

# ANARCHY 20<sub>p</sub> or 50<sup>c</sup>



From here we  
grow

# CONSTITUTION OF NO AUTHORITY

SELECTIONS  
FROM THE

The proceedings of those robbers and murderers, who call themselves "the government," are directly the opposite of those of the single highwayman.

In the first place, they do not, like him, make themselves individually known; or, consequently, take upon themselves personally the responsibility of their acts. On the contrary, they secretly (by secret ballot) designate some one of their number to commit the robbery in their behalf, while they keep themselves practically concealed.

Not knowing who the particular individuals are, who call themselves "the government," the taxpayer does not know whom he pays taxes to. All he knows is that a man comes to him, representing himself to be the agent of "the government" -- that is, the agent of a secret band of robbers and murderers, who have taken to themselves the title of "the government," and have determined to kill everybody who refuses to give them whatever money they demand.... All political power, as it is called, rests practically upon this matter of money. Any number of scoundrels, having money enough to start with, can establish themselves as a "government"; because, with money, they can hire soldiers, and with soldiers extort more money; and also compel general obedience to their will.

WHOEVER DESIRES LIBERTY, SHOULD UNDERSTAND THESE VITAL FACTS, viz.:

1. That every man who puts money into the hands of a "government," puts into its hands a sword which will be used against himself, to extort more money from him, and also to keep him in subjection to its arbitrary will.
2. That those who will take his money, without his consent, in the first place, will use it for further robbery and enslavement, if he presumes to resist their demands in the future.
3. That it is a perfect absurdity to suppose that any body of men would ever take a man's money without his consent, for any such object as they profess to take it for, viz., that of protecting him; for why should they wish to protect him, if he does not wish them to do so?
4. If a man wants "protection," he is competent to make his own bargains for it; and nobody has any occasion to rob him, in order to "protect" him against his will.
5. That the only security men can have for their political liberty, consists in their keeping their money in their own pockets, until they have assurances, perfectly satisfactory to themselves, that it will be used as they wish it to be used, for their benefit, and not for their injury.
6. That no "government" can reasonably be trusted for a moment, or reasonably supposed to have honest purposes in view....

by: LYSANDER SPOONER (1808 - 1888)  
(American Individualist-Anarchist)



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The material for this issue was gathered by FRIENDS OF MALATESTA, Box 72, Bidwell Station, Buffalo, N.Y. 14222, USA. A list of literature available from FRIENDS can be obtained by writing to us. This issue was not planned so as to represent the opinions of FRIENDS, but so as to represent some of the opinions of some of our members and contacts, and to present some relatively little known historical material. Be critical, and let us know about your criticisms and other reactions to this issue.

Steve Halbrook is a local contact for the North American Libertarian Alliance. N.A.L.A. publishes SUNBURST (P.O. Box 3684, Tucson, Arizona, 85720 USA).

The pamphlet, ANTIMASS, is available for 50c from Antimass, P.O. Box 7411, New Haven, Conn. 06519 USA.

Rawihokwats is an editor of AKWESASNE NOTES. "Sitting Bull in Canada" originally appeared in NOTES which is a monthly 48-page tabloid on North and South American Indian matters available on request from: Mohawk Nation, via Roosevelt, N.Y. 13685 USA.

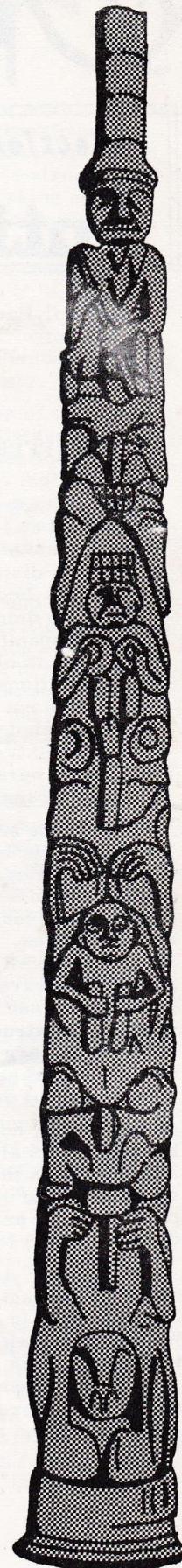
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In a letter to FRIENDS, Rawihokwats says: "You might also wish to add some comment to the effect that, 'Many treaties were made in the name of the Queen by Great Britain which were assumed by Canada under the British North America Act. However, the Canadian Government has not honoured them, and the British Government simply refers inquiries and petitions back to Canada.' Since the issue will have good British readership, they might appreciate knowing that the honour of the Empire is not intact, although I suspect Anarchy people already know that."

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**selections from:**  
**the anti-mass**

The pamphlet *Anti-Mass*, from which these selections have been taken, is mainly about collectives and we intend to reprint it in full in a future issue of *Anarchy*. Other contributions on collectives would be welcomed. Please send them to us by June 1st.

1. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MASS AND CLASS

Why is it important to know the difference between mass and class? The chances are there can be no conscious revolutionary practice without making this distinction. We are not playing around with words. Look. We are all living in a mass society. We didn't get that way by accident. The mass is a specific form of social organization. The reason is clear. Consumption is organized by the corporations. Their products define the mass. The mass is not a cliché - the "masses" - but a routine which dominates your daily life. Understanding the structure of the mass market is the first step toward understanding what happened to the class struggle.

What is the mass? Most people think of the mass in terms of numbers - like a crowded street or a football stadium. But it is actually structure which determines its character. The mass is an aggregate of couples who are separate, detached and anonymous. They live in cities, physically close yet socially apart. Their lives are privatized and depraved. Coca-cola and loneliness. The social existence of the mass - its rules and regulations, the structuring of its status roles and leadership - are organized through consumption (the mass market). They are all products of a specific social organization. Ours.

Of course, no one sees themselves as part of the mass. It's always others who are the masses. The trouble is that it is not only the corporations which organize us into the mass. The "movement" itself behaves as a mass and its organizers reproduce the hierarchy of the mass.

Really, how do you fight fire? With water, of course. The same goes for revolution. We don't fight the mass (market) with a mass (movement). We fight mass with class. Our aim should not be to create a mass movement but a class force.

What is a class? A class is a consciously organized social force. For example, the ruling class is conscious and acts collectively to organize not

only itself but also the people (mass) that it rules. The corporation is the self-conscious collective power of the ruling class. We are not saying that class relations do not exist in the rest of society. But they remain passive so long as they are shaped simply by objective conditions (i.e. work situations). What is necessary is the active (subjective) participation of the class itself. Class prejudice is not class consciousness. The class is conscious of its social existence because it seeks to organize itself. The mass is unconscious of its social existence because it is organized by Coca-Cola and IBM.

The moral of the story is: the mass is a mass because it is organized as a mass. Don't be fooled by the brand name. Mass is thinking with your ass.

9. SELF-ACTIVITY

Bad work habits and sloppy behaviour undermine any attempt to construct collectivity. Casual, sloppy behaviour means that we don't care deeply about what we are doing or who we are doing it with. This may come as a surprise to a lot of people. The fact remains: we talk revolution but act reactionary at elementary levels. There are two basic things underlying these unfortunate circumstances: 1) people's idea of how something (like revolution) will happen shapes their work habits; 2) their class background gives them a casual view of politics.

There is no doubt that the Pepsi generation is more politically alive. But this new energy is being channelled by organizers into boring meetings which reproduce the hierarchy of class society. After awhile, critical thinking is eroded and people lose their curiosity. Meetings become a routine like everything else in life.

A lot of problems which collectives will have can be traced to the work habits acquired in the (mass) movement. People perpetuate the passive roles they have become accustomed to in large

meetings. The emphasis on mass participation means that all you have to do is show up. Rarely, do people prepare themselves for a meeting, nor do they feel the need to. Often this situation does not become evident precisely because the few people who do work (those who run the meeting) create the illusion of group achievement.

Because people see themselves essentially as objects and not as subjects, political activity is defined as an event outside them and in the future. No one sees themselves making the revolution and therefore, they don't understand how it will be accomplished.

The short span of attention is one tell-tale symptom of instant politics. The emphasis on responding to crisis seems to contract the span of attention - in fact there is often no time dimension at all. This timelessness is experienced as the syncopation of overcommitment. Many people say they will do things without really thinking out carefully whether they have the time to do them. Having time ultimately means defining what you really want to do. Over-commitment is when you want to do everything but end up doing nothing.

The numerous other symptoms of casual politics - lack of preparation, being late, getting bored at difficult moments, etc., are all signs of a political attitude which is destructive to the collective. The important thing is recognizing the existence of these problems and knowing what causes them. They are not personal problems but historically determined attitudes.

Many people confuse the revolt against alienated labour in its specific historical form with work activity itself. This revolt is expressed in an anti-work attitude.

Attitudes toward work are shaped by our relations to production i.e. class. Class is a product of hierarchic divisions of labour (including forms other than wage labour). There are three basic relations which can produce anti-work attitudes. The working class expresses its anti-work attitude as a rebellion against routinized labour. For the middle class, the anti-work attitude comes out of the ideology of consumer society and revolves around leisure. The stereotype of the "lazy native" or "physically weak woman" is a third anti-work attitude which is applied to those who are excluded from wage labour.

The dream of automation (ie no work) reinforces class prejudice. The middle class is the one which has the dream since it seeks to expand its leisure-oriented activities. To the working class, automation means a loss of their job - preoccupation with unemployment which is the reverse of leisure. For the excluded, automation doesn't mean anything because it will not be applied to their forms of work.

The automation of the working class has become the ideology of post-scarcity radicals - from the

anarchists at Anarchos to SDS's new working class. Technological change has rescued them from the dilemma of a class analysis they were never able to make. With the elimination of class struggle by automation (the automation of the working class) the radicals have become advocates of leisure society and touristic lifestyles.

This anti-work attitude leads to a utopian outlook and removes us from the realm of history. It prevents the construction of collectivity and self-activity. The issue of how to transform work into self-activity is central to the elimination of class and the reorganization of society.

Self-activity is the reconstruction of the consciousness (wholeness) of one's individual life activity. The collective is what makes the reconstruction possible because it defines individuality not as a private experience but as a social relation. What is important to see is that work is the creating of conscious activity within the structure of the collective.

One of the best ways to discover and correct anti-work attitudes is through self-criticism. This provides an objective framework which allows people the space to be criticized and to be critical. Self-criticism is the opposite of self-consciousness because its aim is not to isolate you but to free repressed abilities. Self-criticism is a method for dealing with piggish behaviour and developing consciousness.

To root out the society within us and to redefine our work relations a collective must develop a sense of its own history. One of the hardest things to do is to see the closest relations - those within the collective - in political terms. The tendency is to be sloppy, or what Mao calls "liberal", about relations between friends. Rules can no longer be the framework of discipline. It must be based on political understanding. One of the functions of analysis is that it be applied internally.

Preparation is another part of the process which creates continuity between meetings and insures that our own thinking does not become a part-time activity. It also combats the tendency to talk off the top of one's head and to pick ideas out of the air. Whenever meetings tend to be abstract and random it means the ideas put forward are not connected by thought (ie analysis). There is seldom serious investigation behind what is being said.

What does it mean to prepare for a meeting? It means not coming empty-handed or empty-headed. Mao says, "No investigation, no right to speak." Assuming a group has decided what it wants to do, the first step is for everyone to investigate. This means taking the time to actually look into the matter, sort out the relevant materials and be able to make them accessible to everyone in the collective. The motive underlying all preparation should be the construction of a coherent analysis. "We must substitute the sweat of self-criticism for the tears of crocodiles," according to a new Chinese proverb.



# NORTHAMERICAN ANARCHISM: problems and tasks

by STEVE HALBROOK

The major problem of Northamerican anarchism today is that it does not relate: it doesn't relate to the Northamerican people, it doesn't relate to the people of the world, and it doesn't even relate to leftist movements in the US which are relatively progressive even according to the anarchist teleology. If this is the most salient problem, then obviously the major task is: to relate. The purpose of the following remarks is to question certain old anarchist dogmas Handed Down to us from Above over the Ages and to explore the problems of libertarianism in the concrete conditions of the USA. Just as Wm. A. Williams and his followers saw the need for a revisionist history to confront establishment history, we need a "revisionist" anarchism to confront establishment anarchism.

## I. Relating to the Northamerican People

In theory, the anarchist's job is summed up in the formula: From the Masses, To the Masses. From the Masses: this means being agents working in the objective interests of the masses, expressing their subjective needs, being servants of the people. But that is not enough, because the masses are brainwashed by the government schools, the elite-owned press, and the other cultural instruments of mind domination, and consequently cannot see that they are being grossly exploited or that they could do something to change that condition. Therefore it behooves anyone who does see through the mask of oppression behind which the State hides to do everything in their power to open the minds of the masses and to abolish the State: *ergo*, To the Masses.

In the history of anarchist practice the latter has at times been de-emphasized. After the formation of the First International some objected to its very existence by interpreting the slogan "the emancipation of the workers is

the task of the workers themselves" in a very extreme form; Bakunin attacked them on the grounds that *voluntary* organization is not incompatible with anti-authoritarianism and that for anarchist militants not to act was (to use the current term) right wing opportunism (1). This is still a very real problem in the US today. Yet presently far more important is the fact that classical anarchists have not been an expression From the Masses, which they must do *before* they can move on to To the Masses.

Anarchism is worthless if it is not populist. It must express the aspirations of the people and not take a commandist attitude to them. To accomplish this, anarchism must be just plain anarchism, and not anarcho-this or anarcho-that: (2) if anarchism is the freedom of every individual to do anything he chooses as long as he does not initiate coercion against his fellow man, then to speak of individualist anarchism, collectivist anarchism, or communist anarchism *in exclusive terms* is dogmatism and is *not* anarchism. He who does so exposes himself as dictatorial and in the final analysis Stalinist; it is strange how certain self proclaimed saviors of humanity never mention who vested them with the right to impose upon the masses a socio-economic system not of their own choosing.

Two of the major anarchist sects in the US - the anarcho-communists and the free market anarchists - both ignore the dictum From the Masses. On the anarcho-communist side, all we have is a bunch of worn out, imported slogans learned by rote from Kropotkin (whose utopianism, dogmatism, and anarcho-imperialism should have discredited him long ago(3) or some other equally irrelevant old timers; and none of the slogans stop to consider that the Northamerican people or parts of it just might in the future prefer a non-communist brand of anarchism. Thus, we have Naom Chomsky imploring in his introduc-

tion to Guerin's recent volume and elsewhere that "libertarian socialism" (by which he means "planned" economy) is the only true form of anarchism, and that market anarchism would be worse than the present order of state monopoly capitalism - because, he insists, the state today protects the weak from the strong (!!). This attitude applied in practice would mean everything To the Masses and nothing From the Masses. For deeply imbued in the Northamerican people is an individualist libertarian tradition which may be traced back to Jefferson and Paine, and which through later decades manifested itself in consciously anarchist forms by Thoreau, Lysander Spooner and Benjamin R. Tucker, Albert Jay Nock, and Murray Rothbard. These champions of individualist or free market anarchism have expressed very real aspirations of masses of (usually petty bourgeois - which shouldn't be a bad word for anarchists) people who are severely exploited by the State, which serves the interests only of the big bourgeoisie. In contrast to some of the early anarchists - Proudhon, who championed the cause of the small commodity producer; Bakunin, who defended peasant individualism from Marxian attacks; and Malatesta, who in his later years argued for market anarchism - beginning with Kropotkin we find a form of "revisionism" from the original anarchist toler-

ance, a dangerous revisionism which has continued to this day. In the US this sectarian attitude continues; thus a newly formed group proclaims: "The American Federation of Anarchists is a specific organisation of militant Anarchist-Communists..."(4) May they have good luck in a country where the most salient libertarian tradition is an individualist one!

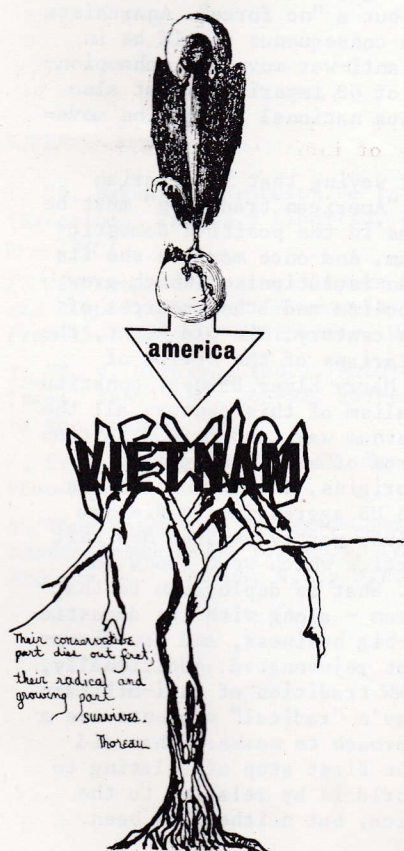
For their own part, some individualists from Tucker to Rothbard have not always been tolerant to other forms of anarchism, ignoring that anarcho-communism is a type of anarchism and hence cannot on principle be rejected, as well as the fact that anarcho-syndicalism does have a certain tradition in the US (remember the IWW spirit which lingers on).(5) The same individualist anarchists also disregard the fact that the class of big capitalists, creatures of the State that they are, must by libertarian principles be divested of all their wealth and the big factories be turned over for ownership and control by the workers. While this in not to say that the market between these factories *must* be abolished (6) - trends in Yugoslavia have demonstrated the virtues of market syndicalism - it is no more to say that a market economy requires entrepreneurial elitism.

It perhaps sounds crazy that arguments on such an abstract level should be the source of division among Northamerican anarchists, but it only goes to show that they are more ivory tower theorists than activists. The divisions are indeed deep, and it is only recently that a few *anarcho-anarchists* - those who attach no this or that to limit their tolerance- have been working to bridge the gap.

The point should be clear: if anarchists in this country ever hope to relate to the masses they are going to have to learn that they will not do so by insisting on systems which are products of their intellectual elitism and not of the wants of the popular masses. From the Masses consists in quoting Thoreau not Kropotkin, it consists in discovering what the people desire and what the State prevents them from getting. But until anarchists do this, they can never expect to influence the masses - which is as it should be.

## II. Relating to the People of the World

As internationalists, anarchists must relate to the popular masses of the world. As humanitarians, anarchists must be on the side of the people of the Third World engaging in anti-imperialist, anti-bureaucratic struggle. Yet typically anarchists not only of Northamerica but of the rest of the world have forgotten Bakunin's classic arguments on national self-determination (8) and have repudiated the just struggles of the oppressed peoples of the world. For some, any national liberation movement is *by*



*definition* a new elitism, a mechanical, oversimplified view which makes those who hold it (objective) apologists for imperialism.

A major problem for Northamerican anarchists is to recognize the validity of the ongoing Third World revolution, for they are in the belly of the Monster itself - with easy access to its entrails - and if nothing else they can keep from being criminals of silence by denouncing this international dracula, by engaging in anti-imperialist struggle, by bringing the war home. US imperialism is the enemy of the whole world, the most ferocious conspiracy of criminals in history, and is the ruthless murderer of hundreds of thousands of innocent men, women and children all over the face of the globe. In a word, it is the highest form of Statism ever to confront mankind. It is *the State par excellence* - one could almost say it is the perfect Ideal Type of State in Weber's sense - and thus anarchists must hold it as their most resolute enemy. Every day it threatens the world with total annihilation, and, as Bertrand Russell so aptly put it: "Wherever there is hunger, wherever there is exploitative tyranny, wherever people are tortured and the masses left to rot under the weight of disease and starvation, the force which holds down the people stems from Washington."

If for no other than tactical reasons, every person or group who opposes US imperialism should be considered an ally. US imperialism, as the highest manifestation of statism in this century, is enemy number one for the anarchist. But this is so in a double sense, for it is a fact that the most resolute fighters against US imperialism in the world today are anarchist inclined - and until anarchists wake up to this fact they will remain slumbering in the dust bin of history. For those who are willing to take the trouble of seeing through US imperialist propaganda, they will find that the basic fact of Third World revolution is not only struggle against the foreign statism of imperialism but also the domestic statism of bureaucracy. From London's *Freedom* all the way to Venezuela's *AIT Boletin* and then north to Arizona's *Match* we find anarchists denouncing the current struggles of the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America against US imperialism. Ignoring that the NLF of Vietnam is extremely decentralized, encourages the people of each village to rule themselves, and champions the cause of the peasant against the landlord, anarchists denounce them as authoritarian statists! Pretending that the conflict in the Middle East is a conflict between states, their eyes are closed to the soviets, the Popular Front set up in Irbid, the severe denunciations by the Democratic front of bureaucracy and Arab elitism, and El

Fatah's instigation of the armed people taking the place of police forces in the refugee camps. Many anarchists parrot the imperialists' line on China, and stop their ears to newer interpretations which emphasize Mao's anarchism, the anarchistic Cultural Revolution, and so forth. "Ditto" with the antibureaucratic elements of the Cuban revolution (9). The Tupamaros of Uruguay include workers' control in their programme, and the liberation movement in "Portuguese" Guinea is seeking to re-establish the stateless societies of the Balantes.

On the one hand are the oppressed masses of the world rising up to crush their oppressors and instituting roughly or nearly anarchistic societies. On the other hand is twentieth century Statism represented by US imperialism. Will anarchists go on being irrelevant - indeed, counterrevolutionary - or will they begin recognizing as their friends the exploited masses whose struggle constantly surges forward and their enemy as US imperialism and its junior partner Soviet social-imperialism? Northamerican anarchists must declare who are their friends and who are their enemies. This stuff about a "third force" is empirically unjustified, confuses the real issues, and consigns anarchists to being not a "third force" but a "no force". Anarchists in Northamerica as a consequence should be in the vanguard of the anti-war movement, championing not only defeat of US imperialism but also victory of the various national liberation movements.

This goes without saying that libertarian elements within the "American tradition" must be as emphasized here as in the positive domestic revolutionary program. And once more we see its roots in Jeffersonian isolationism, which grew into Mid Western populism and other sources of isolationism in this century. The Old Right, the individualist libertarians of the stripe of Albert Jay Nock and Harry Elmer Barnes, constituted the anti-imperialism of this century all the way up until the Vietnam war, and this tradition lives on in the hearts of many, especially of lower middle class origins. This tradition was not revived when the US aggression in Vietnam was intensified in 1965 partly because New Left students pursued tactics which were bound to alienate this class. What is deplorable is that this Old Right program - along with its domestic counterpart of anti-big business, and pro-decentralization - was not rejuvenated. Additionally, there was the old IWW tradition of anti-militarism, but, alas, today's "radical" students use a rather different approach to workers than did Big Bill Haywood. The first step of relating to the people of the world is by relating to the people of Northamerica, but neither has been done.



### III. CONCLUSIONS

A few conclusions are warranted from the above remarks. First, it is evident that anarchism must cease being expressed in terms of a nineteenth century European ideology and must become a populist expression of Northamerican traditions and experiences: to be red and black on the inside the Revolution must be red, white and blue on the outside (10). This entails the repudiation of all forms of dogmatism on the part of anarchos -this and -that. It should also be added that unity among all anarchists is the first step to creation of a real anarchist movement in this country: too many times the anarchos this and that have actually published in their announcements for national conferences that dirty Maoists or creepy individualists are not welcome, reminiscent of the old sign "Niggers and dogs not allowed here." It is good for anarchists to be diverse in their predictions of how anarchism might work in economics or elsewhere, for this is as anarchism should be, besides the fact that diversity draws diverse outside people; but every form of dogmatism, sectarianism and self-righteousness must be cast into the cesspit. With the absence of intolerance, North-

american anarchists could finally get organized - a step which a few still object to, forgetting that voluntary organization is a part of anarchism and that disorganization only leaves the way open for the organized forces of statism to triumph.

But perhaps a Northamerican anarchist organisation bringing all the present splinter groups together is not too far in the future. Only when such an organization is formed in every state, in decentralised sections which eventually must become at one with the masses, can anarchists become effective over the whole country. This means being effective not only in the individual neighbourhoods: but also internationally, for being a real force against US imperialist aggression - which anarchists should be - requires national organization. These tasks are immense, possibly insurmountable; but even without their accomplishment the struggle of the peoples of the world surges forward, destroying first the weaker then the stronger links in the imperialist chain. In the long run, US imperialism is headed for total collapse. But if anarchists fail to speed up this process, then they have no right to complain about whatever policies the masses pursue.

### NOTES

1. Cf. Bakunin, 'Protesta de la Alianza', *OBRAS* (Barcelona: Tierra y Libertad, 1938), Vol. VI, pp. 232-7.
2. Cf. Leonard Liggio, 'Impure Anarchism - Left and Right', *Radical Libertarian* (Fall 1971), from 15 Yale St., Winchester, Mass. 01890.
3. Cf. V. Richards (ed.), *Malatesta* (Freedom Press, 1965), pp. 243-51, 257-68, and elsewhere in the volume.
4. From AFA broadside. AFA, Box 9885, Minneapolis, Winn.
5. Thus Rothbard, 'Anarcho-Communism', *Libertarian Forum* (June 1, 1970), from Box 341 Madison Sq. Station, N.Y., N.Y. 10010.
6. Cf. Bass, 'Economics of Workers' Control', *Libertarian Analysis* (Spring 1971), from PO box 210, Village Station, N.Y., N.Y. 10014.
7. Three excellent publications which have been doing so are: *Libertarian Analysis*; *The Abolitionist* (Radical Libertarian Alliance), PO box 14, Verona, N.J. 07044; and *Sunburst*, PO box 3684, Tucson, Arizona.
8. Cf. Halbrook, 'The Controversy between Bakunin and Marx on the Question of Nationalism' *Anarchy* (London), No. 4.
9. Among other places, I have attempted to revise some of these myths in 'Libertarianism and Mao's China', *Libertarian Analysis* (Spring 1970) and 'Anarquismo en Cuba?' *Abolitionist* (feb. 1971).
10. A paper pushing this line is *New Patriot*, Box 50393, Chicago, Ill. 60650.

## A NEW DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

When in the course of human development, existing institutions prove inadequate to the needs of man, when they serve merely to enslave, rob and oppress mankind, the people have the eternal right to rebel against, and overthrow these institutions. The mere fact that these forces - inimical to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness - are legalized by statute laws, sanctified by divine rights and enforced by political power, in no way justifies their continued existence.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all human beings, irrespective of race, colour or sex are born with the equal right to share at the table of life; that to secure this right, there must be established among men economic, social and political freedom; we hold further that government exists but to maintain social privilege and property rights; that it coerces man into submission and therefore robs him of dignity, self-respect and life. The history of the American kings of capital and authority is the history of repeated crimes, injustice, oppression, outrage and abuse, all aiming at the suppression of individual liberties and the exploitation of the people. A vast country, rich enough to supply all her children with all possible comforts, and insure well-being to all, is in the hands of a few, while the nameless millions are at the mercy of ruthless wealth-gatherers, unscrupulous lawmakers and corrupt politicians. Sturdy sons of America are forced to tramp the country in a fruitless search for bread, and many of her daughters are driven into the streets, while thousands of tender children are daily sacrificed at the altar of Mammon. The reign of these kings is holding mankind in slavery, perpetuating poverty and disease, maintaining crime and corruption; it is fettering the spirit of liberty, throttling the voice of justice and degrading and oppressing humanity. It is engaged in continual war and slaughter, devastating the country and destroying the finest qualities of man; it nurtures superstition and ignorance, sows prejudice and strife and turns the human family into a camp of Ishmaelites.

We, therefore, the liberty-loving men and women, realizing the great injustice and brutality of this state of affairs, earnestly and boldly do hereby declare:

That each and every individual is and ought to be free to own himself and enjoy the fruits of his labour;

That man is absolved from all allegiance to the kings of authority and capital;

That he has by the very fact of his being, free access to the land and all means of production, and entire liberty of disposing of the fruits of his efforts;

That each and every individual has the unquestionable and unabridgeable right of free and voluntary association with other equally sovereign individuals for economic, political, social and all other purposes, and that to achieve this end man must emancipate himself from the sacredness of property, the respect for man-made law, the fear of the Church, the cowardice of public opinion, the stupid arrogance of national, religious and sex superiority, and from the narrow puritanical conception of human life. And for the purpose of this declaration, and with a firm reliance on the harmonious blending of men's social and individual tendencies, the lovers of liberty joyfully consecrate their uncompromising devotion, their energy and intelligence, their solidarity and their lives.

by EMMA GOLDMAN (from Mother Earth, vol. IV, 1909/10)



## SITTING BULL IN CANADA

THE BATTLE OF THE LITTLE BIG HORN WAS OVER. No bugles blew, no shouts were heard. The Seventh Cavalry lay in the dust of the Black Hills. So many dead soldiers! The Sioux cut sticks, placed one on each body, and collected the sticks for a careful count.

Although there were thousands of warriors there, with their families, for the annual and sacred Thirst Dance, Sitting Bull knew that there were even more thousands of soldiers where the Seventh Cavalry had come from. He knew that they would soon be after the heads of his entire nation, and that although they could fight well and hard and long, in the end there would be no Sioux left.

A great council was held, and Sitting Bull explained that the Sioux were like "an island in the middle of a sea". They could escape by going south, to the land of the Spaniards, or north to the land of the Great Mother. Some decided to run westwards, and a few others wanted to surrender. Most wanted to follow the man who had engineered the great battle and started to move out with him.

The first priority was to get away from where ever the soldiers would look for them, and they held Council—what should they do? Canada or Mexico? While they camped on the Missouri River, disaster struck. They were awakened by the roar of a summer flash flood sweeping down on them, and while there were no casualties, tents and guns and equipment were swept away in the currents. But the misfortune was not without redemption—had they remained there, it would have been almost certain slaughter, for troops were marching towards them on the south shore.

And so the decision was made—it was to be Canada. Small units immediately headed northward, while Sitting Bull and his followers took a more roundabout route, arriving in the land of the Great White Mother five months later during a hard and bitter winter.

Meanwhile, the famous General Sheridan promised

an aroused American populace that he would take to the field personally to direct operations against the Sioux. An army of 4,000 men was to be collected, and Sheridan foresaw a bloody and stubborn fight. But the administration of President Ulysses S. Grant already had made up its mind that the punishment of the Sioux Nation was going to be one they would never forget—or recover from. He did not know then that Sitting Bull and 3,000 Sioux would soon be safe on British soil, and would be seeking amnesty there.

The goldrush that had touched off the Custer episode continued in the Black Hills, the lands that by a treaty less than ten years' old was to have been reserved to the Indians as long as the sun would shine and the grass would grow. Adventurers were swarming in, and soldiers preferred shooting Indians to shooting people from "back home". The Indians would have to go.

And so the remaining Sioux, the Cheyennes, the Arapahoes, and others at the Red Cloud and Spotted Tail agencies signed the papers handed to them.

They knew what the papers meant. One chief, not long before, a proud custodian of the plains, held his blanket before his eyes as he made his mark.

To Wood Mountain in what is now Saskatchewan came the Sioux. The Ogalala, the Minnecougoos, the Uncapapa. And there were Blackfeet, Sawsae, and Kettles—and the People of Black Moon. There were 109 lodges in all, crowded beyond usual occupancy—and Sitting Bull was yet to arrive. The vital statistics of the community reflected both tradition and current stress: 500 men, 1,000 women, 1,400 children, 3,500 horses, and 30 government mules. Not far away was the camp of the Santees of White Eagle, a loyal Canadian Chief.

Major J. M. Walsh, one of only 300 Northwest Mounted Police in the whole of the Territories, travelled to the encampments of these political refugees, and easily made arrangement for a meeting with principal chiefs Little Knife, Long Dog, Black Moon,

and Man-Who-Crawls.

"We know we are in the Queen's country. We came because we have been driven from our homes by the Americans. We came to look for peace. We have been told by our Grandfathers that we would find peace in the land of the British. Our brothers, the Santees, found it years ago, and we have followed them. We have not slept soundly for years, and we are anxious to find out where we can lie down and feel safe."

Satisfied with this explanation, Walsh gave them a small amount of ammunition, for they were using knives made into lances for hunting buffalo, or lassoing the huge beasts and then slashing away with a knife to kill them. In the weeks to come, Walsh kept in close touch with the Sioux while Ottawa and Washington pondered their respective diplomatic moves. A few months later, he reported to Ottawa again to tell of the arrival of Four Horns, the head chief of all the Teton Sioux with "what you might call the headquarters of the tribe". That was 57 more lodges and then Medicine Bear pulled in with 300 lodges of Yanktons. He told Walsh that the Americans had refused to allow them ammunition to kill buffalo to feed their families—they had left the United States for ever. They told Walsh:

We are British Indians. Sixty-five years ago was the first our fathers knew of being under the Americans. Their fathers were told at that time by a chief of their British Father (for it was a Father not a Mother we had at that time) that if we did not want to live under the Americans, we could move northward. From childhood we have been instructed by our fathers that properly we are children of the British, and that we are living with strangers, and that our home is to the north. There are those among us who wear medals of their White Father for fighting the Americans.

But the question was not what the Sioux had remembered. Did the people in Ottawa remember the promises made in the name of King George III during the War of 1812?

David Laird, governor of the Northwest Territories, was more anxious to keep them out than in keeping promises. He wrote Walsh:

It is very undesirable, for many reasons, that these Indians should be allowed to reside permanently in our territory, even though they should remain peaceable and quiet as those who, after the Massacre in Minnesota in 1862, took refuge on British soil.

Laird wasn't the only one who wanted them to leave. General Miles, of the US Army, who had made camp within a stone's throw of the border sent his head scout to accompany an American priest, Rev. Abbott Martin, to persuade Sitting Bull to return to the United States. Annoyed and surprised at this intrusion, and uncertain about what this would do with his peaceable relationship with Canada, Sitting Bull took them prisoner and summonsed A. G. Irving, assistant commissioner of the NWMPT to come immediately. As Irving reported to the Secretary of State of Canada, R. W.

Scott, on June 6, 1877:

I found his camp at a place called the Holes, an old battle ground of the Crees and Saulteaux, about 140 miles due east from here (Fort Walsh) on the plains shown on the map as Buffalo Plains. Sitting Bull's camp was composed of about 150 lodges, and close to his camp there were about 100 lodges of Yanktons. . . . I was particularly struck with Sitting Bull. He is a man of somewhat short stature, but with a pleasant face, a mouth showing great determination and a fine high forehead. When he smiled, which he often did, his face brightened up wonderfully. . . . Sitting Bull spoke as a man who knew his subject well, and who thoroughly weighed it over before speaking. His speech showed him to be a man of wonderful capability. . . .

The Ceremony at the opening of the council was very impressive. After the peace smoke was concluded, the ashes were taken out and solemnly buried, the pipe was taken to pieces and was placed over the spot.

The official minutes of the council he held there with Sitting Bull show the determination of the Sioux not to return to the United States lest their people be destroyed:

Sitting Bull had around him Pretty Bear, Bear's Cap, the Eagle-Sitting Down, Spotted Eagle, Sweet Bird, Miraconge etc. In the Council Lodge there must have been 100 men women and children. Pretty Bear, who is a chief now—not a soldier—opened with a prayer, holding the pipe of peace aloft:

"Creator: Look down on me! my Grandfather! (Here all the chiefs and soldiers held their hands aloft.) See the course I am going to raise after this. . . ."

"Make this land to be full of plenty and the land peaceful."

Here the pipe was lighted with buffalo chip, a match being refused as being deceptive. Sitting Bull, taking the pipe and pointing it to the four quarters, handed it to the great chief, holding the end himself.

Sitting Bull spoke:

"I don't know anything else that I can say in any other way: we are going to raise another people. That's what I am going to speak about. We are going to raise in the north with the British.

My Grandfather raised me in a long blanket. My heart was good. . . . The Americans always ran behind me, and this is the reason I came this way.

The Americans gave us flour in every direction. I said, 'Hold on! We want buffalo meat. . . .' The Creator raised me on horseback.

Remember this is the land I was brought up on, me and a woman; that is the reason I came back. I was brought up here.

God never told the Americans to come to the head of the Missouri. We were raised on this side of the sea. You were raised on the other side. On both sides of America there were only two blankets left big enough to cover me.

My heart was strong, but now it is really weak. That is why Americans want to lick my blood. . . . Why do the Americans want to drive me? Because they want only Americans to be there! God told me if anyone came from the East to eat with him just the same. But it is no use.

You—a priest! You told me you came as the Messenger of God! What you told me was not good for me. Look up, and you will see God. Look up, as I am looking! I don't believe you Americans ever saw God. That is the reason they don't listen to me. You know—as the Messenger of God—that they came to kill me. Why did you wait until half my people were killed before you came?

Do you think it is the will of God to have some of his people under your arms so that you can laugh at them?

You are waiting for my people to come to your land, so that the Long Knives can rush at them and kill them.

The Great Spirit looks at me every day. And after this talk if there is anything wrong, it will be against me. Now did God or the Queen ask you to tell me to give all my stock to the Long Knives? Did God tell you to come and make me poor?

Go use your influence with the President, to send back the bad men to where they came from and leave the good men. There will be peace then. What can the Americans give to me? They have no lands. . . ."

Lieut. Col. Irvine said:

You are in the Queen's, the Great Mother's country. Major Walsh has explained the law of the land, which belongs to your Great White Mother, you must obey her laws. As long as you behave yourself, you have nothing to fear.

The Great White Mother, the Queen, takes care of everyone in every part of the world.

That evening, about 11 p.m., Irvine was surprised to find Sitting Bull alone at his tent. He sat on Irvine's bed until an early hour, talking in subdued tones about his many grievances against the Americans. Canada chose to ignore the points made by Sitting Bull. The politicians in Ottawa fretted about what the Sioux would do to the westward movement of the settlers, and what would happen between Canadian-American relations? What would happen if Canada tried to force the Indians back into the States—and failed? With London handling external affairs for the newly born Canadian nation, the problem was one for the British ambassador to worry about. David Miles, then minister for the interior, went to Washington to assist him in his negotiations. On August 23, 1877, they met with newly-elected President Rutherford B. Hayes, and the secretaries of state, war, and the interior of his cabinet. Mills explained the basic principles of Canada's relationship with Indians:

I informed the President . . . I did not think we would insist upon disarming them. In the first place, it would not be calculated to awaken in their minds the most friendly feelings, and in the second place, it was a proposition that they would naturally regard as a humiliation. If they were supplied with arms of a superior class, and quality, instead of being deprived of those they had, and if they were dressed up in military officer's uniforms, in this way their obedience and good will could easily be won, and besides, it would be an easy and inexpensive mode of dealing with them.

Savages are pleased with showy dress and a little attention. . . .

These more sophisticated means of colonization

developed through the years of building the British Empire were repugnant to the American ideals developed through the hard knocks of pushing back a "frontier". Things like national pride, honourable and just settlements, the Domino Theory, military shows of strength which are still very much in the American attempts to tame the Vietnamese were first tried and tested against men like Sitting Bull. And so the Hayes Administration decided to send emissaries to accept Sitting Bull's surrender, or declare war. They were to offer terms little different than the ones which had caused the initial difficulty.

However, everyone invited to sit on the commission seemed to develop sudden illness. As the Washington National Republican put it:

The Sitting Bull epidemic is affecting everybody. The bare mention of having to travel 1,000 or 2,000 miles and paying one's own expenses (there was no appropriation for peace talks, only for fighting) to wait on the Hon. Sitting Bull, seems to act as a nausea upon those invited to serve. General Miles had information that Sitting Bull is in the United States. That would save the Government the humiliation of sending commissioners to that untamed barbarian, who has twice badly defeated our military forces, and who is now asking us for terms of surrender.

In any event, we should not consent to make any treaty with that savage until he has been thoroughly thrashed. . . . General Terry states the additional fact that it would not be safe for the commissioners to attempt to treat with Sitting Bull, unless protected by an overwhelming military force.

Such a policy may well be enough for the Canadian government, but our relationships with the Indians are quite different. We must subdue him by main force, or we will never have any real peace with him.

It would moreover render all our Indian foes insolent and confident should they learn that one of their race had practically extorted terms from our Government by force



of arms. . . . Treaties with Indians are, at the best, worth but little, and the fewer we have of them, the better it will be for all concerned.

Nevertheless, the commission did get organized, and General Alfred Terry, the commander of the military district of Dakota; General Lawrence of Rhode Island, a prominent Washington social figure and former ambassador to Central America; and former White House secretary Colonel Corbin headed for the long trip westward and north.

At about the same time, gold was discovered on the Salmon River in western Idaho, and the peaceful Nez Perce people were ordered off their lands. They refused to surrender lands which had just been guaranteed to them and waged a brilliant military campaign against overwhelming odds. Engineering a fighting retreat over 1,500 miles of mountains and plains, Chief Joseph and his 800 people ended their struggle, overtaken just short of the Canadian border. On October 5, 1877, Chief Joseph made his famous statement:

Hear me, my chiefs. I am tired; my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever.

And so, as the Peace Commissioners were making their way northward, they passed within a few miles of the site of the battle with Chief Joseph. And just at that moment Canadian policemen were attempting to persuade Sitting Bull to come to Fort Walsh to meet with the Americans, one hundred Nez Perce people stumbled into his camp, wounded, bleeding, dying.

Although Sitting Bull reluctantly agreed to obey the wishes of the Canadian officers, he insisted that no matter what terms were offered, he would not accept them, for he had no confidence in any promises made by the Americans. But he and other principal men made the journey to the fort for the parley.

When they walked into the conference room, the Sioux found the three commissioners sitting in their grandeur behind a table at the front of the room. First carefully removing the table, the Sioux warmly greeted and shook the hands of the Canadians present, and looked into space past the Americans. Completely ignoring the visitors, the Sioux took comfortable positions on the floor. They were there as leaders of their people—Bear's Cap, Spotted Eagle, Flying Bird, Whirling Bear, Medicine-That-Turns-Around, Iron Dog, Bear-That-Scatters, the Crow, Little Knife, Yellow Dog, and about 12 minor chiefs. They ordered all outsiders excluded. Sitting Bull, his brown hair looking incongruous amongst the other raven-haired chiefs, was at his impressive best.

General Terry proceeded to read the message from the President of the United States, promising full pardons ("what is past will be forgotten") but insisted that the Sioux must give up their arms and horses as they crossed the border. Terry said these chattels

would be sold, and the money would be used to buy cows.

For the distance they came, and the importance of the encounter, the commissioners must have thought the meeting rather short. Sitting Bull heard the President's message, and after brief whisperings with his colleagues he made his reply:

For sixty-four years you have kept and treated my people badly. We could go nowhere—so we have taken refuge here. On this side of the line I first learned to shoot. . . . I was raised with the Red River halfbreeds. . . . We did not give you our country—you took it from us. Look at these eyes and ears! If you think me a fool, you are a greater fool than I am. This is a medicine house. You came here to tell us stories and we do not want to hear them.

I will not say any more—you can go back home.

General Terry asked if it was clear that his offers were refused and then told the Sioux he had nothing more to say.

The peace commission was through.

Sitting Bull and the Sioux wintered at the edge of the Cypress Hills in company with 75 lodges of Nez Perce and Spotted Eagle. He arranged meetings with leaders from all Indian nations for hundreds of miles, proposing a long-dreamed of Union of Indians—this time from a Canadian base. He talked with Big Bear, famous leader of the Crees, and sent runners to gather the Sioux, the Crows, the Cheyenne, and his own Sioux were kept well informed of the negotiations. He worked throughout the winter of 1877-78 and into the spring before Major Walsh told him that Canada would not permit other Indians to find asylum in Canada "under any circumstances".

Explaining his motives, Sitting Bull sat in his camp and told Walsh:

I did not feel safe, and believed that if I could get the Crows to join me, I would be strong enough to fight the Americans if they came to attack me.

It was my wish to try to get every man that lived by the bow and arrow to federate, but while I was endeavouring to get them to shake hands the Americans appeared and stole my horses. There is no man in the American country that wears trousers that is not a rascal!

The United States Government grew increasingly uneasy, and had scouts and paid informers keeping track of Sitting Bull's movements. In addition to trying to set other Indians against Sitting Bull, the US started hard-hitting negotiations with the British ambassador.

Wm. M. Evarts, American Secretary of State, summonsed Lord Thornton to a talk, and suggested that Canada might trick Sitting Bull into going to Ottawa, where he could be easily arrested. Lord Thornton expressed Canada's side of the story, and related back to the Marquis of Salisbury in London what he had told Evarts:

Even though we may have the rights, we have not the power. He must remember the circumstances under which Sitting Bull and his followers entered Canada. A large

body of armed men had been driven across the frontier by the United States troops. We had no force in that distant and uninhabited part of Canada, neither was it in our power to disarm them.

They are a burden to Canada, had already cost a great deal of money, were likely to involve her in difficulties with her own Indians, for they were destroying all the buffalo and other game, and were depriving the British Indians of the subsistence upon which they depend. . . .

I thought it would not only become, but was the duty of the United States Government to help us by all means in its power, and that the best way of doing so would be by offering to Sitting Bull such conditions as would enable him to return peaceable to the United States and relieve Canada from the burden and dangers which his presence imposed upon her.

Evarts said the United States would offer no better terms than it had done already. If ever these Indians could be laid hold of again he fumed, it was the intention of the Government to put it out of their power to do any more mischief by arresting and imprisoning their chiefs, and by dispersing their followers to different parts of the country. And furthermore, if Canada didn't disarm them immediately, His Majesty's Government would be held fully responsible for their actions.

Thornton disagreed. After all, had not the Fenian Raiders come from the United States against Canada, carrying death and destruction? And hadn't the United States disavowed all responsibility? Thornton told the Marquis of Salisbury of Evert's closing statement:

The Fenian Raids were a matter of history. Since that time, a treaty had been made between the two countries and he would not discuss if the US were right or wrong. He insisted that even if we had to send regiments to the Northwest Territories, and it should cost us a million dollars, we were to prevent hostile expeditions from being organized in British Territory against a friendly country. . . . We ought to arrest him, and either oblige him to keep the peace, or tell him that we would hand him over as a prisoner to the US authorities.

I did not see that any advantage was to be gained by continuing the conversation.

Sitting Bull had, in fact, made a few trips back across the border, but only to hunt the buffalo needed to prevent his people from starving. Irvine had been sent out to warn them not to make any trouble for Canada; he had a message from the Governor-General to read. He described his encounter:

I camped about dusk on the prairie for the night. About an hour later I noticed an Indian coming at a smart canter toward us.

When he came to the camp fire, I recognized Sitting Bull. He informed me he was camped in a coulee a short distance off. I said I wanted to see him on business, and that I would go to his camp in the morning.

After having a cup of tea and a smoke, he left me. . . .

The Privy Council of Canada met under more formal circumstances in Ottawa to discuss their next move because of the "urgent importance of preserving the

peace". They termed the US demands as unreasonable: Lt. Col. McLeod and his subordinates believe that the Sioux will surrender their arms, but state that the Indians feel it would be unreasonable to surrender their only means of transport of their women and children and sick and such chattels as they possess.

The experience of the United States proves that Indians can never be civilized by the force of arms. Force sufficient to show that law has possession, that the country is occupied, is all that is necessary to open up farms, employ farmers, cultivate them, and instruct them at the same time in agricultural pursuits until they are sufficiently informed therein to take charge themselves is the only true and good way to civilize them with the least expenses.

The winter of 1879-80 had been particularly severe. The Americans had so harassed the buffalo by setting fires and reducing their numbers by slaughter-fests that the Sioux were reduced to eating their horses—who were also starving—to quiet the whimpers of their children. Excepting for a few isolated instances, the Sioux remained peaceful, as they promised they would.

But Laird felt heavily his responsibilities to the settlers of the Territories, and wrote the Minister of the Interior:

Over 70 tents of Teton Sioux, being some of those who came over to Canadian Territory with Sitting Bull in 1876-77, had arrived at (Prince Albert). . . . The newcomers are very troublesome to the settlers begging from house to house, and sometimes almost demanding food. . . . They shot a tame buffalo belonging to Capt. Moore, and several cattle owned by settlers. The Indians did not deny killing these animals, but said they were starving. Two or three of the old Sioux of the band waited upon Capt. Moore, and expressed regret and offered to pay for them. . . .

This invasion of settlements by the Teton Sioux ought to convince the Dominion Government that unless they can be persuaded or compelled to return to their reserves in the United States at an early day, some steps will have to be taken to provide for their future. Reserves will be required to set apart for them in this country, and assist- required to be set apart for them in this country, and assistance given to them to commence stock-raising and farming.

It is a serious question, but it must be faced, or the territories will be abandoned by all peace-loving white settlers, and become a scene of guerilla warfare, which may even menace the older settlements in Manitoba.

Finally, scouts brought in word that buffalo had been sighted between the Milk River and the Missouri east of the Bear Paw Mountains and once again the Sioux had food and robes. It was at this camp that Sitting Bull met up with one of the Red River halfbreeds, one who had dreams and ambitions for his people. He talked for days with Louis Riel, the Metis revolutionary leader, then in exile. Although an alliance would be tremendously powerful, Sitting Bull could not afford to take the risk; if he alienated the Canadian Government, that would mean certain death for his people at the hands of the Americans. Riel agreed and encouraged Sitting Bull not to get "between two

fires" for at least a while—maybe after Riel rebuilt his organization; maybe then. Riel offered to go to Washington to see President Hayes on behalf of Sitting Bull, but Sitting Bull said it would be of no use—he could not accept American promises at face value.

The weather turned mild, and the snow melted early, and the buffalo vanished again. By April, Crozier was feeding over 1,000 starving people at his fort. He needed more supplies, which meant more costs, and so the diplomatic discussions commenced again.

Sitting Bull learned that Walsh was planning on going east for sick leave. If there was one Canadian Sitting Bull felt he could trust, it was Walsh. Whether his trust was well-founded is another question, for Walsh had built a military career around his trust relationship with Sitting Bull, and Ottawa more than once suspicioned that Walsh was not anxious for Sitting Bull to leave Canada lest he lose his status. Others whispered that Walsh was just waiting for the right time to get Sitting Bull's surrender so that he could take full credit.

At any rate, Sitting Bull asked Walsh if while he was in the east, he might go to Ottawa to see the Governor-General, or even to Washington to see the President. Tell them our story, he urged. Tell them the truth. He gave Walsh his finest garments, his ceremonial clothes. Meticulously decorated, carefully sewn, they were among his prized possessions. Since he could not go himself, perhaps Walsh would show these clothes, so that the President and the Governor-General would know that it was the words of Sitting Bull himself that they were hearing.

Walsh went east all right, but from his home in Brockville, near Ottawa, he wrote the Minister of the Interior, and betrayed Sitting Bull:

I consider it impolitic to give Bull a reservation in our country.

He is the shrewdest and most intelligent Indian living, has the ambition of Napoleon, and is brave to a fault. He is respected as well as feared by every Indian on the plains. In war he has no equal, in council he is superior to all. Every word said by him carries weight, and is quoted and passed from camp to camp.

Sitting Bull claims that he should not be blamed for the blood that has been shed within the last few years on the American frontiers, for whatever he did was in defense of the women and children of the tribes. He says the Great Spirit in the first place provided for both the white and red man, but the white man has become so powerful that he defies gods and is trying to undo all that He has done.

... as soon as it would be known that he had secured a home in Canada, he would be joined by a great number of disaffected Indians at present at US agencies, at least a constant communication would be kept up with him by the Indians south of the line, where parties would be constantly running to and fro, and would, I fear, prove infuriating to our settlers and Indians.

Bull's ambition is, I'm afraid, too great to let him settle down to be content with an uninteresting life, although at times he has shown a disposition to do so. I think if he

were put at the head of an agency filling such a position as Red Cloud and Spotted Tail occupy, with a large number of people to look after, and were able to receive considerate treatment, the government would find him very acceptable and useful.

Bull is a wise man, and if properly handled and induced to accept civilization, would and could do more towards civilizing of the Indians of the Plains as any man living.

Thousands of Indians are wishing Bull's return to the United States, and his acceptance of an agency, not only because they sympathize with him in his sad position, but because they wish to secure the contentment of their own families, and believe that his wise council and truthfulness to them would insure better treatment for them from the government. Bull is the man, above all others, prepared to suffer for his people.

The United States position, in the meanwhile, was toughening. Evarts was indignant at the suggestion that the Indians should be allowed to keep their horses when they crossed the border. The United States, he declared, would no longer receive them back as a free and innocent people—even if they gave up their ponies and weapons. They were to be treated as prisoners of war and nothing else!

Canada decided to simply wait it out, for Sir John A. Macdonald was cagey enough to see a lot of the talk from the US as pre-election manoeuvring. He wrote Lord Lorne:

I've seen many presidential elections in the United States, and at every one of them the rival parties tried to excel the other in patriotism. That patriotism always consisted of attempts to bully England, hence just now this discussion about Sitting Bull and the Sioux.

It was just a coincidence that in the summer of 1880 the circumstances arose that everyone was waiting for—Sitting Bull decided to return to the United States to surrender. For four years now, he had behaved as a model law-abiding citizen, and he kept strict discipline on those who lived with him. But now he felt unwelcome. The official police report tells the tale:

Mr. Legarre (the trader) called upon me to arrest an Uncapapa who had stolen a horse from him. I immediately ordered Acting Constable S. M. Parke to send Acting Corporal Davis and one man to bring the Indian to the post. Sitting Bull advised him to resist. After a few minutes, the Indian concluded to come with Davis, but before they arrived at the post, a number of Indians with Sitting Bull at the head collected in front of the gates and attempted to prevent the prisoner from being taken inside.

I had my whole detachment under arms and for a few minutes, a fight seemed imminent. I talked very sharply with Sitting Bull, so much so that he left here the next morning, telling Joseph Morin that he thought he would never return but would try to make arrangements to return to his agency, as he had lost his chance of ever getting anything on this side.

I handed the prisoner over to Mr. Legarre, who after hearing his case, released him.

And sure enough, that autumn, Sitting Bull and his people split into two camps, and headed for the United States. They were not in any rush to get there and



anyhow, the scarcity of food made progress slow. Just to make sure, Irvine was sent to intercept them to deliver a message from the Canadian Government.

He found the Sioux in bad shape, poorly clad, virtually starving to death. Calling them together, he told Sitting Bull to make sure they returned to the United States, for while the Canadian Government wouldn't force them to return, neither should they expect any food from Canada.

Sitting Bull may have been hungry, but he had not lost his pride. He told Irvine:

When did I ever ask you for provisions?

I would rather cut sticks for my young men to kill mice with, than to ask you for food.

But convinced that he was not wanted in Canada, he continued to plan that dreaded trip back to the United States, and the people moved onward. Bull was in constant terror that they would be trapped and slaughtered and he felt too great a responsibility for his people to let that happen. After all, he could have struck off alone long ago, and survived well—but all these people depended on him!

And so they crossed the border. One group, the larger portion, went on ahead, Sitting Bull following a few days behind. It was Christmas Eve, 1880, when they found themselves camping on the Porcupine River in the Dakota Territories that the lead party had met soldiers, had surrendered, and then had been fired on by cannons after they had given up their arms as their Great White Mother had told them to do!

Eventually, the full story was told. As the Sioux had reached Poplar River, some 40 miles from Sitting Bull's position, they encountered soldiers. The officer-in-command supervised their surrender, and his troops took up a position near the Indian camp.

After collecting every rifle and every round of ammunition, the officer ordered them to round up their horses and then start marching—for Tongue River, on foot. They replied they would, but only after Sitting Bull had caught up with them.

At that moment, a young man, son of Iron Heart, was driving the horses through the camp, after having rounded them up for the surrender. As he passed in front of the troops the bugle sounded, and the whole force of military fired a volley, killing the youth and a woman.

Helpless, the Sioux watched in horror. Only one old woman, the sister of Whirling Bear, in rage and tears, seized a discarded bow, and began firing arrows at the soldiers. Her family gently caught hold of the woman, and took the bow from her. The Sioux had surrendered.

Fifteen lodges escaped, and eventually caught up with Sitting Bull, who immediately headed for the Canadian border once again. Every available soldier commenced chase.

A column left Fort Assiniboin on January 14 to

meet with Major Ilges and five companies of the Fifth Infantry and two companies of the 11th Infantry at Poplar Creek. Their orders: keep Sitting Bull away from British soil, and then compel his surrender. Major Ilges was to attack him in front, and if he should attempt to retreat up the Milk River, he would be met and attacked by the Assiniboin command, composed of four companies of the 18th Infantry, and two companies of the Second Cavalry—in all 326 men and 14 officers.

The weather was bitter—12 degrees below zero. 15 inches of snow. Sitting Bull and his people had scarcely eaten for days, and were struggling for their very survival. The New York Herald described the troops who chased him:

Each soldier is supplied with a buffalo overcoat, furcap, gloves, and arctic overshoes. The men have Sibley tents, and stoves and plenty of blankets. Each soldier carried a few rounds of ammunition, and 250 rounds per man are in the wagon in case it is needed. One gatling gun and one 3-inch shell gun accompanies the column, well supplied with ammunition.

24 muleteams carry rations and half forage for the command up to Feb. 5, and another supply train follows with additional supplies.

It is believed that the present movement will terminate Sitting Bull's career as an Indian warrior, and rid the Northwest forever of this pest which has, ever since 1868, been occupying public attention and making trouble for the government.

But the Herald was wrong, and Sitting Bull reached Canada 70 miles ahead of the troops. He crossed the border on January 24, and reached the fort near Wood Mountain on the 31st.

If Sitting Bull and the Sioux were to live in Canada, it meant they would have to give up the chase, and take up farming. Sheridan's campaign to kill every buffalo in North America had almost been 100% successful. All those buffalo gone! Impossible, but true. Sitting Bull and his people talked about how they could make their living from the ground.

L. N. Crozier, now commanding at Fort Walsh was told by Sitting Bull the full story about what had happened on their trip to the United States. Sitting Bull felt he had proved his point about the Americans:

I do not believe the Americans—they are liars in everything. . . . I went towards the agency against my will, because the Great Mother told me to do it. I knew all the time the Americans would not tell the truth, and when I took one step forward, I stopped to think before going on again. I have shown now that they are untruthful, and I have come back here. And here I am going to remain and raise my children.

But Canada had other ideas. The Privy Council observed with regret that the Americans had used force against the Sioux, for they still wanted Sitting Bull out. How unsophisticated were the Americans! British experience had the answer, for as the Governor-General said:

His surrender may be secured without bloodshed, a result which will be more easily obtained if the United States will be moved to prevent further measure of intimidation, leaving hunger to do its work.

By the time summer would arrive though, Sitting Bull and his people would be dead. If they could get no provisions from Ottawa, if they could get no seeds to plant, how would they survive? Irvine made sure that they wouldn't:

I think the Canadian Indian agent in the Northern Districts should be notified that they are not to supply Sitting Bull or his followers with food, and not to give them any encouragement whatever.

To stall for time, Sitting Bull agreed to send a couple of his young men over to the American reservations to see what had happened to those who had surrendered; and Walsh agreed to feed them while they awaited their return. Crozier wrote Major D. M. Brotherton, commanding officer of the United States 7th Infantry at Fort Buford:

I would most respectfully suggest that an impression as favourable as possible as to the treatment of the surrendered Indians be made upon those now sent by Sitting Bull. . . .

And Brotherton did just that. He gave out extra rations, and the young men returned with glowing tales and a most patronizing note addressed personally to Sitting Bull:

Your people here are all well, have plenty to eat and wear, and are very happy. I wish to assure you of our good feeling towards you and all your people, that our hearts are good. We are pleased to hear that you have made up your mind to come in and live with us.

When your friends get back to you, they will be able to tell you of what they saw for themselves, and then you will know that the reports that have reached you of the bad treatment of the Indians who have already come in is false.

I know you will have a long hard march from where you are to Fort Buford, and that the game is scarce. Just as soon as I hear that you and your people have started, I am going to send wagons to help your women and little children along, and provide all of you to eat, and friends with the best hearts will meet you.

On April 19, 1881, the young men returned. Crozier watched Sitting Bull as he contemplated the letter, the words of the young men, and as he toyed with the tobacco and "other little things" the American major had sent up as a lure. Finally, Sitting Bull turned to Crozier and said simply, "I have nothing to say."

Sitting Bull had toyed for some time with the idea of going to Fort Qu'Appelle. There he might meet with people who had some power, people who might grant him a reserve. There he might find Major Walsh, and find out what had been told to him by the Governor-General and the President. And so it was that he and 40 lodges, mostly of the older people, left for the month-long journey. On May 28, a coded message reached Ottawa that "Sledge Buy" had arrived at Qu'Appelle.

The Commissioner of Indian Affairs, E. Dewdney,

got started on the touchy business of negotiating with the Sioux, with the aim of starving them out but without appearing to do so. His own memorandum of June 7, 1881, describes the first meeting:

I asked them if they had anything to say. They answered that they had come a long way, and were hungry, and wanted one meal. I replied that from word late received from Wood Mountain, the Government found they had been deceived. Sitting Bull said it was correct. . . . Sitting Bull then said, "I have not much to say now."

I asked him if Col. McLeod, Col. Irvine, and Capt. Crozier had not all seen him, given him the same advice, and told him the same story, that they must expect no assistance from Canada and that it would be for their own good to go back to their country.

Sitting Bull knew he was talking matters of life and death. He thought over his position carefully and then began a lengthy and proud speech:

. . . Col. Irvine came from Fort Walsh and said the Queen wants you to go home. Our Mother, the Queen, says whenever you go, shake hands with the white man. I was going back, and when I was over the line, I was fired at. . . .

I told Col. Irvine and Capt. Crozier I want to get an answer from Major Walsh. I said, "What is the reason you are in such a hurry to send me across the line, what is the reason? This is my country here. . . . You were born across the water. I thought you had come here to make money and to feed those who are hungry. How is it you are in such a hurry to push me aside?"

The Great Spirit who made me made all upon this earth, and made us that we live on buffalo meat. He did not make us to live on the half-breeds and white man. This is the first time I have asked for assistance. I shake hands with the white man on this side, and I feel safe. I shake hands with the Americans, and I am afraid of them. I told Capt. Crozier no one has harmed me since I came on this side.

Look at those people sitting here. Some of them are sons of great chiefs; I am no chief, but when we come to run buffalo, I am counted a head man. I know the reason why all of you want me to go back to my country. My carcass is nothing but gold. They would give a good deal for my carcass."

But despite the eloquence of those who addressed him, Dewdney was having no second doubts about his mission. He told them that the best he could do was to give them provisions for the journey if they decided to return to the United States.

The next day, they returned for what was to be their last official meeting with the Canadian government. Canadians should well remember the date—May 26, 1881—for that was their last opportunity for Canada to welcome a great man and a great people. Sitting Bull gathered his followers, and addressed the Commissioner, the representative of the Queen:

Look at these men sitting here . . . the names of these with me are Mad Buffalo, One-The-Sky-Shines-On, Wicked Thunder, Frog Dog, Sky-Fire, Long Eyes, Wachapi, Lightning-Thunder.

Those who are sitting at the back are my soldiers. Those whom I have along are brave men. I depend on them.

That is why they always go with me wherever I go. This is Iron Star, the Buffalo, One-Who-Holds-The-Iron-Feather, the Fire Shield, Red-Useless Buffalo, Nervous Man.

And this is my child. This is the first time I have taken him with me. His name is Crowfoot. I wish this boy to grow up to be like these men. The child says to you:

"Now, Father, look into this,  
and see that I live up to this today.  
Find out where I may live a long time"

That is what my son says to you. Look at me! I beg of you, look up to the heavens and down to the earth, and see how I am to get along. It is, I suppose, from the sky above and the earth below me that I am going to live by.

The Great Spirit told me that I had to live, and I didn't want to put aside what he told me.

Then Wachapi spoke:

Let us put our minds together, and see how we are going to make our children live. . . .

Dewdney still held to the government line. As he reported:

I told them I had been sent to make a distinct proposition to them on behalf of the Government. They knew what that was, and I was prepared to carry out my part of it, and if they did not accept the offer made them, they would receive no assistance whatsoever in the way of provisions or land.

Shortly they will have berries, which will keep them alive till winter, when they will have to decide between starvation or surrendering. . . .

Completely disillusioned, a saddened Sitting Bull drifted back to the Wood Mountain to confer with his people, and decided at last to give in, to surrender.

On July 13, he left Wood Mountain, headed for Fort Buford.

Canada had won out. The United States had won out. Sitting Bull had lost.

Or perhaps, they all had lost.

#### EPILOGUE

Sitting Bull and his immediate followers were imprisoned at Fort Randall for the next two years.

His people had been dispersed to Cheyenne River,

to Pine Ridge, to Rosebud. Sitting Bull himself ended up at Standing Rock, where with his family he lived in a small log cabin on the Grand River.

He carried on a running feud with the agent, who described him as:

. . . crafty, avaricious, mendacious, and ambitious. I never knew him to display a single trait that might command admiration or respect.

When the Ghost Dance excitement hit his agency, the agent was determined to get Sitting Bull under arrest and out of the way. On a pretext, he sent word for Sitting Bull to present himself at the agency. When he didn't show, the agent sent soldiers, Indians employed by the government, to fetch him.

They found him sleeping on the floor of his home. Awakened, he asked and got time to dress. A crowd of Sioux gathered outside his door, and when the soldiers started to ride off with Sitting Bull, a fight ensued.

Sitting Bull and four other Indians, and seven of the police were killed. The cavalry came up just in time to prevent the annihilation of the police.

It was December 15, 1890.

President Benjamin Harrison said he was glad that the pest had been killed.

The Indian Agent promised recognition by the government of the US for the services of the policemen as "richly deserved".

#### POSTSCRIPT

After Sitting Bull was killed, one of the soldiers spied a light movement in a pile of blankets in his cabin. It was Crowfoot, his son, then seventeen years old, the lad who had stood next to his father at the meeting at Fort Qu'Appelle.

One of the men struck the boy a staggering blow, sending him reeling across the room and out the door. There, as he lay dazed on the ground, two more policemen pumped bullets into him. Tears streaming down their cheeks, they killed Crowfoot.

The last dream of Sitting Bull was dead.



# THOREAU on slavery, economy & alienation

by BOB DICKENS

IN DISCUSSING HOUSING—in particular, his own dwelling—Thoreau claims that, "Economy is a matter which admits of being treated with levity, but it cannot so be disposed of." In part, he is simply claiming that economy is a serious subject. His interpreters have not seen this as clearly. Nevertheless, the first chapter, "Economy", of WALDEN is not merely the longest, it is the most important. Its title is not an arbitrary one. It indicates that Thoreau was concerned with economy as the root of any person's existence. His choice of housing as an example was quite deliberate. Thoreau was attempting to get at the roots of economic problems at the beginning of industrialization in America by dealing with *where* people live.

For Thoreau, these economic problems center around various forms of slavery and "quiet desperation" or alienation. This is what the first chapter of WALDEN is all about. Thoreau attempts no cure, but he provides a diagnosis. The keys to his thinking here are his ideas about: (1) alienation of the individual as producer, (2) alienation of the individual as consumer, and (3) the relation of industrialization and capitalism to alienation.

## **Alienation**

One of the bases of Thoreau's thinking about the alienation of the worker from his own product (both as producer and as consumer) occurs fairly early in "Economy":

I cannot believe that our factory system is the best mode by which men may get clothing. The condition of the operatives is becoming every day more like that of the English; and it cannot be wondered at, since, as far as I have heard or observed, the principal object is, not that mankind may be well and honestly clad, but, unquestionably, that the corporations may be enriched.

Here Thoreau was concerned about the producer as well as the quality of his product. At the root, he claims that the profit motive destroys any possibility of production for need and use. He was concerned

with economy as frugality and simplicity, but here he is claiming that the political economy is the root problem, and that as long as the political economy is based on the enrichment of corporations, simplicity, frugality and any other human value will be, or become, impossible.

The profit motive may be the key to capitalism (and for Thoreau, the roots of our social problems), but its ramifications are so broad as to make the derivative social structures have, what frequently is, a dynamic of their own. For example, division of labor is necessary for industrial growth and efficiency. It also further alienates workers from their products, and when carried to extremes means that a person does almost nothing productive for himself. He will eventually even leave his thinking to some specialist as Thoreau points out in the following passage:

Where is this division of labor to end? and what object does it finally serve? No doubt another may also think for me; but it is not therefore desirable that he should do so to the exclusion of my thinking for myself.

This division of labor is not only the case in industry, it is also a guiding principle in the organization of colleges.

The mode of founding a college is, commonly, to get up a subscription of dollars and cents, and then following blindly the principles of a division of labor to its extreme. . . .

This does not mean that Thoreau is simply talking about the intellectual labor of "professionals". He suggests that students ought to be involved in laying the foundations of a University (both intellectually and physically). He goes on to say that,

The student who secures his covered leisure and retirement by systematically shirking any labor necessary to man obtains but an ignoble and unprofitable leisure, defrauding himself of the experience which alone can make leisure fruitful.

This is why Thoreau could look back favorably on the life of the Indian. He was not in a simplistic way asking that we all become so-called primitives. Rather,

he is asking whether there isn't some way whereby we can regain the control over our own lives which Indians demonstrated at one time.

The very simplicity and nakedness of man's life in the primitive ages imply this advantage at least, that they left him still but a sojourner in nature. When he was refreshed with food and sleep he contemplated his journey again. He dwelt, as it were, in a tent in this world, and was either threading the valleys, or crossing the plains, or climbing the mountain tops. But lo! men have become the tools of their tools.

We are the tools of our tools, we are also products as well as producers. The word "commodity" refers to useful things, it also refers to articles of trade (which may have no use). Thoreau is aware of the fact that the worker not only produces commodities, he is one. He, as a person, is of no value to a corporation, it is his labor that is valuable.

Contrast the physical condition of the Irish with that of the North American Indian, or the South Sea Islander, or any other savage race before it was degraded by contact with the civilized man. Yet I have no doubt that that peoples' rulers are as wise as the average of civilized rulers. Their condition only proves that squalidness may consist with civilization. I hardly need refer now to the laborers in our Southern States who produce the staple exports of this country, and are themselves a staple production of the South.

The laborer is alienated and exploited. Thoreau was clear in seeing that the working class and the poor in general are only poor because the economy means that a few gain from the work of many.

But how do the poor minority fare? Perhaps it will be found that just in proportion as some have been placed in outward circumstances above the Savage, others have been degraded below him. The luxury of one class is counterbalanced by the indigence of another. On the one side is the palace, on the other are the almshouse and "silent poor".

Under these conditions it becomes ridiculous to talk about a man working at what he loves to do (as Thoreau does in "Life Without Principle"). Working out of love for one's work is a luxury reserved for a small elite. Specifically, it is reserved for a small, educated, very individualistic elite of which Thoreau was a part. Thus Thoreau disclaims simplicity as the only motive for going to Walden Pond. Rather, he claims that his desire "to transact some *private* business" is his major motive. That is, he was doing what is frequently known now as "getting his shit together". More importantly, however, he was getting out from the institutions which kept him from doing the writing he wanted to do. He had little tolerance for institutions.

If it is asserted that civilization is a real advance in the condition of man,—and I think that it is, though only the wise improve their advantages,—it must be shown that it has produced better dwellings without making them more costly; and the cost of a thing is the amount of what I call life which is required to be exchanged for it, immediately or in the long run.

This did not mean, however, that he was simply looking back to a more romantic past or forward to a utopia.

Leo Marx is one of the few writers to have called attention to any of this.

This reaffirmation of the pastoral ideal is not at all like

Emerson's prophecy, in "The Young American", of a time "when the whole land is a garden, and the people have grown up in bowers of a paradise". By comparison, the findings of the Walden experiment seem the work of a tough, unillusioned empiricist. They are consistent with Thoreau's unsparing analysis of the Concord "economy" and with the knowledge that industrial progress is making nonsense of the popular notion of a "pastoral life". . . . In WALDEN Thoreau is clear, as Emerson seldom was, about the location of meaning and value. He is saying that it does not reside in the natural facts or in social institutions or in anything "out there", but in consciousness. It is a product of imaginative perception. . . .

This gives the impression that the source of "imaginative perception" was consciousness. Unlike Emerson, Thoreau never even suggested this. It was not social institutions or natural fact, but it was, for him, the Natural Fact—God in Nature. Thoreau was more of a metaphysician than Leo Marx recognized, and more than I think he needed to be. He affirmed both imagination (and its source ultimately in God) and physical nature. The tension between the two combined with his distaste for society produced an antipathy to industrialization and the social institutions related to it, even though he was not so stupid as to fail to recognize the power of those institutions. He opposed the rigidity of the institutions which industrialization and civilization produced. He frequently declared his independence of them. Nevertheless, he was not in opposition to civilization or industrialization *per se*. Rather, he looked for the day when man could control the institutions of "civilization" rather than *vice versa*.

It may be guessed that I reduce almost the whole advantage of holding this superfluous property as a fund in store against the future, so far as the individual is concerned, mainly to the defraying of funeral expenses. But perhaps a man is not required to bury himself. Nevertheless this points to an important distinction between the civilized man and the savage; and, no doubt, they have designs on us for our benefit, in making the life of a civilized people an institution, in which the life of the individual is to a great extent absorbed, in order to preserve and perfect that of the race.

Some problems which faced Thoreau after his experience at Walden Pond, and after he had come to the sort of limited peace with industrialization suggested above, are outlined by Leo Stoller in the following terms:

First, it (the limited peace) required a solution of the problem which Thoreau had avoided when he washed his hands of slavery: how to achieve that union with political expediency which will gain popular support for political principle. Second, it demanded that he give up the no-organizationist's reliance on spontaneous parallel individual actions and learn to participate in reform and political organization.

Thoreau could not make these two changes. A major reason was his individualism, and his inability to think in communal terms. But more important, the formulation of these changes indicates that Stoller misreads Thoreau by making at least three erroneous assumptions. First, he seems to assume that Thoreau had "washed his hands of slavery", and this assumption is proven false not only by Thoreau's writings, but by

his open defense of John Brown and his periodic physical involvement with the underground railway. Second, Stoller seems to assume that "political expediency" (which truly would have been repugnant to Thoreau) is a necessary ingredient in gaining popular support, thereby ignoring Thoreau's role as radical prophet and further ignoring the possible effect (even if latent) of Thoreau's writings. Third, Stoller assumes that Thoreau was a reformer in some sense. The evidence would seem to suggest that Thoreau was a radical who was critical of any compromising reforms. Indeed, if Thoreau had not been so uncompromising, his individualism could be written off as mere perversity rather than having to be attacked as tactically wrong. Thoreau did have a "no-organizationist" bias and this was a factor in his individualism but it may also have been a reason why he could not accept political compromises.

#### Against Institutions

Thoreau was opposed to the institutionalization of American life because he wanted to preserve individuality. Unfortunately, most of the time, too much of one's life and labor is required to do this, and the individual gets too crushed by many layers of power to fight back. At that point, one is not only alienated as a producer, but is further alienated as a consumer (and of course is reduced to a feeling of further powerlessness).

When I consider how our houses are built and paid for, or not paid for, and their internal economy managed and sustained, I wonder that the floor does not give way under the visitor while he is admiring the geegaws upon the mantelpiece, and let him through into the cellar, to some solid and honest though earthy foundations.

It is not hard to predict what Thoreau would say today if he saw the tremendous effort to get people to consume unfunctional, aesthetically atrocious items which are somehow raised almost to the status of necessities by a new industry (advertising) having the purpose of encouraging useless consumption. Thus, Thoreau is opposed to those impracticalities made in the interest of profit (disguised as needs) but which have no function beyond that. They are too often "improved means to an unimproved end".

The devil goes on exacting compound interest to the last for his early share and numerous succeeding investments in them.

Thoreau is concerned that we might become the property of our property. With respect to housing he claims that,

... when the farmer has got his house, he may not be the richer but the poorer for it, and it be the house that has got him.

Part of the reason for this is simply that he probably doesn't own it. He inherited it with its debts ("encumbrances" in Thoreau's terms) or buys it with a mortgage ("hired money").

On applying to the assessors, I am surprised to learn that they cannot at once name a dozen in the town who own their farms free and clear. . . . The man who has actually paid for his farm with labor on it is so rare that every neighbor can point to him.

For Thoreau, however, land is not the only form

of property. He was more subtle in his idea of property than most writers of his time. Money is also property and so are people under some circumstances. He suggests here, however, a labor theory of value, though it is unargued. The point is that even as a so-called property owner, one may be further alienated since one's labor may be unrelated to one's property.

The merchant is also dealing in property. The situation here is worse than with farmers. Thoreau claims that, at the time, ninety-seven percent of merchants fail in business. He also claims that because they are not hard-bitten enough, they do not have the appropriate moral character. In other words, they are too honest to survive in a competitive, profit-orientated economy.

But this puts an infinitely worse face on the matter, and suggests, besides, that probably not even the other three succeed in saving their souls, but are perchance bankrupt in a worse sense than they who fail honestly.

This leaves the business man to the illusion of Adam Smith's "invisible hand". He may feel guilty about being bankrupt in a moral sense so he is led "as if by an invisible hand", to help the "less fortunate". Thoreau calls this helping "philanthropy".

Philanthropy is almost the only virtue which is sufficiently appreciated by mankind. Nay, it is greatly overrated; and it is our selfishness which overrates it.

One might well ask whether a system requiring the "invisible hand" of philanthropy is really a rational system, and Thoreau seems to be asking this question quite directly.

I speak for the slave when I say that I prefer the philanthropy of Captain Brown to that philanthropy which neither shoots nor liberates me.

He asks it in many ways and forms, and it all could be based on the economic concerns and critical insights presented in "Economy". But Thoreau seemed to prefer to ground most of his social and political writing in intuition (and hence in his theory of Nature), rather than work out a thorough economic critique. I believe



this was unfortunate; nevertheless, for a full understanding of Thoreau's social and political philosophy one must turn to his essays rather than to his brief but important excursion into economics. He never fully gets away from economics, but in no other place does he pack as many economic insights into as few pages.

The basic problems he dealt with still exist. The problems were slavery (now in other forms than the very obvious one he frequently dealt with) and Imperialistic wars (e.g. The Mexican War). He never lost sight of the original base of the problem. For him the roots were to be found in alienation. In the last essay he prepared for publication, "Life Without Principle", he begins with this theme in a couple of different forms. One is his own situation when asked to give a lecture:

A man once came a considerable distance to ask me to lecture on Slavery; but on conversing with him, I found that he and his clique expected seven-eighths of the lecture to be theirs, and only one-eighth mine; so I declined.

He is, of course, justifying his own very personal, critical style for the article, but he is also speaking of his refusal to perform alienated labor. They wanted, not him as a person, but a certain amount of his "labor power" (Karl Marx's phrase). He was determined that he would "give them a strong dose of myself".

### Slavery

He returns also to the theme of alienated labor in general. For example,

Most men would feel insulted if it were proposed to employ them in throwing stones over a wall, and then in throwing them back, merely that they might earn their wages. But many are no more worthily employed now.

One could get the impression from this that Thoreau is blaming the laborer for his alienated state, but he recognizes that the matter is not so simple.

When I observed that there are different ways of surveying, my employer commonly asks which will give him the most land, not which is most correct.

The profit motive is present again, and it corrupts the laborer as well as his employer. Slavery is a perfect example of this and Thoreau dealt with the subject in a number of essays. Some of what he said on slavery has become famous. I want to deal with some of his less famous (perhaps infamous, since being infamous is sometimes a value) statements.

Very early in "Economy" Thoreau makes the following comment:

I sometimes wonder that we can be so frivolous, I may almost say, as to attend to the gross but somewhat foreign form of servitude called Negro Slavery, there are so many keen and subtle masters that enslave both north and south. It is hard to have a southern overseer; it is worse to have a northern one; but worst of all when you are a slave-driver of yourself.

He is saying: look, the problem is right here staring us in the face. We are all slaves. "Negro Slavery" is simply a blatant, open form of slavery (alienation) from which we all suffer—particularly if we become "masters" by supporting a system which makes any form of slavery legal. He is also dealing with a theme to which he was to return in "Slavery in Massachusetts". If there are slaves in Massachusetts then the people in

Massachusetts should free them rather than being concerned so much with areas far removed from them (e.g. why not deal with hunger in America and then be concerned with Biafra, rather than let the condition exist under our own noses and deal with another one farther away). So Thoreau devotes the first paragraph of "Slavery in Massachusetts" to a description of a meeting in which Nebraska is discussed.

. . . but though several of the citizens of Massachusetts are now in prison for attempting to rescue a slave from her own clutches, not one of the speakers at that meeting expressed regret for it, not one even referred to it.

The next paragraph is a scathing attack on those we might now call professional liberals, those who refuse to seek radical solutions, who do not get to the roots of any problem,

They who have been bred in the school of politics fail now and always to face the facts. Their measures are half measures and makeshifts merely. They put off the day of settlements indefinitely, and meanwhile the debt accumulates. . . . The fact which the politician faces is merely that there is less honor among thieves than was supposed, and not the fact that they are thieves.

Then he returns to the question of alienation, now in a new form. Slavery is degrading. This is not new, so were labor conditions of that time (and now), so were the conditions of seamen in the Navy, so were many human relationships. But slavery is more than degrading, it is treating a person like a thing. Persons become commodities (not just their labor, but their entire life becomes a commodity) just like a sausage is a commodity.

Much has been said about American slavery, but I think that we do not even yet realize what slavery is. If I were seriously to propose to Congress to make mankind into sausages, I have no doubt that most of the members would smile at my proposition, and if any believed me to be in earnest, they would think that I proposed something much worse than Congress had ever done. But if any of them will tell me that to make a man into a sausage would be much worse,—would be worse,—than to make him into a slave, than it was to enact the Fugitive Slave Law,—I will accuse him of foolishness, of intellectual incapacity, of making a distinction without a difference.

### John Brown

This solution is some sort of revolution. That is, he argues that Massachusetts should cease to support slavery, and that until it does men should cease to regard themselves as citizens of Massachusetts. The last is a revolutionary step, though it is not a revolution immediately. So too, John Brown did not produce a revolution at Harper's Ferry (though he did help precipitate the Civil War), though his act was a revolutionary one (even if it suffered from poor planning). Thoreau was aware of the revolutionary nature of the raid and he should have quieted all attempts to call him an absolutist pacifist by defending John Brown in three speeches. He could only react with contempt to the lack of respect for John Brown that he found in his neighbors.

When a noble deed is done, who is likely to appreciate it? They who are noble themselves. I was not surprised that certain of my neighbors spoke of John Brown as an ordinary felon, for who are they? They have neither

flesh, or much office, or much coarseness of some kind. Thoreau's own elitism is partially responsible for the tone of this statement, but so is his respect for John Brown and for his "noble deed". He regards Brown as the true "emancipator".

He has liberated many thousands of slaves, both North and South. They seem to have known nothing about living or dying for a principle. They all called him crazy then; who calls him crazy now?

Brown did not liberate anyone with a proclamation. Physically, he liberated few people. Thoreau is talking here about mental liberation. He is suggesting that many were freed spiritually by Brown's example (and this process may still be going on). But there is a curiosity in Thoreau's last sentence. He seems to have thought it a rhetorical question, but it was not rhetorical and historians still debate it. Nevertheless, it is crucial to Thoreau because Thoreau's defense of Brown depends on his analysis of him as being

... like the best of those who stood at Concord Bridge once, on Lexington Common, and on Bunker Hill, only he was firmer and higher principled than any that I have chanced to hear of as there.

Thoreau is defending Brown as a noble revolutionary and pointing to the revolutionary base of our own culture. He is not one who failed to see the logic of his own thoughts on civil disobedience. Even the abolitionists (excepting Parker and Philips) turned on Brown. As Thoreau points out:

Even the *Liberator* called it a "misguided, wild, and apparently insane—effort."

The *Liberator* is the paper of W. L. Garrison, who was one of the most famous abolitionists. But Thoreau saw the value of his arguments more clearly. He knew that

All men recognize the right of revolution; that is, the right to refuse allegiance to, and to resist, the government, when its tyranny or its inefficiency are great and unendurable.

He did not expect the Judges of American courts to make a just decision since they could only make a legal one.

In "Slavery in Massachusetts" he claimed:

I am sorry to say that I doubt if there is a judge in Massachusetts who is prepared to resign his office, and get his living innocently, whenever, it is required of him to pass sentence under a law which is merely contrary to the law of God. I am compelled to see that they put themselves, or rather are by character, in this respect, exactly on a level with the marine who discharges his musket in any direction he is ordered to. They are just as much tools, and as little men. Certainly, they are not the more to be respected, because their master enslaves their understandings and consciences, instead of their bodies.

They have decided to let someone else do their thinking as Thoreau warned in "Economy". So Thoreau's defense of Brown is not a legal one, it is a moral defense. Nor was his defense an ordinary "political" defense (e.g. one in which you defend a member of your political party at any cost). As Stoller points out:

Thoreau's "Plea for Captain John Brown" is still, on the level of doctrine, the statement of a thinker who is outside parties and organizations and who has no grasp of the impulses that govern politics in men built differently than himself. He is still a disunionist, taking exception to Brown's "respect for the Constitution and his faith in the

— permanence" of the union between the states, he still derides politics and he still measures political acts only with the ruler of principle, careless of consequences.

But Thoreau is not quite so politically naive as Stoller claims, nor was he "careless of consequences". He saw, as few did in his time or ours, that politics would have to be a-political (that is, outside of "normal channels") in order to have the desired consequences of getting rid of slavery. He was not a reformer and he was not a bomb thrower or fighter (though he saw the latter two as possibilities). He was a revolutionist in his own peculiar way and with little naivete involved.

Thoreau was trying by such a defense to reach the people who Brown thought he was fighting for (North and South). He had hoped in vain that the American people would rise to defend John Brown. It was a vain hope, but though Thoreau's individualism was strong, it did not lead him to contempt for people.

I would much rather trust to the sentiment of the people. In their vote you would get something of some value, at least, however small; but in the other case, only trammelled judgement of an individual, of no significance, be it which way it might.

On the other hand, Alfred Kazin claims that:

Brown's raid was exactly the kind of mad, wild, desperate, and headlong attack on the authority of the United States, on the support it gave to the slave system, that Thoreau's ecstatic individualism sympathized with.

But Thoreau's individualism was not sufficiently great to override his very rational imagination. He claimed that:

The society is mad and proves it by objecting to John Brown while condoning all kinds of violence on even the most petty level. We preserve the so-called peace of our community by deeds of petty violence every day. Look at the policeman's billy and handcuffs! Look at the gallows! Look at the chaplain of the regiment! We are hoping only to live safely on the outskirts of *this* provisional army.

In a historical context, Thoreau felt that he was defending a man who was, at worst, not hypocritical. He was defending a man who would act in a straightforward, uncompromising way, who understood that:

If I have unjustly wrested a plank from a drowning man, I must restore it to him though I drown myself.

He would also apply this to Slavery and imperialism: This people must cease to hold slaves, and to make war on Mexico, though it cost them their existence as a people.

His individualism was partly temperamental, partly due to his extremely idealistic ideas of community, but it was never the "rugged individualism" of capitalism, and he was never a seeker of power or leadership. He felt that Brown was doing his thing without concern for his power, and this was one of the things Thoreau found noble. He did not feel he was defending a madman. He felt that he was defending a noble human being who understood what Thoreau meant in reminding his

countrymen that they are to be men first, and Americans only at a late and convenient hour.

#### Forms of Servitude

Thoreau, at least, knew that the enemy was not ultimately in the South, and in dealing with the war in Mexico (1854) he saw the same enemy there as in



the question of slavery.

Practically speaking, the opponents to a reform in Massachusetts are not a hundred thousand politicians at the South, but a hundred thousand merchants and farmers here, who are more interested in commerce and agriculture than they are in humanity, and are not prepared to do justice to the slave and to Mexico, cost what it may. I quarrel not with far-off foes, but with those who, near at home, cooperate with, and do the bidding of, those far away, and without whom the latter would be harmless. He also anticipated the argument that we have colonialized Black people and that decolonialization is revolutionary.

All machines have their friction; and possibly this does enough good to counterbalance the evil. . . . But when the friction comes to have its machine, and oppression and robbery are organized, I say, let us not have such a machine any longer. In other words, when a sixth of the population of a nation which has undertaken to be the refuge of liberty are slaves, and a whole country is unjustly overrun and conquered by a foreign army, and subjected to military law, I think that it is not too soon for honest men to rebel and revolutionize. What makes this duty the more urgent is the fact that the country so overrun is not our own, but ours is the invading army.

Colonialization, Imperialism, and Slavery are separate parts of the same phenomenon. They may, and often do, have a dynamic of their own in specific cultures (e.g. slavery is a form of racism, and racism in the United States has its own characteristics and is not simply reducible to imperialism or class struggle). Nevertheless, there is an interrelation, and Thoreau was aware of it. This has made it possible for anti-Vietnam groups to reprint the essay on "Civil Disobedience" with a few minor word changes (principally substituting "Vietnam War" for "war in Mexico") and use it as an anti-war pamphlet, and for civil rights group to do the same sort of thing. For Thoreau, the Mexican War was not one which the American people desired, it was a war fought for the benefit of a few.

Witness the present Mexican War, the work of comparatively a few individuals using the standing government as their tool; for, in the outset, the people would not have consented to this measure.

The few are the establishment of Thoreau's time and of ours. They are the ruling class and the State is the ruling class and its tools. Further, this is dialectically related to a nation's ability to use conscription. Conscription is the State's final and most crushing way of alienating labor. It is its admission that it cannot find soldiers committed to it, and therefore must hire slaves at great advertising expense. It is not only conscription which is at issue here. Thoreau is concerned with the question "What is the price-current of an honest man patriot today". He is concerned that patriotism and related things like being a soldier because of some patriotic duty, are merely things the State buys (at a low price) to bolster up its illegitimacy. Perhaps the reason is that,

when war too, like commerce and husbandry gets to be a routine, and men go about it as indented apprentices, the hero degenerates into a marine, and the standing army into a standing jest.

Wars may be fought for any number of reasons (at least, many reasons may be given), but they are popular

under few conditions. The major sort of popular war is revolutionary war. A revolutionary war cannot be won if the people are not in support of it (or if it is won, it will not be revolutionary). Thoreau showed some sensitivity to this in one of his first entries in his Journal.

"Men claim for the ideal an actual existence also, but do not often expand the actual into the ideal."

### Individualistic Anarchism

Full scale social revolution could never be his theme since his individualism forced him into the position of "one man revolution". This is why "Civil Disobedience" was so important to him. It was both philosophical and technical, and it could be completely individualistic (though it need not be). Kazin claims that:

. . . It is impossible to imagine the most passionately anti-Vietnam writer saying today that in face of such evil, "I need not say what match I would touch, what system endeavor to blow up!: We have all lived too long with violence to be persuaded by the violence of language."

But Kazin missed the point, mainly because he does not quote the entire passage. The whole sentence reads as follows:

Rather than do thus, I need not say what match I would touch, what system endeavor to blow up: but as I love my life, I would side with the light, and let the dark earth roll from under me, calling my mother and my brother to follow.

Thoreau is making a hypothetical, comparative judgement that it would be better to lead a violent rebellion (as Brown did later) than use voting as one's only reaction to a state which oppresses one's brothers and sisters. He is attacking the slowness of going through "normal channels" (as it is now popularly called). Actually, the criticism of this passage should be directed at the last part of it. Thoreau could not call on his brother (except literally, i.e., meaning his brother John who died in 1842) since his own individualism too often forced him into a position of one man revolution. Thoreau is an anarchist, an individualist anarchist (as most anarchists were at his time). But he often carries the individualism part so far as to make social or communal forms of anarchism impossible. This is the point where Thoreau and Marx are from opposing traditions. As a revolutionary, Thoreau could only opt for one-man revolution even to the extent that this became akin to hero worship.

The bravest deed, which for the most part is left quite out of history, which alone wants the staleness of a deed done and the uncertainty of a deed doing, is the life of a great man.

Though heroes can be John Brown's, by Thoreau's own admission sometimes "the hero degenerates into a marine".

Thoreau's anarchism was a desperate attempt to counter the alienation of a society beginning the Industrial Revolution.

But it is not the less necessary for this; for the people must have some complicated machinery or other, and hear its din, to satisfy that idea of government which they have. Men are not ready for individuality (not the same as individualism in that individualism is not consistent with community, individuality must be the result of

community). It may be that:

... government is an expedient by which men would fain succeed in letting one another alone; ...

Nevertheless, this is closer to Adam Smith than to most socialists, and Thoreau can be quite simplistic about this.

Let every man make known what kind of government would command his respect, and that will be one step toward obtaining it.

Still, Thoreau is not an anarchist for no reason. He believes in one man revolution. He is calling for acts of rebellion, of resistance and non-cooperation. Ironically,

The soldier is applauded who refuses to serve in an unjust war by those who do not refuse to sustain the unjust government which makes the war;

Thus, Thoreau argues that:

It is not a man's duty as a matter of course, to devote himself to the eradication of any even the most enormous wrong; he may still properly have other concerns to engage him; but it is his duty, at least, to wash his hands of it, and, if he gives it no thought longer, not to give it practically his support.

But Thoreau is not quite willing to leave things at the stage of washing his hands of the government (his individualistic anarchism), he wants people to go further (civil disobedience). So, he asks what is for him a rhetorical question:

Unjust laws exist: shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavor to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once?

However, just as the question is rhetorical (he has clearly led one to the point of arguing for the last alternate), the "we" is a disguise (rare for Thoreau) for the "I". He is really justifying his own life of Civil Disobedience (minor as it may have been except that he wrote about it) on the grounds that you should "let your life be a counterfriction to stop the machine".

### Civil Disobedience

So anarchism is tied to individualism and both to Civil Disobedience. He is uncompromising in his demands for non-cooperation as a part of Civil Disobedience. The following passages are separated by an interesting paragraph, and I quote this in reverse order, but they actually make a good argument for individual non-cooperation.

Under a government which imprisons and unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison.

I do not hesitate to say, that those who call themselves Abolitionists should at once effectually withdraw their support, both in person and property, from the government of Massachusetts, and not wait till they constitute a majority of one, before they suffer the right to prevail through them.

In fact Civil Disobedience and Anarchism cannot be separated in Thoreau's thought. He had no illusions about anarchism as an *immediate* possibility.

But to speak practically and as a citizen, unlike those who call themselves no-government men, I ask for, not at once no government, but at once a better government.

He had no illusions about Utopias. He persists in his dreams, however. For if one does not dream, one has no idea of where to go. No majority can deter-

mine the value of these dreams, for only freemen with vision can deal with dreams, and for most men,

... there is no free exercise whatever of the judgment or of the moral sense; but they put themselves on a level with wood and earth and stones; and wooden men can perhaps be manufactured that will serve the purpose as well.

Neither can the law be depended on, because it depends on the majority and their obedience.

Law never made men a whit more just; and, by means of their respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice.

In other words, Thoreau could see no morally compelling reason for obeying any law just because it is a law. He was profoundly heretical by intention. His vision was of a world of free individuals, each of whom did what he or she thought was right, and where "the only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think is right". Thoreau was claiming that people have a right, *and an obligation*, to regain control over their own lives. Human dignity was an ultimate value for him. This was his reaction to a society bent on destroying all individuality.

Hence, civil disobedience (including non-cooperation) was his philosophy. It may need to be reworked in a post-scarcity, increasingly automated society, but it cannot be called irrelevant. An example of his relevance is found in an essay by Robert F. Williams:

Henry David Thoreau is idealized as an apostle of non-violence, the writer who influenced Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr. But Thoreau was not dogmatic; his eyes were open and he saw clearly. I keep with me a copy of Thoreau's "Plea for Captain John Brown". There are truths that are just as evident in 1962 as they were in 1859.

But Thoreau states his own relevance best. In his College essay "The Service" he strikes a note which stayed with him:

Of such sort, then, be our crusade,—which, while it inclines chiefly to the hearty goodwill and activity of war, rather than the insincerity and sloth of peace, will set an example to both of calmness and energy;—as unconcerned for victory as careless of defeat,—not asking to lengthen our term of service, nor cut it short by a reprieve,—but earnestly applying ourselves to the campaign before us. Nor let our warfare be a boorish and uncourteous one, but a higher courtesy attend its high chivalry,—though not to the slackening of its tougher duties and severer discipline. That is our camp may be a battlefield, wherever the dormant energies and affections of men may tug and wrestle, not to their discomfiture, but to their mutual exercise and development.

There is no individualism here; rather, there is a tough minded blending of individuality and responsibility to a group. Many radicals (many of whom call themselves anarchists) have learned little about "tougher duties and severer discipline", and could learn a lot about the tug and wrestle part of dealing with ideas. Thoreau was an individualist, but he was not undisciplined and he never gave up on his vision of a community of free persons. Maybe he is more relevant today than in 1836 when he wrote "The Service". Certainly, he is no less relevant.

# ABOUT MALATESTA

by DAVID WIECK

Looked at objectively, the activities and hopes of the few thousand anarchists scattered over the globe are ludicrous or pathetic in their pretension, or else simply irrelevant. These few thousands - over against a world-wide array of well-organized power! Consider, however, an interesting historical conjunction.

In the youthful New York anarchist milieu of the middle and late 1940's and early 1950's, certain ideas came to be generally accepted, some of them after prolonged and even acrimonious discussions. Brief identification of these common themes will blur certain issues but not (I hope) misleadingly. Thus: political and economic decentralism; critique of institutional bureaucracies; critique of leadership-concepts (nowadays one would say: anti-elitism); critique of the concept of an organized "movement" and stress on temporary functional groupings (nowadays: "ad hoc", "conspiracies"); liberation and equality of women and of children; communistic economic ideals (on the whole: but questioning); personalist individualism; "the movement" (anarchist) as a kind of community; direct action, inventively non-violent if possible; draft resistance and anti-militarism; opposition to the Cold War and Korean War (and to the Second World War previously) as, on both sides, struggles for imperial power; a critical attitude toward romantic ideas of revolution; anarchism regarded as a general orientation, philosophy of life and action, first of all of an individual's life, rather than as a set ideology; critique of Marxist (and anarcho-sindicalist) ideas of "the working class"; and of course anti-Statism, critique of bourgeois values and way of life, anti-Stalinism and anti-Leninism, emphasis on black emancipation, etc. Nowhere outside the anarchist milieu could one find anything resembling this constellation of ideas. To

an astonishing degree - and this is my point, the "conjunction" - very many of these ideas are to be found in the contemporary consciousness of American white radical youth. We might ask what this means (1).

Not much of a claim of historical influence can be made, although the anarchist milieu of New York, and of San Francisco of the time, undoubtedly affected the evolution of radical pacifism, and although Paul Goodman eventually came to be widely read. There is of course no harm in supposing that strong ideas may acquire a certain life of their own, and the ideas mentioned did in fact have strong foundations. First of all, they had foundation in an acute sense of social and existential realities. Second, in some good theory: the psychology of Freud and Reich; the sociology of Veblen, Weber, Durkheim, and Myrdal; the economics of Borsodi; the anthropology of Mead and Malinowski and also of Kropotkin; the educational ideas of Neill; the community concepts of the Goodmans; the anarchist theories of power and bureaucracy, which constituted the basis of a theory of history; the anarchist interpretation of the Russian and Spanish Revolutions, and Randolph Bourne's interpretation of the American Revolution and American State. And third, in critical attachment to the traditional values of anarchism (especially as expressed by Godwin, Kropotkin, and Malatesta), conceived as essentially continuous with the great value-traditions of mankind.

Still, if we wish to account for the contemporary radical consciousness we have to speak mainly of the great disillusionment with American democracy consequent upon the latest war, the racial conflicts, the "discovery" of poverty in a nation which pretended to be middle-class, the manifest uncontrollability of the war-making State, and also of the psychological trauma of a

(1) The ideas of what I have called "the New York anarchist milieu" found expression in the review *Resistance* (called, in the first half of its dozen-year existence, *Why?*), which in turn reflected the well-attended weekly discussions at the SIA hall (of the Spanish anarchists) on lower Broadway. In the spiritual desert of the mid-fifties these activities lost their momentum and ceased.

many-rooted sense of alienation. (We might speak too of how the rediscovery of "early Marx" has tended to rehabilitate later-Marx and to force spontaneously libertarian thoughts into a Marxist framework.) So we should claim no more, perhaps, than that a strong liberatory idea like anarchism - essentially negational, in a more profound sense than Marcuse's - can be a base for insights and anticipations, surely not wasted (2).

I have (without doubt) implicitly exaggerated the convergence, the "anticipations", and now there are negative signs in the "contemporary consciousness" - the revival of Marxist ideology, the sectarianizing of "the movement", the widespread sense of failure and defeat and loss of elan, the isolation of campus radicals, the success of cooptations and public relations, the corruption of the youth-culture, the bad drugs, the black-white dichotomy, etc. Five years ago the parallelism could have been documented in fine detail; now one encounters burned-out 18-year-old ex-New-Leftists, and one wonders if the proliferation of anarchist reprints by commercial publishers is after-the-fact. (3).

It may also be, to pursue a (perhaps) pessimistic theme, that movements of protest and rebellion have a brief fixed career (the Southern non-violent movement, the Northern ghetto-rebellion and Panther militancy, the student rebellion of '68-'70, now the prison rebellions) after which the dedicated ones, who cannot or will not "go home" again, throw their lives away in desperate combat (Russian anarchism after 1905), or try to hold it together by tight ideological organization, or work to keep the faith for the next time of rising in hope that the level of consciousness momentarily gained will have been (nevertheless) a permanent increment. (Imprisoned, exiled, black-listed from society, driven underground, they cannot "go home" again.) We may be - how could we tell? - at the end of the middle-class-youth insurgency. But it may not matter.

On the hypothesis, which I suggest, that we are still in an early stage of a new era of revolutions, itself a stage in a longer series of historical trials at post-capitalist society, one will expect rebellion and protest to ebb and flow (a ghetto does not erupt twice, etc.). Per-

(2) *The Marxist Daniel Guerin saw in the appearance of the idea of Workers' Control in the days of May '68 in France the welcome re-emergence of libertarianism as a vital force. But how much else is there to anarchism! - The French Days of May afford, of course, a spectacular example of the influence of an anarchist group. The magazine Noir et Rouge was a center at which anarchist ideas were continuously brought into relation to the day-to-day of student-life and worker-life.*

haps, in the economic stagnation which seems to lie ahead for America, the next and potentially interesting turn will be that of the wage-earners, whose foothold in the middle class and separateness from the Nonwhites and Appalachian-and-Welfare whites are being threatened and eroded. If the population of the Lower Depths becomes expanded from above, and welfare and heroin become as common among whites as in the ghetto, there may be (as the advertisement says) "a whole new ball game"

On such a historical hypothesis, it will be very important for the future that libertarian and anarchistic thought and values have pervaded, to the degree that they have and however how, a numerous radical generation - thought and values which also have relation to older American traditions which ideological Stalinist militarism interrupted in the '30s. For, given anarchist values, the question about the future would be, Can the series of revolutions which began in, and in fact perpetuated, the totalitarianism of Tsarist Russia have one day a libertarian ending? By suggesting that culture is more important than ideology, the divergence of the Chinese and Cuban revolutions from the Russian model is encouraging; by eliminating poverty, while achieving major technological advances, the Chinese Communists have shown that the economics of post-capitalist society can be, even under Communist dictatorship, a fairly simple exercise in rationality and need not reproduce the Russian chaos. These are, regardless of the Statist, collectivist, anti-libertarian, and power-political character of the regimes, hopeful signs with respect to what might be accomplished, sooner or later and in some manner or another, in the United States.

The perspective in which I am situating current history - hopefully a perspective which includes a future - is not current fashion. I shall not insist on it, or on the hypothesis of "eras" and "series" of revolutions. The next step is all that we are ever permitted to take, and a good rule to adopt, lest we become hostage to our images of history, is that the next step must validate itself in the present and the here, in the consciousness and action of people. But the present is *also* a place where our minds can bog down.

(3) *But then I remember that long ago, at age fifteen, I was a very disillusioned ex-Communist high school student.*

## II

Despite a certain anarchizing tendency, there is hardly in America an *anarchist* movement, or a specifically anarchist presence (to borrow the imperialists' word) comparable to what one finds in Paris or Milan. Lack of continuity of tradition has helped make it so that some proclamations of anarchism have been *simply* negational (anti-State, anti-power). An empty negation has no dialectical force; the black flag may then signify only "far out". What validity was possessed by the ideas mentioned at the beginning is still theirs, and what I have just said implies that need for thought upon them has not passed; by indicating their foundations and origins, I have intended to suggest a method. (I make the anti-Yippie assumption that for *libertarian* advancement, mind-thinking is essential, irreplaceable. Among the most useful guides, I suggest, would be Malatesta, or more exactly Malatesta's habit of thought.

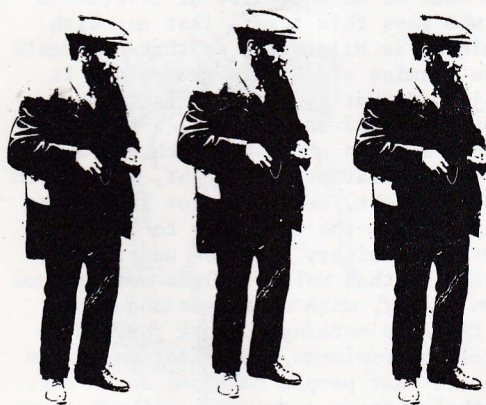
"Major" anarchist thinkers are usually so reckoned because they articulated anarchist ideas in terms of some major philosophical tradition: Godwin and the rationalism of the Enlightenment, Proudhon and Hegelianism, Bakunin and Marxism, Kropotkin and Positivism and Evolutionism. The various individualisms have generally found their basis in Stirner and Nietzsche (they might also have looked to Fichte - though not to that philosopher's politics). More recently the effort to set anarchism deliberately in a philosophical background has been less common and less successful. The psychologies of Freud and Reich and (lately) Laing have played an analogous role in our psychologistic, rather anti-philosophical era. Herbert Read's effort to base anarchism in a Bergsonian outlook was unsuccessful, either in creating a new viable

anarchism or in attaching it to a lively contemporary tradition. I have heard of an effort to relate anarchism to linguistic philosophy but know nothing about it.

There is nothing wrong with such "use" of philosophy; on the contrary. One must speak in some language or other, whether one talks in linear fashion or in circles, and a philosophy is (among other things) a comprehensive language in which to speak about man, society and nature. If Proudhon (for example) thought that his philosophical foundations were "true", then he would have to be counted wrong about that, but one could still read him *as* Proudhon, speaking a particular philosophical dialect. If one recognizes the pluralism of philosophy, and then sees the ways in which Proudhon and Kropotkin complement each other, then one will see Proudhon's and Kropotkin's ideas as elements in a mosaic whose totality may be more like an aesthetic whole than an intellectual synthesis.

Not that the differences between anarchist theories are merely semantical. A society of retained absolute self-sovereignty (Josiah Warren), a society of sovereign mutual aid and cooperation (Kropotkin), a society of sovereign justice (Godwin), etc. differ more than linguistically. Whether one regards mutual aid or individual self-interest as primary will affect one's theory of politics, theory of education, etc. But all anarchists do agree that the abolition of coercive political authority (Godwin's "positive institutions") would liberate us to be genuine social animals; all appeal to a principle of voluntary cooperation; personality, personal freedom, self-realisation, are shared values. So Kropotkin though *social* justice would make it possible for everyone, and not a privileged few, to enjoy an intense *individual* existence. Possibly, Warren, Kropotkin, and Godwin could look at the same anarchist society and agree that it was anarchist; Warren saying of it that the individual is sovereign, Kropotkin that mutual aid is the rule, and Godwin that justice and reason reign. Possibly - although one cannot be sure of this.

Now, Malatesta is a major anarchist thinker, despite the tendency of historians to neglect him, just because he deliberately sought to pass between the philosophers, of whom he was uniformly sceptical. In a sense one cannot really pass between the philosophers; in the limiting case this would mean uncritical acceptance of the tyranny of ordinary language. But Malatesta reasoned as follows: Here is something we anarchists want, and which we believe that most people, if they understood it and thought for themselves, would in fact want: namely a society of peace and non-coercive cooperation and opportunity for individual development and fulfill-



ment. (This would be an empirical hypothesis.) Between now and the realization stand the economic power of the privileged, governmental coercion and violence, and the masses' habitual submissiveness enforced by religious and political superstition. (Again an empirical hypothesis, although of a higher order.) What then are the most effective methods of overcoming these obstacles and achieving the goal?

*There is hidden in Malatesta's thought, it seems, a small assumption, which may be enormous: that what people will, they can do, so that if they come to understand what freedom means, and come then to will it, they can enact it.* (Of course, this could be true by definition, if understanding is defined in terms of will and will in terms of deed: but the proposition is not to be taken in this definitional sense.) Or, to phrase it as I have above, that what the people "would want" can be transformed into an effective social force. The revolutionary movement then is the development of a will to freedom concurrent with the breaking down of the objective barriers constituted by violence and power.

In what I take to be Malatesta's central conception, there is something modern and intellectually clear - modern because it marks a break with metaphysical philosophies, including Kropotkin's positivism. But some amplification of this point will be necessary later.

Malatesta would not argue with people about such a question as whether it is *good* to live in peace and harmony with one's community and make one's contribution to the general welfare - let alone argue that this is the ultimate tendency of material or spiritual evolution or a demonstrable necessity for the survival of the species. One will propose this way to people, one will show it and try to exemplify it, but if they do not want it, the authority of philosophy and reason and science will not make them. After all, what can take precedence over what a man thoughtfully wills, knowingly wills? And Malatesta believed that a thoughtful, knowing person does will the ends of anarchy - the less clearly and forcefully, perhaps, the more his or her erudition, with its accompanying class-prejudice; the less clearly and forcefully, certainly, the more he or she is indoctrinated by churches and government schools. That "one can be an anarchist irrespective of the philosophic system one prefers" (Richards, p.29), together with its implications, which include an indication of why anarchism must be philosophically free, are (it seems to me) the essence of Malatesta's "approach to anarchism". And it is Malatesta's "approach", together with his "political sense and realism", which Richards regards (properly I think) as his enduring contribution (4).

Is man-thoughtful and man-thoughtfully-

(4) Page references are to Vernon Richards, *Errico Malatesta: His Life and Ideas* (London: Freedom Press, 1965). In my discussion I am trying not to duplicate Richards' excellent work but to go beyond it in certain directions.

willing a fiction, utopianism finally self-unmasked by its own simplicity and clarity? We shall have to try to find out.

### III

In a characteristic passage Malatesta wrote:

"In our opinion all action which is directed towards the destruction of economic and political oppression; which serves to raise the moral and intellectual level of the people; which gives them an awareness of their individual rights and their power, and persuades them to act on their own behalf - all action that encourages a hatred of oppression and awakens love among men - brings us closer to our ends and therefore is a good thing (subject-only to a quantitative consideration: of obtaining the best results from the forces at our disposal). On the other hand, all activity that tends to preserve the present state of affairs, or tends to sacrifice people against their will for the triumph of a principle, is bad because it is a denial of our ends. We seek the triumph of freedom and love" (1892) (Richards, p.69) (5)

In this passage one can hear the rhythms and habits of Malatesta's mind. There are problems aplenty in it, for Malatesta is preparing to argue for the inevitability of revolutionary violence. What impresses me, however, is the easy way Malatesta writes "is directed toward" "which serves to raise" "which gives them an awareness" "persuades them to act" "encourages a hatred of oppression and awakens love among men" "brings us closer to our ends and is therefore a good thing." We are here, we wish to move there, what is it that will enliven the heart of a person and lead *that person* to desire of freedom and love and to the exercise of their powers? *What will persuade people to act on their own behalf?*

I do not know of an anarchist or revolutionary writer who says this first, last and with such naturalness as Malatesta, so that one feels it to be the premise of all his reasoning. It might be objected that the passage is *too* persuasive: would not *all* radicals agree to it? But apart from the mention of love, which was a persistent theme in Malatesta's thought, and not in all anarchist thought, certainly not in Marxist thought - apart from the reference to love as a key, a negative corollary is to be understood. This corollary is that *unless people come to act on their own behalf, with awareness and with love, then there is nothing to look forward to save the cycle of violence, exploitation, human automatism*; and that people *can* come so to act. If people rebel without awareness, without love, they will be prey to authoritarian messiahs, and it will not matter how justified their blind rebellion has been, or how frustrating to the

(5) Should one correct the "male chauvinist" language of the past? One is tempted to because "people" rather than "men" is certainly more Malatestan. Having at one point, abstractedly, typed "people" for "men", I let it stand.

purposes of the power-group against which they rebelled.

Application of these Malatestan views is unfortunately not easy. The political choices which are commonly proposed to us, including those proposed by the New Left etc., belong to a different system. The radical anti-war movement has been affected by an anti-American paranoia that demands a choosing of sides between the (unique) citadel of reaction and its enemies (the evolution of *Liberation* reflects this). One will not understand the State and power so long as one interprets the massacres in East Pakistan as the result of Anglo-American imperialism, ignores the power-political role of "socialist" China, and ignores (above all) the primary fact of the matter, that the wealthy and militarily powerful and the masses manipulable by nationalistic and religious hatreds are no more benign in the Third World than in any other world. *To think in an anarchist fashion is to find oneself at cross-purposes with the choices that the ongoing politics of power proposes.*

Any general answer to this problem would be vague and unsatisfactory. (One might say: the Malatestan anarchist is one who seeks to discover an action which he, and his friends, can do.) The economic struggles of wage-earners in America are not yet of a sort that tends to a *prise de conscience*. But certain direct actions which have been carried out by "minority group" militants, together with people from their communities, have been exactly of a sort that cuts across political and bureaucratic choices and may stand as symbols: I think particularly of the pressures on and invasion of the hospitals of the New York ghettos. More generally one might reason like this: In '68 the occupation of university buildings brought to focus the question, Of whom is a university the property? for whom do trustees hold a university in trust? In '69 the People's Park in Berkeley brought to focus the question, By what right is property? Just as the assault on the hospitals has raised the question, Are these hospitals for the benefit of the people of their neighbourhood or the benefit of medical schools? Such questions exhaust themselves and have to be re-invented constantly - without a recipe for inventing them.

#### IV

The same spirit, the same approach, underlay Malatesta's mature view of revolution. (His early view was Bakuninist-romantic - the small insurrection would set off the large revolution.) The coming revolution (he thought), whenever it comes, will not be anarchist, given that anarchists are a minority. The occurrence of a revolution, therefore, will depend upon the concurrent initiative of many parties. The anarchists urge these other parties onward, and if there is

revolution then anarchists seek to maximise its libertarianism. To put this thought in a contemporary setting: the overthrow of the Batista regime in Cuba was not the work of Cuban anarchists (although anarchists participated) and the regime which emerged was authoritarian; the task for anarchists would be to seize the opportunity to realize and defend libertarian patterns within the emergent authoritarianism before the latter congealed into a new repressive status quo. Oddly, in 1936, four years after Malatesta's death, there did occur a revolutionary situation in the one country in which the revolutionary initiative, and initiative in the popular struggle against fascism, lay with the Spanish anarcho-syndicalist movement, but it would be rash and unrealistic to suppose that such a powerful movement, which had been three quarters of a century in the making, will appear elsewhere. *To seize power (or dream of it) is to go outside the libertarian realm.* Anarchists then must think of themselves as associates, and the conscience, and when most successful the highest consciousness, of a social movement they must not expect to dominate.

And what if the revolution does take a strongly authoritarian turn? Malatesta's advice here, given with the Russian (1917) case in mind, is less than satisfactory:

"If we are unable to prevent the constitution of a new government, if we are unable to destroy it immediately, we should in either case refuse to support it in any shape or form. We should reject military conscription and refuse to pay taxes. Disobedience on principle, resistance to the bitter end against every imposition by the authorities, and an absolute refusal to accept any position of command" (Richards, pp.162-163).

One supposes that some of the anarcho-syndicalist exiles from Cuba, who found themselves choosing American "democracy" against Castro's communism, may have thought they were following Malatesta's advice. But like Kropotkin in Russia, Malatesta would not have expected a foreign intervention to permit the renewal of social revolution; if they believed what they said they believed, those Cubans did not understand the world they lived in. On the other hand, Malatesta seems to be saying that in the event of an authoritarian revolution the anarchists (after having urged the authoritarians to make the revolution!) will insist on committing collective and individual suicide, and this would hardly fit with Malatesta's conception of a minoritarian role for anarchists.

Concrete conception of the minoritarian role in a revolutionary situation - or in a local community where action is afoot - is very diffi-

cult. The context of Malatesta's discussion seems to suggest hope that anarchists would be able to sustain against a new government the independence of libertarian communities or regions, and to establish (say) the principle of voluntary financial contributions to government (instead of taxes) as well as the principle of voluntary military service (instead of conscription). Well, to this end one would like to see the "libertarian Marxists" of the world become more rigorous in their questioning of the "Socialist State". The original evil of the Bolshevik revolution in 1917 was that its theory (Lenin's and Trotsky's) precluded acceptance of an autonomous Ukraine in which the peasants influenced by the Makhnovist movement could interpret the idea of the Soviet in their own fashion, and precluded acceptance of Soviet autonomy in the industrial sector as well. One does not know of any case in which Leninists have relented from this theory and its attendant practice, repressive of revolutionary groups which sought cooperation without subordination.

In his study of Malatesta, Richards finds a contemporary importance in Malatesta's arguments in behalf of revolutionary violence. (Richards was polemicizing, not without justification, against a facile conception of non-violent revolution.) But perhaps the question of revolution has to be thought about more carefully - not the question of *violence* merely - for if one can see that Malatesta pointed a direction, the post-World War I situations in terms of which he reasoned are little like our current scene or any scene we can foresee. If a revolutionary group could somehow succeed in provoking in present day America a political crisis of revolutionary dimensions, one would not be unwise to consult first of all one's personal safety, for expectation of some alternative to dictatorship of the Right or Left has no foundation. (The idea that America is responsible for all the world's evil has generated a desperate "bring it down" psychology. But such a base of military power is not brought down by, so to speak, knocking off its government.) By now we should (I think) see clearly that a social revolution without a change of consciousness to sustain it - the point is in fact Malatesta's - will not be a *social* revolution, will not alter the fact of State-power whose evils anarchists have so amply specified. If this is so, the tendency of anarchists to define their movement as a *revolutionary* movement is an inappropriate relic of 19th century thinking. At some given time and place, in particular where the State has betrayed the people overtly and rebellions are making way, to help move it forward and give to it a libertarian character, is a natural work for anarchists. Whenever a revolution has succeeded, whatever the terms of its success, it has turned out that a second chance, corrective of the first, has not been permitted. The first one, it seems, had better be a good one.

v

We turn once again to the fundamental Malatestan position, and now to a philosophical difficulty which I want to locate.

Malatesta had no great confidence in economic deprivation as such as a source of motion toward freedom: its product is rebellion but such rebellion without consciousness (once again) is not revolution and it is not anarchy. What he counted on is certain qualities of the human spirit which have emerged, fairly tenuously, through the centuries: a sense of morality, feelings of sympathy and love, a sense of justice, a desire for freedom. (So, as I have written elsewhere, Malatesta combined in his thought the eudemonistic, the ethical, and the libertarian strains of anarchism.) Rebellion without consciousness is blind, spontaneous, but in a sense mechanical; sympathy, love, justice, freedom, these are acts of the soul which are not produced mechanically and which cannot be produced deliberately. Malatesta was on strong ground in trusting them - where they exist. A person who possesses feelings of love and sympathy, and understands what justice and freedom mean, is one who has achieved a consciousness in which the whole of his or her life-attitudes have come to organization. This is what it means to give precedence, as Malatesta did, to will (*Volunta*). The problem, as was indicated earlier, is whether such a will is a fiction, and if it is a fiction (does not yet exist) whether it is a fiction which has power (as an object of faith) to effect its own realization.

People who are thoroughly good, and this is what everyone felt about the anarchists Louise Michel, the Reclus, Kropotkin, Malatesta, and many others whose names are not remembered, find this way so natural and easy that it seems to them to be expressive of nature, or the human spirit, rather than of themselves as perhaps fortuities and exceptions in the human evolution. *The optimism of anarchism has been (on the whole) the optimism of people who have found it easy to love and feel sympathy and do justice and sacrifice material wellbeing.* But what is the case with the brothers?

Observation appears to confirm it that the goodness of good people is more likely a fortuity of human evolution than an expression of something rightly called the human spirit. Men in general would no doubt enjoy the possession of the fruits of an anarchist society, where no one would be materially deprived and there would be space for one's talents. Those who delight in warfare and the misery of others must be quite few and there are good psychopathological explanations for such aberrations. If people take satisfaction in the knowledge that others are worse off than themselves, it is very likely because they are bothered by knowledge that others are better off and undeservedly so. Most people would undoubtedly find equality endurable. What Malatestan anarchism calls upon people to do, however, is *to act on one's own behalf*, to assume responsibility, to participate with one's mind and not with one's body alone - and so does all serious anarchism. The question is, who wants to bother? It would not exactly be that people do not want freedom, it would be that the will to freedom, which signifies the will to responsibility, is rarely a ruling passion. One



might suspect - and this is a hard and pessimistic saying - that Malatesta's emphasis on violent revolution was due to a sense (which he certainly did not acknowledge) that men will not accept freedom and its responsibilities unless the regime of irresponsibility is first destroyed. Freedom is thrust upon them, and they come to value its fruits and therefore to will it.

For every theory of social and political action there is an area which cannot be resolved within the theory itself - the area in which one passes over into action and finds out, pragmatically, if the means are there. Action was in fact the area in and for which Malatesta lived. He wrote no theory for its own sake, no extensive formal justifications of anarchism; during a long exile in England he lived quietly as a workingman awaiting the day when he could return to Italy and renew the struggle on ground where he could be effective. Everything he wrote was clear and patient explanation of the needs of action. He was a revolutionary agitator who sought to educate and bestir to action but not to lead (he did not choose, in 1919-1920, to be "the Lenin of Italy" as he could conceivably have been, if he had not been Malatesta.) It turned out, as a matter of historical fact and no more than that, that the means were not there. The disparagement of Malatesta by such a writer as Nomad, for having declined to seize the reins or for holding the unrealistic theory that one can be effective without seizing the reins, may be the "verdict of history" but it implies that a man can control a thousand variables, and that if he could, he could bring about a *libertarian* revolution.

In entering the realms of action, however, do anarchists carry with them a plausible ground? Two paragraphs ago I have tried to put the negative case strongly - thinking, the while, of my friend's contention that only agricultural man was un-warlike and only neo-agricultural man (some day) will be anarchist. But now enters the final element of strength of Malatestan anarchism. I said earlier that only subject to amplification could Malatesta be spoken of as renunciatory of metaphysical vision. (I am sure Richards will not like this - I wish he would.) Without a realm of *the ideal*, without an idealist dimension, I do not see that anarchism will overcome the arguments which I have implicitly set out against it. But if the ideal comes from outside us, not only shall we not believe it, in this century of philosophical clarity, but we should be possessed by it and so not free (long ago, Max Stirner made this plain). But if we can generate our own ideal, and remain its owners, so that it grows with us, and so that it is a work of spirit free both from psychological determinations and metaphysical a prioris, and (therefore) expressive of both our common moral impulses and our dreams of freedom of spirit, then we may have entered a new realm. Such I believe is the work undertaken in Malatesta's anarchism by love, as unspeakably abused idea, not truly an idea but a way of designating a post-alienation human community, an "ideal" which much anarchism, reactive to superstitious religions and churches dedicated to power and

wealth, has hesitated to affirm.

## VI

I have, I fear, not remained in close touch enough with Malatestan texts; in essaying to interpret the man, I have tried to read an image in my head derived not only from his printed words and public actions and less public anecdote but also from an effort of empathy on my part. Have I seen in him something which belongs to the much younger Italian, restless, neurotic, mystical, philosophical, intellectual Camillo Berneri, who died under Communist guns in Spain? Richards (I say to myself) will be amazed that I have turned a shrewd practical Italian into someone he does not quite recognize. Once, when Richards was editing *Freedom*, I reproached him, privately but for all that still unkindly, for the sharpness of his rejoinders to writers of foolish letter-to-the-editor, and I suggested that Malatesta would have patiently explained; whereupon I was reminded of the ungladness with which Malatesta was known, during his London days, to have suffered fools. (With peasants and workers, not sophisticated into literate folly, Malatesta's manner was of course different.) Malatesta *was* above all practical and realistic, and I do not mean to have cast doubt on this image; we catch sight (I think) of both the practical man and of what his ideals meant to him in the following quotation:

"For myself, I would violate every principle in the world in order to save a man; which would in fact be a question of respecting principle, since, in my opinion, all moral and sociological principles are reduced to this one principle: the good of mankind, the good of all mankind" (Richards, p.61)

I would not like, as a practising philosopher, to have to spell out the logic of this statement in any formal way, for I know that Malatesta had a notion of "the good of all mankind" which was not a simple sum of the good of every individual considered separately. If he was not favourable to terrorism, it was on pragmatic grounds rather than out of an absolute respect for human existence; he could not believe that a man who suppressed and exploited other people possessed a moral immunity from being killed if he sought to defend his "rights" by violence. Malatesta was not one to enter into the subtlety of questions like that: the reasoning of his emotions is clear enough, and far enough beyond taint of self-interest, that one cannot complain if, upon logical analysis, he is found not to have given an unambiguous decision upon hard particular cases. In short, I see in Malatesta a person in whom ideals and practicality and common humanity, as uncomplicated as it can ever be, have a vital junction.

I had intended first, in view of my starting point, to issue various Malatestan judgments upon tendencies in the current American scene. They would have concerned such matters as revolution-as-self-expression, the celebration of the rip-off, anti-thought revolutionary theatrics, want of patience, ideologism, lack of a sense for the human spirit, subtle expressions of a power-orientation. Perhaps these can be left for the reader to make his or her own inferences.

## REVIEW

Giovanni Baldelli, *SOCIAL ANARCHISM*  
(Chicago, Aldine-Atherton, 1971)

I cannot hope to do justice to this book in a short review (actually more of an invitation to read than a review), but I take some comfort in the fact that the book is so rich in ideas, definitions and new combinations of old ideas that no "review" could do it justice.

Baldelli is almost unique among current anarchist thinkers in that he is willing to be concrete - even to the point of sketching out a plan for various aspects of an anarchist society. This concreteness is the major strength of *Social Anarchism*. It is an idealistic book on ethics, which does not deteriorate into a series of unintelligible abstractions. Baldelli is willing to talk about ethics when most radicals steer away from ethics except as dictated by their own sort of opportunism.

At worst this willingness to talk concretely about ethics is refreshing. Ask most radicals (including anarchists) about what their ethical principles are, and they either take refuge in some abstract absolute (e.g. pacifism) or can't answer the question. Baldelli submits five basic principles in his "Introduction":

The human person is primary.

Human life is sacred.

Coercion must be rejected.

The end does not justify the means.

Double standards are unacceptable. (pp. 3, 4)

The most interesting of these is both obvious and far-reaching in its consequences: "Double standards are unacceptable." Spelled out, this means minimally:

No one is to be disqualified as a human being by the label of "enemy". What the enemy does to us and what we do to him must be weighed by the same scales and described by the same vocabulary. (p.5)

Most of us run amuck of this principle at some time or another. It is part of the humanity of this book that it reminds us of such a principle over and over again.

Baldelli attacks power (as opposed to certain sorts of authority which he justifies as necessary for society) because power must be coercive and cannot be reciprocal. Power relations involve double standards by nature - one standard for the powerful, another for the weak. Hence, if there has to be any power in a society it must be spread out as widely as possible. The safeguard against "authority of ability" becoming coercive power is that there must be an open possibility for anyone to obtain any socially useful ability, and any authority relationship must admit of scrutiny by a third person. I suspect that Baldelli places too much weight on this third person in that disinterested third persons are easier to define than locate, but

at least he is dealing with the concrete possibility of authority becoming coercive. He is also aware of the possibility of authority becoming manipulative leadership, and of the possible cop-out of reacting to this by seeking unlimited positive freedom to do one's thing. He rejects both possibilities as essentially non-reciprocal.

There is a sort of organic consistency here. Baldelli does not mechanically dispose of possible contradictions by rationalization or periodic rules changes; rather, he works his positions out to their consequences in all directions. For example, he is more concerned with persons as consumers than as producers, and provides a theory of exchange value to go with that concern. This should also mean a theory of compensatory justice. It does. Baldelli argues simply that reparation is the appropriate response to injustice. In a family, this should mean an accounting system of some sort for determining who makes what sacrifices. Here Baldelli develops an "arithmetic of values" such that each person lists what they would desire under optimum conditions, attaches values to each desire (he calls these values "axions"), then negotiates so that each person gets close to the same value out of the relationship. This all strikes me as absurd on the face of it, but how many families, for example, have been destroyed because people did less? Further, how many political groups have fallen apart because the members could not bring themselves to do something like this?

The organic integrity of *Social Anarchism* is essential. Ideals are spelled out in concrete terms. Plans and low level principles lead one back to ideals. If one disagrees with Baldelli, it will not be because he is unclear. More important, if one is disconcerted at first by the idea of establishing a "social machinery", for example, one will have to face Baldelli's argument that the positive freedom of "Art, Music, Philosophy, and Play" is essentially non-social, and that an anarchist society must be primarily concerned with negative freedom - freedom from harm. As he puts it, "An anarchist society, whatever positive freedom it may include and foster, cannot include the freedom to be a tyrant. Respectful of autonomous choice among many possible destinies, an anarchist society will exclude many destinies now possible which contain some element of tyranny." (p.72) This is where Baldelli parts company with free-market-anarchists-of-the-Right, and I would find it difficult to end up disagreeing with him, though I do suspect that we should pay a great deal more attention to the positive freedoms and their realm. For example, Baldelli's *Social Anarchism* is an exercise of positive freedom in the realm of ethics, and it is an invigorating example of the importance of such freedom.

Bob Dickens



"Women need not always  
keep their mouths shut  
and their wombs open"

— Emma Goldman  
1869 – 1940

EMMA GOLDMAN

