin Buber, Paul Goodman, Colin Ward, Ivan Illich, Pierre Clastres, Paul Feyerabend, André Breton, and others.

ROBERT GRAHAM has been writing on the history of anarchist theory for over 20 years. In 2005, he published *Volume One: From Anarchy to Anarchism (300CE to 1939)*. He is currently working on *Volume Three: The New Anarchism (1974-2008)* (forthcoming 2009).

Praise for Volume One:

An excellent and long-overdue anthology of anarchist writings. Highly recommended. —Peter Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism*

Admirable in its chronological, geographical, and thematic range. —Wayne Thorpe, *The Workers Themselves: Revolutionary Syndicalism and International Labour, 1913-1923*

Admirably displays the range and inventiveness of anarchist approaches. —Colin Ward, *Anarchism: A Very Short Introduction* and *Anarchy in Action*

A testimony to the renewed interest in, and ongoing importance of, anarchism today. —Saul Newman, *Labour/Le Travail*