

RESISTANCE

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If They Don't Seem to Like it Here

In the late stages of the psychosis of Nationalism, the practical philosophers of Government make a discovery. They find that they have been tolerating, as though divinely ordained, what is only a recent human prejudice: the notion that all subjects of a State are citizens with equal claim to protection by and from the law. The insight—the blinding illusion, rather—comes upon them that their nation is first and foremost a warring State, an army, that it has a great destiny and a great mission. From this perspective, an entirely new vision of *homo sapiens* ensues, and from the new vision, a new style of governing.

Allegiance and *loyalty* were once the obsession of a minority of rather boring fanatics of patriotism. Now they become prime concerns of the Government. A man is no longer a man, inalienably dignified by citizenship. It remains to be determined, by close inquiry, if he is entitled to "the duties and privileges of a loyal citizen." Does he range himself unequivocally on the side of the State? This is what counts. If he questions the majesty of the State, or the whole idea of survival by war, he is considered to have pitched his tent in the alien camp, he has confessed his worthlessness to the State, and it will do him no good to suggest that he has lived honestly and honorably, or to protest—as some do—that he is really a better patriot than the zealots of patriotism. It's all right to exploit the imperial crisis for private enrichment—if not too odiously. But a person exercises the faculties of speech and thought only at the risk of discovering that the guardians of the State find him unworthy of the rights and protection of the citizen—such as they are.

From no point of view is it a joke. These folk are enemies of the State. They are guilty of what, in the ascendancy of Nationalism, is unpardonable crime. *If they don't seem to like it here, why did they choose to be born here?*

Everyone in the United States knows that Russian Nationalism carries this totalitarian principle, that critics and enemies of the State are noxious and superfluous, to a ferocious extreme: to the point of treating them as cattle who possess the faculty of labor. But when this same philosophy makes inroads in the democratic State, its citizens prefer the peace of self-deception. In their quest they are given plenty of assistance. The old democratic ideals continue to be invoked, and with the straightest sort of face. The leader of the State solemnly assures its citizens that the ethics of the frontier still animate the nation. The leaders of the Opposition cry alarm at each new departure—but accept defeat with a gracefulness that bewilders an honest man. All the while, the fanatical types are carving for themselves a great enclave in the machine of Government; all manner of opportunists from hacks to statesmen are diligently acquiring the new habits of thought; the citizens become pawns in a game of demagogic speculation. And no one is less aware of what is happening than the citizens of the State themselves.

2.

Now the President of the United States has proposed to inscribe into law a way to revoke the citizenship of some Americans. This proposal is more than a demagogic device—which of course it is. The action it proposes is a letter-perfect symbol of the relation between Citizen and Government, Man and the State, in America of the era of imperial wars. "He who is not with us is against us" is one of those principles commonly ascribed, in accents of moral superiority, to the philosophers of Russian Nationalism. It is not only the Russians, it would seem, who can find a certain virtue in the modes of thought of the Inquisition.

The Opposition, so loyal, finds fault. This is election demagogy! The Administration is out-mccarthying McCarthy, and it is a dirty business. Is it too cynical to suggest that the Opposition is really outraged by the unfair political advantages the Administration is garnering? Does anyone *really* care about the fate of what is—160,000,000-wise—a narrow range of rather despised victims? The speeches of the orators of the Opposition ring with devotion to liberty, but the down-to-earth level-headed captains of the party are plotting how to shake the moderate but too liberal ADA off their—so to speak—bandwagon. Having already made so many graceful concessions to Nationalism, the Opposition has no grasp of what is going on; even if it did, it is too busy waging its own sort of politics to come up with one single idea for coping with the Nationalist degeneration.

At times it is encouraging to read the righteous prose of the more liberal journalists, for they are genuinely distressed by this one step farther; but from those who trust the integrity of the FBI, but not McCarthy, who sound the tocsin and are contented with "guarantees against abuse," one does not expect any modes of action except poor ones; and one gets no more than he expects.

America or Russia! The Administration or the Opposition! Totalitarianism or the Democratic State! Nationalism or the United Nations! Over and over again we are offered two "practical" alternatives. Over and over again, there is an evil, and there is its *apparent* contradictory; and how often do the men of good will pour their energies and hopes into the "practical" alternative to the abyss! And it turns out that the alternative is not

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what they want, nor does it "work." When are the men of good will going to realize that the past is dead, the present is dead, and there is a future to create?

3.

That men are equal under law, and citizens, is really a very central part of the American democratic ideal. That ideal itself is not satisfactory; *égalité* can no longer be called a liberating idea; but the present attack on it is obviously not for the sake of improving it.

Under a good hard look, the fine ideal shrinks down to less than life-size. When the exceptions to its observance are lumped together, it is seen, not surprisingly, to have been honored especially in the breach. At various times, the present included, equality has been wholly or partially withheld from slaves, Negroes, women, children, the propertyless, Indians, ex-convicts—at any given time, a mighty large group.¹ For the rest of us, equality before law counts for a good deal less than the influence of wealth and position, even in what would seem to be affairs of pure justice; it would be a naive person indeed whom the statement that the dollar is weightier than the law would startle. If the right to vote sets up some kind of relationship between the opinions of the multitude and what goes on in Government, the tie is so obscure that no one would dare try explain how it works; the citizens-who-govern is the most transparent of fictions. Once upon a time, *égalité* had an hour of glory, for it was one of the driving ideas of the great revolutions in England, America and France, and its enshrinement in law confirmed the defeat of one kind of tyranny. But law never makes men free, it only stakes out an area on which authority may not trespass; and later, bureaucracy and autocracy and the play of economic power encapsule the revolutionary principle and nullify it. Then the cynical and sophisticated—at least—see that it has become mainly a juridical fiction.

But the idea of equality and citizenship still has moral force, and this is why an attack on it is not trivial. It does restrain and temper the actions of the powerful and authority-invested, it is at the core of the American tradition of inalienable rights and irreducible liberties, and this tradition is not yet wholly meaningless.

To judge what is at stake, consider a category of persons not "as equal as others"—not the obvious case of Negroes, but the ex-convict. Technically, the disfranchised felon is not an outlaw, and he benefits from the presumption of innocence. But if the ex-convict is pursued, cornered and killed by a trailing detective he attempted to elude—for reasons that cannot in the nature of the case be elucidated—no one thinks anything of it, it is a police statistic. What has happened to this man, was that he had ceased to be a Man, when the judge pronounced sentence.

To become a designated pariah, is to face grim possibilities. Actions that men shrink from, if their object is thought to be human, one of their peers, become "second nature" when higher authority of Church or State has degraded the object to less than human status: as an "enemy" in battle, a "Jew" in a racist State or neighborhood, an "alien" in extreme Nationalist societies.

¹It is, of course, in the very nature of the State that alien immigrants, and naturalized citizens, should have a precarious status. The abuses they have suffered are ignored here only to simplify the argument.

Then the more ruthless types are no longer held back by awareness that they are not dealing with a dog or a piece of furniture. The victims have been removed from the protected list, they have become subjects for a calculation which by its premises shuts out any concern for their personalities and their suffering; in effect, it is open season.

The principle of legal equality and universal citizenship has long since lost all forward-going power—every strong social tendency in America is moving toward, not the extension of liberty, but its extinction. Liberal democracy is already patently a lost cause, because it has no idea to oppose to the powerful undercurrents set moving by imperial war. Yet this principle is part of the barrier between us and the *lettre de cachet*, bill of attainder, star chamber and inquisition which our ancestors revolted against, between us and a recrudescence of the old barbarism under color of the nation's emergency. It is absolutely shocking that in just a few years there has disappeared from America the indignation that should lead men to seek a new and viable foundation for liberty.

That a thousand evils should be upon us—this is nothing—when has this not been so? But that there should not be men to *nevertheless* hammer on the door of a new future—this is unthinkable, we dare not allow it to be so.

4.

It may seem alarmist to make so much of Eisenhower's proposal—there are a dozen ways it can be made to seem like nothing at all, and its chief importance is as a symbol of the Nationalist process. But it also happens to touch some vital areas, and to contain more dynamite than may appear.

In seeking for tendencies one looks less to the letter of the law, the spelled-out proposal, than to the intention. The category of persons Eisenhower wishes to strike at, he says, is "the subversives." Does anyone know what a "subversive" is? Some branch of the Government may at some time have given this term a clear and precise meaning; but in practical usage it embraces all persons who want basic social changes. Those grass-root patriots who think that the UN—let alone world federalism!—is subversive, are a little ahead of the main parade. But the Attorney-General's list of subversive organizations—drawn up, we may interpolate, under the ex-President who stands for Liberalism and boasts that he put his Communists in prison—certainly is not limited to groups which might conceivably be prosecuted under the Smith Act, as now interpreted. Let a group propose major changes in the distribution and organization of wealth, and it stands a better than fair chance of a "subversive" listing.

Who all will be dragged in the net of the Internal Security Act, when the National Emergency comes and the dangerous and suspicious elements are scheduled to be bundled off to concentration camps—with right of appeal—is as yet the private knowledge of certain Department of Justice officials, and those FBI individuals who have been caring for such lists for 30-odd years. Or perhaps not even they really know. Perhaps no one in the Administration knows.

The potential number is formidable—though numbers are not what matters.

As to the Smith Act—conviction under which, by Eisenhower's proposal, would lead to alienization—it is only at the charity of the government that minor officials and rank-and-file members of the Communist Party have so far escaped prosecution under it. This Smith Act is a very interesting law. It is possible it will never be applied to a DAR who declares that the American Revolution of 1776 was justified, or a Southerner who tries to make a case for the Confederate States of 1861-65. Yet it does strike blindly and indiscriminately at all persons who go so far as to *justify* a revolution accompanied by violence—with no distinction between those who propose to establish a dictatorship, and those who justify armed resistance to a tyrannical Government. The stretching this law will take, may be judged from the prosecution of American army deserters who were "in communication" with agents of the East German government, after their flight across the frontier.²

So it is by no means clear who may be trapped under this law—but again it is not numbers that matter.

In the general evolution of "subversion" to a quasi-outlaw status, not the least incident has been the acceptance by the courts of the following foolproof trap: (1) The advocacy of an act (violent revolution) is culpable; (2) but even if one has *not* advocated it this is a very poor defense because it is well known that Communists and other "subversives" say *just the opposite* of what they mean. It can be imagined what the principle of Aesopianism does to judicial proceedings, particularly those concerning "advocacy"; for how can the testimony of informers possibly be refuted?

But there might not be another prosecution under the Smith Act—those "akin to traitors" might never be denationalized—it is not number that matters. The tragedy of Nationalism, if it sweeps onward in America, will be the plight, not of the thousands of new aliens or new deportees, but of the millions who elect the tranquility of conformity and silence. The biting irony is that a few harsh words have already nearly accomplished the work of intimidation.

5.

Creation of vast bodies of displaced persons—their internal deportation to Siberia and Belsen, or their external deportation to countries where they are utter strangers given small welcome—is, as Hannah Arendt pointed out (in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*), one of the characteristic products of the modern nationalist ideologies. It is enough warning, that this tendency is in motion; we don't have to wait to be sure it will reach lunatic proportions, to know that it is working a serious kind of destruction. By now there is enough evidence, that any person sincerely concerned for liberty should recognize that a political idea must answer to the need for a true foundation for liberty and individual dignity, to merit consideration.

Arendt's analysis carries us straight to the heart of the problem and when it fatally deviates from the mark its error is transparent and leads to a right direction.

²We may appear to be overlooking the "clear and present danger" formula, which should protect the DAR lady. But this doctrine has been far enlarged from its original intent—to the point where one of the Jesuits of law could well argue that *in times like ours* the most academic discussion of revolution is a "clear and present danger." In fact this is obviously the premise of the purifiers and self-purifiers, and illustrates the tendency of political repression constantly to break through the limits set to it.

The kind of individual liberty that flourished under 19th century capitalism, with its post-mercantile ideal of free market and free enterprise, has broken down under the weight of factors too numerous to reverse. Now a different liberty must be sought, on the basis of the realization that (except for special circumstances not likely to be repeated) an individual is secure in life and dignity and a rough kind of equality, only when these are guaranteed by his integration, his full acceptance, in a human community.

Exactly! But which community? This is the point. The only existing communities are the national pseudo-communities, the Nation-States. They are pseudo-communities, because the integrating factors in the society are not personal, except in a negligible degree; primarily, the society is integrated by the economic market and by politics, as, in the main, are all European-American nations. To whom is the plea for the rights of inalienable citizenship to be made? It can only be to an amorphous public which, especially these days, acts collectively only under the influence of demagogy; or to the Government, and in this article we have reviewed some of the principle tendencies of the American Government. One looks in vain for any interest which would impel public or Government to "be soft," as the demagogues call it, to those who are out of sympathy with their all-consuming concern. Morality and appeals to reason are—as can be seen—not even brakes upon a tendency driven onward by the powerful irrationality of war. The aim of such appeals is praiseworthy, but without means of realization.

6.

What is needed is to complete the statement "the individual needs the protection of a community," by describing the *kind* of community, and the kind of social matrix in which it could exist. The general outlines of this community and social matrix can be indicated by means of certain contradictions.

The ideas "State" and "Community" are antithetical, because when sovereignty resides in the former, the functions of the latter are gradually centralized into the apparatus of Government and the Community withers and fragments. Again, the conceptions "War" and "Community" are antithetical, because war is a function of the State, and one of the major influences in the destruction of Community. A third conception diametrically opposed to Community is the structuring of society around an economic market, and the reduction of workers to hired elements in production: whether this structuring be along capitalist, Socialist or Communist lines.

In short, a political idea that does not envisage the abolition of Government, the discarding of the State idea, the creation of free sovereign communities which are dynamic centers of economic, cultural and social life, does not face squarely the threat posed by the Nationalist degeneration of the democratic State. A political idea that envisages and tries to create this new social matrix—as anarchism does—may for a time to come remain the nearly personal vision of a small minority. Yet when what is in question is a fundamental alternative to the process of war, nationalism, capitalism and Communism, truth in ideas would seem infinitely preferable to company in error.

DAVID WIECK

The Ruth Reynolds Appeal

On October 30, 1950, in retaliation for armed raids upon them by the U. S.-controlled constabulary, the Puerto Rican Nationalists rose in revolt. In a few days the massive power of the occupation had crushed all resistance. More than a thousand Nationalists and Independentists were thrown into jail. Among the victims caught in the dragnet was Ruth Reynolds, executive secretary of the American League for Puerto Rican Independence, who happened to be in the island at the time.

In jail Ruth Reynolds underwent the treatment our newspapers play up as peculiar to Soviet Russia or Red China. Her diet of rice and beans was so meager that she lost 33 pounds in the ten months preceding her trial. For weeks she was kept in solitary confinement. The writer, who knew Ruth Reynolds in New York, was unable fully to contain his tears when he first saw her in La Princesa, the fearful dungeon of San Juan.

It took herculean efforts by Ruth's pacifist friends and colleagues in the U. S. to secure a trial for her. Had it not been for the furor they raised, she might still be rotting in jail.

Her trial, which began on August 17, 1951, ended three weeks later, on September 7, when Judge Pablo Juan y Toro sentenced her to two to six years at hard labor.

What had been her offense? She was convicted of taking an oath, as a Nationalist Party leader, to overthrow the government of Puerto Rico by force and violence, in a meeting of the party in Arecibo on December 18, 1949. Such "taking" was construed to be an advocacy of violent overthrow, in violation of the Little Smith Act, Puerto Rico's copy of the Federal statute. Government stoolpigeons testified that Ruth Reynolds had stood up when Albizu Campos asked the meeting to stand and pledge aid to Nationalist prisoners appealing from convictions for refusal to obey the U. S. draft act. Ruth Reynolds did not stand and raise her hand, because she was in no position to pledge financial aid. She herself was living on the bounty of Puerto Rican friends while she completed her book on the political, economic and social scene in Puerto Rico.

It is interesting to note that Albizu Campos was never indicted for making the speech which formed the core of the charge against Ruth Reynolds. Nor were any of the 500 members of the audience who stood and raised their hands indicted or tried. An examination of the manuscript Ruth was working on, which contained revelations about the shenanigans of the political bosses of the island and their mainlander confederates, leaves little doubt about the true motive of the prosecution.

How was the conviction obtained? By the most unblushing use of hearsay, innuendo and guilt-by-association. Ruth Reynolds was observed applauding a speech by Albizu Campos at an open-air gathering. That was proof she was a Nationalist leader. She accepted the hospitality of friends on a remote farm. That was proof she was there to hatch a conspiracy. A Nationalist friend greeted her on the street. Undoubtedly he was conveying to her a sinister message subversive of our sacred institutions.

When the obvious absurdity of charging that an advocacy of "overthrow"—by silently standing and subscribing to an oath to pledge money—in December, 1949, culminated in the revolt of October 30, 1950, was placed before the court, it was brushed aside without comment.

The appeal in the Puerto Rican Supreme Court was argued on November 5, 1953. Even the American Civil Liberties Union, consistently hostile to Ruth Reynolds, was constrained to file a brief amicus curiae pointing out the flimsy basis for the conviction. Chief Justice Snyder, surprisingly enough, was exceedingly cordial in allowing full exposition of the appellant's case. The Chief Justice is a mainlander who, rumor has it, has for years been the actual ruler of Puerto Rico via direct line from Washington. His conduct becomes understandable when it is realized that between the trial and appeal a new government had assumed the reins in Washington. The Republicans are more cynical than the Democrats. Eisenhower offered independence to Puerto Rico, if the island legislature requested it. Since no request has been made, the U. S. regime is vindicated. If a request had been made, the disturbing problem of Puerto Rican immigration would have solved itself and Puerto Rico would still have remained an economic colony of the U. S. No decision has yet been rendered on the Reynolds appeal. When it comes, it will undoubtedly reflect Republican policy.

CONRAD LYNN

Gigi Damiani

Gigi Damiani, one of the outstanding men of the anarchist movement, died in Rome, Italy, November 16, 1953, at the age of 77. The death of Comrade Damiani is a loss which will be felt throughout the Italian anarchist movement, for he was one of its most outstanding thinkers and writers, especially in the field of journalism. And the loss will be felt in many other countries where his varied writings appeared from time to time in anarchist periodicals. Although self-educated, Damiani was a keen interpreter of social problems and an accomplished journalist. His work, covering nearly half a century, is a massive contribution to anarchist literature and ranges from articles in periodicals to numerous pamphlets and some books.

Damiani was what is sometimes referred to as "an anarchist of the old school," in the sense that he grew and evolved along with the Italian anarchist movement itself. He went through the mill of persecutions and prosecutions experienced by the movement in Italy from the early 1890s onwards.

Still a youth, Damiani was among the anarchists banished to the penal islands in 1894. He was among those forced, by the increasing reaction and persecutions just before the turn of the century, to take the road of exile. He fled to Brazil where, for almost two decades, he published an anarchist paper and identified himself with the struggle of the people of Brazil to better their conditions and attain their freedom. But republican reaction caught up with him, and because of his vigorous opposition to World War I, he was forcibly returned to Italy through that highly civilized procedure called deportation. Back in Italy with many other repatriated

comrades, Damiani gave unstintingly of his energies in the post-war revolutionary period and contributed regularly to *Umanità Nova*, the first Italian anarchist daily.

When fascist vandalism and terrorism practically destroyed the daily, Damiani tried to resist by publishing the weekly *Fede* but nothing and no one could survive the beastly violence of the fascist hordes, which operated with absolute immunity. Once again Damiani was forced to take the road to exile.

After World War II, at the end of nearly two more decades of bitter exile, he returned to Italy and took his place in the struggle to revive the anarchist movement. He edited *Umanità Nova*, now a weekly, until a year ago when, ailing and almost blind, he could no longer carry on the physical task. But he never stopped writing for the paper. Unbelievably alert in spite of physical handicap, he had comrades read to him and he dictated his articles.

Damiani was a dedicated man. He had chosen a place and a mission for himself. His place was in the anarchist movement, and his mission was to spread the anarchist idea. He lived for that. When someone suggested that he write his memoirs, he refused. During his last months, he decided to write a brief autobiographical sketch; the result was a chronological evaluation of the movement, and the development of anarchist thought, during the past fifty years. Damiani came to know about what he called "my beautiful anarchy" when he was in his teens, at a time when anarchist action was directed mostly at retaliation for social injustice. It was not long, however, before the anarchist idea took on for him a broader conception of justice and humanity. "This conception," he wrote, "had no vengeance to propose, rather it aimed to make of justice a living, practicable, self-sufficient thing. It did not propose to set men against men, it aimed to create solidarity among men on the basis of equity. Then I loved anarchy as a noble and pure thing."

Anarchists were persecuted viciously, but in time—through retaliation, resistance and perseverance—they came to be tolerated and left to live a relatively normal life. "But these new circumstances did not change our hearts. Anarchy had gotten into our blood and remained there." Answering the objections of critics and skeptics, Damiani closed his autobiographical notes thus: "Anarchy does not want to, and cannot, impose itself on anyone. The revolutionary violence which is attributed to it as the only way to gain its ends is not a means of imposition. Revolution in itself is authoritarian; but revolt, insurrection and constant insubordination are a means of defense and of eliminating obstacles to the conquest of freedom of expression and experimentation. Through them anarchy aims not to impose but to propose. Anarchy will not come about as the result of an organized coup, but it shall come about nevertheless. Anarchy is being realized even now. It is being realized in each and everyone of us. By modifying the mentality of its adherents, anarchy modifies the environment. Anarchy predisposes to the acceptance of its postulates and molds both men and environment for the fruitful development of its ethics."

We hold no cult for the dead, and this hurried, sketchy note is not meant to be a eulogy. It is only a brief informative recapitulation of the activities of a deceased comrade who gave so much of himself to our common cause. M. R.

THE SPANISH REVOLUTION EXAMINED

For more than a decade the Spanish Revolution, as it is known among anarchists, has stood as a kind of landmark to be regarded with a view dominated by almost sentimental nostalgia. In a way this quasi-reverent attitude is understandable, for that event was the last and the most impressive instance in which libertarian ideas of constructive social organization were put into practice on an important scale. Unfortunately, however, the very grandeur and tragedy of the events in Spain, coupled with the fact that so many anarchists were at the time involved directly or vicariously in them, have given to this passage in recent history an almost mythological aura. There has been a tendency to clothe it in romantic colours, and to think that the use of such emotive adjectives as "glorious and heroic" is sufficient to dispel the need for investigation or criticism. Those who hold such views have been inclined to forget that tragedies, while they may appear romantic on the stage or in history, are always unpleasant to the participants and are often avoidable.

Fortunately, with the passage of fifteen years since the final disintegration of the anti-Franco forces (their tenuous bonds were too negative to give them a better title), the heroic cloud that has hung over the Civil War has largely dissipated, and anarchists, from both Spain and other countries, have spent a great deal of time considering why, though the Revolution appeared to begin propitiously for the fulfillment of anarchist social ideals, it ended with the total destruction of its positive social achievements and in an atmosphere of demoralisation so intense that Franco's final entry into Barcelona was almost unresisted, either actively or passively.

These reflections, and their attendant misgivings, have provoked many recent pamphlets and articles in the Spanish expatriate press, and a lesser amount of consideration in non-Spanish libertarian publications. Finally, they have been summarized in a compact and closely reasoned form by the English anarchist V. Richards in his *Lessons of the Spanish Revolution*.¹ This, I say without hesitation, is the best analysis of the progress—or retrogression—of the Spanish libertarian movement from July, 1936, onwards that I have yet read. As I shall show later, I do not agree with all the arguments that Richards advances. But I still consider that he has presented extremely convincingly the evidence relating to the errors of the CNT leaders in entering and collaborating with the Spanish government. He has also shown very clearly how these errors played constantly, though unwittingly and unwillingly, into the hands of the Communists, with their plans to take control of Spain and turn it into a virtual colony of Stalinist Russia. Finally, Richards has drawn from these events some conclusions on the difficulties that beset anarchist movements in times of action which are eminently worthy of consideration.

¹Freedom Press, London, 1953. Available in the U. S. from Irving Ravin, 660 Riverside Drive, New York 31, N. Y., at \$1.35 per copy.

It is perhaps possible to exaggerate the *particular* lessons of historical events, for the situation that arose in Spain is never likely to be reproduced. Instead we shall be faced with a totally different set of circumstances that will demand its own series of *ad hoc* decisions and actions, for which we may well be just as unprepared as most of the Spanish anarchists seem to have been in their day. Even so, historical events can at least give us *general* lessons; they can teach us certain broad principles of action, the avoidance of which can certainly lead to disaster and the observance of which may possibly involve a measure of success.

Whether what happened in Spain during July, 1936, constituted a true Revolution has long been disputed in left-wing circles. According to a text-book definition, a case can be put for denying it this title, since the people took action against the enemies of the existing government. But, whatever its *de jure* character, I do not think there is much doubt that a *de facto* revolutionary situation existed. The power of the Popular Front government was steadily diminishing; it had the wholehearted support neither of the institutions of authoritarian power—the army, the police, the church—nor of the people, and thus one can say, as Harrington said of the Civil War in England, "The dissolution of this government caused the war, not the war the dissolution of this government." In fact, the ineptitude of the Spanish government had left a vacuum in society, and into this vacuum rushed the conflicting forces of the army (with the police and the church in its train) and the people. The clash was inevitable in some form or another.

That the people—except for the CNT and POUM militants—actually thought in revolutionary terms on the 19th July seems to me very unlikely. They appear to have been moved in that instant mostly by the desire to safeguard against encroachment by absolutist forces the relative gains they had made since the fall of the Monarchy—basically the same kind of desire that initially provoked the Parisians into resisting the French army at the beginning of the Commune of 1871. It was only on the morrow of the 19th July, when the people realised that they were masters of the situation and the government was powerless, that they began to take the economy of the country into their hands and re-organise it according to their conceptions of social justice. Therein lay the real Revolution of July, 1936; it was an economic revolution. And it was this economic revolution that was betrayed by the weakness and the lack of plain common sense which the CNT displayed in allowing itself to be cajoled into giving collaboration to a paralysed government, which later grew, because by a tragic paradox it enjoyed the trust and support of the anarchists, into a new authoritarian structure that effectively destroyed the collective achievements in the villages and the factories.

Before we leave July, 1936, I must take issue with Richards on one point. This is hardly the place to indulge in a divagation into the arguments for and against

the use of violence—it would be too long and would divert too much attention from the main subject of this study. But, since Richards himself has specifically raised the question in his book, I would disagree with him that armed resistance to the generals was necessarily the best way of dealing with the situation that arose on the 19th July. I admit that, given the tradition of violent action which had been fostered in Spain ever since the days of the Napoleonic invasion, any other kind of reaction on the part of the people was unlikely. But if we are looking at the Spanish war to detect the lessons it may contain for the future, it is not academic to suggest that a resolute campaign of passive resistance might have achieved a better eventual result, and would certainly have caused far less suffering for the Spanish people.²

In such a situation Franco's oppression would undoubtedly have been less well organised and practiced, his armed forces would not have been strengthened by the experience of three years of fighting, and Germany, Italy and Russia would not have had the excuse to intervene and add their contribution to the destruction of the Spanish people. The revolutionary movement would not have been saddled with the crippling and corrupting temptations of governmental office, nor would the Communists and their allies have had the opportunity to impose upon it a secret police and a military discipline. The hundreds of thousands of militants and ordinary men and women who were killed or forced into exile would have been there to carry on a resistance that would not have become demoralised by the three years of internal betrayals during the Civil War.

Furthermore, as Richards has pointed out, the direct mingling of the people and the soldiers during the July days resulted in a fraternisation that helped to break up the reactionary forces in Barcelona and elsewhere. Afterwards, when the war had crystallised into fronts, there was no possibility to fraternise and the Francoist officers were able to nurture the hatred of their troops against the enemies who shot at them from the opposing trenches. In a campaign of passive resistance there are no fronts, and thus the chance of fraternisation is perpetual. I do not claim that such a campaign would infallibly have succeeded, but even its failure would not have been so bitter, so costly or so demoralising as the failure that came from three years of organised violence. It is significant, surely, that the recent events in Spain which have caused Franco most anxiety have not been the occasional acts of violent terrorism, but the few strikes carried out with a complete lack of violence. However, that is an argument with an eye to the future; the past we cannot change.

Proceeding from the 19th July, Richards shows scrupulously and revealingly the way in which the leaders

²This argument of common humanity is one which I find rarely appeals to revolutionary theorists, who have their eyes fixed so firmly on the glorious future that they are often relatively indifferent to the present misery their favourite solutions may incur.

of the CNT got themselves involved in a collaboration with the authoritarian parties that gradually turned them into administrative tools of the government and led to their assisting actively in the "legalisation" and consequent placing under government restriction of the achievements in collectivisation made by the peasants and the industrial workers in Catalonia, Aragon and elsewhere. It is sad and salutary to follow the way in which, by loose thinking and vanity and the love of authority (though rarely by material corruption) the men who had been tested in many years of underground struggle became in a few weeks the easy dupes of those who wished to use their influence among the workers in order to further the ends of bourgeois politics and of Russian foreign policy. In the first real test of their lives, the greatest test—I imagine—to which anarchists were put at any time, these men abandoned almost willingly all the arguments against governmental power which they had been uttering throughout their active lives and which, in the event, the consequences of their actions proved to be absolutely correct.

From the evidence that Richards puts forward there seems to be no doubt that, if the CNT and UGT had acted resolutely together, the Communist Party and its bourgeois allies of the Republican and Catalan nationalist groups would not have gained such an easy triumph over the socially revolutionary elements. It is of course possible that Franco might still have won, but at least his victory would not have been speeded by the sense of failure that brought the rapid final dissolution of the anti-fascist cause.

But if Richards justly assesses the faults of the CNT leaders, I think he is over-charitable to the rank-and-file. Where he suggests that they were relatively blameless in the situation that developed, I feel he is allowing his laudable sympathies for the ordinary, self-sacrificing, unambitious man to blind him to the fact that such a man is often partly responsible if his interests are betrayed. The majority of CNT members seem in fact to have followed their leaders with, if not blind, at least myopic trust. Consider, for instance, the elections of February, 1936; the Popular Front won because it gained the CNT vote, and the additional number of voices was so large that clearly not only the leaders and demagogues of the organisation, but also practically its whole rank-and-file, must have gone to the polls in contradiction to the anti-parliamentary tradition that the CNT was supposed to maintain.

Similarly, the high-handed way in which the CNT leaders involved their organisation in the machinery of government met with so few open protests that we can only assume the majority of the rank-and-file was either in agreement or indifferent. Richards only quotes the protest of the Iron Column from the Teruel front against the continued use of the Civil Guard; but this was not a protest against collaboration in the government as such, and Richards, while he lightly says that it "cannot have been an isolated phenomenon", brings forward no other instances. He remarks that: "There is reason to believe therefore that had the question of collaboration been debated by the CNT-FAI in the syndicates and the groups, the good sense of the rank-and-file militants would have prevailed against the politico-legal arguments of the 'influential militants.'" But why, in that case, did not the "good sense" of the rank-and-file militants, in an organisation supposed (as the CNT was)

to be governed from below, lead them to insist that the question be debated? Why did they not call their own meetings? Why did they not recall their representatives from the government and from the thousands of administrative posts which CNT members held in the bureaucracy and the army? The only answer, it seems to me, is that they either approved of collaboration or that they did not feel strongly enough about it to go to any trouble to bring about its termination.

Richards brings forward the argument that they were too busy with their militia activity or with their work on the collectives. But if they had been really aware of the dangers involved in collaboration, they would certainly have found time to protest, instead of leaving it to a few foreign intellectuals whose criticisms mostly went unheard. I cannot help comparing in this respect the situation in Spain with that in England during the civil war of the seventeenth century. Then the soldiers of the revolutionary army, though they were busy fighting against the Royalists, did not neglect to criticise their own leaders volubly and actively for what they considered betrayals of the true cause of liberty; the record of the rank-and-file men of that revolution, the Levellers and Diggers, makes inspiring reading in comparison with the almost unbroken silence with which, for the most part, the Spanish libertarians seem to have regarded the betrayal of their cause and their situation by their own leaders.

The last paragraphs were not intended as an attack on the working men and women who took part in the Spanish Revolution. I believe that most of them were courageous and diligent and devoted. But I also believe their acceptance of their leaders' actions during the time of collaboration shows clearly that they allowed themselves to be deceived as to the implications involved in this "temporary" obeisance to the powers of government. In fact, we have to conclude, from the evidence that lies before us, that the libertarian movement in Spain was ill-fitted to safeguard the very principles for which anarchists have always fought.

The CNT was a mass industrial movement which, before the revolution, had more than half a million members, and which increased to three or four times that size during the Civil War. Theoretically it claimed to be working towards a vaguely defined anarchist-communist society, but in practice it contained only a minority of declared anarchists. The FAI, the organisation of anarchist militants, had no more than 30,000 members, and, though there were doubtless many other unorganised anarchists among the members of the CNT, the majority even before the Revolution probably belonged to this organisation for no other reason than that it happened to be the most popular union at their place of work. This was even more the case later on, when it was almost necessary for every man who worked behind the front line to join either the CNT or the UGT; then the organisation became hopelessly watered down with indifferent or even disruptive elements, for many CNT members were also members of political parties, such as the POUM and the Socialist Party, that were opposed to anarchism.

This huge and amorphous body was theoretically organised on a federalist basis and governed from below

upwards. In fact, its very size made it tend towards a monolithic kind of structure and, while theoretically its officials were unpaid and impermanent, in fact a cult of leader worship arose which thrust to the surface a whole top crust of orators, office-men and heroes. Some of these, like Durutti and Ascaso, were personally uncorrupted, though the adulation they received was corrupting to the movement; others, like Sequi in the early days and Garcia Oliver during the Civil War, were clever and vain oratorical demagogues who were ready to accept and manipulate the influence which their dubious talents gave them. Undoubtedly the very heterogeneous character of the CNT helped these men to gain and keep their power.

The CNT was, theoretically, an instrument which its founders constructed for the purpose of revolutionary struggle. In fact, size and success had so rotted it that as an organisation it was worse than useless during the Civil War. Its leaders carried on their independent existence as apprentice politicians within the governmental apparatus, while its rank-and-file followed up the social revolution in the collectives. One cannot help feeling that, had the CNT been dissolved and a new federation of active collectives been formed, this would probably have been far more effective in furthering the work of creative reconstruction. As it was, by forming a bridge between the governmental collaborationists and the members of the collectivities, the CNT gave an unreal appearance of reconciliation between the political and the social conceptions of revolution.

Undoubtedly, even before the Civil War, much of the CNT's activity was devoted to gaining more or less reformist trade union objectives, while within its divided ranks the debate was unending on how far collaboration with political groups or in administrative activity could go. Its libertarian ideals were perpetually being watered down in the interests of expediency, and even the avowed anarchist organisation, the FAI, became tinged with the same weaknesses. We must not forget that many of the ministers and military leaders were not merely CNT but also FAI members. Another disadvantage of the close link-up between the anarchists and the CNT was the feeling this gave the former that they were the representatives of a certain section of the population, i.e. their half-million or more fellow syndicalists. Instead of being a leaven within the people, they became in a sense the leaders of a powerful minority interest, and one of the arguments which we find the Spanish anarchists within the government bringing forward to justify their position is this need to be "represented". Had they remained a group devoted entirely to spreading the idea of a revolutionary change in society they would have felt no such need, since they would have realised that being regarded as representatives of a section of the population would automatically have lessened the appeal of their propaganda.

The preoccupation with power in fact ate so deeply into the Spanish anarchist movement that even those who swung away from reformism tended towards a cult of action for action's sake which resulted in a desire for strict conspiratorial organisation and a conception of revolution that was in some respects Blanquist rather than anarchist. The Friends of Durutti, for instance, a radical grouping who criticised the collaborationist leaders, seem to have been almost wholly permeated by the Blanquist spirit of revolutionary dictatorship, if one is

to judge from a proclamation Richards quotes them as having printed after the May Days of 1937: "A Revolutionary Junta has been constituted in Barcelona. All those responsible for the *putsch*,³ manoeuvring under the protection of the government, shall be executed. The POUM shall be a member of the Revolutionary Junta because they stood by the workers." In other words, this group of "purist" anarchists seem to have envisaged something like the old Jacobin Committee of Public Safety, wielding a ferocious reign of terror in collaboration with an authoritarian Marxist political party. It will be seen how far the illusions of power had infected Spanish anarchists after only ten months of Civil War!

This could happen only because for so many years the anarchists had been working as part of an organisation which was riddled by those evils of compromise and leadership that are endemic in mass organisation. The ends of anarchists doubtless remained the same as they always were, but the means they allowed themselves to adopt in order to attain these ends were so contradictory to libertarian principles that they could only end in disaster. It is with a singular appropriateness that Richards, after discussing these pitfalls of mass organisation, quotes this comment from Malatesta:

"Every fusion or confusion of the anarchist and revolutionary movements with the syndicalist movements ends either by reducing the syndicates to impotence, so far as their specific tasks are concerned, or by diminishing, diverting or destroying the anarchist spirit."

This, of course, brings us back to the question, as Richards puts it, of "the role of anarchists in situations, albeit revolutionary, in which it is clear that the solution cannot be an anarchist one." It also brings us, I may add, to the question of how the anarchist is to act in the vastly greater amount of situations which are not even revolutionary, at least in an acute sense. Is he to be condemned to a career of total inactivity or fruitless isolation? I believe that this is not the case, and that the anarchist who realised his position as a spokesman of the forces in society that militate towards freedom has at any time a great function to fulfil. Linked in loose affinity with his collaborators, he can sense and interpret those currents which turn away from authoritarian and towards libertarian conceptions. He can influence them and, by his own example and the purity of his convictions, set before them a vision of a free and dynamic society. But to do this he must abandon those mirages of mass organisation which inevitably, as happened in Spain, entrap their most active spirits in a morass of compromise from which there is no emerging. He must also withstand that temptation to hide behind the deceptively reassuring symbols of authority which even revolutionaries seem to experience in times of crisis. The Spanish Revolution taught us much about the positive business of constructive agricultural and industrial organisation; if it can also teach us the negative lesson that freedom cannot be advanced by the sacrifice of libertarian principles or by the pursuit of prolonged and organised violence, then the courage and suffering of its participants may not have been wholly in vain.

GEORGE WOODCOCK

³By this they mean the Communist attempt, with the connivance of the central and Catalan governments, to crush the anarchist and POUM movements in May, 1937.

Community

Communittee for the Disenchanted

The trouble with most cooperative communities, past and present, is that they are started by human beings. It takes the ants or the bees to really make a go of it. Now don't get me wrong—I'm all for cooperative communities. But I think that in most cases those who start them are the least prepared to live in them. Therefore the communities that manage to come into existence either soon blow sky high due to inner strife:—you discover that you really can't stand your fellow communittee's mother-in-law whom he insisted on bringing along because he felt that under a communal set-up the old witch would be easier to put up with; or you get hot for his wife and he resents it, or he gets hot for your wife and this hits you right in the old insecurity plexus and scares you right the hell out of communititis. Or they disintegrate into nice pleasant neighborly cooperatives that are as boring as suburbia on Sunday morning.

This is the case of most communities that have no radical visionary basis, or have the radical dream scared out of them by some sordid experience like running into one of the basic life problems such as sex, inequality of effort, inequality of demand, etc. Most radical communities soon blow themselves apart with some fine bitter back biting, kneeling in the clinches and not a little eye gouging. At least it isn't fit material for an afternoon educational TV program. But good cheer comrades, if you got a year or even a month of good stimulating living out of it you've got more than most of us poor doldrums devils in this society.

Then again there is always the community that starts with visions of founding a new wonderful bucolic utopia. These communities are usually started by dental mechanics, advertising salesmen, an occasional artist and disillusioned social worker. Anybody, that is, but farmers. The fate of these people is not hard to imagine. After returning to their old haunts and double-dosing themselves with vitamins, they spend their days in a constant search for escape from the horror of having been confronted by nature.

Then of course there are always the communities proposed—but thanks to an aversion to physical work seldom established—by some of each year's new crop of sociologists. Fresh from their studies on human communities with hundreds of brand new tests designed to be tried out on members of the human species, they become excited by the possibility of having their own private little controlled experiment to observe and collect data from to fill their ever-hungry notebooks. I heard of one such group from a Mid-West university that was led by a bright young sociologist to establish a living cooperative while still going to school. They rented a large house together, and here they attempted to put into practice some of the oldest and latest sexual experiments. The only thing wrong with this was that the leader of the community whipped out a freshly cooked up test for them to take and proceeded to write at least five new pages in his notebook, as soon as he finished his sexual activities with a fellow communittee. I think this group dissolved when he ran out of paper.

The religious communities, by far the most successful if length of duration is the measure of success, are not worthwhile my discussing. My own irrationality is far

too rational to get involved in the mystical hocus pocus that enables these communities to continue to exist or even grow.

Seriously, the need for cooperative communities is more pressing than ever before. We must find some means for translating our ideas into reality. Anarchism will remain a living philosophy only insofar as anarchists try to live as anarchists. The more stultifying society becomes, and the more oppressive its institutions, the more it behooves us to create an alternative on whatever scale we can. Then again, in community there is a possibility for us to try to solve some of the pressing problems that face us everyday: How to bring up our children with freedom and joy; how to release these children from the oppression of emotional dependency upon the solitary family unit; to establish the children's community, so to speak. How to find an alternative to the wage slavery which most of us are doomed to under the existing societal setup. To try to regain joy in work, and freedom from the economic fear and oppression that we suffer if we try to make it alone. To establish a suitable environment for working out our sexual needs—to find some alternative to the false monogamy that most people suffer under in this society. I don't maintain that such experimentation would be painless in a communal setup, but that the inevitable pain would be more endurable in a situation where one does not feel abandoned, isolated and alone, but feels he is needed and loved and has status with his fellows.

Finally to try through mutual effort and experience to capture that—which is truly the essence of community—the joy of sharing, respecting, loving, and yes even fighting with, other humans with whom you are deeply involved. To try to capture that super-awareness of each other as loved individuals. Some of us had this "spirit" of community in the earlier days of the publication of *Why?* and this experience was the most exciting of our lives. It created a bond among us that remains strong and wonderful even though we are separated by time and space. I know of another group, the people who established the experimental FM radio station on the west coast, KPFA. These people too had this spirit. The intensity of their mutual efforts and common strivings was expressed by the joy with which they met the most adverse of conditions while trying to establish the station. This is the essence of community—this love, and joy, and spirit of freedom, and creativity. It doesn't have much to do with the establishment of schools, or coops, or even radio stations, as is so mistakenly thought by the professional communittees. These things are secondary. They must remain means rather than ends, as they become in most community endeavors. When they become the ends, the spirit of community dies.

I think it is possible to establish cooperative communities. However, these communities must start with people who enter without optimism or fear. People who know each other's foibles and frailties and are prepared to accept the worst in each other in order to share the best in each other. They must have few illusions, certainly not approach community from the viewpoint of a great social experiment. Let us say: "Perhaps, with these fellows I choose, and who choose me, I may find some love, joy, excitement, freedom, and perhaps even a stimulating contest." What matters is that we make the

choice of life, of community, of a living anarchism—the essence of all these is the same.

DAVE K.

Books

In Ernest Jones's excellent biography of Freud, of which the first volume has just appeared, there is important new evidence for the development of Freud's "theory of the mind". A striking trend in that development is: that as Freud deepened his explanation of the mental processes, he more and more gave up the contact of "mind" and "external world"; he tended toward a closed system, the individual acting out a mental drama on an isolated stage.

I have tried to show elsewhere (in *Gestalt Therapy*, part II, ch. 3) that "mind" is an abstraction from the felt contact of the field of the organism and its physical and social environment. This abstraction is necessary, and is felt as a real thing, under certain conditions: namely, a chronic low-grade emergency in which proprioception (the sense of the body) is diminished and selectively blotted out; there is a hypertension of muscularity; there is a split in the unity desired-perceived because of frustration, danger, and resignation; habitual deliberateness and unrelaxed self-constriction color the foreground of awareness and produce an exaggerated feeling of the exercise of "Will"; the safe play of dream and speculation is maximized; and so forth. I need hardly point out to readers of this magazine how these conditions obtain in our societies. But it is instructive to show examples in Freud's theorizing of how he progressively comes to the "mind".

1. Just before the *Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud wrote and rejected a physiological psychology on a neuronal basis, a kind of thinking-machine. There is one major difference between this and the model of the mind in the *Dreams*: in the earlier work he held that sensory stimuli imparted a quantity of energy to the neuronal system, later he held that such stimuli merely "excite" and "qualify" the mental apparatus. That is, the earlier view allows for a psychology of growth—the environment is novel and nourishing and the organism survives by creatively adjusting, changing and changing the environment. On the later view, the drama is all internal. Therapeutically this comes to mean that a cure does not depend essentially on finishing an unfinished emotional situation in actual current experience, but simply on a reshuffling of the conflicting cathected ideas; there is no "real" conflict but only "inner" conflict. But the case is, I think, that essentially all inner conflict is a real conflict and there is no cure without current environmental change, providing new nourishment. There can be a release of dammed-up affect only by a real object, or its real absence. In clinical practice Freud, of course, understood this perfectly when he laid so much stress on the transference to the therapist; but he then interprets the effect of the transference as a revival of an old illusion, whereas the truth is, I believe, that the effect comes from a new experimental try with a real person. As if embarrassed by the importance of the therapist, Freud tries in every way to make the actual man completely unobtrusive and shadowy; but this is blinking at the facts.

2. It was at this same period, again, that Freud first held a theory, evidenced by an astonishing unanimity of

memory of all his patients, that hysteria was specifically caused by the seduction of the very small child by some adult. Soon he had to give up this spectacular bright idea, for it turned out on closer investigation that the "memories" were only fantasies, wishes, a form of infantile auto-erotism. Of course they were; but what is astonishing is that Freud does not at once follow up with the next question: why should children have such a fantastic wish? The explanation must be that they have been starved in the social environment; they have previously been denied a necessary close contact with the other people; frustrated, they dream it up, in terms appropriate to their later similar starvation. One does not need to look far to find the conditions of community-starvation in Vienna 1895. But Freud took this social "reality" to be the nature of things.

3. Another example of the splitting of the soul from its environment was Freud's cooling toward his theory of "actual-neurosis", imperfect current sexual gratification, as the core of psycho-neurosis. Freud never quite abandoned this view, but he came to lay *all* the stress on mental repression. But supposing he had pursued the earlier view: it would have become increasingly evident to him, would it not, that cure could not depend merely on talk, revival of affect, and reconsideration, but must also pass over into practical behavior, and therefore must involve a change of the social rules so as to make such curative behavior possible. Obviously Freud was not willing to make any such frontal attack on the moral and economic institutions.

4. Skipping a few years to the *Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex* (this is further on than the period covered by Jones's first volume), we find a peculiar anomaly in Freud's theory of infantile sexuality as mainly under the control of the erotogenic zones—skin, mouth, anus, genitals. On the one hand, like the great biologist he was, he insists that these zones, and the entire sexuality, are "anaclitic", that is that they lean on, and support, vital life functions, of nourishment, excretion, etc. On the other hand, he increasingly insists that the infantile sexuality is essentially auto-erotic, self-contained, and only in the course of time includes the world and the others. But this latter view cannot make fundamental sense, for the very material nature of the erotogenic zones—sensitive mucous membranes—shows us that they are organs of *contact*, perceptual and chemical; their auto-erotic employment must be secondary. When he makes this secondary employment primary, he must inevitably come to the curious language of calling the infantile sexuality "polymorphously perverse".

To sum up the tendency evidenced in these examples, splitting the soul and the world, instead of regarding their unitary interaction as the context of psychology, Freud came to regard the original "primary" process of thought as totally "unrealistic". But this is against all the evidence of the animal kingdom—for how do the animals who have, I suppose, only that primary process, nevertheless manage so well? And then Freud came to the contradiction between "pleasure-principle" and "reality-principle", and his consequent gray and stoical view of culture and society.

Two things strike one here: First, that as Freud's insight became more concrete, daring, and far-ranging, even to anthropology and religion, he more and more withdrew into himself and limited the "possible" sphere of direct environmental contact; conversely, from this

secure vantage-point he forged the extraordinary practical weapon of the psychoanalytical movement. But secondly, the most important later advances by others, in theory and technique, have been able to go back precisely to ideas (and hopes) that Freud resigned on the way.

PAUL GOODMAN

To Our Readers

In the light of the deficit recorded in the financial statement, it seems advisable to remind our readers that their contributions are the only source of income *Resistance* has. The present deficit has been incurred, out of reluctance to reduce the size of the magazine, particularly at a time when efforts to secure the collaboration of a greater number of writers are beginning to yield results; and in the hope that continuous bi-monthly publication will gradually lead to a wider audience for the magazine.

Because of lack of space, we are again omitting the list of books and pamphlets we have for sale. We shall gladly supply this list on request. A large part of the Freedom Press book-list is now distributed by Irving Ravin, 660 Riverside Drive, New York 31, N. Y. Ravin offers a 20% discount to readers of *Resistance* on most of these titles; the full list may be obtained by writing directly to him.

Readers wishing to become acquainted with the excellent London anarchist weekly *Freedom* may obtain sample copies by writing to us. Also free on request, are back issues of *Resistance*, and the Resistance Press pamphlets, *The State* (Randolph Bourne), *War or Revolution*, and *An Appeal to the Young* (Peter Kropotkin).

The cover-drawing on this issue is by Vera Williams.

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ILLINOIS: Clarendon Hills: E.F. 2.00		2.00
IOWA: Mt. Vernon: W.G. 2.00		2.00
MASSACHUSETTS: Boston: A.McD. 1.00, A.O. 1.00; Chelsea: H.B. 3.00; East Boston: Circolo Aurora 23.90; Greenfield: R.B. 6.00		34.90
MICHIGAN: Ann Arbor: R.H. 2.25		2.25
MINNESOTA: Minneapolis: E.B.M. 2.00; McC's Bookstore 4.00		6.00
NEW YORK: Brooklyn: J.E. 2.00, L.G. 0.74; New York City: A.G. 2.00, S.V.D.B. 1.00, Misc. 0.10		5.84
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Letters

Report from Animal Farm

(The second part of "The Patriotic Revision of History," to which the following letter refers, has had to be postponed till next issue, for the usual reasons of space. Part I appeared in the December issue.)

I guess there is no denying that a full-scale reaction is setting in; we are in for another round of fuhrer-worship, USA-style. Love those "great Men." Poke fun at the antics of monarchists, fascists and communists overseas, with their quaint leader worship, but perish the thought of comparing our own bawling at the tops of our lungs at the appropriate birth and death days.

The aspect that intrigues me most is that the crop of historians Allan Nevins is representing is the "liberal" crew. The degree to which we have gone downhill can be seen in the fact that the apologists for the Big Boys, and their Big Wars, Big Defense, Big Imperialism and Big Power, are no longer a smug gang of well-to-do patricians writing and teaching history more or less as a hobby. That was generally the situation between 1880 and 1915. A historian was usually a man of independent means and considerable leisure. He rarely concealed his social and psychological leanings. But the bunch who have become the new handmaidens of orthodoxy are sprouts from the reformist garden. After a decade of toying playfully with what they have chosen to call "reform" they galloped off with FDR and the war party, and in the transition of the USA into the 20th century Rome, they have become transfigured. "Reform" slipped out of their ken around the time the New Deal was scuttled, roughly at Munich or thereabouts, and they clambered aboard a much more reliable raft, one which they ostensibly had cast adrift in the journey to the new Liberal Land. But they found the old hulk of nationalism, war patriotism, and all the comfortable reactionary stuff associated with these, most substantial transportation into a newer and more plentiful life. The fine official positions in court historical writing have really opened the eyes of these lads; they are on a new gravy train.

Don't forget the various "foundations" which are as important as the Government in providing official writing projects and positions. There was the OWI, of course, which recruited the historians and made them go through their acts like the trained seals they really were. And there were the official historians, like Samuel Eliot Morison, who got a Navy commission to write an official history of naval operations at the express order of Roosevelt himself. But the various fronts are just as important. The council on Foreign Relations and the Rockefeller crowd have already provided large sums to subsidize writers to prepare whitewashes of the Roosevelt diplomacy and continue deepening the 1939-46 hatreds, by dwelling on the devil theory of war and trying to head off any investigation of the part played by the "peace-loving" nations in bringing about world-wide hostilities.

I bring this up to point out that it is all one piece of cloth. Nevins was one of the first of the over-age patriots to declare war on Hitler among the Columbia faculty after Hitler's armies invaded France in 1940. He has occupied and still occupies strategic spots where loaves and fishes may be dispensed to bright young boys who see what it is smart to write about. By steering the handouts skillfully, he has been able to train a crop to take the auxiliary posts in the court history writing sphere. So if he is on a binge to sell re-tread reverence for our late robber barons because they were the architects of our destructive potential (Basil Rauch, one of the Columbia historians, once called FDR "the architect of our happiness" for taking us into war), it must be considered in the context of the whole war-trend of domestic affairs since the home front New Deal failed to solve the internal contradictions of a peacetime capitalism. There is no doubt that the war came to the rescue in 1939. And one year of war production did more to straighten out the agonized bends in capitalism than all 6 years of New Deal messing around.

The aspect of their program that is most despicable is their attempt to make a marriage between organized world-wide perpetual murder and the liberal reform aspirations by supporting a wartime prosperity and unending commitment to messing in the politics and economies of the nations of the world under the notion that all this is uplifting and good for them. It would be interesting to know just how much real unaffected help this crowd is in favor of, unaccompanied by detachments of marines, "freedom-loving" troops, and disguised reaction.

BENJAMIN