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Alain Gouzien
Individual Action
1887

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Individual Action

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Whatever some revolutionary socialists are saying, *individual action* can hasten the hour of Revolution. We thus couldn't support it more.

One individual, tired of suffering, revolts against current social order, he tramples on respect for property by going to a capitalist's home to remove part of the goods he stole — and this, not for himself — but for his miserable companions.

Can we truly reproach that to him ?

No, a thousands times no. Why ? — Because this revolted shows the example to the workers, because, impatient to see the triumph of equality and justice, he tries to put into practice the theories he defends.

Social restitution of the means of production will be the inevitable complement of this individual initiative, of this *propaganda by the deed*.

Some collectivists are very funny, they always ask for revolutionary means to expropriate capitalists and achieve the socialization of the means of production, and then cry out when a revolutionary deed happens.

You are a revolutionary in all that the word entails, or you are not : To excite a worker to hate capitalists and then find it strange that this worker eliminates a capitalist to set an example, this seems totally stupid to me.

The truth is that a quantity of ambitious people who thirst for popularity have slipped into the ranks of revolutionaries and who, with their tactics, instead of making any progress whatsoever for socialist ideas, do nothing more nor less than the game of the owning class.

We couldn't too much warn the workers against the maneuvers of those pseudo-socialists — and we will be able to congratulate ourselves for doing an absolutely useful and necessary task.

ALAIN GOUZIEN