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VIEWS & COMMENTS

of the Libertarian League

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"Strangers in Paradise," indeed!

"Reference was made to children who are hungry. There will always be hungry children."

-- Senator Harry Byrd

THERE IS AN AIR OF DISCOVERY in liberal circles. Suddenly Newsweek, the Saturday Evening Post, and a host of economists and sociologists have "uncovered" the embarrassing fact that some people are poor in these United States. And these poor are not just the corner bum "who wouldn't work anyways," the backwoods hillbilly, or the temporarily unem- ployed factory worker, waiting to be retrained for some equally menial and de-humanizing work as that which he previously held. The Johnson Administration's "essentially realistic" (sic) figure for the number of poor is thirty- five million, but the dedicated economists, the majority of which are operating inside of, or on the fringes of Liberal- ism, have reached a number of conflicting figures, ranging from ninety million to a minimum of twenty million.

Some important insights into the character of the American Liberal are to be gained in a look at the treatment by the mass media of the "paradox" of "lingering poverty in the shadow of unrivaled affluence."

The Newsweek article (February 17, 1964) is a beaut. To be poor in America today, the article says, is to be "out of step with the nation, a stranger in paradise, a frequently faceless member of an alien culture." Aside from the usual verbiage and case-history type dramatization ("The impoverished are people, too"), there is a cynical article on the Johnson Administration's "War on Poverty."

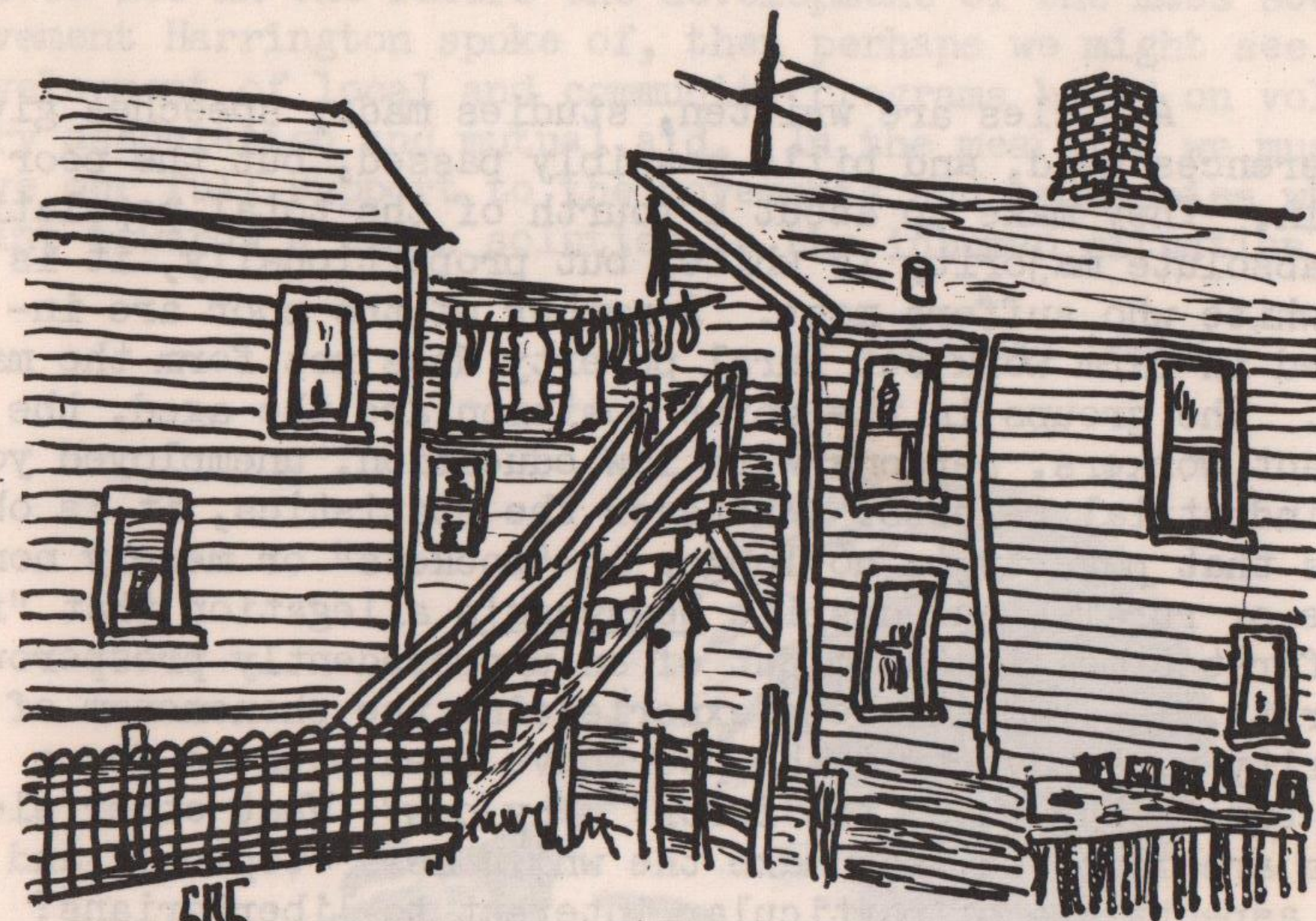
The two most recent, most interesting, and possibly influential books on poverty which have appeared recently are Michael Harrington's The Other America and Gabriel Kolko's Wealth and Power in America. Harrington

gives a study of the groups which make up the poor, and gives a generally well-drawn outline of the situation. Of particular importance is his look at the psychological effects of poverty and degradation on individuals and families. However, the proposals Harrington makes are pat: massive Federal Aid, welfarism, and "national planning." Realizing that his proposals, were they to take shape in a bill, would probably have trouble getting through even the various subcommittees, and considering the opposition forces that would be marshalled against such legislation, Harrington states that "there is no realistic hope for the abolition of poverty in the United States until there is a vast social movement, a new period of political creativity."

Harrington would see the development of a mass movement and then would chain it to the State! Such a social movement would have no relevance unless it developed outside the power structure, and operated independently of the existing social institutions. Such a movement could begin to deal with the problem by creating a source of power (and aid) outside of, and directly in opposition to the State. Harrington, in the Social Democratic tradition, starts out to attack a problem, and ends with leaning on the very thing which perpetuates it: the organized society of Corporation and State.

Kolko's book, although not dealing directly with the question of poverty, gives a detailed analysis of class and income distribution, which, although offering no proposals or final solution, implies a more pessimistic (and thus radical) outlook for the impoverished today. Kolko states that "throughout the 1950's, the income of the top tenth was larger than the total for the bottom five income-tenths -- about the same relationship as existed in 1910 and 1918." Kolko also points out that the only significant increases in income distribution have been added to the second and third richest income-tenths (upper middle class) who did not really need the increase. The share of the richest tenth has remained the same. The share of the lowest two income-tenths declined sharply and the bottom five tenths taken together dropped from 27% of the national personal income in 1910 to 23% in 1959. This book has a wealth of information and figures of economic distribution in the United States and utterly refutes the liberal myth that there no longer exist significant, if any, class differences in America.

Generally speaking, the American Liberal has chosen to disregard the problem, but currently, poverty is the "thing" (besides civil rights, of course) to get slightly indignant and self-righteous about. The question of poverty, and of class and social inequality generally, has perhaps a bit more appeal to the liberals than civil rights because it involves that central deity in the liberal mythology, the sociologist-economist and Almighty Statistician. One group "analyzes" and "studies" while another simply prays for the State to step in. In the meantime, more and more "statistics" suffer from hunger, chronic diseases, lack of education, and the whole vicious circle of degradation and want. The conservatives, most of whom still believe the poor either to be lazy or stupid, and in any event, deserving of their lot, have generally been more occupied with pleading the cause of the rich who groan under excessive burdens of income tax. The Stalinists and Social



Democrats, having reached pretty much the same conclusions as Harrington, look to the Democratic Party as the force for "effective social reform."

The bandwagon currently being jumped on is the program of the Johnson Administration. I.F. Stone's Weekly (February 3) points out that "there are several ways of looking at President Johnson's 'all-out war on the problem of poverty.' The U.S., in his new budget, will spend

somewhat more than 1 billion a week on the defense program. The President is asking something over 1 billion dollars in new obligational authority for his all-out war on poverty. If he spent it all in one year, he would be spending as much in one year to fight poverty as we will be spending in one week on armies and armaments."

Mr. Stone adds: "It is interesting to compare this with the handout to business. The Economic Report says corporate profits have risen 44% in the last three years, from a rate of 38½ billion in early '61 to 55 billion at the end of 1963, without counting 2½ billion in liberalized depreciation. To this, thanks to the tax cut and economic stimulation, the Administration hopes to add 5 to 7 billion a year more. This closely follows Gospel -- to him who hath shall be given."

Articles are written, studies made, speeches given, conferences held, and bills possibly passed, but the poor remain. They make up about a fourth of the total population. The absolute majority is white, but proportionally, it is the non-white who suffers most. A number of the poor are involved in farm work but rural poverty does not form the mass base. The groups in the worst position are the aged, the migrant workers, persons with low education, unemployed youth, and industrial rejects. Whatever the statistics, it is obvious that poverty is no longer in "pockets" or merely non-white or rural. And despite Newsweek's allegation that "for the first time, in the midst of an unprecedentedly prosperous majority, America has been experiencing the phenomenon of minority mass poverty," the poor have been with us for a long time. Why then, the furor? Why now? What other elements are involved that make the whole mess "topical" and what aspects are of particular interest to libertarians?

Gunnar Myrdal, at the Georgetown University Conference on Poverty, Washington D.C., January 23, saw the Negro rebellion as ending the usual apathy of the American poor. Said Myrdal: "Poverty breeds poverty in a vicious circle. The whole milieu becomes degrading. The underclass (in America) has been, and is largely still, what I have been accustomed to call the world's least revolutionary proletariat... We have seen one important break in this empirical rule of the political apathy of the poor in America -- the rebellion of the Negroes in Southern and Northern cities."

As libertarians, we must naturally reject any proposals which would increase the dependence of individuals and families on a centralized bureaucracy, and which would entail a strengthening of the State. The problem is not to be humanly solved within the context of existing society, and thus it is not the job of libertarians to humbly present proposals to our "elected representatives" to put some more people at the "statistically correct" bare subsistence level on government-surplus beans and cornmeal.

It is conceivable that, backed by a coalition of big business, the unions, and the federal government, the initial physical suffering could be alleviated, but along with this would be the immeasurable degradation to the individuals and families, with their becoming absolutely dependent on the Big Brother of the welfare agency. If we are to see in the future the development of the mass social movement Harrington spoke of, then perhaps we might see the development of local and community programs based on voluntary association and mutual aid. In the meantime we must give our full support to the movements and tendencies which point towards a human solution to the inhuman situation.

-- Jonathan Leake



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IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS, the fastest-growing movement in New York has been the Rent Strike. Having its origins in the civil rights movement in Harlem, it has now spread to the Lower East Side and other boroughs, and has involved people of all strike groups in spontaneous grass-roots action for the improvement of their condition.

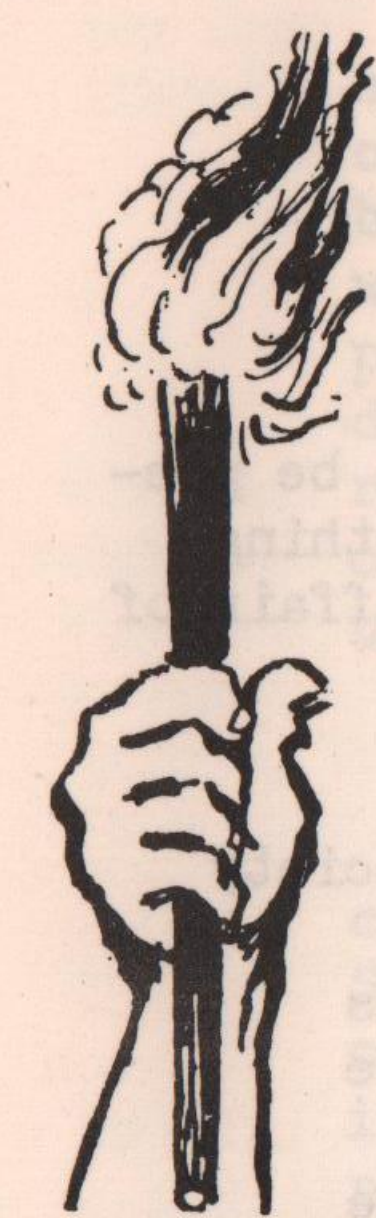
While it is in line with the anarchist tradition of direct action, it must be realised that the Rent Strike has no ideological basis. It is a war against rats rather than rent, and has no goal more revolutionary than that of decent living conditions. The logic of the situation, however, has produced several cases of action that anarchists can regard as significant. One is the case of several buildings in Harlem in which the tenants took money that would otherwise have been paid as rent and made their own repairs. Another is the typical result in those cases where the building is entirely abandoned: the tenants pool their money for heat and repairs and in effect become a cooperative.

It is particularly in these cases that it becomes clear that the strike can bring only limited results without other changes in the social system. Even where the tenants make their own repairs, their poverty prevents them from making the extensive structural repairs that their buildings so often need. Furthermore, while the Welfare Department will pay landlords up to \$120 a month for slum dwellings, it declines to help unemployed tenants who must pay for their own heat and repairs. In a building on Rivington Street, rents were cut by the city to a dollar a month. When this was done the rent allocations of the welfare recipients, in this case a majority of the tenants, were also cut to a dollar. As a result, the tenants were left without the means to pay for heat and hot water and were compelled to seek receivership.

While these examples point out the need for action in other areas of society, the Rent Strike itself can serve as a model for the form that this action must take. The Strike has shown that where the material interests of their families are at stake, ordinary people are capable of spontaneously organizing mass social action for the improvement of their condition, on a direct and grass-roots level.

-- Walter Coy

ANARCHISM and LAW



Ed. note: In the libertarian press there are very few studies of the question of anarchism and social codes. "Anarchism" by A. Borovoi, published in 1918, includes an entire chapter on this subject. We present a summary translation of this chapter here.

The editors of this magazine feel that in Borovoi's emphasizing his differences with the individualists, he adopts a position which is a little too extreme. He does, however, throw light on an aspect of anarchism that is not often discussed, and we include his article for that reason.

IN LITERATURE CONCERNING ANARCHISM there is a general opinion that anarchism, which negates existing society and existing legal codes, has an equally negative position concerning social codes in general. This opinion is absolutely false.

The reasons for this error are:

1. confusion over the problem of the relationship between social codes and the State in the writings of anarchists themselves;
2. the variety of definitions of society and social codes in the writings both of anarchists and of their critics;
3. rash statements by certain anarchists who, because of a certain sociological naivete, are sincerely convinced that anarchy is the absence of any sort of regulation;
4. the laziness of those who consider themselves critics of anarchists but do not bother to learn even the essential elements of anarchist thought;

5. finally, conscious distortion, characteristic of the philosophy called "scientific socialism."

THE PROBLEM OF LAW AND THE STATE

The problem in which we are interested can be presented as follows: Can a society exist in which nothing limits the individual, where all regulation is an affair of the individual and not of the collective will?

Anarchism favors the establishment of a society

"of brothers, each of whom contributes his share, living harmoniously, not because of a legal system which severely punishes those who disobey, but because of the force of interpersonal relations, the inevitable force of natural laws."

-- Reclus

How restrictive are these natural laws? Do they permit of a society in which each individual is free to do as he pleases, or on the other hand, do they require the existence of a State for the preservation of an orderly society?

Impartial sociologists have found that the State (the authoritarian society with an established power) is not the first form of human society. The State appeared as the result of complex phenomena: of a particular material and intellectual culture, of the progressive differentiation of society, of conquest and at the same time of a progressive consciousness of the advantages of solidarity among large groups.

The same sociologists have pointed out the parallel growth of the institution of power, which progressively engulfs functions which previously belonged to local and autonomous social organisms. If some of these functions have been better executed by the new power, others have been executed badly and with a constant disregard for the fundamental rights of the individual.

The process of governmental hypertrophy is well described by Durkheim:

"The governmental power tends to pre-empt all forms of social activity. Among them it is obliged to take upon itself a considerable number of functions for which it is unsuited and which it executes in an insufficient manner. Its passion for bringing everything under its jurisdiction is matched only by its inability to regulate human life. It expends enormous amounts of energy which are totally out of proportion to the obtained results.

"On the other hand, men obey no other collectivity before the State, because the State proclaims itself the only collective organism. They acquire the habit of looking upon society as having a perpetual dependence on the State. And meanwhile, the State is situated very far from them, it remains an abstract entity which cannot exercise an immediate influence, so that in a great part of their lives they move in a void."

It is on this terrain -- the tendency of the State to engulf all things, the human person, his social needs, to paralyze his will with threats and sanctions, that the anarchist revolt is born.

Anarchists seek to abolish the State and in general to replace it, not with chaos, but with a new form of organization. They seek to organize society not on the principle of class power, but on the principle of mutual aid.

IMPOSED AND SPONTANEOUS CODES

There has not been a single society, even prior to the birth of the State, that has not made certain demands upon its members. While specific regulations may vary from society, some form of regulation is always necessary.

Aside from legal codes, there exist in all societies what can be called codes of convention. Shtamler points to these:

"In rules of ethical conduct, in inter-personal relationships... in collective norms such as the chivalric codes of the Middle Ages or the codes of the guilds."

The force of these codes is perhaps greater than the force of laws. The fundamental difference is that these codes are based on a collective accord:

"Men consent to a collective agreement, perhaps an unconscious one, like the majority of social phenomena, but an agreement nevertheless."

Meanwhile, legal codes are created by a specialized body, detached from society, having as its primary aim the preservation of the established order, which imposes its "sovereignty" without regard to the needs of individual human beings. Genuinely collective codes, based on the free agreement of human beings, can be correctly called anarchist codes. This is recognized by the foremost representatives of anarchist thought, and follows necessarily from the fact that neither social organization nor social progress are consistent with unlimited individual liberty.

After this brief theoretical exposition, we would do well to see what the more important anarchist thinkers have to say about the role of collective codes in future society.

1. GODWIN

According to Eltzbacher, Godwin opposes all forms of social regulation. However, while he opposes government in all its forms, he speaks of communes as organizations for the collective benefit of all, and points out the necessity of accepting such organizations. Considering the possibility of anti-social acts on the part of particular members of a commune, he speaks of a committee of wise men which would have the power to punish these people or expel them from the group. Furthermore, he envisages regional conferences for the discussion of conflicts between communes and for the

necessities of defense against the attacks of common enemies. He feels that such institutions would be much more effective than existing ones. Thus he favors the replacement of existing legal codes with the regulation of society by communal organizations.

2. PROUDHON

There are many seeming contradictions in the work of Proudhon concerning centralization and the State. One can call the institutions advocated by Proudhon "anarchist" and "federalist," but these institutions carry with them certain governmental characteristics. Even the word "anarchism" is used by Proudhon in two senses: one is the ideal, the vision of a society totally without coercion; the other is simply a form of organization characterized by a preponderance of individual liberty.

Proudhon compromises the ideal of anarchism even further. He envisions a society built largely on the principle of centralization, and his federalism follows largely from the overt recognition that anarchy is impossible. In realizing that a realistic solution of social problems must start with a principle of federalism, he makes a realistic compromise between anarchy and democracy.

3. BAKUNIN

No one has written such passionate criticisms of the State as Bakunin. For him the State is an absolute evil:

"The State is an immense cemetery, the scene of the suicide, death and burial of all manifestations of individual life or collective life -- briefly, of life. It is the altar for the sacrifice of liberty and well-being, and the more complete this sacrifice is, the more perfect is the State. The State is an abstraction which destroys the life of the people."

But the State, he insists, is a "historically necessary" evil, in the same way that the bestiality of the first humans or the theological imagination of men is necessary. But the State must disappear. It must be replaced by a free society built on the basis of total autonomy; starting with the small

commune and building toward a worldwide union joining all men. The relation between different organizations will no longer be violent -- it will be imposed not by law but by the free consent of all. The voluntary commune -- that is the source of Bakunin's social norms.

4. KROPOTKIN

Kropotkin, like his predecessors, accepts social norms in relations between men, for example, the obligation to fulfill a freely accepted contract. In "The Conquest of Bread," for example, he deals extensively with the objections to and false notion of anarchist communism. In his answers he shows himself to be above all a humanist, believing more in human nature than in logic.

He correctly insists that the most effective way to deal with antisocial behaviour is to find and remove the reasons for its existence. Meanwhile, such problems as the refusal of some men to work or the refusal to submit to a collective decision can appear even in the most perfect society. In this case, the recalcitrant can always be banished. But in a communist society this can be a terrible punishment, even for the perpetrator of a despicable crime. Unless, of course, the banished criminal simply finds another commune.

We must find other solutions.

5. TUCKER AND THE INDIVIDUALISTS

In his philosophical constructions, Tucker follows the reasoning of Stirner and Proudhon. From Stirner he takes the principle of the absolute sovereignty of the individual; from Proudhon he takes his methods for achieving a free society constructed on the principle of individual agreement.

Like all extreme individualists, Tucker rejects all imposed organization. From there he launches a violent attack on the State:

"The State is the greatest criminal of our time. It acts not for the defense of

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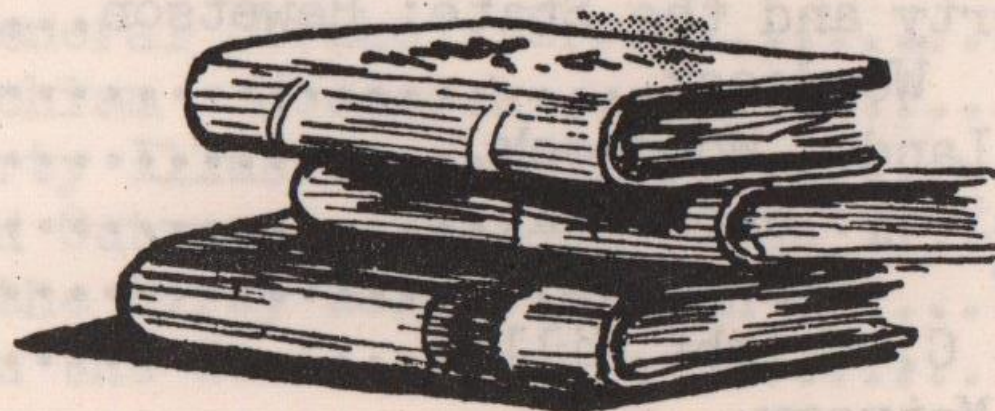
is again on the order of the day. The literature department of the Libertarian League has a number of pamphlets and several books that are indispensable to an understanding of the background and antecedents of the of the current upsurge that threatens to overthrow the Franco dictatorship. We especially recommend the following:

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its most important unit, that is, the individual, but on the contrary, to limit him, to oppress him, to attack him."

13

Tucker vehemently criticizes all monopolies: government, the classes it protects, money, laws. Against monopolies he opposes the principle of unlimited competition:

"General and unlimited competition leads to absolute peace and true cooperation."

From there begins the battle of the anarchist individualists against state socialism -- they reproach it as being the victory of the mob over the individual. Under state socialism power arrives at its culminating point, monopolies wield their greatest power. At the same time, the anarchist individualists fail to distinguish between state socialism and anarchist communism. For them, the latter is a phase in the development of state socialist doctrine.

The characteristic trait of anarchist individualists is their acceptance of private property. The problem they face is the following: can they accept the monopoly of the individual over the product of his labor? If they reply negatively, they give society the right to infringe upon the individual. They have therefore chosen the other response and therefore reintroduce the private ownership of land and the means of production.

From the principle of egoism as the sole motive force of men, Tucker derives the law of equal liberty for all. The limit of the power of each is found precisely in this egoism. The source of social norms based on the will of all is the necessity to accept and honor the liberty of each. Thus the anarchist individualists not only accept certain social norms, but they tend to defend them.

Therefore, in anarchist individualism, as in anarchist communism, we are faced with the tragic impossibility of resolving the incompatibility of the individual and society, the choice between absolute individual liberty or the necessity of a harmonious society.

If anarchism accepts this incompatibility, it turns to the principle which is the proper basis of its theories: the principle of the equality of all members within a free organization.

If anarchism does not accept this, it must then accept other social norms.

CONCLUSION

This article follows from the fact that anarchism is not an imaginary dream, but a reality which gives logic and a realistic sense to the revolt of the human spirit against violence. To be anarchist one does not have to speak of fictions such as "absolute, unlimited liberty" and the negation of duty and responsibility. The eternal contradiction, the incompatibility of the individual and society, is insoluble, because it is rooted in the nature of man himself, in his need for independence and his need for society.

Let us openly admit that anarchism admits social norms. The norms of a free society resemble neither in spirit nor in form the laws of contemporary society, the bourgeois society, the capitalist society. Neither do they resemble the decrees of a socialist dictatorship.

These norms will not seek the detachment of the individual from the collectivity, neither will they serve such abstractions as a "common good" to which the individual must sacrifice himself.

Anarchist norms will not be a torrent of decrees from a higher authority. They will come organically from the restlessness of the spirit which feels in itself the force of creation, the thirst for the creative act, for the realization of its desires in forms accessible to men.

The guarantee of this order of things will be the responsibility for our own liberty and for the liberty of others. Like all social orders, it will have to be defended. The concrete forms of this defense cannot be indicated in

advance. They will correspond to the concrete needs of the society at the given moment.

(translated from Noir et Rouge, no. 24)

Biographical Note: Alexei Borovoi. Brilliant Russian Anarchist theoretician, writer and orator. Professor of Political Economy at Moscow University, prior to and after the Revolution, until ousted by the Bolsheviks. Known and respected throughout Russia, where he had great influence among workers, students and intellectuals. In 1920 the students of Sverdlov petitioned the university administration to permit a series of debates on "Anarchism versus Marxism," Borovoy representing the Anarchist viewpoint. The local Communist Party, designated the famous Bolsheviks, Bukarin and Lunacharsky, to defend Marxism. The Central Committee of the CP of Russia at the last minute overruled the local CP and forced cancellation of the debates.

Because of his great popularity, the Bolsheviks postponed the silencing of Borovoy until 1929 when he was arrested and deported to Viatka, Siberia, where he died in 1936, the victim of persecution, cold and hunger.

REFLECTIONS OF SPAIN

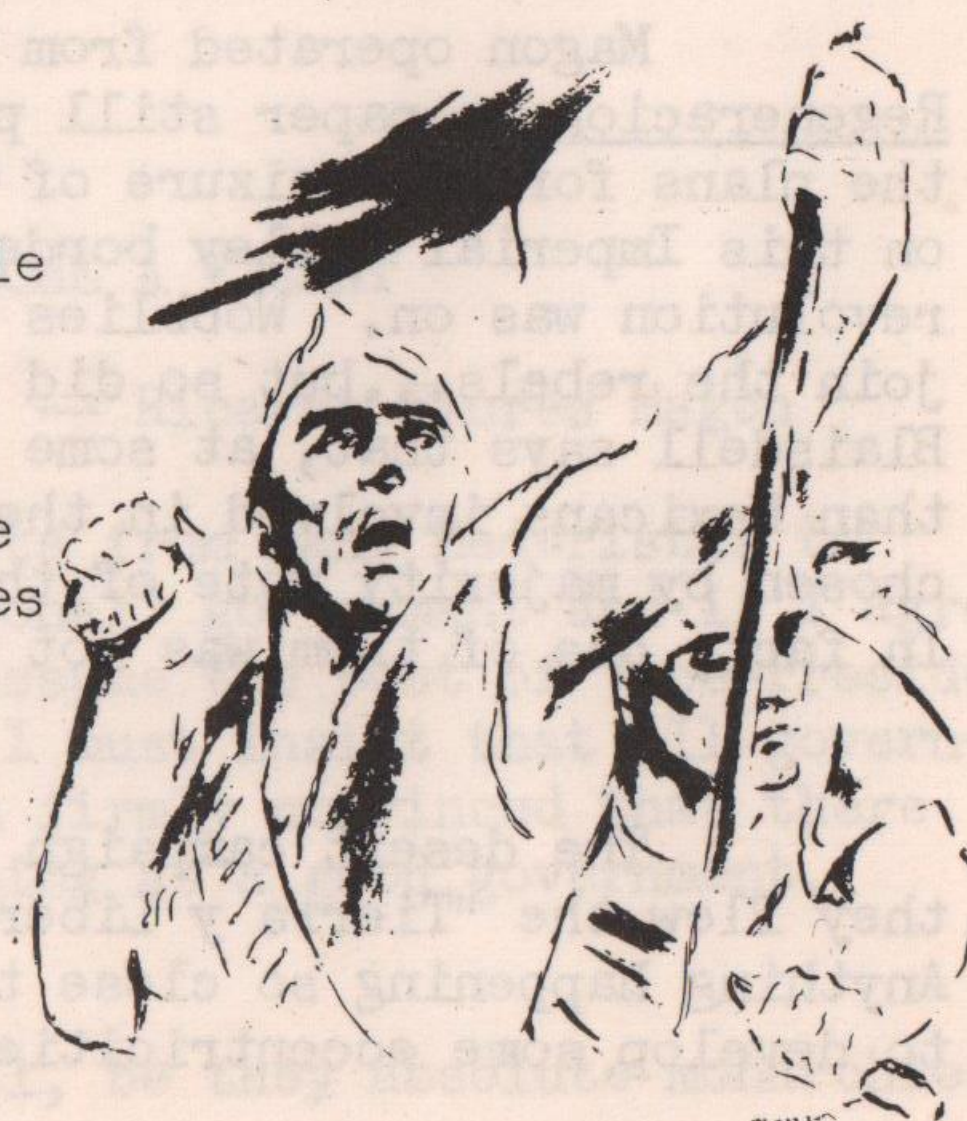
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Libertarians in Mexico

"The Desert Revolution - Baja California, 1911". Lloyd L. Blaisdell. Univ. of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1962. 268 pp. \$6.00. Index & Bibliography.

THIS ACCOUNT OF THE 1911 Anarchist-led revolt in Lower California, together with the portrait of Ricardo Flores Magon, must be taken con grane sale. Blaisdell, who is described as a historian with an interest in radical causes, assumes an attitude toward Flores Magon and the revolutionists that is compounded of attraction, amusement and irony. Still, the book is worth reading for it is the only thing in print in English on this joint Wobbly-Mexican Anarchist--Yankee adventurer expedition.

In 1910, the Diaz regime was a weak and rotten structure, not quite a pushover, but certainly no muscled giant. Diaz' principal opponents were Francisco Madero, the son of a well-to-do ranching family, who campaigned as the candidate of the Anti-Reelectionist Party (sure one of the most unwieldy labels ever willingly attached to any political party) and Ricardo Flores Magon, head of the Liberal Party, a thinly-veiled front of the Mexican Anarchist movement.

Magon operated from Los Angeles where he edited Regeneracion, a paper still published today. It was there that the plans for the seizure of Mexicali were laid. The attack on this Imperial Valley border town was successful and the revolution was on. Wobblies from all over the US rushed to join the rebels...but so did other "gringos" looking for kicks. Blaisdell says that, at some points, there were more foreigners than Mexicans involved in the revolt. Most of the leaders, chosen by majority vote of the militants, were not Mexican. In fact, one of them was not even an anarchist!

The desert campaign took the rebels to Tijuana, where they flew the "Tierra y Libertad" flag over the customs house. Anything happening so close to Southern California was bound to develop some eccentricities. If Blaisdell can be trusted,

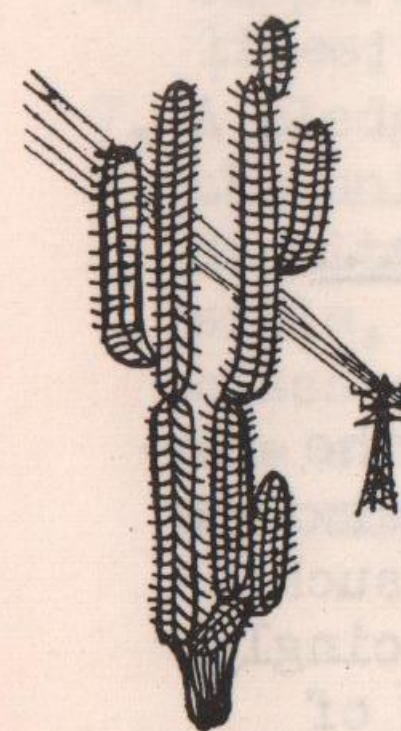
the revolt was near-enough wrecked by the antics of Dick Ferris, an actor turned PR man for a San Diego fair. It was Ferris who started the notion, still current in Mexico, that the revolutionary Junta was simply a California filibuster in disguise.

The main trouble with the desert campaign, writes Blaisdell, was that it was a sideshow. Magon should not have stayed in Los Angeles, with his eyes on Tijuana. He should have rushed to central Mexico as soon as the Diaz regime had started to crumble, as did Madero.

Madero died in 1913, assassinated by the counter-revolutionist Huerta. Magon died in 1922, in Leavenworth, a victim of the American war and post-war anti-radical hysteria. Today he is buried in Mexico, DF, in the "Rotunda of Illustrious Men" - surely the only anarchist to have been so honored by a State!

For those who read Spanish, Blaisdell's book could well be read along with, say, the October issue of Tierra y Libertad (Netzahualcoyotl 54-4, Mexico, DF) which featured a biography of Magon, along with that of Zapata and other Mexican anarchists.

-- Gee



I DO NOT WISH TO BECOME A TYRANT

-- Ricardo Flores Magon

"I have received requests from many Mederistas to accept some post in the "provisional" government and if I agree to do so, I am told that I can assume the post of Vice-President of the Republic. First of all, I must insist that all governments are repugnant to me. I am firmly convinced that there is not and cannot be any such thing as a good government.

"All governments are evil, be they absolute monarchies

or constitutional republics. Government is tyranny because it chokes the free initiative of individuals and only serves to sustain a social condition unfavorable to the integral and complete development of the human being. Governments are the guardians of the rich and privileged classes, and the destroyers of the just rights of the proletariat.



"Therefore I do not wish to be a tyrant. I am a revolutionist and will remain so to my dying breath. I wish, always, to be alongside my brothers, the poor, to fight with them, and not be with the politicians, who are the oppressors of the poor. In the ranks of the working people I am more useful to humanity than I would be if seated on a throne surrounded by lackeys and power-hungry politicians. If the people should someday unanimously proclaim me their ruler, I would say: 'I do not wish to be your executioner. Find some one else.' "

-Regeneracion, Feb. 25, 1911



"On Dictatorship" by one who should know...

"Clearly, there are two kinds of dictatorship... the dictatorship of the minority...of a small group...Marxists are enemies of such dictatorship, and they fight such a dictatorship far more stubbornly and self-sacrificingly than our noisy anarchists. There is another kind of dictatorship, the dictatorship of the masses...here everything is done openly, in the streets, at meetings...

"Messieurs the anarchists confused these two mutually negating dictatorships and thereby put themselves in a ridiculous position: They are fighting not Marxism but the figments of their own imagination."

-- J. Stalin in "Anarchism or Socialism," 1906

British Syndicalists Look Up

I

THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION has had its most successful period since the last IWMA Congress in 1961. The culmination of a steady process of development was our Fifth National Conference, held in London on Nov. 10, 1963. Some 83 delegates from 18 centers in the British Isles attended. The IWMA was represented by three comrades of the Spanish CNT in Britain. Among the main resolutions of the Conference were:

1. A clause in SWF Statutes specifying active opposition to war and militarism.
2. A call for an all-round 40-hour week.
3. A condemnation of trade union cooperation with employers and government in the National Economic Development Council and statements pledging support for a wage freeze under a labor government.
4. A proposal to join other groups in an anti-parliamentary campaign during the coming general election.
5. A call for a complete boycott of trade and tourism with Spain, Portugal and South Africa.
6. Support for local tenant's association along direct action lines.
7. A pledge of support to libertarians in all countries, in the universal movement for freedom, equality and human dignity, recognizing that this movement is one and indivisible, whether directed towards day-to-day gains in the class struggle, for racial integration, for freedom from the ever-present threat of nuclear war, or against totalitarian barbarism.

II

SWF members have taken part in industrial activity and our influence is beginning to bring some interesting results. Libertarian ideas have also penetrated into the universities, where specifically Anarchist groups have been formed. The SWF has generally attracted the most active elements.

During the past few months the SWF has organized and taken part in a number of demonstrations against Franco tyranny in Spain and in solidarity with FIJL comrades arrested in France. Three demonstrations were organized to protest the garroting of comrades Delgado and Granados, and another in solidarity

with Asturian miners and Spanish political prisoners. About 1,000 persons took part in the latter, gaining considerable press, radio and television coverage.

At the beginning of 1963 our two papers, World Labour News and Direct Action were merged and, during this year, the joint paper has appeared monthly, printed one month and duplicated (with a printed cover) on the alternate one. From January 1964, the paper will be a monthly printed issue, fulfilling a long-felt need and providing a more adequate means of propaganda for our growing Federation.

Two pamphlets, "The British General Strike, 1926," and "The Bomb, Direct Action and the State," were published by the SWF in 1963. A third, "Resistance Shall Grow," about the 1963 Aldermaston March, was published with other groups.

Early in 1963, we were faced with a financial crisis, when we had to vacate our premises in London at short notice. New premises were quickly obtained, however, and thanks to the solidarity of comrades in Britain, the US, Australia and other countries, this temporary threat to our publishing activity was overcome.

The SWF can now claim to be firmly based, with growing influence and a solid membership prepared for further development. We believe the perspectives for Syndicalism in Britain are excellent.

* * *

LE MONDE libertaire

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'Viva la Revolución!'

ARMS & LAND

THE CUBAN REVOLUTION IS IN ITS SIXTH YEAR: A sufficiently long time lapse to judge it by two important social barometers - agrarian reforms and the fate of the Voluntary Peoples' Militia (after all, the leading slogans of the Revolution were "The Land to the Peasants" and "The People in Arms"). As far as Anarchists are concerned, the Revolution stands or falls by the implementation of these slogans.

Abelardo Iglesias, veteran activist and spokesman of the Cuban Libertarian movement, sums up the problem of agrarian reform. We give the essence of his analysis:

"Cuba is 80 percent rural. The horrible conditions in the rural areas contrasted sharply with the relatively superior conditions in the cities. For this reason, the libertarian movement was intensely concerned with the problem of organizing a radical, deeply-rooted agricultural revolution...With the triumph of the revolution of 1959, the Cuban Libertarians urged the peasants to seize the land and organize agricultural co-operatives and collectives without waiting for order from the new authorities. This policy was undertaken for two reasons: First to incorporate actively and involve the peasant masses in the construction and administration of the new agricultural economy through their own voluntary organizations; and second, because direct action of the peasants would place economic power in their own hands, thus preventing the 'revolutionary' state from converting free cooperators into slaves of a totalitarian government. The new rulers dislodged the peasants from the land by force and threats.

"Never was there any great unanimity of sentiment for land reforms than in Cuba. When Batista fled, all parties realized the necessity for land reform. Four hundred million pesos were

voluntarily donated by workers for agricultural machinery. The electrical union collected 300 million pesos for its 7,000 members. The paper Bohemia raised 40 million pesos. Now, the enthusiasm has gone. The ponderous hand of the Castro Communist dictatorship has killed the initiative and the will of the people to make sacrifices for their new oppressors.

"The agrarian reform law bombastically proclaimed in 1959 was a step in the direction of turning the holdings of the big land-owners into State property. The 'agrarian cooperatives' and the 'Granjas del Pueblo' are nothing but State enterprises directed by political commissars appointed by the Government. (In an interview with the editors of Isvestia and Pravda on January 23, 1962, Castro admitted that both were copies of Sovkhozes and Kholkhozes - Ed).

"The results of the agricultural policy of the Castro-Communist Government have been disastrous. The peasants protested their refusal to be State serfs by slow-downs and other forms of passive resistance. The tempo of agricultural production in Cuba is so great that even under Batista more than half of the food consumed in Cuba was home-grown. Now under Castro, these home-grown foods are in scarce supply."

In June 1960, when the disaster of the authoritarian agrarian policies were first becoming obvious, the Libertarians published a declaration of principles, which read, inter alia:

THE LAND FOR THOSE WHO WORK IT We, the men and women of
of the Libertarian Syndica-
list Group, today more than ever before stand by our old re-
volutionary slogan, "The land for those who work it." We be-
lieve that the classic cry of the peasants of all countries,
"Land and Liberty," is the best expression of the immediate
aspirations of the Cuban guajiros; their own land to till
and produce ;and the freedom to organize themselves and to
administer the products of their own labor.

This may be done through individual or family cultivation in some cases; through setting up free producers' cooperatives in others; but above all - wherever possible - through the organization of collective farms. The form of cultivation to be used must always be decided by the peasants themselves, and never through any imposition by the representatives of the State.

As a result of long experience in the revolutionary struggles of the peasantry, we are convinced that the planning of agricultural production, so vital for our people, cannot be viewed

as a simple technical process. The decisive factor is the human factor - the peasants themselves. We therefore declare ourselves in favor of the organization of collective and cooperative work on a completely voluntary basis, extending to the peasant the necessary technical and cultural aid as a means - doubtless the best means - of convincing him of the great advantages of collective cultivation as distinct from individual or family cultivation.

To act otherwise, to use coercion and force, would be to lay the basis for the complete failure of the agrarian revolution, for the failure of the most important aspect of the revolution itself.

. . .

For this declaration, which was just criticism of the authoritarian agricultural policies of the government, we were called "counter-revolutionists" and agents of the State Department" by Blas Roca. When we tried to answer him, all means of printing and circulating a pamphlet were closed to us. This act shattered the final hopes of the Libertarians for reversing the trend to complete dictatorship.

Agronomists agree that the rational use of Cuba's marvelously fertile soil could easily feed its people. But no. Under a recent Cuban-Soviet agreement, Cuba is to become the sugar-bowl of the Communist world. Even rice fields are being planted in sugar! And so the economy and destiny of millions of Cubans is decided by secret agreements, by private whims of the Big Shots, and by the mistakes of the bureaucrats. Things have reached a point where INRA (the National Agrarian Reform Institute) has stated that "the role of workers is to obey...the duties of managers are being increased."

We conclude, then, that agrarian reforms have been a failure. The State has once again shown itself fearful of the power of the people. This fear is even more clearly outlined in the fate of the Voluntary Peoples' Militia. Once the main carriers of revolutionary enthusiasm, the militia are now voluntary in name only. A November 29, 1963 New York Times report said it this way:

"Raul Castro...announced the introduction of a compulsory 3-year draft law, which will affect all men 17 to 45 years of age. Registration for the draft is scheduled to start in December and the first call-up is programmed for April 1964."

This is the first time that conscription has been instituted in Cuba. Not even Batista or Machado dared enact draft laws. Why has it suddenly become necessary to force people into the army?

The volunteer system has had to be replaced largely because the people have lost enthusiasm and confidence in their rulers. The double-dealings of the old-line Communists, the immense economic blunders of the leadership, the continued privations, the heavy authoritarian hand of the petit-bourgeoisie... all these have eroded much support for the regime. Under such conditions, then, it becomes suicidal for the regime not to maintain tight control on all arms.

And secondly, the draft is a way of getting cheap labor for the cane fields. It seems incredible that in a "socialist" nation with a high rate of unemployment, men should actually be conscripted to get them to work. If that doesn't illustrate the flimsy foundations of the regime, then nothing else will.

There can be no genuine and lasting revolution without the people being permanently in arms (or at least, allowed to bear arms without restrictions) and without full responsibility to manage the land and factories being in peasant and workers' hands. That is why we express solidarity with the Cuban people as they start their long struggle towards liberation from Castro tyranny.

--W.S.



What We Stand For

The "free" world is not free; the "communist" world is not communist. We reject both: one is becoming totalitarian; the other is already so.

Their current power struggle leads inexorably to atomic war and the probable destruction of the human race.

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

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

We advocate a world-wide society of communities and councils based on cooperation and free agreement from the bottom (federalism) instead of coercion and domination from the top (centralism). Regimentation of people must be replaced by regulation of things.

Freedom without socialism is chaotic, but socialism without freedom is despotic. Libertarianism is free socialism.

These ideas are expanded upon in the provisional statement of principles of the Libertarian League and in other literature that will be supplied free on request.

LIBERTARIAN LEAGUE

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