

"The 'free' world is not free; the 'communist! world is not communist; one is already openly class-divided & is becoming totalit. arian, the other - already totalitarian 4 is growing more and more class-divided.

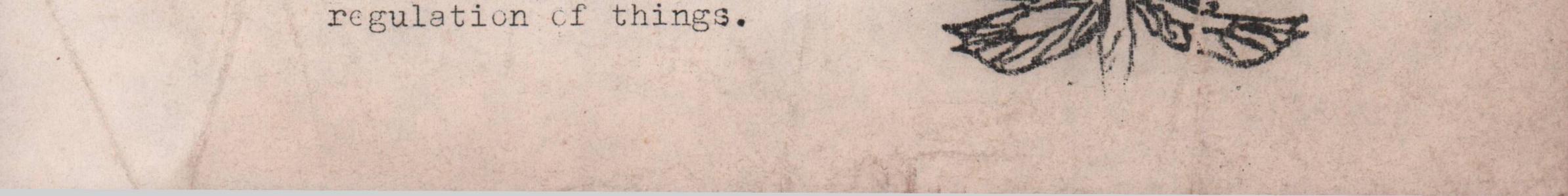
"Pollution, nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction put a question mark over the very survival of mankind; and they are the inevitable product of the 'free world'/'communist world' power struggle and its disregard of human values.

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"We charge that both systems engender servitude; that pseudo-freeom based on economic slavery is no better than pseudo-freedom based on political slavery.

"The monopoly of power shich is the state must be eliminated. Government itself - as well as its underlying institutions - perpetuates war, oppression, corruption, exploitation. & misery.

"We advocate a worldwide society of communities & councils, based on cooperation & free agreement from the bottom (federalism) instead of ccercion & domination from the top (centralis Regimentation of people must being



socialism is a deceptive mirage, without freedom is despotic. Sh anism is free socialism."

> (Slightly revised from the "What we stand for" of the New York Libertarian League.)

START

Syndicalist Tendency of the Anarchist Revolutionary Tradition

REVOLUTION

- when used of social revolution - does not mean mere insurrection.

An insurrection may well be a device for replacing one small elite at the apex of the state and power system, with another similar elite, bringing no serious attempt to change the economic & social infrastructure.

A revolution - which is a change in social & economic relationships may well be carried out without insurrectionary means.

REVOLUTION

means the abolition of the priveleges of the existing ruling class, & of the economic differentials that give rise to them; followed by the creation of a new social order.

REVOLUTION

by no means inevitably involves violence on the part of the revolutionaries. It is however inconceivable that the ancien regime would ever willingly surrender power. If it can avoid being dispossessed it will and it will resort to violence to further this aim.

It must therefore be expected that unless there is an accordic collapse, or unless for some reason, such as war-weariness, the ruling class has lost its will to rule; that the defenders of . .c old order will resort to arms.

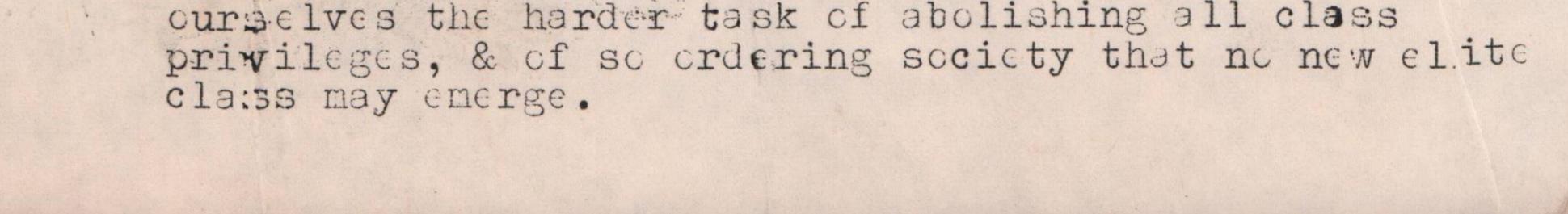
It does not necessarily follow that reactionary violence can best be overcome by revolutionary viclence. Such is the nature of the modern state and its weapons of mass destruction, that it is unlikely that a just society could emerge from a full scale military confrontation.

ANARCHISTS

COEF CION

do not set out nerely to overthrow one class in order TS to replace it with the 'Diktat' of another; but set

ADVOCATE A SOCIETY BASED ON CO-OPERATION WITHOUT



ANARCHISTS

wish to abolish all class divisions, & - since "the state merely reflects the class divisions within a society" (Marx) - hold that that abolition cntails the abolition of all states, government (rule by one man, or one set of men - &/or women over others) & not - as the "Marxists" advocate the creation of "workers' governments" or "workers' states.

Such "workers' regimes" - be they democratic, or be they despotic, have invariably produced their own elites ruling the masses. Anarchists were warning of the dangers of such new exploitative and class-divided systems, long before the creation of any of the self-styled sociakist^ states. The fact that in practise the Stalinist regimes brought not merely all the evils against which anarchists had warned but even exceeded them, confirms the validity of those early anarchist arguments.

ANARCHISTS do not necessarily argue that Marxism & Leninism

lead <u>inevitably</u> to Stalinism; nevertheless the danger is very much inherent within the state road to socialism and the concept of the vanguard party; both of which are central doctrines of Marxist-Leninism. It is therefore highly probable that such Leninist revolutions will follow a Stalinist path, & anarchists recall with pride that we warned of the danger early.

ANARCHISTS

- to repeat - oppose all governments, whatever the label, & all states as being symptomatic of class divisions and rest on class privileges. When Marx described governments as the executive committee of the ruling class, he used the word executive as a body responsive to the orders of another and merely doing what it was told, - an implementation committee. Marx spoke at a time when capitalism had not taken a collectivist & corporative form; the fact that his term "a mere executive committee"

still appears to have value is due to the changed nature of executive committees within society as an whole.

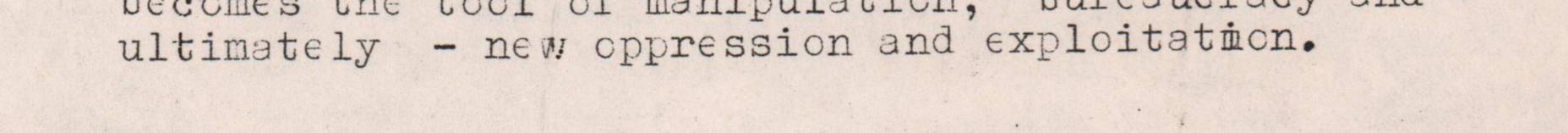
ANARCHISTS

advocate the replacement of existing society whether the openly capitalist "free world" or the state capitalist "communist world", or indeed the "Third World" admixture of the two, with a society based on free cooperation.

ANARCHISTS

regard calls to build a "militant workers' party", as wholly misconceived. These too often conceal cynical attempts to manipulate workers in the interests of one clique or another, & have as much to do with the liberation of society, as the appeals made to the national interest by spokesmen of the Right, & Centre.

Attempting to bring about the revolution through the creation of a workers' party is not merely misguided, but as it offers only the illusion of success, the projected weapon of freedom soon becomes the tool of manipulation, bureaucracy and -



NDICALISM IS A STRATEGY FOR ATTAINING THE ANARCHIST REVOLUTION,

SYNDICALISTS advocate the social general strike - (that is the simultaneous occupation of factories by workers, locking out the bosses, taking over the firms and converting them, to produce for use not profit, and running them in a non-authoritarian and non-heirarchical way) - as the principal means of revolutionary change.

SYNDICALISTS in order to plan for the social general strike, advocate revolutionary industrial unionism;

(that is unions based on the fundamtal unit that workers who work together, whether in factory, office, shop, or part of these, - irrespective of their craft or other divisions, - meeting at work, and while class society exists preferably in the bosses' time;

utionary industrial unionism shall make it clear that while capitalism lasts it exists solely to fight for the immediate interests of workers until it has won the adherence of the mass of the working class when it will launch the social general strike.

SYNDICALISTS insist that direct ac tion, (industrial or otherwise,) by the worker - whether individually or collectively is the only form of political action in which he can fully trust; the only form of action where he does not leave himself open to be betrayed by leaders.

SYNDICALISM

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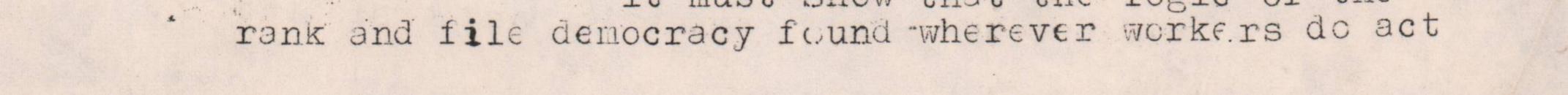
is not however an invariable blueprint; nor is it a theory dreamed up by some academic. It is a cover-all term given to a number of disparate movements, & in each case these were the product of the spontaneous struggles of the workers; created in the midst of major upsurges of the working class.

Such differing circumstances as explain the individual characteristics of movements as diverse as the American IWW, the French CGT, the Spanish CNT, the early days of our own shop stewards' movement here in Britain, (as also the vorkers' councils in South Wales & on the Clyde in and after 1916.)

SYNDICALISM

as a theory demands first and foremost that the anarchist aim must be explained and interpretted in terms of the radical struggles in which major sections of the working class are currently and spontaneously engaged.

It must show that the logic of the



spontaneously leads directly to the truest form of socialism. Must combat all attempts to impose leadership and discipline on the workers, attempts which amount to the reintroduction of capitalist relationships to the workers' movement.

It must show that inherent within this direct democracy and within the spontaneous direct action is the whole conception of anarchist struggle, and that the worker has adopted these because deep down he naturally yearns for the free society even though he probably does not know the word anarchy.

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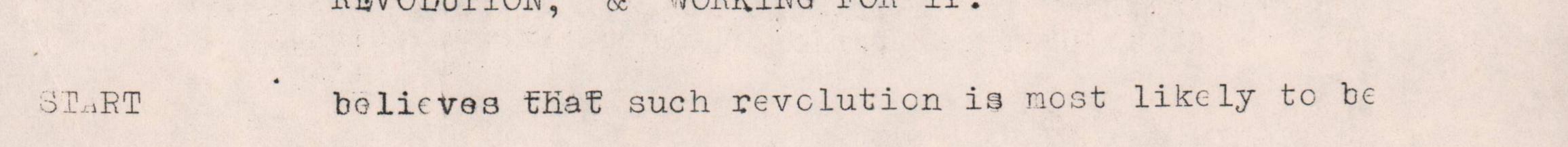
movements, created in the heat of one proletarian upsurge, have, where healthy, remained as the basic organization for future struggles, both the partial & defensive struggles of workers in every day life, & the longer term educational struggle to convince other workers of the need to change society basically. Not all revolutionary strug les that have followed a libertarian pattern have however left such a residue. In 1953, in East Berlin & Vorkuta, in 56 in Poland and Hungary, the working class intervened decisively; in struggles which set out as combats within sectors of the Stalinist bureaucratic-collective. They did not survive. the coming of the tanks, - nor later were Czech and French workers' councils to survive in 68.

> Years earlier, (soon after the Russian October in Germany and Northern Italy,) similar waves had equally failed to leave remnants. Nor has the working class element in the American negro movement left an organization.

This has led to a false contrast between syndicalism and what is known as council communism. Certainly the various groupings which together make up the latter tradition stress spontaneity :e than does syndicalism. Certainly syndicalists are sceptical of the claim that any upsurge is entirely spontaneous if that means that noone was working and preparing for it.

However no syndicalist is opposed to spontaneous working class action, we claim that if possible we should not lose the gains of yesteryear & if yesterday the working class built an organization, then even though we accept that there are dangers of it growing bureaucratic after the first flush of enthusiasm is past, we would not lightly agree to abandon it. Moreover we consider it a self-contradiction to agitate and propagate ideas, if it is then argued that spontaneity is all in all sufficient; yet every council communist group does so agitate & does work for that upsurge which it nevertheless argues will come through no action of its, own. This is not - from the syndicalist side - a major division. We accept that in aim, in the greater part of our theory, and in practice in the greater part of our strategy there is no difference between syndicalists and council communists. It is however seen by some council communists as a matter of fundamental importance, & we therefore have to acknowledge the difference.

START first & foremost IS A GROUP OF PEOPLE ADVOCATING AN ANARCHIST REVOLUTION, & WORKING FOR IT.



achieved by a syndicalist strategy; & that the most useful body of theory in the anarchist armoury is anarcho-syndicalist.

However syndicalism is a means and must always be subordinate to the anarchist end, (save in that means shape ends, that is an end cannot be achieved by means that are incompatible with the end.) It would be untrue to the very fund-

amentals of syndicalism to insist on syndicalist concepts to a degree which would alienate the anarchist from the working class when in revolutionary struggle. (Which is why, here in Britain - since unlike other countries most workers belonged to trade unions - the syndicalists have never attempted to set up a distinct industrial union federation.)

START

remembering that various bourgeois-liberal politicians have at times temporarily aclaimed themselves syndicalist; (to say nothing of the pre-war fascist use of the term); and noting that industrial unionism - however revolutionary is not necessarily anarcho-syndicalist; emphasizes that its task is not only to adv-

ocate syndicalism as a tactic for anarchists, but also to insist on the anarchist perspective to those we con-'act who are beginning to consider themselves syndicalist.

emphasizes that anarcho-syndicalic: __s always involved incorporating into the industrial unicnist struggle elements of other streams of anarchist thought, indeed other streams of radical thought. The formation of workers' committees for instance - necessarily involves a significant measure of solidarity, (the product perhaps of mutual aid), & cannot be achieved unless workers have shed radialist, nationalist, militarist, sexist and other illusions that now divide the working class. It is a commonplace to say that the social conditioning imposed by existing society; through advertising, formal schooling, conventional family

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roles and ideas as to sex-roles, the belief that it is morally imperative to work - even if the work is useless or positively harmful - the belief in the absolute necessity of economic advance - even when this means manufacturing goods that are designed to fall to pieces tomorrow so as to force the purchase of replacements - & the attitudes imposed by conventional moralism; all contribute to divisions among workers.

Given that workers are divided by these things it follows that any movement that contributes to their abolition provided it does not sow fresh divisions is advancing the cause of workers' unity. Therefore even if it does not see itself as revolutionary a movement by combatting the harmful conditioning of the present could aid revolution.

(However in practise most - if not all - movements which do not see thenselves as revolutionary; ((Together with many that would claim so to be;)) do in fact foster a new set of divisions and illusions.) Nevertheless to the extent that any

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humane and libertarian agitation - even if merely meliorist (reformist by blows) & do-gooding, in conception - frees the working class from the bonds of attitudes which prevent its own self-liberation; we

see it as facilitating the growth of syndicalism.

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mode of production so complex, all stages in the productive process obvious to all workers that the bossie for ion was inessential. That the workers could the selves run the factories better. The fact that is workers see all processes of production nowadays, has a mystifying effect, making it look as if management at least - if not the shareholders - play an useful role.

Moreover given that many of the evils of today are not (at least in this country) the lack of goods, but that so much of what is produced is harmful, useless, or designed to be obselete & scrapped; given therefore that many workers - particularly say in munitions - feel they have an interest in maintaining the production of anti-social products and feel themselves, consequently, menaced by campaigns of the Left; it is more than ever necessary that workers attain a globally radical consciousness and not just an industrially radical one, before they begin to think of becoming syndicalist.

Similarly with the growth of power of the nation-state, aspects of anarchist arguments which may at times in the past have seemed to stress individual liberty to the exclusion of revolutionary class consciousness; (& which for this, or other reasons, have been dismissed by syndicalists as petit-bourgeois ultra-liberalism;) have taken on a revolutionary tinge and a working class appeal which they formerly lacked.

Nowadays, few working class youngsters grow up without finding themselves in conflict with stupid, piddling restrictions, on their individual freedon; so that forms of protest which may once have been the near-monopoly of the sons of the priveleged middle-class, - or which were applicable only to the super-exploited, to racial minorities, to the homeless, or the unemployed, - now have a far wider appeal. Protests which marxists used to disdain as a product of aristogratic disdain for necessary controls, now are part and parcel of the activity of every Leninist group; even though the Leninists continue to quote their forbears to the effect that anarchists are unconcerned with proletarian solidarity.

This means that the worker, nowadays, does not come to syndicalism solely as a natural extension of instinctive industrial militancy; but he does instinctively come to a libertarian rejection of many of the controls, & conventions of the day, and the natural extension of this is a rejection of the state.

Given his normal contact - not merely at the point of production - with class society; the worker either has to submit to being brainwashed, - to bury his head in the sand, so as not to see that he is enslaved - or alternatively to consider forms of revolt that lead logically to anarchism. When he goes that far, he can then see that capitalism is vulnerable, chiefly, at the point of production, & that the natural application of anarchistic revolt is syndicalism.



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revolt

cical case against these tends to follow the of one or other of the Leninist factions.

Given this ain, and the fact that syndicalism is seen as a strategy, not an aim, & that therefore START accepts the validity of other means of revolutionary struggle; START does not ain only to stress the syndicalist strategy, but also sees a need to work for an united revolutionary federation of anarchist and other libertarian socialist groups, ready to work together in essentials, while not suppressing theoretical differences.

- Consequently START does not wish to work in isclation, & for this reason - despite serious differences with the DTG Programme - intends to apply to the AWA, to be permitted to affiliate as a faction thereof; since the AWA is the nearest we have to a viable, revolutionary, federation of British anarchists.

We will actively seek the cooperation of other libertarians in building revolutionary orgliason organizations in industry. We are also committed as individuals, and as a group, to involve ourselves in other types of struggle for the anarchist revolution.

This call to form START is in response to what we see as a need to involve more people in active anarchism, to keep then more consistently involved in anarchist activity, & give them a greater impact in proportion to their numbers, so as to move anarchism away from its present image as merely people wanting to wave red & black flags & disrupt the demos of other groups.

This letter is being sent out (1) to a number of people who may

well agree with us as to the need for an organization & accept this as a draft for an agreed statement; (2) to a number of people who while involved in other groupings may nevertheless welcome the initiative and be minded to work with START.

All those who share the broad terns of our analysis, aims and principles, are asked to write in with criticisms and com ents; & say whether sharing the general tenor they would consider joining. (Obvicusly no anarchist group would wish to be dogmatic as to the details of a statement.)

> Martyn Everett . Julian Turner Laurens Otter

