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God or the State: No The General Strike: Yes

Francisco Ferrer

1901

There is not a person of good faith, however little enlightened, who does not confess that religion, whether Catholic, Protestant, Mohammedan or Buddhist, has achieved peace and well-being for men.

No politician, of any party or of any independence, can assure that his system of government guarantees absolute freedom of speech and writing or ensures the right to life.

Those who want to give supremacy to the clergy as well as those who expect everything from a more or less secular State, all maintain that there must be poor and rich, masters and servants.

Neither of them seek the economic and political emancipation of the individual.

The first liberals, who, realizing the religious deception, dedicated themselves to founding a State free from the contact of Rome, are excusable, because they could believe that all evil came from the Church.

But those who now practice the parliamentary system, whether monarchists, republicans or socialists, deceive their

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voters, as priests abuse the credulity of their parishioners, by making them hope that with the government of their party or with the program of their invention they will bring liberty and peace to the heart of the nation.

There is no voter who can name a government as good.

Neither the centuries since religions have existed, nor the kings who have made use of courts and assemblies, nor even the last century, occupied almost entirely by parliamentary governments, will serve as an example of the uselessness of delegating the care of our interests to anyone. The years that the governing socialist party has been fighting for elections will suffice. What benefit have the workers obtained by going to vote?

On the other hand, it is within everyone's reach that if the time spent by the socialists in electoral struggles had been devoted to the organization of the producing classes and to anti-military propaganda, a general strike would have long ago destroyed bourgeois society.

It is up to the libertarians to make these truths understood by all those unconscious people who believe in the panacea of voting as if it were the host that will take them to paradise.

The complete emancipation of the workers will come neither from the Church nor from the State, but from a general strike that destroys both.