

# **Pioneers of Anti-Parliamentarism**

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## Foreward

This brochure is incomplete, despite its size. It ought to have included a review of Marx's life and writings, and a study of Proudhon. The latter forecasted the failure of universal suffrage, the liquidation of political and social democracy in reaction and empire, and the successful emergence of libertarian society. He preached the calm, unrelenting optimism of complete democracy and liberty which is so necessary to human endurance today. The essays on Marx and Proudhon are written and will be published in due course.

"Bakunin is not a biography of the immortal Russian Revolutionist. It depicts his force and character. My life of Bakunin is finished also and will appear as funds and conditions permit. As an Anarchist, Bakunin is over-rated. As a man, with a tremendous will towards liberty, and a titanic force of character, he has not received a tithe of appreciation that is his due. Bakunin was thoroughly human. The essay with which this work opens will stimulate interest in the life struggles of this good comrade.

The Chicago studies are comprehensive. When in Leeds in 1934 I saw the wonderful "life" of Parsons, written by his wife. I wanted to keep it for some time to use it but the comrade was jealous of his book. It never occurred to him that, in my hands, it would have a use-value for the movement and for history it would lose, stored away until it fell into Philistine hands. Such is the sense of property as against usefulness.

All these essays are reprinted, revised a little here and there, from the columns of *The Spur*, *The commune*, or *The New Spur*, and cover the years from 1914 to 1934.

The last two essays have been revised and abridged by me from studies by Andre Lorulot and H. Canne Meijer. Lorulot's essay is merely a living picture of Nieuwenhuis and leaves it necessary to write his biography. Meijer's account of Gorter is a biography written by an intimate contemporary. The editing of these essays has been severe and expressions of political opinion are mine and not that of the authors from whom I have abridged and adapted. Some of the essays are written as editorials and use the editorial "we." Others employ the more modest but not grating first personal singular - "I." To have altered this technically of expression would have entailed too much work. The reader must forgive the resulting literary inconsistency of expression.

The present calamity establishes, in my mind, the justness of my long opposition to Parliamentary Socialism. Parliamentarism has ended in militarism and war, and has wasted the long struggle towards a new social order of the working class of the world. The Labor Leaders have sold their birthright, loyalty to peace and freedom, for a mess of pottage, place and career within the national constitution of capitalism. Claiming that their way was the way of peace, denouncing Anarchists and theories of social revolution, they have committed the working class to a criminal orgy of violence, to plague and pestilence. At such time, in a spirit of calm, and in opposition to surrounding clamor, I recall the pioneers of Utopia - the pioneers of Anti-Parliamentarism.

The world of these pioneers is not so far away. 1886 - the year of Chicago - the year of the author's birth. Malatesta I knew well and he links to-day with Bakunin. yet the distance seems tremendous because so much has happened, so many dynasties have fallen, and even nations

have collapsed. however viewed, the Labor movement, Left or Right, of those days is an activity that belongs to history. it has no longer a place in living reality.

To my view, these pioneers have failed. I believe in the promise of the principle for which they stood. I believe the genius which inspired them will be reincarnated in another generation and that the struggle will be resumed unto triumph. I believe that this small volume is a record of lights that failed - that failed both gloriously, and may be a little stupidly, the better to illuminate the world.

This tribute to their memory may be taken as an incitement to the further and more complete study of the principles of democracy and anti-Parliamentarism. It reasserts, in opposition to so much contemporary subservience to Nazism and Fascism, the author's undiminished and uncompromising faith in Socialism, the genuine Socialism of the proletariat. To the workers of the world in their struggle, and to the overthrow of the dictators, this book is dedicated.

*Glasgow, July 2, 1940.*

Guy A. Aldred

# Chapter 1 : Bakunin

Bakunin's literary legacy is small. The man had no literary ambitions. he was too much of a social revolutionist, too genuine, to wish to stoop to literature. to play at depicting wrong where one should at at destroying wrongs; to substitute words for action, art for life: this was no work for a full-grown laborer in the cause of bread and freedom. With Bakunin, writing was but a tool not an achievement. Words were the means to accomplishment itself. His purpose was other than that of writing. He wrote as he studied and observed - in order to answer questions of the day. He wrote under the pressure of some crisis in social struggle. And all his writings originated in the same realistic, direct, useful, unpremeditated way. To this fact they owe much of their unevenness and repetition. Bakunin's vitality, desire for action, and counsel to action, overflowed into writing. in this way, his essays and pamphlets arose.

As a rule, Bakunin sat down to write a letter to a friend dealing with some question of the movement. But the letter quickly grew to the size of a pamphlet, and the pamphlet to that of a book. the greatness of the urge, the impelling idea, cause the author to write so fluently; illustrations flowed so easily from his vast reservoir of contemporary knowledge ; and he had so clear and complete a conception of the philosophy of history to illuminate his vision, that the pages soon filled themselves. the theme developed easily, embellished with countless digressions, a veritable encyclopedia review. But always incomplete, always unfinished.

Bakunin was acquainted with Gerzen, Ogareff, Mazzini, Ledru-Rollin and others. he participated in the uprising of 1848- 1849, the polish insurrection of the early sixties, and the secret Italian movements. He foresaw the fall of the French Empire and an upheaval in Paris. Thoughts, conceptions, facts and arguments borrowed from the realities of a period of struggle, invaded Bakunin's spirit and took possession of his being. His generalization of historical philosophy, leading to revolutionary negation of class society, was richly adorned with facts and wisdom gathered from contemporary reality. This explains how, with all his errors, Bakunin stands out in working class history as "the fiercest representative of the idea of real revolutionary action."

Bakunin was unquestionably inferior to Marx as a political economist. his economics are Marxist, and he subscribed enthusiastically to Marx's theory of surplus value and dissection of the Capitalist system. Bakunin believed in the materialistic conception of history even more thoroughly than Marx. But when Marx, contrary to the logic of his own writing, began to play with Parliamentarism; when Marxism was proclaimed as the only scientific socialism at a time when it was becoming a theology and a metaphysic rather than a science ; when Marxism degraded itself into a dull political class society electioneering, then Bakunin proclaimed his anti-Marxism in opposition to the negation of Socialist thought in action.

To Bakunin, exploitation and oppression were more than economic and political grievances. Hence, a fairer distribution of wealth, even if possible under the system, and a seeming participation in political power (democracy) were "remedies" that did not meet the situation. Democracy was not the cure for poverty but only the perpetuation of the disease. Democracy was the criminal perpetuation of poverty. Bakunin saw clearly that there was one problem only: economic

exploitation and submission was connected intimately with all forms of authority, religious, political and social : and this authority was embodied in the State. Hence anarchism, the negation of authority, the negation of priestcraft, was the essential factor in all real Socialism. To Bakunin, Anarchism defined Socialism as Submission defined Capitalism.

Bakunin did not confound "Government with "Administration." He did not confuse the "State with "Society." He did not pretend to believe in "Community" interest in a class society. He opposed class society and all its hypocritical masquerades. he proclaimed the need for freedom and defined Socialism as the proletarian determination to revolt to realize freedom. Thus, Bakunin opposed anarchism to Parliamentarism, Mental, personal and social freedom are to him inseparable - Atheism, Anarchism, Socialism, an organic unit. His Atheism is not that of the ordinary Freethinker, who may be an authoritarian and an anti-Socialist; nor is his Socialism that of a parliamentarian, albeit Marxist, who may be, and very often claims to be, an Authoritarian and a Christian, or speaks as though he were both; but his Atheism and Socialism complete each other. They interpenetrate and constitute a living realization of freedom, a social condition of happiness. The thoroughness makes Bakunin's Socialist propaganda unique.

If Proudhon's vision was blurred by a kind of bourgeois pacifism, Marx certainly sacrificed his own revolutionary understanding for political and personal dictatorship. He liquidated his great revolutionary work in an unscrupulous vanity and an all-consuming miserable pretension to absolute priesthood that knew no bounds. But for his desire to dominate, Marx would have been the great working class emancipator. his mighty mind descended to petty spleen because his will could brook no qualifying influences. Marx was his world - and his limitation. The self-immolation of a great intellect to a narrow will was nothing less than a terrible disease from which Marx suffered. It reduced a prophet to a priest and a great movement to an impotence. It made Marx less than a political revolutionist, a mere parliamentary temporizer, where the mind of the man visioned and understood and cried out for the complete social revolution. Not even when one considers the long life of Labor Judas Iscariots M.P.'s, is it possible to discover one person in the history of the worker's struggle who sold his birthright for a more miserable mess of pottage than Karl Marx. For he lived and died in poverty. He shared all the misery of the struggle. only his semi-disciples, the disciples of his error and not his vision, prospered into defenders of Capitalism. They praised him for his confusion and his name grew to shaded mediocre respectability. Whereas he was intended to be a symbol of proletarian challenge, the enemy of Capitalism.

As early as July, 1848, possibly because Bakunin saw good in Proudhon as well as in Marx, the latter's *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* accused Bakunin of being paid spy in the employ of the Russian Ambassador. Marx's paper added that George Sand, the novelist, possessed papers that would establish the charge. Bakunin appealed to George Sand to clear his name of this odious accusation, and she wrote to *Zeitung* :

"The facts related to your correspondent are absolutely false. I never had any documents which contained insinuations against M. Bakunin. I never had any reason, or authority to express any doubts as to the loyalty of his character and the sincerity of his views. I appeal to your honor and to your conscience to print this letter in your paper immediately."

Marx published this letter with the explanation that, in publishing the charge, the *Zeitung* had given Bakunin an opportunity to dispel a suspicion long current in certain Parisian circles. In September, 1853, Marx had to repudiate this charge against Bakunin in the columns of the *London Morning Post*.

Marx knew that, at the international congress at Basle, in 1869, Bakunin demanded an investigation of the charge from Wilhelm Liebknecht. He was vindicated completely and Liebknecht publicly apologized.

Yet, in a "confidential communication" sent to the Brunswick Committee, through Kugelmann, Marx wrote of Bakunin : -

"Bakunin . . . found opponents there who not only would not allow him to exercise a dictatorial influence, but also said he was a Russian Spy."

Lafargue bitterly attacked Bakunin and his comrades from 1872 onwards. Yet his enmity was not sufficient to please the concentrated vindictiveness of his father-in-law. On November 11th, 1882, Marx wrote to Engels: -

"Longuet, the last Proudhonist, and Lafarge, the last Bakunist ! May the Devil come to fetch them !"

How different was the attitude of Bakunin!

Early in the summer of 1848, Bakunin quarreled with Marx and Engels over Herwegh's plan to invade Germany with armed legions. Writing of this quarrel in 1871, Bakunin confessed: -

"On this subject, when I think of it now, I must say frankly that Marx and Engels were right. they truly estimated the affairs of those days."

The International Working Men's Association was founded at St. Martin's Hall, London, on September, 29th, 1864, to unite and weld together all workers who would come together to work for their emancipation from Capitalism, irrespective of the shades of opinion on principles and tactics which divide them. this broad principle was respected for five years. The Congress held at Basle, Switzerland, in September, 1869, was the last conference at which Marxists, Revolutionary Collectivists or Anarchists, Proudhonian Mutualists, Trade Unionists, cooperators or social reformers met in fair discussion and tried to elaborate lines of common action, useful and acceptable to all. The congress of 1868-1869 showed that Anti-Parliamentarism was spreading through the sections of the International owing to Bakunin's influence. This was mortifying to Marx, who, despite the Anti-Parliamentary logic of his thought and writings, worked, through the London General Council of the Association, for the development of Parliamentarism.

Owing to the Franco-Prussian War, no congress was held in 1870, and in 1871 Marx convened a private congress in London, September 17-23, 1871. At this congress of conference, Marx although such conduct was contrary to the opinion he had developed in his *Civil War in France*, struck the blow he must have premeditated from some time, namely, the enforcement of Parliamentarism. He imposed upon the Association the official doctrine of political action, which meant Labor Parties, electioneering, the practical Administration of Capitalism, and the steady negation of Socialism.

The Marxist Parliamentary London Conference caused the Jurassian Federation to convene an Anti-Parliamentary Conference at Sonvillier, Switzerland, on November the 12th, protesting against the parliamentary doctrine being imposed on the International, and calling for a General Congress. The circular issued by these sections was known as the Sonvillier Circular. Marx replied to this circular in a recriminating document, to which he affixed the names of the members of the General Council, called *On the Pretended Split in the International*. This was dated March 5th, 1872. It was printed and circulated in May, 1872. Bakunin and others replied to it in the Jura Bulletin of June 15th, 1872.

It is quite true that the Marxist Congress was convened at the Hague in September, 1872: and that a few days later Bakunin and his comrades convened an Anti-Parliamentary Congress at



St. Imier. This Congress met on September 13th, and accepted the rules and principles of the secret society, the Alliance of Revolutionary Socialists, that Bakunin had drawn up at Zurich since August 30th, 1872. It is true also that whilst the Marxist General Council at New York simply abolished the International, the Anti-Parliamentarians and Anarchists reorganized the Association *on the basis of St. Imier principles*, and convened a Congress at Geneva (September, 1873), and further Congresses at Brussels, Berne, and Veniers. But virtually the International was dissolved. One does not identify the Anarchist propaganda that resulted from those conferences with Anti-Parliamentarism, necessarily. Rather this anarchism merely balanced the Parliamentarism that came into existence. Anti-Parliamentarism regards both as parodies of the real struggle. It does not share the Anarchist objection to abstract authority : it does not make the state the author of economic society : it does believe in class struggle : it does negate political society : it does stand for the liquidation of political and property society in industrial and useful society.

From this period of activity (1848-1873), anti-Parliamentarism accepts, not uncritically, but gladly, though critically, all Marx's writings of importance: his *Communist Manifest* (as he suggested correcting it); *Eighteenth Brumaire* ; and the *Civil War in France ; Revolution and Counter-Revolution ; the Poverty of Philosophy* . The Anti-Parliamentary movement has not the same interest in Marx's *Eastern Question*. But it grounds its Teaching on *Capital* and *Wage-Labor and Capital*. As a movement, we would say that Anti-Parliamentarism has not much regard for *Value, Price, and Profit*. Personally, we consider this work unsatisfactory and intended to justify palliation and reform. Opinion is divided as to its worth but, personally, the present writer has deemed it, except for an odd paragraph, an elaborate joke, an attempted repudiation of Marxist logic written by Marx in the same spirit, and to the same end, as Lenin wrote his *Infantile Sickness of the Left-Wing*.

Anti-Parliamentarism accepts gratefully most of Bakunin's writings. Unlike the Anarchist disciplines of Bakunin, it makes Bakunin's criticism of *The Paris Commune and the State Idea*, in political and working class usefulness, below Marx's *Civil War in France*. Anti-Parliamentarism endorses Bakunin's healthy opposition to the God idea, the deification of the abstract General Idea.

Whilst agreeing, in the main, with the Marxists in their distinction between Scientific and Utopian Socialism, Anti-Parliamentarism does not believe in the neglect of the Utopian Socialists. Anti-Parliamentarians believe that St. Simon, for example, clearly understood the trend of Social development towards Industrial Society. It believes that much of the Utopian thought should be embodied in the current literature of the working class movement and discarded ruthlessly. Nor is Anti-Parliamentarism impressed with intrigues, the pedantry, the abstractions, the electioneerings, and the capitalist loyalties of "Scientific Socialism." In the main, the practical history of "Scientific Socialism" has been a record, neither of Science nor yet of Socialism.

Anti-Parliamentarism does not endorse Proudhon. But it believes that, on the question of the revolutionary development and the evolution of the revolutionary idea, Proudhon's *Revolutionary Idea* is a wonderful and useful work and ranks with the writings of Marx as a classic. On the subject of the liquidation of military and political society, Proudhon writes usefully and scientifically and holds a place, therefore, in the ranks of pioneers of Anti-Parliamentarism. The Anti-Parliamentarians are opposed to Proudhon being dismissed with contempt under the mistaken idea that such dismissal is an expression of revolutionary thought.

Marx: Proudhon: Bakunin: dead, their private feuds forgotten: their errors noted and overruled by time : are the three great founders of Anti-Parliamentary thought and action and the harbingers of the New Social Order of usefulness, wealth, health and freedom.

## Chapter 2 : The Socialism of William Morris

*Slightly revised from a shorthand report of a lecture delivered at the Seamore Picture House, Glasgow, October 25th, 1915.*

My subject tonight is "The Socialism of William Morris." In 'dealing with this subject, I may say a few things that will come as a surprise to many orthodox Socialists who may be present, and to strangers who know nothing about Socialism or the movement. What I shall say will not be from the standpoint of wishing to shock people, but from that of educating them. If what I say seems a little strange or new, therefore, my hearers should remember that, from time to time, we come up against facts and ideals which are strange. The strange, however, is not to be resented necessarily. The strange may gradually enlighten and so change forms and ideas.

William Morris is appreciated greatly in the world of capitalist culture. That is to say, he is spoken and is written about a great deal. While there is quite a number of people who have much evil to urge against Socialism, there is a vast number who have nothing but good to say about William Morris. That is not because Morris was good. It is purely a custom to speak well of William Morris in order to be regarded as occupying a certain position in the world of art and letters. William Morris possessed a certain amount of self-confidence, and by virtue of that confidence, and his money, he forced the world to recognize his mastership in the fine arts.

In our religious institutions, folk talk about Jesus Christ, meaning the myth; but there is not a single parson who knows or cares about Jesus the man, his type, or his class among the ministers who are preaching in Glasgow to-night. They talk and pray, because it is the custom to do so.

When people talk of literature, discuss authors and poets, they most frequently are not concerned with understanding the poets or authors, but are taken up entirely with getting an easy position. By flattering some recognized institution in literature, they hope to be recognized as litterateurs.

That is the position of William Morris. That is why you find critics in arts praising him, not because of his Socialism, but trying to praise him in spite of his Socialism, by pretending that art is a very important thing itself and something that has no place in Socialism. They do not realize that art and literature can have no reality without Socialism: that all culture is devoid of meaning, is sham and hypocrisy, unless you come down to the fundamental economic question.

William Morris was born in the 1834. More or less that was an eventful period in British history. The year 1834 was the beginning of the present constitutional regime in Britain. It saw the close of that period of struggle for the rights of political independence on the part of the people which began with the period of the French Revolution and went on through the Napoleonic Wars. Alive at the time when Morris was born were a number of persons who had made a hard struggle for the free press, for the Rights of the People to understand politics : persons who had suffered years in prison for blasphemy and sedition under absurd Acts of Parliament. William Morris was not born into an atmosphere or environment that was likely to make him interested in this struggle at first. He was born in an atmosphere of middle-class respectability, one of religion and

conventional Charlatanism. Its prevailing idea was not that which works with the people, but that which goes against. the people in their struggle.

In his early years, the only thing that he secured in the way of knowledge and culture which influenced his Socialism, was his love of heraldry, and a tendency to worship things which seemed entirely out of date with the commercial period in which he lived—a tendency to plunge into -Gothic architecture. This lasted throughout his life, and influenced his later ideas.

Down to the “fifties” there was nothing great in William Morris’s life. In that year he went to Oxford, where, he took up with the High Church Party against the Low Church Party; an act which afterwards influenced his Socialism.

Morris, in his love for Gothic Architecture, was expressing not the old Pagan tendency of ancient and Imperial Rome, but still a Pagan tendency; the Pagan tendency of the ancient barbarians, of the Goths, and of the people who believed, not in parasitic art or in effeminate art as the Greeks believed, but who believed in art which represented the joy of life. Throughout his life, Morris consistently cherished his sympathy for Gothic Architecture on this account; because it represented life’s barbarian earnestness against mock society’s cultured sham, and expressed the rich joy of labor as opposed to the misery of mere toil.

This barbarian tendency came out in his love of medievalism and found expression in his association with the High Church Party. The Low Church Party in England has much in common with the Non-Conformist Party, and is almost identical with the latter in its prejudices against sacerdotalism and joy in worship. Like the Nonconformist Party, the Low Church faction believed in worshiping God in the simplest form possible. Often, this meant the ugliest and most severe. This view reflected the piety of the time of Oliver Cromwell, the period when the joys of King Charles’ merry court and profligate pleasure code were abolished in favor of stern, rigorous, discipline. In many ways, his virtuous outlook was quite good, but it was completely joyless. That very joylessness condemned it to collapse, because it is not natural for a man to want to spend all his life in a penitentiary. Yet that is what the evangelical and nonconformist outlook amounts to.

William Morris caught the enthusiasm of the High Church Party and the Paganism behind it. The consequence is that we find him obtaining a rich understanding of the symbolism of art.

After some time, Morris discarded the idea of becoming a priest and going into the servitude of the Church. He determined to become an architect; and we have a record of him studying architecture for some time. But coming under the influence of Rossetti, he abandoned the idea in favor of becoming a painter. Meantime, he had been studying architecture because of his love for the Goths and the Gothic architecture. Through this abandonment of love he gained a great practical knowledge of architecture and the pursuit of art—art worked out for itself and not pursued with leisured ease in a mere parasitical study. He was a man who could embody for himself the almost forgotten and misunderstood tendency of the Pagan Goths.

This man came into conflict with a world full of sham, a world Christian and evangelical in the worst senses of those much abused terms; not Christian in the robust, primitive sense of good works or of righteousness; but Christian in the later political established sense of that miserable contemptible Pagan compromise of Church and Constantine; Christian in the sense of the corruption of the fourth and fifth centuries.

In 1870, Morris began to get interested in politics. Previously, he had kept aside from politics because he felt if he had to give his energy to politics, it would be necessary to cast aside all his art and literature and love of painting, and love of studying this and that phase of ancient

heraldry. It meant throwing away the very rich life and charm of medievalism which belonged to him.

Morris was impelled by this intense reverence for the past to challenge the great restoration movement which swept over the land in the "seventies." This was a movement to "restore" ancient churches, against which Morris protested, on the ground that the "restoration" of ancient churches meant their abolition. Accordingly, he formed a society to prevent this "restoration," except where it signified only the keeping out of wind and rain.

I confess that, personally, I am not a great deal interested in medievalism. I think that the future will be a great deal more inspiring than the past, and that the present is the material out of which to construct that future. But Morris was expressing to the full his own personality. That is the great lesson of his life, and that should be the great aim of every one of us present here tonight. We should be ourselves, and not clothes-props, elegantly or shabbily arrayed, according to circumstances, in suits composed of other men's thoughts and dogmas.

We have to remember that no man can belong, truly, to any party or sect. Each one of us should, and must, belong to ourselves. The individual is greater than the nation. If each individual will insist on belonging to him or herself, and will express truly their view of things, a true relationship will spring up and unite in bonds of harmony the men and women of all lands.

William Morris was a Socialist after his own kind, and we must be Socialists after our kind. Brought by our similar circumstances to a certain common understanding, we still can find opportunity for ample expression of our own personalities.

We know that Britain is the noblest country the world ever has seen. We all know that there is no king who has had ancestors who believed so much in liberty, as our present King, George V. Witness George II., George III., George IV. Witness those who placed the stamp-tax on knowledge. Witness the suffering and imprisonment of the workers and the pioneers of political freedom under these sovereigns.

In 1870, Russia was interested in the Bulgarian atrocities. We all know how politicians live on atrocities. Prime Ministers, literally thrive on atrocities. No single government would be able to keep going if it was not for atrocities. The working men of all countries are so chivalrous. They never think of the slums at home. or of the starving children that inhabit these corners of the homeland; but any little story about people abroad will make these same workers weep copious tears.

At the particular period in the life of Morris to which I am referring now, Britain was the best friend of the Turks. Russia, in the "seventies," got off on a morality campaign, but Britain backed up Turkey in her atrocities in Bulgaria. William Morris came into the political arena and protested against this. Liberals and Radicals were protesting also. William Morris allied himself to the Liberal Party in consequence, but gave an entirely new interpretation to the Eastern Question.

He began to despise the middle-class. He saw that its Liberalism was but a makeshift, and that he had nothing in common with the Radical Party. He came to see that his own personal class were the worst class in society. He observed the energy that reposed in the working people, energy that must be let loose, energy that must be driven or persuaded in the right direction before we can have a decent society. So he began to examine the Eastern Question in this mood. He viewed it not as a political question but as a question which gave expression to economic tendencies in society, which, was part of one great question – the emancipation of the world. From this time forward, William Morris became a Socialist.

In 1883, Morris took the great plunge and joined the Social Democratic Federation, whereby he was brought into full contact with the Socialist movement in this country. At the head of the S.D.F. was H. M. Hyndman. Mr. Hyndman was a politician pure and simple. He believed in a certain idea of Political or Parliamentary

Socialism—really capitalist state collectivism—which he imagined, or pretended to imagine, represented revolutionary Socialism. Unfortunately, Hyndman was accepted at his own valuation.

Working class experience lays down certain first principles of Socialism for the workers' movement to accept. These principles are expressed in the analysis of capitalism and the exposition of surplus value. He said to the workers in effect: "You have no rights in society. You do not count. You have no power whereby to give weight to your wishes or thoughts. Consequently, you have no influence. You have certain duties to perform in order to live and you are permitted to go about these duties and to live, so long as you can sell your labor-power. The moment you are unable to sell your la-hour-power, you have no right to existence, and you must die."

That dictum was true when first propounded. The same dictum is true to-day. In the present war, those in authority do not say to us: "You are citizens! Consider now, is war right? Is it right for us to go to war?" No! they say: "We are at war and will make you go. Come— or be fetched!" When they make peace, they won't say: "Your valor makes your presence desirable at this discussion and settlement of terms." They will make peace without our aid, because they own and control us economically and politically and every other way. When, finally, we do become citizens it will not be with the aid of any king's army, but we shall become citizens in opposition and in antagonism to the old influence of those who live on surplus value. Meanwhile, we are "My People!"

Karl Marx gave expression to this class war in society, this fundamental cleavage of aspiration and purpose begotten of economic antagonism, in a watchword which haunted Europe: "Workers of all lands, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains; you have a world to gain!"

He thus proclaimed a truth. This truth is true still. Marx, in expressing it, explained that his Socialism was something entirely opposed to all existing conditions of society. It was opposed to the family idea; it involved free-love; and it was opposed to the state. Marx said, if necessary, Socialism would not hesitate to be conceived in violence. He called its birth the Social Revolution, meaning a complete change of society, not mere parliamentary revolution, but Social Revolution, something more fundamental than a change of masters—an entire alteration of the social system, a radical transformation of its structure.

In 1874, when Hyndman's Democratic Federation, which afterwards became the Social Democratic Federation was born, William Liebknecht united the small Marx party with the larger Lassalle party, with the result that a new Social Democratic Party was born, opposed to revolutionary Socialist principles, and uninterested in the watchword of proletarian revolt. This party represented the surrender of the workers to the small traders' interests. It was essentially middle-class, essentially reformist, essentially comfortable, essentially wanting in all genius of revolution. Its watchword was Lassalle's cry: "Through universal suffrage to victory."

This watchword then represented, and continued to represent Hyndman's ideal. Hyndman swung in with the Social Democratic movement organized by Liebknecht, and became its pioneer in Britain, because the political revolution it aimed at accomplishing in the different countries was to establish a different governing class, and not to achieve a complete social insurrection.

Morris understood economics but did not have an intellect adaptable to grapple with dialectical economics. He took his own genius, his knowledge of medievalism and the expression of

his sense of the joy of labor into the Socialist movement. He gave it his poetic vision and understanding of life, and the joy of being which Marx never brought into it. The consequence was that William Morris made a distinct contribution to Socialist thought, but purely because he was himself and not because he tried to model himself after someone else.

Morris, the poet, a man who saw the real nature of artistic values; Morris, who saw and said that truth was truth, came into contact with Hyndman and saw that he was a politician straining all his faculties to a certain end, namely, a political success under a system where all success must be shallow and pretentious; a political success which made John Burns possible, which allows a politician from the ranks of labor to get on, but leaves the workers at the end of the journey where they were at the beginning. Morris was not a Social Democrat for a year when he broke away and founded the Socialist League. He realized that economic control is behind everything else. He realized that many of his late friends were merely Charlatans playing the game for their own ends; Charlatans like the Professors of Philosophy in our universities, the humbugs we put into power and into intellectual authority over us. If people were true to their art, they would not tolerate these sleek purveyors of unwisdom in the position to which they have elected themselves.

Morris's Socialism, expressed in his poems, his contributions to *The Commonwealth*, and in his lectures, was that economic was greater and more important than political control. That is the message which I want to drive home to-night. There can be no talk of working-class political power in this, or in any other society. There must be an end of political power in society if the workers are to be free. That end will correspond with the social revolution and a clear understanding of the economic position of the people, that will come when they try to analyze the conditions of society, and ask themselves why man is the slave of the machine.

Morris wanted comradeship; comradeship where no real comradeship could exist; and for this reason he was not an ideal Socialist.

Later, Morris was torn between the charlatan parliamentary element, which did not want action, and the Anarchist element, which is supposed to be very revolutionary and extreme, but which is lacking in the real genius of revolution as a civil factor. This Anarchist element preached violence and bombs and dynamite. It attracted to its cause police spies. But after all, you do not change imagination and give understanding to people by throwing bombs. We all bring our contribution of guilt and we all bring our contribution of commonsense and our contribution of slavery to this intolerable system of society, which makes slaves of us all.

This Anarchist movement meant really respecting nothing, not even its own principles. After all, man is a social problem and his integrity matters to himself, but there is an integrity which balances society and the real society of the future. Morris would not approach the evil thing. He saw that mere violence would lead nowhere. He knew, if he could get the consciousness of the people directed towards a sense of the poetry and the drama of the revolution; if he could get them to understand the poetry of every home in Europe; if he could get their imagination stimulated until they saw all the past destiny of man, and the present sufferings of the slaves in every attic and in every cellar of slumland, there would arise a people against whose liberties no one would dare conspire, a people who would be no more a mere prostitute civilization. Morris thought that if he could take the people selling their labor power and show them the light, slowly let drip into their lives the music of the water of understanding, that would be the beginning of a new education.

Morris went back to the parliamentary party, much to the delight of politician and war-monger, H. M. Hyndman. Rejoicing at this devolution in his "Further Reminiscences," published in 1913, Hyndman says that, in 1889 there was –

"An active rivalry, not to say antagonism, between the S.D.F. and the Socialist League similar to that which existed in France between the Marxists and the Possibilists."

Hyndman's suggestion is that the S.D.F. was Marxist and revolutionary, and the Socialist League Possibilist and Reformist. But Hyndman knew, when he penned this suggestion, that the Socialist League was not organized to be less advanced, but to be more advanced than the S.D.F. It was essentially a propagandist organization. To compare Morris's *Commonweal* with Hyndman's *Justice* would be to clinch this truism.

I do not pretend to draw any great distinction between the Marxists and the Possibilists, because the Marxists do not ground themselves on the philosophy of Marx, but on his intrigues and ambitions which finally betrayed Social Revolutionary aspiration to parliamentary compromise.

Morris learned to despise palliators and parliamentarism during his membership of the League. He agreed, in this, with the consistent teaching of Marx 1848 to 1871 and opposed no less the consistent example of Marx from 1871 to 1883. On his return to the S.D.F., Morris compromised alike in his contempt for palliators and his opposition to parliamentarism. And so proud was *Justice*, the S.D.F. organ, of Morris's revisionism, that, in 1913, it reprinted from its columns of 1894, "Wat Tyler's" interview with him, affirming this sorry retrogression. At Morris's blessing of its palliatives and eulogy of the ballot-box *Justice* rejoices! Yet Hyndman would lead his readers to believe that the *Socialist League* was an Anti-Marxist organization because it stood for Possibilism. It may have been Anti-Marxist in some senses but it was certainly also an Anti-Possibilist, that is, a true revolutionary Socialist organization. Hyndman's placing shows how history is written. Well! Well!!

Morris went back to the parliamentary party, a broken propagandist. But he does not live as a parliamentarian. Ramsay MacDonald cannot quote him as a parliamentarism. Morris lives for his revolutionary outlook. He survives for his belief in the social revolution, for his caustic censures of parliamentarism. Remove Morris's opposition to parliamentarism and you kill his work, you stifle his genius, you trample down his vision and his every achievement as a pioneer. Morris lives in Socialist history as an Anti-Parliamentarian.

Today, when certain "Socialist" adventurers are telling us that Socialism is a purely secondary matter; if one can master the message of Morris, it is to realize that Socialism not only does matter, but that it is *the reality*; that our lives are the *reality*; and that Socialism against the war, Socialism against mere pacifism even, Socialism against capitalism, is the message.

What we need today is to be a little more exact, a little more determined. We can be true to Socialism of William Morris only by taking a grand conception of the reality and necessity of the Social Revolution.

Morris died in 1896. A few years have elapsed since that time. But we do not seem to be making much progress. What we want now is not the idealist but the MAN. Morris is dead. Though he does not live, his expression of the tendencies of a certain period of British history, and his bringing together of ideas from different epochs in society, will inspire others to live.

There are those who worship the man, who rave about his poetry. I have spoken of them already. To others I would say: if we must respect the man and mention his name, let us do so truly, Don't let us mention the man and go on serving a prostitute philosophy of murder, which the present is. If we must worship the man, don't let us mention his name in the same breath or



in the same article which asks a man to slay his fellow. Morris has a message for Socialists. It is to believe in Socialism. Any man who can reconcile his (Morris's) Socialism with the present day Society, does not understand Morris, and does not recognize what Socialism is.

Socialism is here to become practical. That sort of "Socialist army" which falls clown before kings; which "believes" in William Morris; which "believes" in Socialism and the call of art; which believes in military discipline; which believes in no man's conscience and has faith in no man's conscience, is impossible.

William Morris's call is a serious thing. If we accept the call of Socialism; if we feel its imperative necessity, then we must take and wear our armor. Socialism is something serious. 'When Socialism awakens in us a real love it must come to life and prove irresistible. Then we shall stand, Truth against Falsehood, Harmony against Discord. The battle will prove the consummation of all the preceding struggles, the end of the militarism of all the countries of the world, of the accursed capitalist system which is behind militarism, and political imbecility.

The ideal of realizing oneself entirely in harmony with one's fellows, that is the ideal of the message I want to deliver to-night.

# William Morris and Anti-Parliamentarism

William Morris explained his attitude towards parliamentarism in a letter that he addressed to Bruce Glasier from Kelmscott House, Hammersmith, on May 19, 1888 :—

“I quite agree with your views about the future of the League and the due position of a revolutionary party of principle as to its dealings with Parliament. . . .

“As to myself, you may be sure that I will not be pedantically stiff about non-essentials. At the same time there are certain convictions which I cannot give up. And in action, there are certain courses which I cannot support.

“If you will re-read the editorial to the first number of the weekly *Commonweal* you will see my position stated exactly as I should state it now, and which was the position taken by all of us when the (Socialist) League was first founded. If the league reverses its views on these points it stultifies our action in leaving the S.D.F., and becomes a different body from that which I first joined. I should, therefore, be *forced* to my very great sorrow, to leave it, not for the purpose of sulking in my tent, but in order to try some other form of propaganda.

“I ought now to explain what would drive me out of the League, and how far I could meet our friends who are so anxious to have us take part in *Parliamentary action*.)1L. A mere abstract resolution that we *might* have to send members to Parliament at some time or other would not drive me out. But I believe, *with you*, that, whatever they may think, our parliamentary friends would not be able to stop there, and that a necessary consequence of the passing of the Croydon resolution would have to be the issue of a program involving electioneering in the near future, and the immediate putting forward of a program of palliative measures to be carried through Parliament; some such program, in short, as the ‘Stepping Stones’ of the S.D.F., which *I always disagreed with*.

“Such a step I could not support; for I could not Drench in favor of such measures (since I don’t believe in their efficacy) without lying and subterfuge, which are, surely, always anti-social.

“I hope you understand my position. I recapitulate:—

- “1. Under no circumstances will I give up active propaganda,
- “2. I will make every effort to keep the League together.
- “3. We should treat Parliament as a representative of the enemy.
- “4. We *might*, for some definite purpose, be forced to send members to Parliament as rebels.

“5. But under *no circumstances* to help to carry on the Government of the country.

”6. And, *therefore, we ought not to put forward palliative measures to be carried through Parliament, for that would be helping them to govern us.*

“7. If the League declares for this latter step it ceases to be what I thought it was, and I must try to do what I can outside it.

“8. But short of that I will work inside. it.”

Items 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 read together are very definite, and completely refute the attempt of the Communist Party to claim William Morris, in his Socialist League days, as a champion of the Communist Party policy. Morris here definitely repudiates all palliative proposals and the united front policy of parliamentarism, for which the C.P. stands. His “*rebels*” are very different persons from the C.P. members of Parliament. What he says is that we must not send Socialists to Parliament as legislators. That is correct. But he has not thought out how we shall send them. It is now quite clear, with the growing collapse of parliamentarism, what has to be done. We can write more definitely, more clearly, and, if less beautifully, yet more distinctly than Morris. It is all the fortune of time and circumstance. Watch the evolution of economic doctrine : note the respective doctrines of the Physiocrats, Adam Smith, Ricardo, and Malthus, Sisimondi, and St. Simon, on to Marx: the gradual yet definite evolution that so smoothly effects a complete revolution of vision and understanding in the matter of the dismal science; and then realize that the voice of William Morris, inevitably, must be, however powerful, less distinct than ours to-day. There is something immortal in every thinker, yet the thinker is not immortal. To-day, William Morris’s points 3, 4, 5, and 6 can only have one meaning. Parliament is the representative of the enemy and must be treated as such. Under *no circumstances* must the workers return members to Parliament to talk and to legislate. They only can be returned, *if* returned at all, to liquidate and to abolish parliamentarism: *i.e.*, as rebels and ambassadors, to state the case against parliamentarism before the bar of the House of ‘Commons, to refuse to take any oaths or make any declarations of allegiance, to decline to sit in the Commons, to work outside on the streets, preparing workers’ opinion for the coming social change, evolving the conception of the new social order, building up the new social structure within the shell of the old. This is the furthest one can depart from the complete boycott of the ballot-box. And side by side with such departure, there must be developed a powerful and effective agitation for boycotting the ballot-box so that Laborism can never be represented in parliament: for industrialism, not parliamentarism, is the parent of the new social order. Labor Parliamentarism is the last bulwark of capitalism. Its negation will destroy political society.

The parliamentarians were routed and William Morris now found himself the center of a struggle between the Communist and Anarchist elements. He is pleased at the rout of the parliamentarians, but has no sympathy with Anarchy. The division is lamentable but *not* discouraging.

Morris writes to Bruce Glasier on March 19, 1890, detailing his pessimism and the grounds for it. He anticipates the passing of the *Commonweal* and the Socialist League, but is no longer troubled by it. He adds :—

“Socialism is spreading, I suppose, on the only lines on which it could spread: and the League is moribund simply because we are outside these lines as I, for one, must

always be: but I shall be able to do just as much work in the movement when the League is gone – as I do now.

”The main cause of the failure, which was obvious at least two years ago, is that you cannot keep a body together without giving it something to do in the present, and now, since people will willingly listen to Socialist doctrine, our rank and file have nothing to do.”

This seems a strange and rather naive conclusion. What can the parliamentarians give their rank and file to do in the present? What have they given the rank and file to do except to toil in misery and employ their spare time in sacrificing to make a leader’s career and holiday? There is real work for Anti-Parliamentarism and Anti-Parliamentary organization to attend to: the real work of enunciating Socialism, of spreading the word, of exposing the futility of capitalist reformism, of emancipating the workers from their slavish regard and respect for capitalist honors and honor. It is a giant’s task, lending inspiration and content to the life of each man and woman who participates in it: the complete undermining of the capitalist system, the death of an allegiance to it in the hearts of men. That he stumbled on the threshold of greatness, that he failed so completely in final clearness of vision, earns for Morris our sorrow. So near—and yet so far!

How strange that it should require so many philosophers to vision the new social order! How awkwardly each visions! St. Simon saw clearly the idea Morris was groping for, saw it years before Morris was born: the liquidation of all political society, the complete industrialization of society. And Proudhon discovers the true explanation of the non-appeal of Anti-Parliamentarism: the tendency of the oppressed to exhaust the power of established and entrenched law and custom to alleviate social misery, before swinging to the side of revolution for the solution by social change. This is the law of progress, of evolving social revolution. Inevitable inherent conservatism which secures finally the triumph of the revolution.

Morris writes to Glasier, in November, 1891, explaining his determination to stand aloof, equally, from uninformed Anarchist agitation and from parliamentary action. He described the two parties struggling for supremacy in the Socialist League: “the old Communist one, with which it began, and the Anarchist.” The result is constant quarrel. Morris adds :—

“I have gone through this, as you well know, before; and I am determined never to stand it again. As soon as there are two parties in any body I am in, then out I go.”

Morris explains the position and strength of the Hammersmith Branch, and concludes that the best policy is to break from the Socialist League and form the Hammersmith Socialist Society, which “will disclaim both parliamentarism and Anarchism.” He explains his feelings:

”Call a general conference? To what end? What more could we discover at it than that we didn’t agree? Besides, these conferences are really bogus affairs. In short my dear boy, whenever you want to get rid of me, you need never put on your boots. I never wait to be *kicked* downstairs.”

The triumph of the Anarchists was the inevitable consequence of the justifiable expulsion of the Bloomsbury Branch, and Morris intended his article on David Nicoll’s folly as “farewell” to

the League. He had no intention of remaining in the League after that and fighting the Anarchists and he could not cooperate with them:

“For, in good truth, I would almost as soon join a White Rose Society as an Anarchist one; such nonsense as I deem the latter.”

We know what a broken reed Bruce Glasier turned out to be. David Nicoll, whose attack on Scotland Yard Morris denounced as being foolish and ineffective, died in poverty and madness, years after his release from prison. It was a pathetic sight to see him at Socialist meetings endeavoring to sell the products of his insanity, for he had been broken in the workers' cause. We remember him well as a figure at the Chandos Hall, Charlotte Street Club, and Jubilee Street meetings in London. He will be remembered to the end of the workers' struggle by his new version of the Marseillaise, written in his clays of hope and strength and valorous dedication :-

Ye sons of freedom, wake! 'tis morning,  
'Tis time from slumber to arise,  
On high the redden'd sun gives warning  
That day is here, the black night flies.  
That day is here, the black night flies.  
And will ye lie In sleep for ever?  
Shall tyrants always crush you down?  
Lo, they have reaped and ye have sown.  
The time hath come your bonds to sever.

CHORUS.

To arms! to arms! again!  
The Red Flag waves on high!  
March on! march on!  
A gallant band  
March on—to liberty.

Long have yee heard your children weeping,  
For bread they cried in vain to you.  
Why do you lie there dreaming, sleeping.  
When there is work and deeds to do?  
When there is work and deeds to do?  
Your lords and masters pile their plunder  
They feast and prey and do not spare.  
But from your weary toil and care  
They wring the wealth at which ye wonder.

Chorus:

Tho' force and fraud alike oppose you,  
Yet in your hand is skill and power.  
And tho' the tyrant hosts enclose you  
And overhead the black clouds lower.  
And overhead the black clouds lower.  
Yet what are force and fraud before ye  
But as the leaves of autumn trees  
Borne wildly forward on the breeze  
When the storm rises in its fury.

Chorus:

On every side as loud as thunder  
The tramp of nations now is heard  
Enlisting freedom's banner under  
Obedient to her sovereign word.  
Obedient to her sovereign word.  
No dungeons then or chains shall tame us  
Nor scourge nor gallows tree affright  
For freedom's ensign waving bright  
With scorn of danger doth inflame us.

Chorus:

There is another version, in which the first line of the chorus has been altered to "Arise! arise! ye brave! " But why should the brave arise, if not to do battle? "To arms!" does not necessarily imply murder. It means struggle ending in triumph, without depicting the exact character of the struggle. The alteration seems a little hypocritical or, at least, pedantic.

Author's Note. – David Nicoll's story is told in greater detail in an appendix in *Discarded Dogmas*, Part II.

## Chapter 3 : Malatesta

Enrico Malatesta, born in Capua, on December 4th, 1853, went to Naples to study pharmacology, and immediately came under the influence of Bakunin, in 1871. His interest for me consists in the fact that he was a direct link between Bakunin and the anti-parliamentary propaganda that I commenced in London in 1906. The story of my association with Malatesta was told in the *Herald of Revolt* for June, 1912, and need not be repeated here. I remember Malatesta listening to one of my meetings at the corner of Garnault Place, Clerkenwell, before I became an Anti-Parliamentarian. As I was going away with my platform, he stopped me and said : "You are a strange person to be English because you are destined to be an Anarchist." Although I was never personally very intimate with Malatesta, he made a point after that of attending a large number of the meetings that I held in Clerkenwell. When he did speak he stuck to this theory that I was destined to continue the development of Anarchist thought in Britain. Because of this contact at the very beginning of my anti-parliamentary activity, and because of his own association with Bakunin in his own youth but a few years before Bakunin died, I regard him as a natural link between the activity of the great contemporary of Marx and the movement that I have endeavored to develop in Great Britain, very largely in face of the opposition of the alleged friends of Malatesta and the alleged disciples of Bakunin.

At an early age Malatesta read Mignet's "History" of the French Revolution. He thrilled at the popular struggle and like most young Italians of that time became an ardent republican. It was Mazzini's denunciation of the Paris Commune that turned him into a Socialist. He decided to throw in his lot with those who defended the Commune and he joined the Naples section of the International Working Men's Association. This section was not in the most flourishing condition. Its most conspicuous member was the ill-fated Carlo Cafiero, at that time a wealthy man of boundless enthusiasm and devotion. Cafiero was intimate with Marx and Engels whereas Malatesta was identified with the principles of Bakunin. He undertook to disentangle Cafiero from all Marx's intrigues and to persuade him and Fanelli to meet Bakunin at Locarno. Malatesta succeeded and both of these Italian comrades stayed with Bakunin one month from May 20th to June 18th, 1872. Bakunin's diary records their daily discussion and their mapping out of a definite plan of revolutionary organization.

Malatesta was now in the closest relations with Bakunin and arranged a conference of the Italian sections at Rimini, August, 1872, which brought into being what was known as the Italian Federation of the International Working Men's Association. This was organized during the month of September as a secret alliance at Zurich where Malatesta rejoined Bakunin on September the 7th. He had refused to attend the Hague Conference and went direct to Zurich from Rimini. Four days after his arrival, Cafiero and the Spanish Internationalists arrived from the Hague. On September the 12th and 13th the definite constitution of Bakunin's secret alliance was evolved. Ten days later Malatesta returned to Naples in order to devote himself to agitation and organization. He was the youngest member of the circle that assembled at Zurich and was nicknamed *Benjamin* on that account. To those of us who knew Malatesta in his age, notwith-

standing his boundless enthusiasm and energy, the vision of him as Benjamin is one hard to conceive. The attempt to do so brings home to us the tremendous gulf of years that separates us from the time of Bakunin and shows with what patience one must pursue the path of revolution. A revolutionist is sometimes depicted as a man in a hurry. On the contrary, he is the man who survives the ravages of time. It is the reformist who believes in the idea of haste. The revolutionist wants speed.

In March, 1873, Malatesta was arrested as a common criminal for being a member of a secret society of Socialists. With him were arrested Cafiero, Alceste Faggioli, and Andrea Costa. The latter was responsible for persuading Bakunin to participate in the abortive Italian insurrection of 1874. Five years after that disastrous activity Costa entered the Italian parliament as a Socialist and repudiated Anarchism.

After fifty-four days, Malatesta and his colleagues were released. Cafiero went to Barletta in order to realize money for the cause. Malatesta proceeded to Locarno where he rejoined Bakunin and then passed on to Barletta to join Cafiero in revolutionary work. He was again arrested and was kept in prison from July, 1873, until January, 1874, without either charge or trial. He was then released without explanation. The same month the secret appeals of the Italian Committee for the Social Revolution began to be circulated. This activity was largely syndicalist. The economic conditions of the working-class in Italy at this time were terrible. It could not be said that wages followed prices nor yet that prices followed wages, for as the wages fell the price of food rose and the people were plunged into starvation. The result was that working men without Socialist or Anarchist ideas plundered shops everywhere. The Bakunists felt they could not disavow these popular acts so they declared their solidarity with them. Malatesta justified this endorsement on the following grounds : "Revolution consists more in facts than in words, and whenever a spontaneous movement of the people takes place, whenever the workers rise in the name of their rights and their dignity, it is the duty of every revolutionary Socialist to declare himself solitary with the movement in question.

It was at this point that Costa persuaded Bakunin to work for a general insurrection to be times to occur in Italy in the summer of 1874. Bakunin had his better experience of Lyons of 1870 to draw upon; he knew that Garibaldi and the Mazzinians has no taste for the Social Revolution; yet he yielded to the persuasions of Costa who was destined to turn parliamentarism of the worst description. Malatesta was not in contact with Bakunin at the time that this decision was arrived at. He was called upon merely to forward the insurrection when it was too late to change the intention. There resulted the arrest of the Mazzinian Conference in the village Ruffi, near Rimini, on 2nd August, 1874, and the ill-fated outbreaks near Bologna, Florence and elsewhere, where Bakunin played his part. Bakunin has kept a record of this period of anxiety, distress, and error in his diary from July 13th to October 13th. Malatesta kept no record but he worked in Apulia as a gun-runner. The rifles were sent to Tarent and reposed in the custom house there as hardware. The intention was to seize the custom house and so obtain the "where-withal." This proved impracticable and the "hardware" was forwarded from custom house to custom house all over Apulia. The peasants did not respond to the insurrectionary appeal and finally the internationalists escaped to Naples hidden under the hay in hay carts. Malatesta remained in hiding at Naples for a few days but was arrested at Pesaro, on his journey to Switzerland, in August, 1874. He remained in prison, untried, until August 5th, 1875. On that day he was released following his triumphant acquittal at the great trial at Trani. This trial led to acquittals all over Italy and also annulled the ferocious sentences which had been passed on the prisoners at the opening trial of



these series of suppressions for internationalist "conspiracies," at Rome, in May, 1875. In some of the trials the Assizes were of monstrous length, the Bologna trial lasting from March 15th to June 17th, 1876. It should be explained that the prisoners had been jailed waiting trial since August, 1874. Until the final acquittal was secured the comrades who had been acquitted earlier had to restrain their activity and refrain from propaganda so as not to compromise the case of those in prison. This period of rest prove irksome to Malatesta.

After his release Malatesta went to Locarno and stayed a few days with Cafiero, who was now bitterly opposed to Bakunin. He proceeded to Lugano where he made his last visit to Bakunin. The rupture between Cafiero and Bakunin began in July, 1874, and become complete in September of that year, subsiding into a silent animosity after having received definite expression on September 25th. Bakunin's revolutionary efforts were now at an end owing to his physical sufferings, his terrible poverty, and the resulting intense depression from which he was suffering. Both Bakunin and Cafiero persuade Malatesta to proceed to Spain and to work for the liberation of Alerini, a Marseille comrade who had been in prison there since 1873 owing to his activity in the Barcelona movement. Alerini had helped Bakunin to escape from Marseille to Genoa in the autumn of 1870 and now the service was to be repaid. Malatesta met Marago at Madrid. The latter was the most advanced Spanish internationalist of his time. In Cadiz he was well received and allowed to spend an entire day in the prison with Alerini and thirty or forty of the Cartagena, Alcoy, and Cadiz prisoners of 1873. As I have pointed out in other essays the unreformed prisons in every country in Europe, including Britain, were far superior to the reform prisons that have come into existence since 1832. In some respects the conditions were less clean and there were more brutality. But there were less callousness, more general freedom, and above all greater opportunities of escape. Malatesta visited the town with Alerini and two warders. He had no difficulty in getting permission for this to take place, Here the two warders were made drunk and Alerini could have had escaped but he refuse to go away on principle. The result was that he and Malatesta experienced a great deal of trouble in restoring the drunken warders to the prison. The next day Alerini and Malatesta went to town again, this time with only one warder, Malatesta made this warder durnk but Alerini refused to escape. So again they had to take a drunken warder back to prison. This finished Malatesta who decided to leave Alerini to his prison and to proceed to Naples. Here he met Stepniak. He proceeded to Rome where he went into private conference with Cafiero, Grassi, and other former or actual associates of Bakunin. This conference was held in the spring of 1876 and received Bakunin's last message, which was transmitted by Serafino Mazzotti. The re-organization of the International along Anarchist lines was decided and a congress was arranged for Florence to take place in October, 1876, Malatesta was forced to leave Rome and to live at Napels by order of the government.

That Malatesta was not clear in his Anarchist or Socialist ideas at this time, and that his insurrectionary impulse developed by his association with Bakunin was not absolutely identified with Socialism, are facts made clear by his desire to fight at this period in Siberia against the Turks. In 1875, the Russian revolutionists, Stepniak, Klemmens, and Ross had joined the Herzegovinian insurgents. Despite their revolutionary experiences in Russia, they were primarily intellectuals and in any event, the case of these insurgents however romantically approached had nothing to do with Socialism. It is not surprising to discover that they had no sooner joined the insurgents that they deserted them and returned to their happier exile in Italy. Garibaldi encouraged this movement. His encouragement was communicated to the Socialists by Celso Cerretti, who was a link between Garibaldianism and Internationalism. This caused noted internationalists

like Alceste Faggioli to take the side of the insurgents. It was very largely a matter of prestige, 'The Garibaldian fought and would not stay at home' it was the eve of the Russian war and anti-Turkish sentiment ran high; Gladstone had risen to superb heights of oratory in his denunciation of the Turks; Garibaldi had declared against them; it was almost like a day to day struggle and the Anarchist-Socialists, quite contrary to common sense and every principle of logic, felt that they could not stand out of the fray. They must show that they were at least as brave as other people. Malatesta decided to take up arms against Turkey. It must be confessed that at this time Bakunin kept his head. He communicated the rebuke to Malatesta and all the other Anarchists who were for war on Turkey and declared that such absurd doings reminded him of the good people who made socks for the heathen negroes they never saw and forgot the half-naked and more than starved poor who lived at home in their own city and from time to time cast them on the streets. Malatesta was indignant and replied that whenever war is made on Carthage, Rome is defended. He set out for Trieste, and was turned back. He set out again and was turned back at Neusatz. At Udine he was mistaken for a runaway customs officer and after being imprisoned for a fortnight was returned to Naples. He spent the summer of 1886 here and passed the time in discussion with Cafiero and Emilio Covelli. They decided to replace the ideas of collectivist Anarchism with those of Communist Anarchism. The next congress held at Berne on October 26th to 30th, immediately following the congress at Florence. This congress over, Cafiero, then reduced to absolute poverty through having given his fortune to the movement and having been robbed by comrades and others, with Malatesta began to search for work.

The Anarchist movement, disheartened by the failure of insurrectionary tactics, and oppressed by the futility of parliamentary, now began to consider propaganda by deed. There is no mystery about origin of such propaganda. I have dealt with this in other essays specially devoted to the subject. It arises quite naturally from the sense of wrong, from the desire to revolt, and from a general feeling of oppressive futility. Not quite in the form that it subsequently assumed in the case of Ravachol and others, but in a kind of transitional expression between insurrection on the one hand and the individual deed on the other, Cafiero and Malatesta now settled upon such an undertaking. In 1869, Bakunin had suggested to some Bulgarian revolutionists who had consulted him at Geneva, a local insurrection. Whether the Italians were aware of this advice or not one cannot say, but it is a fact that Malatesta and Cafiero conspired to bring about a small insurrection in the villages of Letino and Gallo. The insurrection took place on April 6th, 1877. Stepniak wrote an insurrectionary Manuel for them. In all, 300 people were involved. But as the chief local conspirator was a police agent they were all arrested before the insurrection took place. Since Malatesta and Cafiero escaped the peasants mistrusted them. At last the insurrection became a fact. Twenty-eight people in all revolted, burned the official records, and distributed the goods they had confiscated among the common people. Of course they were surrounded by military and arrested. They remained in preventive imprisonment - that is imprisonment prior to being charged - At Capua, Malatesta's birthplace for one year. The death of Victor Emmanuel I, caused political changes in April, 1878. They were rearrested and indicted for the manslaughter of two gendarmes who had met their death during the insurrection. They were brought to trial in August, 1878, but the jury acquitted them after a week's hearing. During this imprisonment Cafiero wrote his abbreviation of Marx's "Capital". Malatesta explained to Nettlau at a later date that they all, Bakunin included, theoretically fully accepted the criticism that Marx applied to the Capitalist system and were enthusiastic Marxists.

After the trial Malatesta spent a month at Naples and then traveled to Egypt. After Passante's attempt on the life of King Umberto, he was arrested Parini and Alvino and transported to Beyrout in Syria. Here he was released, it being understood that he would return to Italy. Instead he worked his way from port to port on a French ship and finally arrived safe at Marseille. The captain of the vessel refused to hand him over to the Italian authorities although they demanded this at Smyrna, Castellmare, and Leghorn. From Marseille he traveled to Geneva and assisted at the founding of Kropotkin's paper, the *Revolte*. this was in February, 1878. With other Anarchists he was now perpetually expelled from Switzerland, although he subsequently returned there despite this expulsion. He went to Rumania and here found employment but was compelled to leave owing to fever. He returned to Paris and assisted in the development of the Anarchist movement which had been initiated there in 1877 by some French Anarchist Internationalists who had got in touch with Andrea Costa. Costa was arrested and imprisoned, where his ideas underwent a change on the subject of parliamentary. Cafiero and Malatesta were expelled from France for Anarchism in 1880. Under a false passport Malatesta traveled to London via Switzerland. He returned to Paris and was sentenced to four and a half months solitary confinement.

On his release Malatesta went to Brussels. here he challenged Paul Lafarge to a duel because Lafarge had attacked the Spanish Anarchists including Morago. Many of the Spanish comrades had died in struggle and others with were in prison. when one considers how the Spanish Anarchists have struggled down the years for freedom in Spain; when one remembers that during the time German and Austrian Social Democrats were pursuing their useless parliamentary fancies the Spanish Anarchists were being jailed and murdered for their cause; and when one realizes that when at last the Austrian Social Democrats were driven by circumstance to fight and die heroically for their cause at the barricades and on the streets, the Spanish Anarchists were also fighting and dying in the cause of liberty; then one's sympathies go out to Malatesta and his protest against Lafarge's insults. I do not say that one sympathizes with his idea of deulling. Quite rightly, Lafarge refused to accept the challenge. But he did not withdraw his attacks on the Spanish Anarchists. It is strange to think that, as pointed out in my essay on Bakunin, Marx was haunted at this time by imagination that his two sons-in- law, Lafarge and Longuet, were the last Anarchists, whilst both were bitterly opposed to Anarchism, and whilst the Anarchists, inspired by Bakunin and by Caifero from his prison cell were putting their hearts and souls into the taks of explaining and popularizing the work of Marx.

Following upon the Lafargue episode, Malatesta was expelled from Belgium and settled in London for about three years dating form the end of 1890. he was a delegate at an International Revolutionary Congress which was convened in the summer of 1881. here he associated with Kropotkin, Merlino, John Lane and Frank Kitz. In 1882 the death of Garibaldi caused Malatesta to publish his first signed article in Lothrop Withington's *Democratic Review*. With him in exile was Cafiero. Malatesta witnessed the total decline of the latter's intellect and his passage into imbecility and lunacy.

In the *Grido del Popolo* of July 21st, 1881, Cafiero published a letter charging Costa with ambition, vanity, and hypocrisy for his parliamentary intrigues and repudiation of Anarchism. He collected materials for the biography of Bakunin and mislaid most valuable documents. He prepared the publication of "god and the State" with Elisee Reclus, and this edition was published from Geneva in 1882. He also put before Malatesta, Ceccarelli and other Anarchists the outlines of a plan of parliamentary tactics whereby the Anarchist and Socialists could unite for the development of the revolutionary movement without compromise and without resorting to any

further abortive attempts to insurrection or abortive propaganda by deed. Although his Anarchist comrades were against him at this point, Cafiero declined to be turned from his purpose. He left London in March, 1882, and proceeded to Milan where he published the letter proclaiming his policy on October 27th, 1882. He was unable to defend his ideas in discussion because soon after he became insane and was placed in asylum. After several months of horror here the Italian authorities decided to release him and to conduct him to the Swiss frontier. They were anxious that an Anarchist should not die in asylum in case they should be suspected of maltreating him. At the Swiss frontier he tried to commit suicide but was saved by his comrades and underwent treatment at the hands of Bakunin's Tessinese friend, E. Bellerio. He recovered slightly but refused to stay outside of Italy. On February 13th, 1883, he was again placed in an asylum by the Italian Government owing to his grave mental condition. He was discharged many years later but his health had been wrecked and he soon died.

The circumstances that caused Cafiero to endeavor to work out some kind of political expression of Anarchism in common with revolutionary Socialism also changed the nature of Malatesta's propaganda. he gave up the insurrectionary tactics of arms and came forward as the avowed propagandist. He endeavored to create an anti-parliamentary atmosphere and to develop a proletarian faith in revolutionary Anarchism with arguments and appeals to reason. He went to war with logic and common-sense against the fallacies and allurements of parliamentary. Whether my Anarchist comrades recognize it or not, this was a definite development of what Daniel De Leon terms activity on the civilized plane. Quite definitely in my opinion, such propaganda activity not only comes within the category of political action but it is the most fundamental and more useful form of political action. It changes the outlook of the common people and prepares a social psychology and also an individual psychology which finally breaks down all tyranny and undermines all transient appeals to violence. At the end of the social struggle it is the mind of the people and no mere power of arms that will prevail. Mind has a physical basis but it declines to acknowledge a physical conquest. Mind came after matter in order that mind might conquer matter. This fact is forgotten by all dictators and by most persons who believe in the appeal to violence. I do not disbelieve in the effectiveness of insurrection at certain periods of crisis. I am not opposed to the test of violence on certain critical occasions. But I do protest that when violence decides to act contrary to dictates of reason and to the harmony of the human mind it degenerates the violence in the worst sense of the term and having become disorder is naturally and inevitably overthrown. Nature no more stands for the degradation and the enslavement of the mind of man than it stands for a vacuum.

Malatesta selected Florence for the publication of the paper that expressed this new attitude. He called his paper *La Questione Sociale*, and it flourished from 1884 to 1885. All previous Anarchist papers had been fighting papers. They were newsy and violent and their news was not always of the greatest importance. But this was a propagandist paper, the first real propagandist paper of the Anarchist and Anti-Parliamentary movement. It initiated a campaign against parliamentary socialism and maintained this campaign consistently and continuously. It created a revolutionary socialist mind and gave a clear Socialist understanding. It pioneered a movement and one that could not be destroyed. To its columns Malatesta contributed the most popular of his pamphlets, like his "Talk between the Two Workers." Needless to say this continuous propaganda of Anarchism was cut short by prosecution. Malatesta had to choose between imprisonment for alleged offenses against the press and speech laws of Italy, or voluntary exile. Feeling that he had spent enough of his youth in prison he decided on exile and left Europe altogether for the

Argentine Republic. He lived here from 1885 till 1889 and conducted a vigorous Anarchist propaganda and threw himself into syndicalist activity. Meantime a court in Rome had condemned him, in 1885, during his absence.

He returned to Europe and settled in Nice where on September 6th, 1889, he published *L'Associazione*, a large paper similar in style to his *Questione Sociale*. At this time an agent provocateur of the Italian Government, named Carlo Terzaghi, was active under an assumed name. Terzaghi had been exposed as early as 1872 by Cafiero and Malatesta now recognized the spy's hand-writing. This ended the spy's activity and must have saved many comrades from imprisonment. But it also ended Malatesta's activity. After the second number of the paper was published Malatesta was compelled to seek asylum in London. This was in October, 1889, where he joined William Morris's and Belfort Bax's Socialist League. He published his paper at Fulham and it survived seven numbers, the last being issued on January 23rd, 1890. Malatesta had collected a printing fund and was arranging for the production of illegal Italian pamphlets. But the printer ran away with the money and this activity came to an end. After this Malatesta contented himself for a time by contributing to the French Anarchist papers.

In describing Malatesta's career up to this time I omitted to mention that at the end of 1883 Malatesta returned to Italy, notwithstanding the fact that he was liable to imprisonment for so doing. He went to Naples to nurse in a hospital the victims of the terrible epidemic of Cholera that was then raging the country. The Italian Government suspended its charge against him in order that he might render this service to his fellow citizens. Many other Anarchists did the same and of course Socialists also. Costa was among these and also the editor of the Anarchist paper, *Proximus Tmcs*, who met his death as a result of his heroism in this matter.

Malatesta had learned Spanish in Spain but more particularly in South America. In 1891, he suddenly disappeared from London and organized a tour of Anarchist meetings and lectures all over Spain till well into 1892. Then came the Xeres revolt and his lectures were stopped by order of the Spanish Government. He then turned his attention to Italy and was arrested at Lugano by the Swiss Government for endeavoring to organize an Italian movement from Switzerland. He was arrested for transgressing the expulsion degree of 1879 and threatened with extradition to Italy. This raised an outcry and after a few week's imprisonment he was allowed to return to London. Actually, London was his home until the spring of 1894, for his visits to Spain, to Switzerland, and at May periods to France were always made from London. This was actually his permanent domicile.

In 1893, the Sicilian peasants were on the eve of insurrection and the old exiled Anarchists secretly returned to Italy. The ex-lawyer, Merlino, was among these. The authorities discovered him and he was chased by police through the public park of Naples and arrested in an utterly exhausted condition. Malatesta also returned to Italy and at once became the bugbear of the authorities. Rewards were issued for his capture and the press published reports of him being seen everywhere. His adventures of 1893 to 1894 make similar reading to those of the Sinn Feiners in Ireland prior to the establishment of the Irish Free State.

After Italy, Malatesta turned his attention to America. Merlino had emigrated to the United States in 1892 and on June 5th of that year started an Italian paper at New York entitled the *Grido degli Oppressi*. A fortnight later Edelman founded *Solidarity*. Malatesta never mastered the English language and was unable to identify himself with the English speaking propaganda. Accordingly, having been driven out of Italy and re-association with Merlino having directed his attention to America, he gave up his London domicile for the time being and migrated to the

United States. Here, during 1895, he identified himself with the Italian and Spanish propaganda. He returned to London after a year's activity and discovered that he was able to return to Italy through a special amnesty having been granted to him. He took full advantage of this and at once became the life and soul of an intense Anarchist propaganda throughout Italy and established his third propaganda paper. *L'Agitazione* one was published by him first at Ancona on March 14th, 1897, and afterwards at Rome. A year later he was driven from Italy by a new prosecution and his paper was seized. He was arrested, thrown into prison, and then transported by the Italian Government to an island penitentiary in the Mediterranean. From here he escaped and made his way to London for his third London exile, which lasted from 1899 to the spring of 1913. During this period his Italian comrades continued to publish the journal he had founded. In order to overcome seizure it had to constantly change its name and appeared under various titles, such as *Agitatore*, *Agitiamoci*, *l'ro Agitazione*, etc., until 1906.

His life in London was not without adventure. He was menaced with arrest during the Houndsditch affair of 1911 which is better known by its cumulation in the Sidney Street siege where Winston Churchill, with the aid of the guards, the fire brigade, Scotland Yard, and the local police, more or less distinguished himself as a battling Home Secretary. It should be mentioned that all the persons arrested in connection with this affair were acquitted after trial. On May 20th, 1912, Malatesta was sentenced to three months' imprisonment for alleged criminal libel with a recommendation for his deportation. In connection with this affair I organized the Malatesta Relief Committee which was repudiated by a number of the Anarchists who organized an opposition Defense Committee. The Relief Committee, however, organized a tremendous demonstration in Trafalgar Square and the deportation was withdrawn.

In 1913, Malatesta decided that the time had come for another Italian campaign and he returned to Italy where he established his paper *Volanta* at Ancona on June 8th, 1913. The career of this paper ended in June, 1914, being cut short by a popular uprising in Ancona and the smaller towns of the Romagna, in which Anarchists, Socialists, Revolutionary Republicans, and anti-Clericals united in street fighting against the Government.

This was a defeat so far as the street fighting was concerned. But this was followed by a rapid propaganda recovery. Malatesta had again to leave Italy in disguise after an amazing number of adventures. His comrades lost sight of him until he turned up in Geneva and soon afterwards reached London. Here the war overtook him, and Malatesta took his stand against Kropotkin and the war-mongers in a very clear statement of his anti-militarist views. In 1919, he determined to return again to Italy and persuaded the Italian Consul to give him a passport. The French Government refused to allow him to travel through France and with great difficulty he discovered a ship that gave him a passage to Genoa where he landed in December, 1919, and received an enthusiastic welcome from the Italian workers. He was arrested in Toscana but released as a result of threatened general strike. He established a daily paper, *Umanita Nova*, in Milan. This paper was finally suppressed by Fascism.

After the establishment of Fascism in Italy, Malatesta's life was a tragedy. The supervision of the police with which he was harassed not only affected his material conditions but also reduced him to a state of absolute isolation. Mussolini knew Malatesta well and is said to have expressed considerable respect for him. This respect notwithstanding, the Government certainly made it dangerous for anyone to be known as Malatesta's friend, or to visit him, to recognize him in the street, or to write to him on any pretext. Whatever citizen of Italy made even the mildest approach to a recognition of Malatesta was destined to become a victim of Fascist persecution.

Malatesta was allowed to correspond with his foreign friends and even to send them articles. But the answers were opened and if there was any mention of his Italian friends, that again served as an excuse for further imprisonment. All this came to an end when Malatesta died on July 22nd, 1932.

In death it is given to us to estimate the worth of a man and to pay tribute to his importance as a revolutionary pioneer. Malatesta represented that rare type whose entire being is a challenge to all the traditions and governing principles of Capitalist society. He subordinated the whole of his being to the furtherance of an idea. He put principle before principal. His interest was life and not money and not power. Born in the bourgeoisie, a student at the University at Naples, he abandoned everything when the moment arrived to choose his way. He cast aside all bonds of family and repudiated his small inherited properties. He made presents of these to the peasants who occupied them on the ground that they were his neighbors. He abandoned all bourgeois aspirations and gave up all idea of bourgeois welfare and material security. He gave up his medical studies in order to become a mechanic and an electrical engineer. From this time on he earned his living as a worker, often being reduced to the gutter and at times being in absolute want of a meal. When unable to obtain a job he occasionally turned street hawker. All the time he was possessed by this idea, the emancipation of the common people. His entire life offered a distinct contrast to the labor leader and the politician. There is no metaphysical complication, no interested subtlety of thought about his sentiment or his ideas. His life is simple and candid. As far as possible, living under class society, he tried to be governed by the ultimate ideals of Anarchy, Commonwealth, and Freedom which can only find expression in a new society of which, from his youth to his old age, he was such a fearless and untiring pioneer.

## Chapter 4 : Johann Most

John Most was born in Bavaria on the 5th of February, 1846. He was a bookbinder by trade, but owing to his roaming disposition he delighted in tramping from town to town and country to country. In this way he had a good opportunity of getting into contact with the Working Class Movement, and in 1869 he became an ardent Republican, Socialist and Atheist.

About this time Most went to Vienna where, for his severe criticism of the Government, he spent several months in prison. Then, on his release, he took part in organizing the Demonstration of December, 1869, at which about 20,000 working men demanded Manhood Suffrage, the result of which ended in the arrest of the leaders, among whom were John Most and Andreas Scheu. They were charged with High Treason, and after a long trial Most and Scheu were sentenced to six years imprisonment. In February, 1871, an unexpected amnesty liberated the prisoners, but Most was expelled from Austria.

In Mainz, where he edited a Social Democratic paper, Most, at the request of the workers, stood as a Member for the Reichstag, believing he could expose the poverty of the workers and propagate his remedy—Revolutionary Socialism. But, to his great disappointment, he found that his Parliamentary efforts were utterly futile.

In Berlin in 1874, Most delivered a speech on the Paris Commune, and was immediately arrested and sentenced to two years imprisonment. On the expiry of his sentence he was given the editorship of the *Berlin Free Press*, the largest Organ of German Socialism. Under the editorship of Most, this paper became remarkable for its independent tone, unlike the papers edited by the Lassalleans, Bebel and Liebknecht. He attacked the Christian Socialist Movement with a vigorous Freethought Propaganda among Socialists, being determined that the virus of the God Idea should be completely eliminated from the Socialist ranks.

While in prison in 1878, the Anti-Socialist Law was passed, which meant, that upon liberation, Most was expelled from Berlin. On his release from prison, Most went to London, where the German Communist Working Men's Club enabled him to publish *Freiheit* (Freedom)—the paper which became his real life's work. The first number was issued on the 4th of January, 1879. The paper was written in strong terse language which placed it in the forefront of German Socialist literature. It was forbidden in Germany, but was smuggled into that country by various ingenious methods. It was very popular among German workers who were being satiated by the sophistry of the Social Democrats. As the paper continued, its progress developed from Revolutionary Socialism to Anarchist Communism.

Most, with the help of a few energetic comrades continued to publish *Freiheit*, until the English Government came to the assistance of Bismarck and put Most into prison under the pretext that his article entitled "Endlich!" (At Last!)—on the execution of Alexander II. of Russia by the Nihilists - - incited to the murder of kings in general. This was in March, 1881. In spite of the indignation of Radicals and Socialists at this Press persecution, and the eloquent speech for the defense by A. M. Sullivan, M.P., Lord Coleridge sentenced Most to eighteen months hard labor.



There can be no doubt that Most's prosecution was urged upon the then British Government by Bismarck. Alexander II. was killed by Rousakoff, Sophie Perovskaya, and some other Nihilists. on March 13, 1881. Most issued his *Freiheit*, in German, from the Rose Street Club on Saturday, March 19. Surrounded by Russian and German refugees, the victims and enemies of Absolute Government, Most rejoiced in this act of terrorism. He expressed his vow that this killing was no murder. a view held by tyrannicides down the ages. The danger of this view is that it was subscribed to by the assassin of Abraham Lincoln and in the case of the most famous of American Presidents, appears more like an act of liberticide than tyrannicide. The Czar's tyranny was a fact beyond dispute, although the wisdom of the assassination can be questioned. The *Freiheit*, applauding the deed as an execution, reached Germany, and came to the notice of Bismarck. He complained to Earl Granville and Most was prosecuted.

Most was arrested. All his papers and documents were seized. He was hurried to Bow Street, committed for trial, and refused bail. Whilst in prison, awaiting trial, he was dragged forcibly to Church, despite his protests that he was an Atheist. He was made to wear prison garb and compelled to do hard labor. There can be no doubt that his treatment was illegal.

On the arrest of Most, members of the Rose Street Club, with sympathizers outside, issued a protest and an appeal for assistance, and a Defense Committee was formed. This Defense Committee, whose moving spirit was Frank Ritz, consisted of some half-dozen comrades. about as poor as could be. none of whom was in receipt of more than thirty shillings income per week. Meetings were organized, a fund was started, but its greatest and boldest achievement was the launching of a weekly paper, *The Freiheit*, in English. The second number contained in full, and in English, the article for which Most was being prosecuted, and which, of course, in Most's *Freiheit* was in German. This number was sold outside the Old Bailey whilst Most was undergoing his trial within.

*The Freiheit* ran to seven numbers, from April 24th to June 5th, 1881, and then ceased for want of funds, having accomplished much in the way of defense, and for seven weeks the dissemination of Socialist principles.

The trial was held at the Central Criminal Court on May 25th. 1881, the charges being libel and inciting to murder. The indictment covered forty-two pages of closely-written large brief paper. and contained twelve counts, charging, among other things, with encouraging persons to murder Alexander II. of Russia and William Emperor of Germany. To any person of ordinary common sense the whole trial, with its legal jargon, was simply ludicrous. Most had commented on an assassination of which he had no previous knowledge. He most certainly did not incite anyone to assassinate the Kaiser.

One count charged Most that he "did unlawfully, knowingly, willfully and wickedly *encourage* Charles Edward Marr to murder the Sovereigns, etc., against Statute and peace, etc." Another count charged Most that he "did unlawfully, etc., etc., persuade Charles Edward Marr to murder the Sovereigns, etc., etc.,"

The Attorney-General, the Solicitor-General, Mr. Poland, Mr. A. L. Smith, and Mr. Danckwerts appeared for the prosecution for the Crown: Mr. A. M. Sullivan was counsel for the defense.

After a most eloquent speech for the defense and a few words from Lord Chief Justice Coleridge, the jury retired, and in about twenty minutes returned with a verdict of Guilty on all counts. Sentence was postponed to determine a legal quibble as to whether the Act under which Most was indicted really applied to him or his offense. This, however, was a foregone conclusion, and on June 29th Most was brought up and sentenced as stated. Commenting on the case, the

conduct of the trial, the treatment to which Most was subjected, etc., the Daily News, then a really valuable organ of Radical opinion, said :—

“In the face of a recommendation to mercy from the jury, Most, who has been lying for months already in prison, has been awarded a penalty which. to an educated man of’ sedentary habits is as severe as even Lord Coleridge’s imagination can picture.”

Bennet Burleigh, who later became famous as a journalist, published a pamphlet report of the trial. He concluded his prefatory remarks with these prophetic words : —

“A day of reckoning must come. Let those who are false to freedom recollect that is certain. When the people awaken the mighty will fail and contempt be poured upon them like water.”

During Most’s imprisonment, 1881-1882, the *Freiheit* appeared regularly. Most was a regular contributor and contrived to pass his copy through prison bars.

The next prosecution of the paper was caused by an article approving of the killing of Cavendish and Burke, in Phenix Park, Dublin. This time the compositors of the paper, Schwelm and Merten, were sentenced to long terms of hard labor. The next two issues were published in Switzerland, and when Most left prison in the autumn of 1882, he accepted the invitation of the New York German Comrades to come to America, and publish the *Freiheit* there. From this time until his death, America was his Arena of Propaganda.

From 1882-1887 the *Freiheit* was at its zenith. Then came the “Drama of Chicago.” It was *fortunate* that Most was in prison at the time of the arrest of the Chicago comrades as he would probably have been arrested and hanged with Spies, Parsons and their confreres. The reason of his imprisonment was a false press report of a lecture he delivered in New York, resulting in his being sent to the Penitentiary for a year.

On the 12th of November, the day after the murder of the Chicago Anarchists, Most, expressing his deep sympathy for the loss of his brave comrades, delivered a speech, which was by no means of an incendiary nature—indeed its moderation seemed to be studied—but so eager were the police to lay hands on all Labor Advocates at this time, that they had Most arrested and sentenced to 12 months imprisonment for a so-called incendiary speech.

Whenever a Revolutionary act was committed in the United States, the New York Press called for the arrest of Most. A pretext was found for his persecution on the assassination of McKinley, when he got another 12 months imprisonment. Most accepted this persecution as if it were all in the day’s work.

He flaunted the Banner of Anarchy before the Citadel of Capitalism until his death. at the age of sixty, on the 17th of March, 1906, at Cincinnati, while on a lecturing tour.

John Most’s last words were characteristic of the man. He reached Cincinnati five days before his death, feeling unwell, so bad that his friends became alarmed, but he would not give in. While traveling he had contracted a cold, which the adverse climatic conditions brought to a head. Still, he thought that a few days rest among his friends would enable him once again to start on his tour of “Agitation.” But this was the last rally before the end which came quickly and peacefully. “Let me go out— I must go out and speak” were his last words, and with them he passed away.

## Chapter 5 : Red May: Tragedy and Resurgence

### **”Chicago Swells the Surging Throng.”**

From 1887, down to the year before the outbreak of the world war, it was the custom, in Anarchist circles, to commemorate, every 11th of November, the death of the Chicago Martyrs. That day was dedicated, after 1918, to the fraud and farce of capitalist armistice celebration, until the second world war ended such tributes to the dead of 1914-18. In proletarian circles the Russian revolution anniversary dwarfed the importance of the Chicago commemoration. The worth of that revolution was liquidated somewhat by the retreat to capitalism via the New Economic Policy. Events must pass into history, however, and decline as mere celebrations. This late has overtaken the memory of the Chicago Martyrs. We celebrate their deaths no more. We no longer make a saints' day of it. But we record it as a passage of Socialist history, a chapter of proletarian struggle.

May, even more than March, is Labor's Red Month. It is the month of warmth, life, and beauty, the magic month of sun- shine and rebirth, of color and abundance, of energy and song. Because of its rich, warm call to life it is the month of labor. May is a satire on capitalist society, an irony on wage-slavery. It calls to active revolutionary opposition to the present economic order, and bids the proletariat awake to a knowledge of its economic might. Then shall we witness a real month of May, a month of labor at harmony with nature, an epoch of harmony in place of our present discord. The Sun, in all his glory, will shine no more on masters and slaves, on palaces and hovels, but on a world of freemen and freewomen, citizens of the earth, active, cooperative, and equal.

Fifty-one years have passed since the Paris Congress, at the suggestion of the American Knights of Labor, decided on the May Day demonstration. The idea was to symbolize the direct struggle of Labor against Capitalism, to usher in the social battle, to sound the note of victory. The symbolism has been crushed by economic conditions, and the call of May has lost its psychological significance. This was inevitable. Symbolism cannot satisfy for ever. The struggle towards emancipation is something more than a mere parade. The true import and essence of the May idea was lost when the parade became accepted. It menaced parliamentary careerism and so the opportunist parliamentary leaders falsified the meaning of the celebration. They liquidated its energy. To them the germinating of spring, the symbol of awakening labor, was an omen of evil. And so they dulled the workers' enthusiasm, and advised, with lying tongue in cheek, that they would gain all those things to which they aspired just as soon as they made an effective demonstration at the ballot box. The First of May was to end in a voters' parade.

And so parliamentarism, which has liquidated Socialism, has abolished May Day and the energy of the May call. Parliament is the enemy of Labor and of Spring. The First of May is no longer celebrated by the workers. "What's the use of stopping work on this day and demonstrat-

ing,” the professional politicians, the parliamentary careerists, ask in a tone of disdainful wisdom. These folk dislike disturbance and inconvenience because they sense their own growing importance under capitalism, and want the social and political machinery to work harmoniously to their own individual advancement, and the more complete enslavement of the vast herd of voting, trusting proletarians. So the first of May has come to be, sometimes, Sunday, April 30; and at others, Sunday, May 2, and so on. Only by the connivance of the calendar is May Day now celebrated on May Day.

But we would revive May Day, not as a day of useless celebration, but as a call-day to revolution. We would make an epic of the day, so that it should fire men’s blood, and make it white hot with the flame of true enthusiasm. What more fitting theme can we select to achieve this end, unless it be the story of the Communards because of their number as well as courage, than the record of the Chicago Martyrs?

It is no isolated message this message of Chicago. If it were it would not be a message of Maytime. It is only one of the many great tragedies that have been concluded in the name of class domination and authority. Not in the execution of four innocent men in the name of capitalist law and bourgeois ethic, but in the manner of their passing, does the inspiration for later laborers in the cause of freedom lie. It is well, then, that we should consider the story of their witnessing against capitalism, the better to realize how the shedding of their blood but served to fertilize the seed of human liberty.

On May the First, 1886, the Eight Hours Day Association of Chicago proclaimed a general strike in that city, as a prelude to the inauguration of the eight hours day throughout the United States of America. A mass meeting was convened at the Haymarket, at which Spies, Parsons, Fielden, and Schwab addressed twenty-five thousand strikers. Whilst pointing out that, short of Socialism, all was illusion, the speakers believed, mistakenly in our opinion, that it was their duty to encourage the revolutionary spirit implied in the movement. We consider it merely a movement of adaptation and reformism and not a revolutionary movement. In all such movements the revolutionary tendency of the workers, and their power of solidarity and extent of class conscious thought, is exaggerated.

On May the third, at a meeting attended by about fifty thousand strikers, stones were thrown at some “strike-breakers” employed at the McCormick’s Reaper Works. Police arrived on the scene in large numbers and used their revolvers, killing six strikers and wounding others. Burning with indignation. Spies rushed back to the *Arbeiter Zeitung* office, and wrote the “Revenge” circular. This was a very human, an all too human document. And it unquestionably rendered Spies life forfeit after the events of the following day, once the ruling class had decided on the victimization of the Anarchists. To our mind, it would have been wiser for Spies not to have written this circular. But who shall say? Against the folly of calling upon the workers to revenge deaths they had not the class conscious power or indignation to avenge, against the pettiness of revenge as compared with the abolition of class society and the misery it naturally entails, there remains the fact that good red blood surged through the veins of Spies, that his deep resentment of the wrong inflicted on the poor rose in revolt, and he dared to protest. The nervous excitement of his words we consider of small avail, but the courage of his protest we deem an inspiration. If he wrote foolishly, he died boldly, and the silence that resulted was more powerful than aught he wrote or spoke. Events are mankind’s teachers: and the name of Spies is the equivalent of an imperishable lesson. No man can ask higher fame than that.

The circular related the death of the six strikers. It described the police as “bloodhounds.” it denounced “the factory lords” as “lazy thieving masters.” It urged:—

“Revenge! Working men to arms! . . . If you are men, if you are the sons of your grandsires who have shed their blood to free you, then you will rise in your might, Hercules, and destroy the hideous monster that seeks to destroy you! To arms! We call you to arms!—Your Brothers.”

Alas! foolish words of righteous indignation, words of weakness and not of strength, stumbling forth, somehow, to advance the cause of working class emancipation, in a confused tortuous way. Words not to be censured without consideration, but to be judged in relation to the conditions that called them forth! Words not to be censured by those who caused the strikers to be murdered or afterwards upheld the murder of men against whose life they had conspired.

Spies was familiar with poverty-stricken hunger demonstrations, police brutalities, and the record of riotous, complacent self-indulgence by the wealthy class. Only the year before this fatal May Day, the *Chicago Times* suggested, editorially, that the farmers who were pestered with unemployed workers, turned tramps, during the winter of 1884-5, should poison them with strychnine in the food provided them. The *Chicago Tribune* vied with the *Times* in upholding the rights of the Vanderbilts and the Goulds against the working-class movement during this period of intensified class struggle and appalling proletarian misery.

Jay Gould had gathered wealth by fraud, and maintained it, and was maintaining it, by outrage and violence in Missouri, New York, Schuylkill, and Hocking Valley, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, San Francisco, Seattle, Portland, etc. A quarter of a century previous he had been a needy punter in gold operations. Now he controlled railroads, telegraphs, news agencies, legislatures, and the entire lives of thousands of men who worked on his various lines. He had qualified for the position of “Napoleon of Finance” by colossal roguery. And he maintained it by lying impertinence and callous brutality.

Jay Gould’s hired journalists blamed the eight hours and all other labor agitation on to foreign conspirators and called for extreme action in behalf of “public opinion.” But “public opinion” mattered little to these millionaire interests except to the extent that it was manufactured by them and served as their ramification. Petty respectability, and its puny void of conscience, was an excellent cur to set barking at the feet of Anarchists. But the millionaire controllers of the cur were more willing to kick it than to humor it.

Once, when confronted with criticism, W. H. Vanderbilt said: “The public be damned.” His father, the old Commodore, when remonstrated with for treating the passengers on his railroad as it they were hogs, answered: “By God, sir, I wish they was hogs.”

With such conditions oppressing the worker, violence was inseparable from the desperation that dictated the daily industrial reformist struggle of the workers. In 1880, that is six years before events dictated Spies’ “revenge” circular, H. M. Hyndman, who certainly had no sympathy with either Anarchism or propaganda by deed, predicted, as a result of a tour in the United States, in the *Fortnightly Review*, that a conflict between capital and labor was brewing in America, which might attain to the dimensions of a civil war.

The *New York Tribune*, then Jay Gould’s own paper, extracted some passages, and headed them with the lying comment: “England sends many fool travelers to the United States, but never such a fool as this one.”

Hyndman was right. The facts were with him. But the Gould interests did not want those facts broadcast.

The eight hours movement of 1886, the economic boycotting movement, and the strike on the Gould railroad were opposed vigorously by Powderly, the Chief of the Knights of Labor. This fact will acquit him of the charge of extremism. Yet, in the year 1880. Powderly expressed himself in these terms about preparations for strikes.

“I am anxious that each of our lodges should be provided with powder and shot, bullets and Winchester rifles, when we intend to- strike. if you strike the troops are called out to put you down. You cannot fight with hare hands. You must consider the matter very seriously, and if we anticipate strikes we must prepare to tight and to use arms against the forces brought against us.”

It is clear, from these facts, that Spies wrote his “revenge” circular, not because he was an Anarchist, but because the idea of violence was impressed upon the working class movement through- out the United States by the very lawlessness of which the workers were the victims. The idea of violence was inevitable.

The circular was distributed widely and a committee of action meeting called that night. Waller, who turned informer, was chair- man. Engel and Fischer were present. The events of the afternoon were discussed and it was decided to call a mass meeting of protest at the Haymarket next night. This meeting proved a fatal one for all concerned.

The meeting was quiet and orderly. Spies, Fischer, Engel, Fielden, and Parsons spoke. The Mayor of Chicago, who attended sfor the purpose of dispersing the meeting should the need arise, went over to the police station and told Captain Bondfield that he had better give orders to his reserves to go home.

The crowd had dwindled to 1,500 persons, Parsons and his family had gone home deeming the protest at an end, and Fielden was concluding the meeting. One hundred and eighty police—rightly termed by Marx, the civil bourgeois guard—turned out of the station, and marched upon the meeting with loaded rifles and in fighting formation. The captain of the first row of police had just ordered the meeting to disperse, and his men, without waiting a reply, were advancing to the attack, when a small fiery body arched through the air, alighted between the first and second companies of the police, and exploded with a loud report. Sixty police- men were wounded badly, seven were mortally wounded, and one. E. J. Degan, was killed.

Firing by the police became general and the people scattered in all directions, the police firing at random as they pursued.

A reign of terror ensued. Persons suspected of Socialist or Anarchist opinions were arrested right and left, private houses were broken into without warrants, and ransacked for Socialist literature. The Haymarket speakers, except Parsons, who had left Chicago, were arrested. In Chicago, Milwaukee, and New York, Socialists and Labor organizers were hunted and imprisoned just because they were connected with the Labor movement. Socialist and Labor papers were submitted to a police censorship and their presses broken up. Everybody connected with the *Alarm* and *Arbeiter Zeitung*—including printers, writers and office-boys—were imprisoned on a charge of murder. A newspaper campaign, virtually a campaign of murder, was conducted against Socialists and Anarchists, and all proletarian agitation was checked. Jay Gould’s hirer! journalists blamed the Chicago rioting on foreign conspirators and carefully ignored the fact

that this description could hardly apply to Parsons and Fielden, the two principal orators on that occasion.

The Parsons family had played a conspicuous part in English speaking rebel movements since 1600, but time had honored and condoned those movements. Albert Parsons was of the same stock as the General Parsons of 1776 Revolution fame and the Captain Parsons of Bunker Hill. On his mother's side also he was of American Revolution stock. Circumstances made him the most outstanding victim of this capitalist agitation. He was an excellent martyr but a rather strange foreigner.

O the 17th May, 1886, the Grand jury came together.

"The body is a strong one," telegraphed Gould's hired penman to his New York daily, "and it is safe to aver that Anarchy and murder will not receive much quarter at the hands of the men composing it."

It is in times of crisis that the shivering mediocrity and despicable abjectness of respectability becomes so marked. Reaction, dictated reaction, organized anti-social interest triumphed, and termed its triumph public opinion. The poor creatures of the Grand Jury were flattered into importance by Gould's thugs of the pen: and the more the creatures swelled, the more they aired their opinions. the emptier and the more despicable they became.

The word "strong," applied to such a body, shows to what degraded use words may be turned. Well are we reminded of Paine's indictment of the trade of governing, and, little as we may agree with him, of the magnificently true words of irony and reproach addressed by Ravachol to the jury that condemned him.

The indictment contained sixty-nine counts. It charged the defendants, August Spies, Michael Schwab, Samuel Fielden, Albert R. Parsons, Adolph Fischer, George Engel, Louis Lingg, Oscar W. Neebe, Rudolph Schnaubelt, and William Selinger with the murder of E. J. Degan.

Schnaubelt, who disappeared mysteriously and completely, and seems to have been the agent employed by the authorities to accomplish this wholesale murder and so secure for a time the triumph of reaction, was not in the hands of the police. Parsons surrendered in Court, on June 21, 1886, when the empannelling of the jury before Judge Joseph E. Gary began. This lasted twenty-one days.

On July 15, States Attorney Grinnell began his address. He charged the defendants with murder and conspiracy and promised to show who threw the bomb. He did not do so.

The most important witnesses for the State were Waller, Schrader, and Seliger, former comrades of the defendants, turned informers from fear of the gallows and hope of gain. Waller was to prove the conspiracy to throw the bomb at the Haymarket. He admitted that the police were not expected at the Haymarket. He confessed that not one word was said about a bomb or dynamite when it was resolved to call the Haymarket meeting.

Schrader was to confirm Waller's story of the defendants' guilt. But his testimony was so unfavorable to the State that the Assistant Attorney, losing his temper exclaimed to the defendants' lawyers; "He is your witness not ours."

The attempt of the State to connect the defendants with the Haymarket bomb completely broke down. But the fact remained that they had spoken strong words against the existing system and had been driven by their indignation to proclaim their belief in violence. Girls had been clubbed to death by the police and the workers had been shot down for the "crime" of assembling at a public meeting. Of course, the defendants, having red blood in their veins, were indignant. But their words were no evidence that they threw or conspired to throw a bomb.

To stupid respectability, apart from the menace to private property society, of their words and attitude, they were condemned by the fact that there were seven policemen dead and sixty wounded. But the class that was prepared to send these agitators to their death thought nothing of a few policemen. Agitators and policemen alike were sacrificed to make a capitalist joy-day.

The jury returned a verdict on August 20:

"We, the jury, find the defendants, August Spies, Michael Schwab, Samuel Fielden, Albert Parsons, Adolph Fischer, George Engel, and Louis Lingg guilty of murder in the manner and form as charged in the indictment, and fix the penalty at death. We find the defendant. Oscar W. Neebe, guilty of murder in the manner and form as charged in the indictment, and fix the penalty at imprisonment in the penitentiary for fifteen years."

A new trial was refused. An appeal was made to the Supreme Court of Illinois without avail.

Time passes, and the next act of the tragedy is enacted in Judge Gary's court on October 7, 8, and 9, 1886, when the now historical figures of the agitation addressed the court in reference to the question of sentence.

Dignified in bearing, his handsome face now lighted up with satire, bold, defiant, and fluent in delivery, Spies indicts the perjury and conspiracy of the prosecution. His speech is rich in history, philosophy, and piquant, unwelcome truth.

Schwab also exposes the conspiracy of law and order against the life and liberty of the proletarian agitator.

Neebe follows, only to regret that he is deprived by the verdict of the jury, of the honor of dying.

Fischer, erect in bearing, is his successor; and he is proud to die for the cause of the people.

Lingg speaks in German. His is the passion of youth. He is proudly defiant and fiercely calm. His utterance is impassioned. "I do believe in force: hang me for it!" he declared.

Engel speaks easily and quietly. His is the calm stolidity of the stoic.

Then follow lengthy speeches from Fielden and Parsons.

Moderate in manner, Fielden's speech is telling as an indictment of the prosecution. Grinnell, the State Attorney, declared "had it been made to the jury they would have acquitted him." Luther Lafiin Mills, formerly State Attorney, declared it to be a masterpiece.

The intense power and latent passion of Parsons' speech rightly entitles it to be deemed a brilliant agitation speech-the most powerful effort of a formidable propagandist.

It was known that, under no circumstances, would the death sentence be commuted in the case of Spies, Fischer, Engel, and Lingg. But it was intended to commute the sentence to one of imprisonment in the case of Parsons, Schwab, and Fielden. Under the constitution and statutes of the State of Illinois, it was prescribed, as a condition of the exercise of his pardoning power by the Governor, that the convicted person must sign a petition for the exercise of executive clemency. Fielden and Schwab signed a petition and were pardoned by Governor Oglesby, the death sentence being commuted to imprisonment for fifteen years. Although repeated pressure was brought to bear upon him by his friends and counsel, Parsons refused to sign the petition necessary to reprieve.

State Attorney Grinnell, anticipating conformity with the statute, declared of the prisoners: "I want to make them do something for which the Anarchists shall hate them."

But Parsons, paying the cost with his life, denied him the pleasure. He defeated Grinnell: and the latter now stands at the bar of history, indicted by the memory of man, a figure like unto that of the state attorneys of all times and climes, poor, shriveled, sniveling soul. All tribute is



paid to the memory of the man who died on the gallows rather than desert his comrades. What matter the laws of Illinois and the executive clemencies of governor against this fact of sterling manhood in the dock and on the gallows! What matter statutes and constitutions when character weighs them down!

Captain W. P. Black, leading Advocate for the Defense, made strenuous efforts to have Parsons save himself. So did Melville E. Stone, editor of the *Daily News*.

On Sunday, November 6, 1887, the latter spent two hours in Parsons' cell, urging him to sign the petition, and promising the full support of his paper in favor of the commutation of the death sentence. Parsons refused to petition. He was determined either to hang with his comrades, Lingg, Engel, Fischer, and Spies, or to save them.

Two days later, Black paid a special visit to Parsons and pleaded for his signature in vain. Black added that refusal to sign the petition meant execution.

Parsons replied :--

"I will not do it. My mind is firmly and irrevocably made. up, and I beg you urge. me no further upon the subject. I am an innocent man—innocent of this offense of which I have been found guilty by the jury, and the. world knows my innocence. If I am to be executed at all it is because I am an Anarchist, not because I am a murderer; it is because of what I have taught and spoken and written in the past, and not because of the throwing of the Haymarket bomb. I can afford to be hung for the sake of the ideas I hold and the cause I have espoused, if the people of Illinois can afford to hang an innocent man who voluntarily placed himself in their power. . . .

"If I should now separate myself from Lingg, Engel and Fischer, and sign a petition upon which the governor could commute my sentence, I know that it would mean absolute doom to the others- that Lingg, Engel and Fischer would be inevitably hung. So I have determined to make their cause and their fate my own.

"I know the chances are 999 in 1000 that I will swing with them; that there isn't one chance in a thousand of saving them, but if they can be saved at all it is my standing with them, so that whatever action is taken on my case must be taken, with equal propriety in theirs. I will not, therefore, do anything that will separate me from them. I expect that the result will be that I will hang with them, but I am ready."

Black could make no reply to this argument. He took Parsons by the hand, looked into his face, and said to him: "Your action is worthy of you." He then came away.

He went to Springfield and saw Governor Oglesby on the Wednesday morning. The latter insisted on technical compliance with the law. Parsons must petition.

Black telegraphed Parsons to this effect. When Parsons received the telegram he placed it upon his cell table and beside it —the "Marseillaise"! That was his answer.

Black returned from Springfield that night and had his last interview with Parsons on Thursday morning. He saw also his companions, Lingg, Fischer, Engel, and Spies. They knew that they could not save themselves by signing a petition. But they were willing to do so, and so brand themselves as cowards if Parsons would sign, and so save himself.

Black had no heart to press Parsons to sign, since that would "do violence to the noble purposes he had framed." Parsons said to him, "as simply and as quietly as he could have spoken

in reference to some matter of no consequence": "I can't do it, Captain; I am ready for whatever may come."

Black shook his hand and turned away.

That night Black went to Springfield again: and Parsons, in his cell in Cook County Jail, sang the song his singing has made an immortal symbol of the Labor struggle: "Annie Laurie."

On the Friday morning, Black vainly urged Governor Oglesby to grant a reprieve for thirty days to enable him to adduce further proof that the convicted Anarchists had no complicity in the bomb throwing.

About the same time, Parsons received from Josephine Tilton the following telegram: "Not goodbye, but hail, brothers! From the gallows trap the march shall be taken up. I will listen for the beating of the drum."

That day Parsons declaimed his last words from the gallows: "Let me speak, oh men of America! Will you let me speak, Sheriff Matson? Let the voice of the people be heard! Oh—"

"The drum tap," said Benj. R. Tucker, in pursuing Josephine Tilton's analogy to its logical conclusion, "has sounded; the forlorn hope has charged; the needed breach has been opened; myriads are falling into line; if we will but make the most of the opportunity so dearly purchased, the victory will be ours. It shall be; it MUST be."

Shortly after the execution, Pauline Brandes, a sister of Waller, made a sworn affidavit before judge Eberhardt, upsetting the whole of her brother's testimony, and denouncing it as perjury.

In November, 1892, the Chicago police wrecked Grief's Hall. and broke up two peaceful meetings, arresting many persons against whom no charges could be brought, on the ground of alleged Anarchism. The result was that they had to pay 700 dollars damages, and the whole question of the Chicago Martyrs was reopened. The *Chicago Herald* unearthed the following facts:—

After the fatal Haymarket meeting, May 4, 1886, some three hundred leading American Capitalists met secretly to plan the destruction of the militant labor movement. They formed the "Citizens' Association," and subscribed 100,000 dollars in a few hours. This money secured the condemnation of the eight Chicago Anarchists. A like sum was guaranteed to the police and their agents every year: but in October, 1892, things being quiet, the subscriptions dropped off. Hence the police endeavored to revive the Anarchist scare.

Judge Gary was moved by these exposures to publish an apology in the *Century Magazine* for April, 1893. Never was the proverb, "He who excuses himself, accuses himself" better exemplified.

Finally, in June, 1893, the recently elected Governor of Illinois, John P. Altgeld, having thoroughly examined the evidence against the eight convicted Anarchists, decided to set the three prisoners, Neebe, Fielden, and Schwab, unconditionally free, as being the victims of false imprisonment. The jury which had tried them had been, in his opinion, packed; the jurors legally incompetent; the judge partial; the evidence insufficient. His conduct having been violently re-sented by a section of the American capitalist press, Altgeld published a pamphlet giving his reasons and containing interesting particulars of the struggle between Capitalists and Workers in 1886.

The facts related by Altgeld constitute a valuable lesson as to the sort of justice to be expected by revolutionists in a thoroughly democratic State, when the possessing class is scared by the misery it has created, and public opinion is merely the daily manufacture of a venal press. So long as this press functions, and function it will as long as capitalism continues, how poor a thing is parliamentarism!

Altgeld demonstrated, beyond the shadow of doubt, that the Chicago martyrs were the victims of ruling class hatred, put out of the way by the force and fraud of the profit-mongers and power lovers, who feared them.

His tardy revelation revives our faith in the struggle. We turn from the drab despair of chill November to the warmth and promise of May. After all, the message of Chicago is the message of May. Responding to its call of freedom and struggle, we recall the words of grim promise uttered by Proudhon :—"Like the Nemesis of old. whom neither prayers nor threats could move, the revolution advances, with somber and inevitable tread over the flowers with which its devotees strew its path. through the blood of its champions, and over the bodies of its enemies."

## Chapter 6 : Chicago's Red Martyrs

“For the nineteenth century has produced these men -- men who bowed at no shrine, acknowledged no God, believed in no hereafter, and yet went as proudly and triumphantly to the gallows as ever did Christian martyr of old.”

—Voltairine de Cleyre, November, 1895.

“Let no attempt be made to avert the final tragedy of the 11th November, make no effort to avenge our deaths.”

—Statement issued by condemned Anarchists a few days before execution.

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### Hanged 11th November, 1887

ALBERT R. PARSONS.—Born 24th June, 1848, at Montgomery, Alabama. Orphaned. Adopted by his brother, Major-General W. H. Parsons, of the Confederate Army, and educated at the latter's home, Tyler, Texas, 1853. Printer's apprentice, 1859. Joined the Confederate Army, 1861. Established a weekly newspaper at Waco, Texas, 1868. This failed, and he became traveling correspondent for the Houston *Daily Telegraph*. Identified himself with Republican Party, and became "Secretary of the State Senate under the Federal Government. Married daughter of an Indian chief, at Houston, in 1872. Discarded by his brother and friends in consequence. Migrated to Chicago in 1873. Interested himself in Socialism, 1874. joined the Knights of Labor, 1876. Participated in the Great Railway Strike and brutally treated by police, 1877. Worked as compositor and journalist, but suffered repeated victimization for his radical opinions. Two years without any regular work and his family suffered much privation. Left the parliamentary Labor party. Delegate to the Labor Congress, where the International Working People's Association was founded on Anarchist Communist Principles, 1881. Edited *Alarm*, 1884, to its suppression in May, 1886. Indicted for conspiracy same month and voluntarily surrendered himself in Judge Gary's Court, June 21 of that year.

Lombroso complained that Parsons lacked moral sensibility, because, at an Anarchist meeting, he said: "Strangle the spies, and throw them out of the windows."

Adolph Fischer – Born Bremen, Germany, 1860. Educated at a common school. Emigrated to America, 1875, and learned the printing trade at Nashville, Ten., in the office of a German paper conducted by his brother. Acquired an interest in a German paper at Little Rock, Ark. Moved to St. Louis, where he married, worked at the case and became known for his extreme Socialism, 1881. Migrated to Chicago, where he worked on the German paper *Anarrizist*, and found employment as a compositor in the office of the *Arbeiter Zeitung*. He was a stern, zealous, and uncomplaining revolutionist and had received an early insight into the rottenness of society from his father. who was a member of the Socialist Party of Bremen.

Interviewed by Black, in the Cook County Jail, immediately after the verdict, Fischer said:—"I am ready to die for the cause of the people."

His last words were: "Hurrah for Anarchy! This is the happiest moment of my life."

Dyer D. Lum commented on them at the time as follows:—"In so exalted a state were they (the four Anarchists), sure that death by the gallows was but a means of spreading further into the hearts of the people they loved the ideas apart from which they had no life, that it was exactly the truth when Fischer said: "This is the happiest moment of my life. And those who saw his face say it shone with a white light on the scaffold."

AUGUST THEODORE VINCENT SPIES.—Born on 10th December, 1855, at Freidwald, Germany. Son of a forester, at that time in Germany, a Government official. Educated by private tutors for the Polytechnicum, where he studied the science of forest culture. Adopted his father's profession. Had read all the great German classics, studied Kant and Hegel, and became a religious skeptic. 1869. Abandoned his studies and decided to join his relatives in America, 1871, owing to the death of his father. Learned the upholstery trade in New York. Proceeded to Chicago, October, 1872. joined the Socialist Labor Party, 1876. Became a Socialist candidate and believed in parliamentary action till 1880, when he became editor of the *Arbeiter Zeitung*. Repudiated parliamentarism for the economic struggle only. Unmarried. Supported his mother and sister.

Knowing that it would be rejected so far as he was concerned, Spies signed the petition to Governor Oglesby, in the hope that it would influence Parsons to petition. His letter to Oglesby was characteristic. He said that he realized fully that popular sentiment demanded somewhat in the nature of retribution for the loss of life at the Haymarket: and some sacrifice has to be made to that overwhelming public demand. That historic event had made shipwreck of the movement in which he and his comrades were engaged, and to which they had devoted and were devoting their every energy. It would be realized, therefore, that they were free of any intentional responsibility. He pleaded with Governor Oglesby. therefore. to extend executive clemency to his comrades in the trial and judgment, and to let him (Spies) be the sacrifice of the hour.

Spies' last words were: "There will come a time when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you strangle to-day."

GEORGE ENGELL—Born 15th April, 1836, Cassel, Germany. His father, a mason and brick-layer, died whilst George was still an infant. His mother, with four young children to keep, struggled on against poverty. She died when he was twelve. Experienced hunger and starvation till a Frankford painter taught him his trade and gave him a home during his apprenticeship. Emigrated to Philadelphia, 1873. Saw the American militia employed against starving miners. Fell sick and lost his savings. Migrated to Chicago; studied socialism and became an Anarchist. Saw the ballot-box actually stolen and "corrected" after a Chicago election. wherein the Social Democrats had a majority of votes. Courts refused to cancel the election thus secured. Was one of the most active workers in the International Working People's Association.

Engel was brought to the study of Socialism through active Anti-Socialist propaganda. After his first arrest he was released on the good word of Coroner Herg, who declared that he had known Engel for years as a quiet and well-behaved citizen.

Engel, on the scaffold, triumphantly exclaimed: "Hurrah for Anarchy!"

Committed Suicide? 10th November, 1887.

LOUIS LINGG.—Born Schwetzingen, Germany, 9th September. 1866. Apprentice to a carpenter. Emigrated to America. 1885 Went to Chicago; joined the union of his trade, and became one of

the chief organizers of the eight-hour movement. Believed that the great revolutionary struggle was at hand, and that the people needed arms to meet the open violence of their oppressors. Studied explosives and made a supply of bombs for use in case of need. Is supposed to have blown himself up in his cell.

Released Unconditionally, as Being the Victims of False Imprisonment, June, 1893  
SENTENCED TO 15 YEARS IMPRISONMENT

OSCAR NEEBE.—Born in Philadelphia, of German parents, 1850. Had established a prosperous business in Chicago, in the sale of yeast to grocers and traders. Identified himself with the cause of the working people and exerted himself on its behalf day and night with untiring energy. Knew nothing of Haymarket meeting. Shortly after his sentence of fifteen years' imprisonment, his wife died of anxiety. Neebe was permitted a last look at her remains under official escort.

Death Sentence Committed on Petition to 15 Years Imprisonment

SAMUEL FIELDEN. Born on 25th February, 1847, at Todmorden, Lancashire. His father was a weaver by trade, a man of fine physique and more than average intelligence, who took part in the Chartist movement without becoming very prominent in it. He was related to Fielden, the Chartist orator, who secured some distinction as M.P., a founder of the Consumers Cooperative Society, and a prime mover in the Society of Oddfellows. This Fielden agitated the question of agricultural lands for working men in Britain. It can be easily understood, therefore, that the Fielden house on Sunday was the meeting place of an advanced group of persons who discussed various social subjects. These meetings first gave him his taste for the study of Sociology.

Spent a number of years in a cotton mill. Became a Sunday School teacher, and becoming a religious enthusiast, perambulated the towns of Lancashire as a Methodist preacher.

Emigrated to America in 1868, settling in New York. Went to Chicago, 1869, then to Arkansas and Louisiana, where he worked at railroad construction. Returned to Chicago and worked as teamster in handling stone, 1871. Had continued his preaching but realized, in Chicago, that something was wrong. joined the Liberal League, 1880. Converted to Socialism by George Schilling.

On his release by Altgeld, settled with his wife and children on a farm in Colorado.

Chicago Anarchist Memorial, Waldheim Cemetery, Chicago

Three days before the execution of Parsons, Spies, Fischer, and Engel. Judge Joseph E. Gary forwarded the petition of Fielden to the Hon. Richard J. Oglesby, Governor of Illinois, with a covering letter stating that Fielden was "the honest, industrious, and peaceable laboring man," with "a natural love of justice, an impatience at all undeserved suffering, an impulsive temper," and "an advocate of force as a heroic remedy for the hardships that the poor endure." Urging that Fielden should benefit by the extension of executive clemency, Gary added :—

"As there is no evidence that he knew of any preparation to do the specific act of throwing the bomb that killed Degan, he does not understand even now that general advice to large masses to do violence makes him responsible for the violence done by reason of that advice, nor that being joined by others in an effort to subvert law and order by force makes him responsible for the acts of those others tending to make that effort effectual."

That paragraph is priceless, as representing the argument put forward against capitalist society by the men who stood for propaganda by deed, when told that not all the wealthy folk were consciously responsible for the outraging of the poor by capitalist conditions.

MICHAEL SCHWAB.—Born in Kitzingen, Central Germany, 9th August, 1853. Father a small tradesman. Lost both parents, 1866. Became a communicant and then lost all faith because of the worldly habits of his priest, 1867. Schiller's works and other German classics dispelled his religious illusions. Apprenticed to a bookbinder in Wuerrburg. Led a solitary life surrounded only by books. Journeyman, 1872. Joined the Socialist Labor Party and traveled through Europe distributing Socialist literature, and living by his trade. Emigrated to America, 1879. Settled in Chicago, 1880. Became reporter and assistant editor of the *Arbeiter Zeitung*.

Schwab, on his release. embraced Social Democracy. Died, 29th June, 1898, in Chicago, of consumption. which disease he had contracted in prison.

## The Chicago Anarchists' Program

Alhert R. Parsons, writing in the *Alarm*, for December, 1885, defined his attitude towards the eight hours' day agitation thus:—

"We of the Internationale are frequently asked why we do not give. our active support to the proposed eight-hour movement. Let us take what we can get. say our eight-hour friends, else by asking too much we may get nothing. We answer: Because we will not. compromise.

"Either our position that capitalists have no right to the exclusive ownership of the means of life is a true one, or it is not. it' we are correct, then to concede the point that capitalists have the right to eight hours of our labor, is more than a compromise; it is a virtual confession that the wage system is right.

"If' capitalists have the right to own labor or to control the results of labor, we have no business dictating the terms upon which we may be employed. We cannot say to our employers, 'Yes, we acknowledge your right to employ us, we are satisfied that the wage system is all right, but we, your slaves, propose to dictate the terms upon which we will work.' how inconsistent!

"And yet that is exactly the position of our eight-hour friends. They presume to dictate to capital, while they maintain the justness of the capitalistic system; they would regulate wages while defending the claims of the capitalists to the absolute control of Industry."

The position adopted by Parsons in 1885 is that adopted by the Anti-Parliamentary Communist movement in Britain since 1906. It defines the Anti-Parliamentarian opposition to the Syndicalist movement and also to the Communist Party Minority movement.

August Spies defined his opposition in these terms:—

"We do not antagonize the eight-hour movement. Viewing it from the standpoint that it is a social struggle, we simply predict that it is a lost battle, and we will prove that, even though the eight-hour system should be established at this late day, the wage- workers would gain nothing. They would still remain the slaves of their masters.

“Suppose the hours of labor should be shortened to eight. our productive capacity would thereby not be diminished. The shortening of the hours of labor in England was immediately followed by a general increase of labor-saving machines, with a subsequent discharge of a proportionate number of employees. The reverse of what had been sought took place. The exploitation of those at work was intensified. They now performed more labor, and produced more than before.”

The program on which our Chicago comrades took their stand was agreed to at an Anarchist Congress convened in Pittsburgh, May, 1883. It was as follows:—

- ”1. Destruction of the existing class rule by all means, i.e., by energetic, relentless, revolutionary, and international action.
- ”2. Establishment of a free Society based upon a cooperative system of production.
- ”3. Free exchange of equivalent products, by and between the productive organizations, without commerce and profit-mongery.
- ”4. Organization of education on a secular, scientific and equal basis for both sexes.
- ”5. Equal rights for all, without distinction of sex or race.
- ”6. Regulation of all public affairs by free contracts between the autonomous independent communes and associations, resting on a federalistic basis.”

This declaration of principles was subsequently published in Chicago. It immediately roused the wrath of the Trust magnates and their kept press, who called for drastic police suppression. This campaign found its climax in the tragedy of May, 1886, and the executions of November, 1887.



## Chapter 7 : Joseph Dietzgen's Stand

Joseph Dietzgen, famous for his association with Karl Marx and Ludwig Feuerbach, and his philosophical essays, was editing the Socialist Party organ, *Der Socialist*, at the time of the Chicago demonstrations, bomb throwing and arrests.

Dietzgen was born in Blakenberg, near Cologne, on December 8, 1828. He died in Chicago in April, 1888, and was buried on the seventeenth of that month by the side of the murdered Anarchists.

He emigrated to America in June, 1849, and worked there for two years as journeyman tanner, painter, and teacher, and traveled by tramping or on canal boats, from Wisconsin in the North to the Gulf of Mexico in the South, and from the Hudson in the East to the Mississippi in the West. He returned to Germany in 1851, but again emigrated to America eight years later, remaining only two years. He returned to the States for the third and last time in June, 1884. He was offered immediately the editorship of *Der Sozialist* and retained it until he moved to Chicago in 1886.

When Spies and his comrades of the Chicago *Arbeiterzeitung* were arrested, Dietzgen temporarily assumed the editorship, and remained a contributor to the time of his death.

Prior to the fatal Chicago meeting, Dietzgen had been attacked bitterly by Spies for his old-fashioned and ornamental style. But after the bomb had been exploded, and the reaction set in, when men were denying being "Socialists" even, Dietzgen came forward and offered his services free of charge to such of the publishers as stood their ground. This was on May 6. He had lost no time and wanted no pay.

He offered his services, as he explained, because he considered it his duty to jump into the breach and fill the places of those comrades who had been torn out of the ranks of fighters, and because he considered it necessary that the Chicago workers should not be without an organ in those trying times. His offer was accepted and two weeks later he became chief editor of three papers: *Arbeiter-zeitung*; *Falkel*; and *Vorbote*.

For this loyalty to the struggle, Dietzgen was assailed by friend and foe. His point of view, however, was made clear in a letter he wrote a fortnight before the Haymarket meeting. and another that he wrote about a fortnight after it.

On April 20, he wrote to a friend living in the East of the United States:

"For my part, I lay little stress on the distinction. whether a man is an anarchist or a socialist, because it seems to me that too much weight is attributed to this difference. While the anarchists may have mad and brainless individualists in their ranks, the socialists have an abundance of cowards. For this reason I care as much for the one as the other. The majority in both camps are still in great need of education, and this will bring about a reconciliation in good time."

On May 17, 1886, he wrote:--

“I was of the opinion that the difference between socialists and anarchists should not be exaggerated, and when the bomb exploded, and the staff of the Arbeiterzeitung were imprisoned, I at once offered my services, which were accepted.”

Dietzgen was invited by the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Labor Party to write articles on the Chicago situation for the Sozialist. But his report on the Haymarket riot was rejected, because “it was diametrically opposed to the views of the Committee.” Dietzgen thereupon attacked the committee and the Sozialist in the Arbeiterzeitung.

On June 9, 1886, he wrote to a friend :—

”I call myself‘ an Anarchist in this quotation, and the passage left out explains what I mean by Anarchism. I define it in a more congenial sense than is usually done. According to me—and I am at one in this with all the better and best comrades—we shall not arrive at the new society without serious troubles. I even think that we shall not get along without wild disturbances, without ‘Anarchy.’ I believe that ‘Anarchy’ will be the stage of transition. Dyed-in-the-wool Anarchists pretend that Anarchism is the final stage of Society. To that extent they are rattle brains who think they are the most radical people. But we are the real radicals who work for the Communist order above and beyond Anarchism. The Final aim is socialist order not anarchist disorder.

“If the Chicago comrades would now avail themselves of the state of affairs in their city, I could help them considerably. The Anarchists would then join our ranks and would form, together with the best socialists of all countries, a united and active troop, before which such weaklings as Stiebeling, Fabian, Vogt, Viereck, and others would be dispersed and forced to crawl under cover. For this reason, I think, the terms anarchist, socialist, communist, should be mixed together so that no muddle head could tell which is which.

“Language serves not only the purpose of distinguishing things, but also of uniting them, for it is dialectic. The words, and the intellect which gives meaning to language cannot do anything else but give us a picture of things. Hence man may use them freely, so long as he accomplishes his purpose.”

Dietzgen’s last words on the subject were penned a few days before his death, in a letter dated April 9, 1888, to his friend in the east:—

“I am still satisfied with my approach to the Anarchists, and am convinced that I have accomplished some good by it.”

## Chapter 8 : Pending Execution

Lombroso inquired whether, according to the charlatan rules of his psuedo-physiognomy, the Chicago Anarchists were criminals. We prefer the testimony of Captain Black, who was their principal advocate, that they were men. On the morning that they were declared guilty by the packed jury in the packed court, Black saw the prisoners immediately upon their return to jail. He was im- pressed by their calm, fearless, and contented bearing.

Adolph Fischer, who towered above his comrades, said to Black, with the utmost simplicity, and with a smile that lighted up his entire face, that he was not surprised at the verdict. and did not mind if the authorities hanged him on the morrow. He added. *"I am ready to die for the cause of the people."*

The idea of witnessing unto death for the cause which he had at heart filled him with a contented gladness.

Louis Lingg, also, smiled at the thought of death, and considered it inevitable from the first day of the trial.

George Engel was the oldest man in this group of martyrs by many years, and Black always wondered how he had become an Anarchist. Engel impressed Black with "his absolute sincerity in all that he did and said."

Spies' plea to Governor Oglesby to be the sacrifice of the hour. and to save Parsons from his doom, impressed Black as being typical of the man. It expressed his character and motives. Parsons was Black's chief concern. His case was outstanding. His execution was the most heinous of all. Black was "anxious to save out of the wreck whatever life was possible," and even people who agreed with the verdict, and were against the Anarchists, felt that Parsons should not be executed, since he came voluntarily to the bar of the court. They argued that even a Drumhead Court- Martial would never inflict the death sentence under such circum- stances. It was understood that this sentence would be commuted if Parsons would sign a petition to the Governor of the State, which, under the constitution and the statutes of the State of Illinois, was prescribed as a condition of the exercise of pardoning power. *Parsons relused to sign any such petition.* He refused to desert his comrades who were doomed by such petitioning. He declined to make any technical compliance with the law that had doomed them. Either his comrades must be pardoned with him or he would hang with them, so far as his personal will could affect the result. That was his uncompromising and unhesitating resolution.

And so Parsons died, with his comrades, to witness to the cause and to the faith of Labor!

Black adds : --

"Of such make were these men as I learned to know them in the months intervening between their arrest and their execution."

He concludes : -

”I have thought always that, if these men could be known by others as I knew them, those who came thus to know them would understand why my whole heart was in the struggle for their deliverance.”

## Chapter 9 : Without Prejudice: A Judge's Apology

(In telling the story of the Chicago martyrs, in a previous chapter, we mentioned the article contributed to the Century Magazine, New York, for April, 1893, by the Hon. Joseph E. Gary, the judge who presided at the trial. Unfortunately for Gary's ravings in defense of "law and order," two months later, Governor Altgeld released the three victims of the trial who were imprisoned still. and declared that the eight Anarchists convicted were the victims of false condemnation, insufficient evidence, a packed and legally incompetent jury, and a partial judge. The following essay is an analysis of Gary's apology.)

Gary opens his apology with a magnificent appeal of dramatic mediocrity to conventional respectability. His very first sentence assures one that he is thoroughly orthodox in superstition, superior to all suggestion of spiritual vision, an enemy not only of class-war agitators but of New England philosophers. His love of minor detail makes one wonder whether such accuracy was not assumed in order to conceal his deficiency of regard for more important fact. The reader would discover the path to justice. The honorable essayist loses him in the woods of accident. But let him speak for himself :-

"On the morning of Friday, the twentieth day of August, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six. twelve men, ranging in age from fifty-three years downward to early manhood, walked two by two from the Revere house, a hotel in the city of Chicago, to the building in which the criminal court of Cook County held its sessions. The hotel is on the south-east corner of Clark and Michigan Street, and the Courthouse was—it has been torn down to be replaced by a better—on the north side of Michigan Street, a little east of the hotel. The men were guarded from all communication with any person by a bailiff of that court at each and of the short procession which their ranks composed."

It needs no practical judgment to realize the weighty and even pointed significance of every word in this precious piece of descriptive writing. We are impressed because the writer assures us that it was "the morning of Friday," instead of casually dismissing the time and date as "Friday morning." Then the event occurred in no mere "year 1886 of the Christian era"! It did not happen even in "A.D. 1886." But it was "in the year of our Lord one thousand, eight hundred and eighty-six." This is convincing. We conjure up pictures of Dionysus—the sixth century ecclesiastical forger who commenced the practice of dating the years after the falsely computed date of Christ's nativity -- and we feel certain that on so augustly described a year as that "of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six" only sincere and truthful men could have stalked abroad!

Of course, had it been only “A.D. 1880” or “the year 1886 of the Christian era” our certitude might have been less: dogmatic.

Judge Gary’s charming evidence of these twelve men’s absolute fidelity to truth does not end here. Had they walked one by one, we might have suspected them of duplicity, or have indicted them for a conspiracy to promote error. But they walked two by two! This argues a severity of mind which puts all doubt of their honesty and perfect impartiality out of the question. The name of their hotel, its situation a little west of the Courthouse, also betokens their possession of the qualities mentioned. Had it been to the east, doubt might have overtaken our good sense. But it was not. So all fear is put aside. Finally, they were guarded in front and behind by a court bailiff. Their procession was a veritable walking Eden, into which no devil could penetrate. He might dwell beyond it at either end. Into it, he could not go. Compared to these twelve men, the twelve apostles are puny mortals of the lowest description. Contrasted against that Courthouse-to-hotel promenade in Chicago of Gary’s famous “year of our Lord” in question, the path from Nazareth to Jerusalem was but a miserable sinner’s highway. And it would be criminal indeed to stand further between the reader’s pleasure and the narrative of the historian of so sacred a walk!

Gary proceeds to state “the case of the Anarchists was on trial,” and that “these men”—whom he names—“were the jurors selected and sworn to try the issue between the people of the State of Illinois and” the aforesaid Anarchists, whom he names also. He then names the counsel on both sides and mentions his own presidency as judge. The defendants were accused of the murder of Mathias J. Degan, on May 4th, 1886.

With that air of candor, never to be extolled sufficiently, Gary continues : —

”The short journey that these Jurors were then making was the last one of the many they made over the same route; every day, except Sundays, from the fourteenth day of July preceding. they had several times each day, under like restraint by the watchfulness of the bailiff’s, paced to and from between the hotel and the Courthouse: and some of them had done so from the twenty-first day of the month before. on which day the trial began. Twenty-one days passed away in selecting the jury; 981 men were called to the chairs where the jury sat, and were sworn and questioned. before the dozen who tried the case were accepted. At all times, the dozen chairs were kept full, and when a man went into one of them he became a close prisoner, not to be released until he was rejected as unfit to serve on the jury; or, if he became one of the chosen twelve, not until he and his fellows gave. the final verdict.”

Here we have an excellence of incidence which is a veritable moving picture. We have no thought for the men on trial. Their sufferings are of too small moment to play any part in the “movie” before us. It is of the jury we think. What weary plodding, what devoted patience, is theirs! And yet the detail is not complete. Indeed, not to impeach the writer, but only to express a fact, his candor is not devoid of a fault whose Latin description in English translation is known as *the suppression of truth*.

For example, Gary dwells on the length of time it took to impanel the jury. He implies that every consideration was shown to the defense, whose challenging thus lengthened the proceedings. He omits to state that, of the 981 men called to the jury chairs, only [our or five belonged to the Labor class. *These were all challenged by the States’ Attorney and rejected by the judge.*

Gary dwells on the isolation of the jurymen from all contamination of prejudice. He omits to state that most of them declared their prejudice against Anarchists and Socialists, and that he, as judge, maintained that that fact was no evidence of their partiality. He fails to mention that one talesman stated that he had conceived and expressed an opinion that the defendants were guilty. This gentleman confessed that he was not prepared to deliver the accused to freedom, if the prosecuting evidence failed; but that he considered them so guilty, that he was not prepared to acquit them unless overwhelming evidence of their innocence was forthcoming. By exercising great pressure, judge Gary persuaded him to acknowledge that he thought "perhaps he might be able" to put this prejudice aside, and act entirely on evidence. Accordingly, Gary declared him competent. This was one of the worthies whose blessed freedom from all bias and suggestion Gary has eulogized in the passages cited.

Yet the judge who presided at the Chicago trial was an honorable man. He was an upright judge. Funny, how, with such a mind for detail, he should have omitted the few facts outlined in the foregoing comment!

Another error of omission strikes us. Gary has told us of the court bailiffs, until we look upon them as walking pillars of supremacy, cold impassive righteousness. Gary tells us the names of jury- men, prosecuting and defending counsel, witnesses, Anarchist writers and agitators, the defendants. But so great are these bailiffs, that he would seem to dread to dwell upon their names. Are they not the very guardian angels of veracity and justice? Yet one was named Henry Ryoe, and he told well-known men in Chicago that he was managing the case and knew what he was about; that these fellows should hang as sure as death, and that he was summoning only such men as jurors as would be acceptable to the prosecution !

As became a judge, Gary, penning his apology, thought it wisdom to ignore such details. He considered it dignity to compete on this wise with junior reporters handling their first "descriptive special":-

On all former occasions when the jurors were on the street they had conversed with one another. had looked about them, at the people at the buildings, at the trifling incidents of street life. tin this morning, each man walked in silence: turning his eyes neither in right nor left. he avoided all recognition of any acquaintance who might be in the multitude that filled the street."

We will spare the reader the judge's description of the thronged street, the concentrated gaze and painful anxiety of Christendom, and the jury's complete ignorance of such universal interest. But we would like to know how a judge, so completely ignorant of the avowed partiality of the jurors, was so thoroughly well informed on the subject of their conduct on a street parade? Was it his function to play spy and to watch them daily? How did he know that they had conversed with each other on every former occasion? How did he know of their complete silence and hang-dog appearance of self-shame in this "morning of Friday, the twentieth day oi August. in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six? And what did such conduct—so mysteriously noted by a judge whose play was not spying from the sidewalk—prove any- way? if a sense of solemnity on this day, surely a grave want of gravity on all the former days, and an ascertained want of mental balance and judgment generally! Or was it a fear to record a cooked verdict now that the moment to act on their criminal conspiracy had arrived? Was each man ashamed to look his fellow in the face, to find the stones in mutiny, and to see shame staring at him everywhere?

The total impossibility of such an event—always bearing in mind the facts with which we have qualified Gary’s narrative is evident from the writer’s repeated assurance:—

“The jurors had no access, either by newspapers or conversation, to any source of information. being at all times either in court, in a room set apart for them in the Courthouse, in a suite of rooms at the hotel, or in a body taking exercise on the streets: and, always, when not in court. guarded by bailiffs. The counsel engaged in the case were fully occupied, when out of court. preparing for the work next session. I read the papers very little, and declined all conversation upon the subject which occupied my business hours.”

This passage convinces us that Gary would have made a fortune as the writer of detective stories. Perhaps he did write some of the five and fifteen cent editions of *Nick Carter*, published so widely by Messrs. Street and Smith of New York. Or else, he may have contributed to the wonders of the magic circle, and have inspired secretly the apparently miraculous impossibilities with the performance of which the audience at the London St. George’s Hall were wont to be charmed. Anyway, there can be no doubt that Gary, in writing his apology, was chuckling at his ability to state a mystery: to dwell on unimportant circumstances whilst concealing essential fact: and to urge the poser: “Ladies and gentlemen, the thing was done, you see it was impossible of accomplishment. Say. how did it happen?”

When the author of a detective novel assures us all his characters are innocent, we enjoy the situations because of its delicious falseness. When Deviant shows us that his tricks are performed without trickery we applaud his splendid insincerity. When Gary explains how utterly impossible it was for a biased jury to be prejudiced whilst watched by corrupted bailiffs, we like hugely the wit of the man. But we want laughter without tears, and comedy unrounded by tragedy. The Chicago business was hardly that. A judge cannot be expected to note the difference.

Gary proceeds to define the dimensions of the Courtroom, and the situation of galleries. He mentions that he kept these closed and empty except upon one afternoon, the events of which he details later in his narrative. He adds, how, at the beginning of each session. he announced that no person would be permitted to stand in the Courtroom, except in the way of duty; that no one could lounge on railings, or on the arms of seats, but that every spectator must be down in a seat, or leave the room. Also that there must be no talking, whispering, or laughing, or any token of approval or censure.

Truly, a just judge come to deliver judgment! But watch the sequel :—

“Reluctantly, when Mr. Grinnell was about to begin his closing argument to the jury, at the solicitation, without his knowledge, of many of the bailiffs in attendance, and upon their assurances that they could prevent all disorder, I permitted the galleries to be opened. As soon as people began to enter them, I received a note— from Mrs. Black, wife of the leading counsel for the defense—she being constantly in attendance— —stating that many persons had desired to hear his speech and had been prevented, as they could not get into the Courtroom, and risking if I thought it was fair to open the galleries for an audience that had been excluded when her husband spoke. I recognized the justness of her complaint, and, calling Mr. Black to the bench, showed him the note of his wife, and offered to clear the galleries and to shut them up again



if he preferred that it should be done. He thought it not worth while. but the event showed how unwise it was to open them.”

Grinnell was the State Attorney, and the gallery is opened to admit an audience to hear his speech at the request of the bailiffs admittedly—though Gary conceals the fact—opposed to the defendants. The judge consents, though he confessed to have kept out any audience that wished to hear Black, the leading attorney for the defense, speak. In all this conduct there was no intentional partiality, not even judicial tactlessness. When Mrs. Black remarks on the unfairness, Gary is not turned from his purpose. He achieves it, by throwing the onus of deciding on the man he has treated wrongly, feeling sure that the latter thus challenged, must generously give way to the injustice. Seven years later, writing an apology for his conduct, Gary follows up a complacent record of his infamy by affecting to discover the unwisdom of his own conspiracy. The event to which he refers above is described thus in the paragraph which follows immediately:—

“During his speech, Mr. Grinnell made some impassioned exclamation—I do not recall the words—to the effect that nobody feared Anarchists, at which a storm of applause broke out in the east gallery. A futile attempt was made to discover who began it, and after some delay Mr. Grinnell proceeded without further interruption.”

Consider the circumstances and character of the applause, and then say, if you can, that you are surprised at learning of the futility of the attempt to discover the source of the applause? In other words, the court confesses, through the medium of Judge Gary’s apology, that the only occasion on which the gallery was open, it was, like the jury, “a packed” affair.

Gary’s article dwindles down to a yellow press pot-boiler. We do not propose to follow him in his quotations from the *Alarm*, the *Arbeiter*, or *Die Fackel*, the speeches of the defendants, or the writings of Most or Bakunin. These questions of reform versus revolution, of violence or nonviolence are of too general and too important an interest, to be considered as attributes of Gary’s vision. They are fundamental like justice: whereas he is incidental like his office. Our concern has been to air his judicial understanding of the nature of prejudice. That done, the present laborer’s task is ended.

## Chapter 10 : The Physiognomy of Social Revolution

The Chicago martyrdoms inspired Cesare Lombroso, the criminologist, to contribute an interesting essay to the columns of *The Monist*, for April, 1891, on the theme, "The Physiognomy of the Anarchists." The most interesting feature of the essay was its exposure of the ignorance that passed muster for criminology, a pseudo-science of patho-psychology, invented in the interests of bourgeois society.

Lombroso claimed that criminal anthropology was a science on the ground that vice, crime, and brutality very often find a characteristic expression of face. But the relationship is not exact, because there is and can be no exact standard of judgment. The physiologists judge inaccurately and falsely. And, like their victims, their attitude towards life is dictated by economic conditions. Criminal anthropology is merely a bourgeois pretense and hypocrisy.

Lombroso makes an interesting distinction between "true revolution" and mere "rebellion." He claimed that criminal anthropology supplied : -

"The method for distinguishing *true revolution always fruitful and useful*. from Utopia or rebellion, which is always sterile. . . . True revolutionists—that is to say, the initiators of great scientific and political revolutions, who excite and bring about a true progress in humanity—are almost always geniuses or saints, and have all at marvelously harmonious physiognomy."

Lombroso instanced the noble physiognomies of Marx, Mazzini, Garibaldi, and Lassalle, among others. But does this not instance the danger of a criminologist dabbling in politics? Marx was a magnificent critic of political economy and to some extent a social prophet. But he was dominated personally by terrible ambition, which does not make for harmony of mind or thought, and should have found expression in his physiognomy. Mazzini has many excellent qualities as a man, but was not his United Italy activity finally sterile Garibaldi was a great soldier of freedom, but his efforts ended in sterile patriotism. Lassalle's career was a conceit and his contribution to working-class organization a colossal pretense.

Lombroso notes the large forehead, the bushy beard, the large- soft eyes, the well-developed jaw, and the pale face. But here he sins against fashion, and perhaps common sense. The bushy beard no longer argues a noble physiognomy but disease-carrying fungus. And it can always conceal a weak jaw. Lombroso does not find these features in all the Anarchists. But since they do not exist in other folks either, the argument seems a little barren, and the deduction not too obvious.

Out of all this pretense of criminal anthropological knowledge, there emerges only one useful point, the differentiation between the fruitfulness of true revolution and the sterility of mere rebellion. One did not need to be a criminologist to remark this difference. But one does need

intelligence to apply this distinction. Lombroso reveals only his prejudice in endeavoring to apply it. He found the criminal type 2 per cent less among the Italian revolutionists than among normal men. He found the criminal type 5 per cent. more among the Russian Nihilists than among normal men. He found the criminal type 6 per cent. more among the Paris Communards than among the Russian Nihilists. And he found 10 per cent. of the remainder of the Communards to be insane. Passing to the regicides and presidenticides, Lombroso instances "the monsters of the French Revolution" and finds them to be nearly all of the criminal type. But the French Revolution was one of the most fruitful events in the history of the world. It is hard to accept the criminal classification of Marat, when one knows his history. Lombroso reaches the climax of his prejudice when, after an arbitrary classification and observation, he finds the criminal type to be 34 per cent. among the Anarchists.

Lombroso discovered the physiognomy of Schnaubelt. who seems to have been the agent employed by the authorities to throw the bomb to be very fine. It matters little, after this tribute to a spy and agent provocateur, that Lombroso discovers the physiognomies of Parsons and Neebe to be "very noble and truly genial." Especially when, in the same breath, Lombroso considers Waller and Seliger, former comrades of the martyrs, turned perjured informers from fear of the gallows and hope of gain. to possess "fine physiognomies" also. Obviously, "fine and noble physiognomy" is a dangerous and futile classification. And the man who substitutes it for economics is engaging in charlatanism and pseudo-science. Criminal anthropology is the astrology of sociology, whereas we are seeking the astronomy. It is the dying conjuring of witchcraft and demonology. clad in the borrowed wardrobe of science.

An unskillful surgeon made John Most's face unsymmetric. Most was hounded down and hated by the authorities for his stern and unbending loyalty to the cause of the Chicago martyrs. He figured in Schaack's book accordingly as a wild and dangerous Anarchist. Lombroso looked at the picture and concluded that "Most has acrocephaly and facial unsymmetry." In other words Most was high-skulled and his features disproportionate. Therefore, his mind was unbalanced. But nature never gave Most an unpleasant face. It was a doctor.

August Spies was of a very tender nature, and his compassion for all who suffered was a byword with his comrades. Compassion as well as justice made him more concerned with the fate of Parsons than with his own doom. But Spies was born in a chateau celebrated for feudal robberies--called on that account, the *Raubschloss*. And Lombroso, the criminologist, discovered a connection between this fact and the other one, that Spies was converted twenty years later to Socialism in America.

Lombroso complained of the morbid physiognomy of August Spies, basing his opinion upon a picture published in Schaack's book. In a footnote, Lombroso admitted that this picture was not true to life and that the features upon which his opinion was founded, did not exist. This did not prevent Lombroso from stating that "the physiognomy of Spies," in the inaccurate picture, "corresponds with his autobiography, written with a fierce fanaticism"! Which, of course is science and a study in values!

Lombroso finds that Fielden has a wild and sensual physiognomy, a turned-up nose, and protruding jaws. But Fielden's employers considered him a harmless enthusiast of an amiable nature, and never suspected of any criminal disposition. It was admitted, even by the prosecution, that he had become entangled in the Anarchist prosecution by a strange concatenation of circumstances. And even judge Gary, Anarchist-hater and sensation-monger, witnessed. in a letter to Governor Oglesby, that Fielden's faults consisted of "a natural love of justice, an impatience at

all undeserved suffering” Otherwise, Gary found Fielden “the honest, industrious, and peaceable laboring man.” On his release by Altgeld in 1893. Fielden settled with his family on a farm in Colorado, and certainly betrayed no criminal impulses.

Connecting Fielden with the well-known M.P., who was related slightly to his father, and with whom Fielden in his youth probably did associate, Lombroso unfolds his theory of the criminal consequence of genius:—

“I have proved how often genius is nervous epilepsy, and how almost all the sons of men of genius are lunatics, idiots or criminals.”

This statement is, of course, absurd, and is rebuked by facts. The Darwin family has been famous for over two hundred and fifty years. The sons of Hegel and Schelling were able men. The Huxley family is more famous in the third generation than in its original outstanding representative, the immortal Thomas Henry Huxley. John Stuart Mill was the famous son of James Mill. Genius, and the posterity of genius, often go to the wall. *But the explanation is to be found in external circumstances, in economic conditions.*

Lombroso discovered “a Mongolic cast of feature” in Engel and Lingg, and concluded that they were, therefore, degenerative in character. Lingg’s oblique eyes offended him particularly. He discovered them both to have been driven to political action by “a truly ungovernable epileptoid idea.” Enthusiasm possessed them like a disease.

The truth is Engel joined the Socialists at an advanced age. In his earlier years he was an Anti-Socialist. On his first arrest he was released upon the good word of Coroner Herg, who declared that he had known Engel for years as a quiet and well-behaved citizen.

Lingg was only 23 years of age. And youth is sometimes moved by an enthusiasm that lapses with years. Certainly his character was not matured nor his ideas tested at this age. What does one know of life at 23?

This consideration, although noted, moved Lombroso less than the fact that the ears were protruding, and were without lobes, in the case of Lingg, Spies, Fischer, and Engel. He was determined to treat politics as a physiognomy instead of an economy: an individual and not a social problem.

Thus Booth, who murdered Lincoln, was given by his father the name Wilkes, and the father’s own name was Junius Brutus. Which proves (says Lombroso) hereditary! Incidentally, Lombroso declares that Wilkes was “a revolutionist”! Which Wilkes certainly was not!

All this fun and criminal anthropological moonshine Lombroso discovered in Schaack’s *Anarchy and Anarchists*, Chicago, 1889. He found this work “very partial but rich in facts.” Its pictures were all wrong and its biographies paid little heed to truth. Schwab rightly termed this book “*a fictitious robber-story*,” containing “untruths absolutely invented for ornament and decoration.”

Michael Schwab, whose death sentence was commuted on petition to imprisonment, published this comment on Lombroso’s essay in an article written from the Joliet Penitentiary, and contributed to the *Morris!* for July, 1891. At that time Schwab had served five out of his fifteen years’ penal servitude, for an offense of which, in common with his comrades, he was innocent, and was within two years of receiving the famous Altgeld pardon, which exonerated him and his comrades. Incidentally, this pardon demolished Lombroso’s physiognomy of crime explanation of the Chicago bombing, since it declared the outrage to be on the other side of the question, the State side!

But even if it had been possible to have conceded the accuracy of Lombroso's blundering theory, as Schwab wrote, "he necessarily failed from the insufficiency of his materials," as regards accurate biographical data, and the fact that "the portraits from which he made his deduction," were "not sufficiently truthful for his purpose."

Schwab added to this criticism the following excellent reflection:--

"It is in the highest degree improbable that such a book should not have caricatured the portraits of the Anarchists. In books designed for sale to the masses, the illustrations are not, as a rule, of any value as works of art, *even if the persons pictured in them enjoy the author's favor.*"

Lombroso lends point to this comment, and invalidates all his "shocker" reasoning about the physiognomy of the Anarchists, when he says:--

"I repeat that among the anarchists there are no true criminals; even Schaack, the police historian, can name but two criminals, and certainly he would not have spared them if he could have stigmatized them. Their heroic-like deaths, with their ideal on their lips, proves that they were not common criminals."

Which ends the discussion. Obviously, there is no exact physiognomy of crime, and no physiognomy of social revolution. It is a question of social and political economy, sociology versus physiognomy. Nero tuned whilst Rome burned: and Lombroso enjoyed a minor harmony whilst civilization wasted. History never records tragedy without mockery and every crisis has its burlesque. Criminology is the burlesque of property—which is robbery and infamy. Socialism will end the mean and intolerable farce.

## Chapter 11 : Daniel De Leon

Daniel De Leon was born on December 14, 1852, in Curacao, an island off the coast of Venezuela, and educated in Europe. He returned to America in 1872, and graduated from Columbia Law School in New York City in 1878. He held the position of lecturer in that college for six years. In 1886 he took an active part in the Henry George campaign, and severed, in consequence, his connection with the law school. Four years later he joined the Socialist Labor Party, and in 1892 became editor of its official organ, *The People*, and leading theorist in the Socialist movement of America. He held his editorial position until his death, on May 11, 1914.

De Leon was noted for his bitter and often outrageously unjust attacks on Anarchism. The lawyer in him degraded his Socialist pen. But the trend of his work was to reconcile Anarchism and Marxism. He was always paying tribute to Marx for the latter's analysis of capitalist production. But he supplemented Marx's work with an even more important contribution to the philosophy of the workers' struggle, a definite application of Socialist knowledge to the purpose of evolving the new social order. De Leon proclaimed that Socialism was incomplete unless it adopted a negative program on the political field and a positive program on the industrial. This was his conception of social revolution, of Marxism, Communism, or Socialism. And it is the true and only conception.

De Leon saw and taught that the system of government based on territorial lines has outlived its function: that economic development has reached a point where the Political State cannot even appear to serve the workers as an instrument of industrial emancipation. Accumulated wealth, concentrated in a few hands, controls all political government. No franchise permits the democracy to control accumulated wealth.

Once he had found his stride, De Leon devoted himself to this definition of Socialism as the Industrial Republic. He did so, not as an Utopian, dreaming vainly and speculating gloriously, but as a scientist and a thinker, seeking earnestly and penetrating with analysis.

Adapting Kautsky's *Socialist Republic* in 1894, De Leon wrote, on this theme, as follows:—

"Few things are more childish than to demand of the Socialist that he draw a picture of the Commonwealth he labors for. The demand is so childish that it would not deserve much attention, were it not for the circumstance that, childish though it be, it is the one objection against Socialism which its adversaries raise with the soberest mien. The other objections are, if anything, still more childish, but in making them the adversaries of Socialism are not half so serious.

"Never yet in the history of mankind has it happened that a revolutionary party was able to foresee, let alone determine, what the forms would be of the new social order which it strove to usher in. The cause of progress had gained, not a little, but quite a good deal, if it could as much as ascertain and recognize the tendencies that led to such a new social order, to the end that its political activity could be a conscious and not merely an instinctive one."

Anti-parliamentarians accept this clear and simple statement as defining the anti-parliamentary position. It is one of the clearest statements to be found in the whole range of Socialist literature.

Anti-parliamentarians also endorse the following eulogy of the agile few, made by De Leon, at the Second Convention, I.W.W., in 1906:–

”I know what Marx teaches upon the instinct of the class-struggle is correct; the instinct is there, it is latent. It is the mission of the lieutenants of the capitalist class to interfere with us, and to prevent us from touching that chord, and that chord if touched responds immediately. But the capitalist class of this country walks upon a flaming volcano, and that volcano will start in eruption and overthrow them the day we have organized a substantial minority. One correction, I think, to the Preamble was suggested to-day that sounded to me quite logical, or rather quite historically true. I wish to refer to it in connection with what I have just stated with regard to our chances. One critic—I think it was McIntosh—stated that it was a mistake to expect to organize *all* the workers. Ah, indeed, it is a mistake; only he did not carry his argument as far as I would have carried it. Not because you cannot organize all the workers, but because it is not *necessary* to organize all the workers. The revolutions of this world have been accomplished not by *majorities* but by *minorities*; only the minority had to be large enough and earnest enough and determined enough and convinced enough to *act*. Soon as it had the numbers that raised it above a negligible quantity, just as soon as it was numerically strong enough, although but a small minority compared to the whole, its energy, its determination, its courage added to audacity have always brought about the Revolution.

”Ex-Speaker Reed, very correctly and very much to the sorrow of his class, pointed out that if a vote had been taken, if a male vote of referendum had been taken, the colonies in this union would by a large majority have voted against independence. Correct. That revolution was accomplished by a clearheaded, determined minority. Between the minority that wants a certain thing and those who do not want it there lies a large mass of the ‘undetermined.’ Whether it will always be so I do not know. It has always been that way, and will continue to be until some time after the Cooperative Commonwealth has been established. That minority must have fire enough in it—not straw fire, not kindling wood fire, *but a fire that nothing can extinguish*—to beat up and move that indifferent mass. And when that minority moves the indifferent mass moves, and is able to move the earth with the revolutionary minority.”

Again, in defining the attitude of the S.L.P., De Leon was really stating the position of the Anti-Parliamentary Communist movement: –

”The Socialist Labor Party carries on its work of education, encouraged by the knowledge that some day, somehow, something is bound to rip. And that, at that crisis, when the people, who have allowed themselves to be misled from Mumbo Jumbo to Jumbo Mumbo, will be running around like chickens without a head, there will be one beacon of light ‘midst the clouds to-day; one beacon, whose steady light will serve as guide; whose tried firmness will inspire confidence; and whose rock-ribbed sides will serve as a natural point of rally from which to save civilization.”

The Socialist Labor Party is dead. But Daniel De Leon’s contribution to Socialist thought and action, all that matters of it, like the inspiration of John MacLean’s heroic struggle, is embodied in the agitation of the Anti-Parliamentary Communist movement.

How correct that conception is, as opposed to the conception of the parliamentary ”united front,” ”Communists” and the Labor Party, will be seen from the statement made by Justice Swift, to the jury, at the London Central Criminal Court, on November 25, 1925, when summing up in the Communist Party trial. Swift said: –

”The Government of this country is not a Conservative, Liberal, or Labor body, represented by a Baldwin, an Asquith, or a MacDonald. We speak of the Government of this country as an

unceasingly active and permanent body, represented by the King in Parliament. Governments appear to fall frequently, by only superficially, merely a change of the 'Party' political appendage. An over-throw of a Government means a complete change of the Constitution, the sorry effect of a Revolution, the abolition of the King and present Houses of Legislation and their replacement by an entirely new structure."

Which means that parliamentarism is not Socialism; that Laborism is not Socialism; that the Communist Party "United Front," Leninism and Nepism, Stalinism, is not Socialism; but that the unceasing agitation towards the Industrial Republic, the entirely new structure, is Socialism. Actually, De Leon pioneered the Anti-Parliamentarism, and all that is of moment in the S.L.P. program either has been, or should be, embodied in the Anti-Parliamentarian Communist program.



## Chapter 12 : In Working-Class Memory

*For Labor can but honor those who witness with their lives and the manner of their dying, to the power of Labor's struggle.*

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*"The greatest men of a nation are those whom it puts to death." - Ernest Renan*

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## Martyred, Tokio, January 24, 1911.

The following comrades were arrested in the fall of 1910, on the bogus charge of plotting against the Imperial family. Tried and sentenced by Special Secret Court, December, 1910. Government issued statements against accused but forbade all statements to be published on their behalf.

Denjiro Kotoku. Journalist and Essayist. Age, 41.

Seinosuke Oishi. Doctor of Medicine. Studied in America. Age, 45.

Qudo Uchiyama. Buddhist Priest. Age, 32.

Tadao Niimura. Small landowner. Age, 25.

Uichita Matsus. Landowner and Journalist. Age, 35.

Uichiro Nimi. Journalist. Age, 32.

Suga Kanno. Journalist. Sweetheart of Kotoku. Age, 31.

Umpei Morichika. Originally a small farmer. Ex-Local Government Official. Age, 31.

Rikisaku Furukawa. Horticulturist. Age, 30.

Takichi Miyashita. Merchant. Age, 42.

Kenshi Okumiyo. A very old revolutionary agitator. Age, 55.

Heishiro Naruishi. A law student. Age 25.

All claimed to be Socialists. Some called themselves Anarchists. Others maintained, with Dietzgen, that Socialism, Communism, and Anarchism are one and the same idea or social theory.

Kotoku's mother, seventy years old, came from her native province of Kochi-Tosa, to see her only son during his trial. Shortly before the close she was permitted to interview him in the presence of the authorities. The aged woman addressed her son stoically, and urged him to face death like a Samurai, the ancient warrior.

He did not reply, and the mother returned home, where she died two days later. After the final hearing in court, Kotoku was shown a telegram telling him of his mother's death.

## Chapter 13 : The Yellow Chicago

Denjiro Kotoku formerly occupied a responsible position on the editorial staff of the Japanese daily paper, the *Korozu Cho-ho* (Thousand Morning News) or Tokio. Becoming familiar with Socialist and Anarchist thought, he resigned his position and founded a monthly review, *Tatsu Kwa* (Iron and Fire). This paper was Anarchist-Communist in tone. It preached the Class War, and was accordingly suppressed.

Kotoku had now called upon himself the hatred of the Governing Class. This despotism remembered that, during the Russo-Japanese war, Kotoku had fearlessly expressed anti-militarist convictions in the columns of the *Korozu Cho*. It saw those opinions assuming a more matured form, taking on more definite proportions in the revolutionary journal he had established. It answered him with the answer of authority, the proclamation of a conspiracy against the intellectual awakening of the Japanese proletariat.

The *Tatsu Kwa* was suppressed. All revolutionary—and even pseudo-revolutionary—magazines were suppressed. Not only Kropotkinist, Marxian, and Bakuninist journals, but also Lasallean ones, suffered the same fate. Among those thus suppressed were the *Heimin Shimhim*, *Kunamoto Hypron*, *Shin Shiho*, and *Wippon Heimin*.

Kotoku answered this Governmental conspiracy against freedom of publication by devoting himself to the task of translating the works of Marx, Tolstoy, and Kropotkin into Japanese. In this work he was ably assisted by the friend—with whom he had formed a Free Love union, we understand—Mme. Kano. All these works were confiscated by the Authorities, who destroyed them.

Whilst suppressing Anarchist and Class-War Socialist thought, the Government appointed to professional seats in the Imperial and Wasada Universities men who upheld and propagated the ideas of evolutionary "State-Socialism"—the Fabian brand.

Kotoku sought to counteract this side-tracking by preaching the ideas of Revolutionary Communism to the Chinese and Japanese students resident in the University of Tokio. In this task he was ably assisted by Mme. Ho Chin and M. Lieu Sun Soh. The propaganda resulting from this activity has since been maintained through the columns of *Chien Yee* and the *Chinese Anarchist News*.

For these labors Kotoku and Kano paid the penalty of being driven into exile. The Government that had driven them to foreign shores had itself given birth to their revolutionary propaganda by causing revolutionary literature to be distributed among the Russian prisoners of war. Kotoku merely extended the area of its circulation. For this capital crime he was several times imprisoned, before being driven to take refuge in San Francisco, whither he went with his comrade, Kano. Here these two comrades assisted in the organization of the Japanese workers of America, and proclaimed to the workers of the world the formation of *The Social Revolutionary Party of Japanese in America*.

But Kotoku was something more than a Revolutionary Communist. He was a fervent lover of political freedom throughout the world. He was a foe of despotism in every shape and form.

When Jung-Keun An, the Korean martyr, killed Prince Ito at Harbin, Kotoku praised his brave conduct in a poem written in Japanese. This was published by his San Francisco comrades on a postcard, with a portrait of Jung-Keun An. The Japanese Government remembered this against him when shortly afterwards he returned to his native land, only to be arrested, secretly tried, and murdered. Eleven of his comrades suffered the same fate.

The Japanese Government justified these murders of the Socialists and Anarchists on the ground of their "simply frightful teachings about sex relations, involving the sinking of the human race to the level of animals." Yet this same Government upholds and extols a system of universal brothelism. It supports by its legislation, and controls, through the power it has conferred on the municipal authority, "the native industry" of a town, existent a few miles outside of Tokio. This town is a walled one, known as the Shin Yoshiwara or brothel town. It consists of several miles of well-paved streets, without a single shop, cafe, stall, or hotel. Facing the street is only room after room, in which girls are confined behind thick wooden bars, through which they look out on the street at pedestrians, all of whom are men. There are 10,000 of them in this town, caged like wild beasts and on view for sale. They are the sole occupants, except for the householders and servants, who regulate the traffic. And they are the daughters of the poor, the producing class.

Such brothelism is not peculiar to Japan. It is common to Capitalism. It is as necessary as crime to the existence of the governing class. Yes, under the moral code supported by the Japanese Government, a female child, in *any part* of Japan, is a marketable possession and may be sold into the Yoshiwara, by her father, for *minimum* period of *three years*, at a price varying from £4 10s. to £10, according to her looks. In order to regain her release, she must save up enough to repay this amount, in addition to making a certain sum for the proprietor of the particular house into which she has been sold. All this, of course, has to come out of her sordid earnings. When she has bought her freedom, she is allowed to return to her native town and get married.

The existence of such a town—with its brothels licensed by the municipal authority, which imposes a medical inspection on the girls twice a week—is a sufficient answer to the lying hypocrisy of the Japanese Governing Class.

But this is not all. There are in Japan about ten thousand factories and workshops, employing about seven hundred thousand girls and women, and three hundred thousand boy and men operatives. Ten per cent. of the female workers are under fourteen years of age. Many girls are employed all night, as well as during the day, in the cotton factories, their employers also insisting that they should work whilst eating. By way of punishment, many employers and foremen lash their girl operators, often stripping them for the purpose. They are also imprisoned in dark rooms, and required to work on reduced rations. Heavy "fines" are imposed, and, at the end of their contract terms, they often leave the factories penniless.

Similar barbarities characterize the treatment of the male workers, the treatment of the miners beggaring description.

Let the truth be told. Kotoku and his brave comrades were condemned to death because they dared to breathe a nobler moral atmosphere than Japanese Capitalism could tolerate. They dared to lighten the intellectual darkness of the proletariat. This was their crime. Let the world of the workers pay its tribute of humble respect to the memories of these dauntless comrades in revolt, these noble pioneers of freedom, these Christs, Brunos and Apostles of the coming Social Revolution, in far away Japan.

## Chapter 14 : From Kotoku Correspondence

We do not believe in treasuring every word that a man writes, even though he enjoy and merit the repute of being a thinker. Consequently we do not propose to publish, in full, the letters sent by our Japanese comrade to Albert Johnson, the veteran Anarchist of California. The following excerpts tell the simple story of Kotoku's scholarship and earnestness in the cause of truth, even whilst jailed and under the doom of his coming execution.

Tokio, November 25, 1904: "I feel very happy to inform you that this picture (Peter Kropotkin) was reproduced from that which you sent me, and is published from *Heimin Shimbun* office, a Socialist weekly. I have been prosecuted on the charge of publishing a treasonable article and sentenced to five months' imprisonment. When this card is in your hands I will be in Sugano Prison of Tokio."

Tokio, December 30, 1904: "Both as a source of argument and reference, Mr. Ladd's work, 'Commentaries on Hebrew,' should be of great value for me, because I am an atheist or agnostic, and always fighting against the dogma of Christian and all other religions..."

"As already informed, I was prosecuted by a barbarous government on the charge of inciting to the alteration of the Dynastic Institution, and sentenced to five months' imprisonment, but I soon appealed and second trial was postponed until January 6.

"Beside this I was sentenced on 20th inst. to a fine 80 yen, on the charge of translating and publishing Marx's 'Communist Manifesto.' What beautiful Japanese Government is! Is it not quite same to Russian despotism?"

Odawara, Japan, August 10, 1905: "Five months' imprisonment not a little injured my health, but it gave me many lessons of the social questions. I have seen and studied great many of so called 'criminals' and became convinced that the governmental institutions—court, law, prison—are only responsible for them—poverty and crime.

"Among the many books which I have read in the prison were Draper's 'Conflict Between Religion and Science,' Haeckel's 'The Riddle of the Universe,' Renan's 'Life of Jesus,' and so forth. Besides I repeated again two interesting books which you sent me—Mr. Ladd's 'Hebrew and Christian Mythology' and Mr. Kropotkin's 'Fields, Factories, and Workshops.' (By the way, Mrs. Ladd often mentions Buddha as a Chinese philosopher. It is true that the greater part of Chinese population is not Buddhist, but Buddha or Gautama is not Chinese. He was born in India. He is Hindu. Several centuries after the death of Buddha his religion was introduced into China.)

"Indeed, I had gone (to Sugana Prison) as a Marxian Socialist and returned as a radical Anarchist. To propagate Anarchism in this country, however, it means the death or lifelong, at least several years', imprisonment. Therefore, its movement must be entirely secret, and its progress and success will need long, long time and endurance."

Tokio, October 11, 1905: "our weekly is still suspended and our office has been compelled to dissolve ourselves owing to the barbarous persecution and financial difficulties.

"I'm now intending to organize the Japanese laborers in America. There is no other means to get freedom of speech and press than to quit the soil of the state of siege and go to a more civilized country."

Same date: "I have decided to start on the N.Y.K.'s ship, November 14th, for Seattle and San Francisco, with my nephew,"

San Francisco, May 29, 1906, 5 p.m.: "I came here to-day (afternoon)... I will stay in Oakland till June 1st. On that day we are going to hold a meeting for the organization of Japanese Social Revolutionary Party at the Oakland Socialist headquarters."

(Kotoku's sojourn in America lasted only a few months. He organized the Japanese workingmen on the coast and return to his native land to continue his propaganda work.)

Japan, December 18, 1906: "Dear old Friend and Comrade—The winter has come, the leaves have fallen. It is however, very fine weather. The sky is blue, the sunlight warm. So I am very happy at my village home.

"My wife went to the law court to attend as a hearer to the trial of Comrade Osugi this morning. Comrade Osugi is a young Anarchist student and a best friend of mine ... now under trial on the charge of 'violence of the press law.' He translated an article title 'to the conscripts,' from a French Anarchist paper, and published it in *Hikuri*, Japanese Socialist paper. This anti-militaristic deed was prosecuted by the public officials. I am now anxious to hear the result of the trial. I think it will be probable the sentence of several months' imprisonment and the confiscation of printing machine. How good law and government are!

"The most comical fact of the results of the late war is the conciliation (or rather embrace) of Christianity with Buddhism and Shintoism. The history of Christianity in Japan was, until now a history of horrible persecutions. The Japanese diplomatists, however, earnestly desired to silence the rumors caused and spread in Europe during the war that 'Japan is a yellow peril' or Japan is a pagan country,' suddenly began to put on the mask of Western civilization, and eagerly welcome and protect, and use it as a means of introducing Japan to European and American powers as a civilized Christendom. On the other hand, Christian priests, taking advantage of the weakness of the government, got a great monetary aid from the State, and under its protection they are propagating in full vigor the Gospel of Patriotism. thus, Japanese Christianity, which was before the war the religion of poor, literally now changed within only two years to a great bourgeois religion and a machine of the State and militarism!

"The preparation for the Socialist daily is almost completed. I hope the daily will have a success. The Japanese Socialist Party consists, as you know, of many different elements. Social-Democrats, Social Revolutionists, and even Christian Socialists. So the daily would be a very strange paper.

"Most of our comrades are inclined to take the tactics of Parliamentarism rather than Syndicalism or Anarchism. But it is not because they are assuredly convinced which is true, but because of their ignorance of Anarchist Communism. Therefore, our most important work at present is the translation and publication of Anarchist and Free-thought literature. I will do my best, and use our paper as an organ for the libertarian propaganda.

"In China, the rebellions and insurrections are spreading. The social and political conditions of China are just the same to that of Russia in the last century. I think China will be, within the coming ten years, a land of great rebellion and terrorism. A group of Chinese students in Tokio is becoming the center of Chinese Revolutionary movement."

Yugawara, Sagami, May 3, 1907: "During the last few months I was very busy, owing to the persecutions of the Government. Now that our daily has been suppressed and our many comrades

have gone to prison, I have no work, no business, so I got leisure to write. I am now alone, at an inn in Yugawara, a famous watering place, one day's ride from Tokio. I came here to improve my health and am now translating a pamphlet, Arnold Roller's 'Social General Strike.'

"My book, in which are collected my essays on Anti-Militarism, Communism, and other Radicalism, has been prohibited and many copies seized by the Government, but the cunning publisher secretly sold 1,500 copies before the police came ...

"I am going to translate Kropotkin's works."

Tokio, May 28, 1907: "The case of 'Heimin Shimbun' was decided. The publisher and my editor were sentenced to imprisonment on the charge of publishing my speech.

"However, I, the speaker, was found not guilty. It is very fortunate, but strange.

"After the suppression of the daily, we have no organ. Few comrades are going to start a weekly, but they are devotees of Parliamentarism, so we cannot expect very much from it.

My mother came back from my native town and is living with us. She is sixty-seven years of age."

Japan, December 6, 1907: "Japanese Socialist movement was split at last to two parties—Social Democrats and Anarchist Communists, shall now produce many, many Direct-Actionists, Anti-Militarists, General Strikers, and even Terrorists."

Japan, February 3, 1908: "you will be alarmed to hear that Comrades Sakai, Osugi, and four other comrades were arrested on the eve of January 17th (Friday) in Tokio. I would have been arrested also had I been there.

"On the last summer we organized a group 'Kingo-Kwai' (meaning the Friday Association) and held meetings on every Friday. The police began soon to interfere, and the meetings were often dispersed without any explanation. On the eve of January 17 the meeting was dissolved and all attendants were dispersed. But when the police forced several comrades who remained there to have other conferences to go outdoors, they protested and a quarrel followed. The light went out. They struggled in the dark hall. The Comrade Sakai stood upon the roof of the house, from where he spoke brilliantly to the people on the street and severely attacked the police's violence. The police drew down Sakai, and other comrades stood in his place. So six comrades were at last taken forcibly by about thirty policemen to the police station. In vain, many crowds struggled to prevent their arrest

"They were soon prosecuted on the charge of violence of the 'peace act' and are now under the trial"

Japan, July 7, 1908: "You will be alarmed to hear that a wholesale arrest of Anarchists was made in Tokio.

"In carrying through the city two or three red flags on which the letters 'Anarchy' or 'Anarchist Communism' were written, fifteen or twenty of our comrades conflicted with sixty policemen who tried to seize the flags. After a severe struggle, fourteen comrades were arrested and thrown into prison. Among them are Comrade Sakai and four young girls. They are now under most barbarous treatment, it is said, and any interviews or communications with them are prohibited, so we cannot know what condition they are in. We are only waiting for the day when they will appear before the court."

Tokio, August 19, 1908: "I came back to Tokio again to prepare for the publication of our new organ. My health is better now. Comrade Sakai and thirteen other men and women are in prison."

Japan, April 11, 1910 (Last letter of Kotoku to Albert Johnson): "I was compelled by the political persecutions and financial difficulty to retreat into this Yugawara, Sagami, about seventy miles

from Tokio. During the time I was in Tokio the policemen always followed me. All my business and movements were so illegally and cowardly interfered with by them that I became unable to get any livelihood.

"I came here three weeks ago. I am writing a book in which I mean to assert that Christ never existed, but was a myth; that the origin of Christianity is found in pagan mythology, and that most of the Bible is forgery. In writing this I owe much to Mr. Ladd's and A. Besant's books which you sent me.

"Received many daily papers in which the details of the great strike are published, and a copy of the *Firebrand*. I thank you very much for them. The *Firebrand* is a very good magazine I think.

"Miss Kanno is with me."

(Suga Kanno, friend of Kotoku, after his separation from his wife, Chiyo, on account of political differences. Madame Kotoku did not accept Denjiro Kotoku's Anarchist beliefs. She remained a parliamentary Socialist. Suga Kanno was martyred with him on January 24, 1911. Writing from prison to an American friend in San Francisco, she said: "I have lived for liberty and will die for liberty, for liberty is my life." She was the daughter of a member of the Japanese Parliament and went into exile for her principles.)



## **Chapter 15 : Karl Liebknecht – Rosa Luxembourg, Liebknecht and Spartacus**

# Liebknecht and Spartacus: Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg; MARTYRED Berlin; January 15th, 1919

Liebknecht assumed the pen-name of "Spartacus" for a pamphlet which he wrote in 1916. Subsequently Rosa Luxemburg, Clara Zetkin, and Franz Mehrin wrote under the same name. Their articles were not printed, but mimeographed. Boldly they attacked the Imperial German Government, the patriotic majority Socialists, and the semi-patriotic minority.

Liebknecht proved himself more than worthy of the great name which he adopted as his own. He was truly the Spartacus of our century—a veritable giant, not of towering physique, but of splendid intellect and boundless daring.

In order to gain a correct conception of the Spartacus of Berlin, let us go back to the life of his historical parallel, the Spartacus of old Rome.

Returning from one of their expeditions of conquest, the Romans brought with them as a slave, a Thracian of herculean proportions. On account of his splendid physique, it was decided that he be sent to the training schools of Capua in order to be instructed in the gentle arts of gladiatorial combat. He was to be given a short sword and a net; he would amuse patrician and plebian; he would make conquest after conquest, and with every combat the excitement of his anticipated doom would intensify, and thus satiate the decadent lust for brutality and blood on the part of the Roman public.

Little did they know, however, of what quality the material this huge slave was made. And why should they know? Were not all slaves merely creatures of servility? But Spartacus was to teach his masters a lesson, a great historic lesson.

Spartacus was a willing scholar under the guidance of the slave gladiator instructors. He learned how to manipulate the sword with skill; he learned how to swing the net and dexterously trap his man, and finally he was prepared to meet half a dozen opponents simultaneously—and leave them on the arena, to be dragged off by the *Plutos*.

Spartacus, however, had not the slightest intention of ever allowing himself to be dragged from the arena and having his skull smashed by the *Pluto's* horrible sledge-hammer.

Time having ripened his plans, Spartacus turned to his fellow-slaves. Calling them together, he asked them whether they wished to be free men or to "wait, like oxen, for the butcher's knife."

this was an entirely new idea, for not one of those slaves had ever imagined that they might be doing something more useful than slaughtering one another for the entertainment of the *seigneurs* and *grand dames*. To this new heresy they listened at first with hostile reluctance, but they were reassured and won over by the redoubtable Spartacus. His challenge: "I am stronger than any of you. Yes, come out and fight me—all of you. I am not afraid!" eliciting no response he cried: "Then fight *with me!*" From that moment he drew them after him irresistibly.

Thus, in the year B.C. 73, the gladiator slaves—who were only 74 in number and armed simply with clubs—under the leadership of Spartacus, insurrected, and after a struggle in which they killed all their guards, took refuge on Mount Vesuvius.

“The Romans will follow us,” warned Spartacus. “We must prepare for a great fight. Better to die here fighting for our lives than butcher each other for our release in the arena.”

Three thousand soldiers, under C. Claudius Pulcher, hunted down and completely surrounded the fugitive slaves. Their starvation being imminent, Spartacus again appealed to them, arguing that, rather than die like dogs, why not rush down the precipice into the ranks of the Romans and die the death of men?

Thrilled by the unbending courage of their leader, the handful of slaves hurled themselves against the Romans and, breaking through their lines, completely defeated them. Spartacus and his men had learned how to wield weapons, and they now began giving the hated Romans a taste of their own medicine. The name of Spartacus sped from one corner of the country to the other. Everywhere slaves raised their heads to a new hope. The small band of Spartacus rapidly swelled into a huge army. Everywhere slaves dashed off their manacles and followed Spartacus and helped him disseminate and actively illustrate the doctrine of resistance to tyranny.

In a very short space of time Spartacus controlled practically the whole of southern Italy. Large forces were sent against him from Rome, only to suffer defeat after defeat.

Then there arose a critical proposition. If Spartacus and his men wished to be sure of lasting security and freedom, it would be necessary to break through towards the north and reach the Alps. Spartacus was fully aware of his necessity, but was compelled to use all his persuasive powers in order to convince his men. But hey, in their short-sightedness, demanded of him why they should go north into strange lands when they were already in control of their present locality. Spartacus, knowing quite well that Rome could still send overwhelming forces, knew also that the hesitation on the part of his men would prove to their undoing.

However, although he entertained little hope for their ultimate success, he still led his men in every battle. Everywhere the legions of Rome went down before him like hay under the sickle. Slowly they cut their way through, and upwards through the Alps. But the further they advanced, the more the men wavered: they wished to remain behind. Although final victory was all but theirs, their temporary and insecure freedom held out to them greater temptations.

In the year B.C. 71, Pompey returned from Spain and marched to the aid of Marcus L. Crassus who was raising a large army against Spartacus.

Then came the clash of the last great onset. Spartacus knew that this was the end, and decided to go down fighting, rather than submit to the Roman tyrants. His men were literally cut to pieces by the vastly superior enemy forces.

Armed with a heavy sword, Spartacus tore forward into the ranks of the Romans, and cut himself a pathway through his enemies, before he finally succeeded in wresting the life from his great body.

So fell he, who felt no fear of the apparently impossible achievement; he, the mere slave who dared to question the authority of proud and mighty Rome; he, the giant of old-world rebels: Spartacus.

The reading of this record enables one to appreciate with what grim understanding of the great struggle Liebknecht decided to assume, the mask of the ancient gladiator of revolution.

Inseparably, the names of Spartacus and Liebknecht will go down to posterity together, not because Liebknecht chose to adopt the name of the ancient battler of Proletarian Liberty, but

because, in essence, through separated by a gulf of more than twenty centuries, the two men were one.

## Chapter 16 : Liebknecht's Apology

Liebknecht defended his opposition to the war in two trenchant letters addressed to the President of the Royal Court-Martial at Berlin. The first one, dated May 3rd, 1916, declared that:

"The present war is not a war for the protection of national integrity, nor for the freeing of oppressed people, nor for the welfare of the masses.

"It signifies from the standpoint of the proletariat the most extreme concentration and extension of political oppression, of economic exploitation, of militaristic slaughtering of the working classes, body and soul, for the advantage of capitalism and despotism.

## Liebkecht's Apology

"To all this the working classes of all countries can give only one answer: intensified struggle—international class struggle against the capitalistic regime and the ruling classes of all countries for the abolition of every species of oppression and exploitation, for the termination of war through the institution of a peace consistent with the spirit of Socialism. In this class struggle the Socialist, who knows no country but the International, must come to the defense of everything which he as a Socialist is bound to defend.

"The cry 'down with war' signifies that I must stand opposed to the present war, condemning and hating it on principle, in its historical character, in its general social causes and specific origin, in the method of its conduct or the purposes for which it is waged. That cry signifies that it is a duty incumbent upon every defender of proletarian interests to participate in the international class struggle for the ending of the war."

The second letter, dated five days later, warned the Socialists of all countries against the danger of playing into the hands of rival militarisms. Here are his historic words:—

"If the German Socialists, for instance, were to combat the English Government, and the English Socialists the German Government, it would be a farce or something worse. He who does not attack the enemy, Imperialism, represented by those who stand opposed to him face to face, but attacks those from whom he is far away and who are not within his shooting range, and that even with the help and approbation of his own Government (*i.e.*, those representatives of Imperialism who alone are directly opposed to him) is no Socialist, but a miserable hack of the ruling class. Such a policy is not class war, but its opposite—inciting to war."

## **Chapter 17 : Liebknecht's Mock Trials**

## October, 1907

In February, 1907, Karl Liebknecht published, in book form, an enlargement of a paper which he had read on the 28th of the previous November before the Mannheim Conference of the German Young Socialist Organizations. This work was entitled, *Militarism and Anti-Militarism*. On the 9th August following, this writing, together with its author, was indicted by order of the Imperial State Attorney in accordance with paragraph 138 of the law concerning the judicial procedure of the Imperial Courts. The indictment stated that:-

(1) Karl Paul August Freidrich Liebknecht, lawyer, of Berlin, is suspected of having set on foot a treasonable undertaking in the years 1906 and 1907 within the country: that of effecting a change in the constitution of the German Empire by violence.

(2) The accused urges the abolition of the standing army by means of the military strike, if needs be, conjointly with the incitement of the troops to take part in the revolution.

(3) He forwards his conspiracy by writing the work, *Militarism and Anti-Militarism*, and causing it to be printed and disseminated.

(4) He advocated the organization of special Anti-Militarist propaganda, which is to extend throughout the German Empire, and is to be controlled and conducted by a Central Committee, working through the Social Democratic Young People's Organization for the purpose of organically disintegrating and demoralizing the militarist spirit.

(5) The necessary consequence of Liebknecht's activity would be, in the case of an unpopular war as between Germany or France, or intervention in Russia, the military strike followed by social revolution.

(6) Liebknecht not only points out the ways and means which appear to be destined and suited to further the aforesaid treasonable undertaking and to ensure its success, but he also demands the speedy application of these methods.

(7) These offenses constitute a crime against paragraph 86 of the Criminal Code in connection with paragraph 81. No. 2 par. 82 of the Criminal Code.

Some time previous to the date of this indictment, Liebknecht's book had been confiscated. The order for their confiscation remained in full force, but it was stated that the accused was not to be subjected to preliminary confinement, pending the public trial.

The trial opened on October 9th before the fifteen judges of 2nd and 3rd criminal chambers of the Imperial Court, at Leipzig, Saxony. It lasted three days. Liebknecht conducted his own defense and assumed full responsibility for the contents of his book. He denied that his book was a treasonable conspiracy, but added that his conviction was a foregone conclusion.

The public prosecutor asked the court to pass a sentence of two years imprisonment and the loss of civil rights for five years. The court deliberated for half-an-hour and then found Liebknecht guilty of having set on foot a treasonable undertaking. It condemned him to incarceration in a fortress for eighteen months, and ordered him to pay the costs of the prosecution. The court also directed that all copies of the work, *Militarism and Anti-Militarism* should be destroyed, and all the plates and forms used in its production.



## May 1916

Karl Liebknecht again threw down the gantlet to Prussian Militarism on May 1st, 1916. At this great labor demonstration in the Potsdamerplatz, in Berlin, he delivered the speech which became famous in consequence of his immediate arrest. The gathering was a huge one and the most remarkable circumstance attending it was its almost complete silence. Women and children predominated: whilst the men present were mostly of advanced age. Liebknecht said :-

"Comrades, some time ago a witty Social Democrat observed: 'We Prussia's are a privileged people.' We have the right to serve as soldiers, we are entitled to bear upon our shoulders the entire burden of taxation, and we are expected to hold our tongues. So it is. The authorities never cease to call upon us to keep silent. Quite a simple thing—hold your tongue, that's all. Don't talk! If you are hungry, don't talk! If your children starve, don't talk! They ask for milk—hold your tongue! They ask for bread—don't say a word!

"Comrades, we are starving, but no one must know it—least of all the soldiers. Such news would weaken the warlike spirit of the fighters, therefore, don't complain. Women, hide away the truth from your own men! Lie; don't tell the truth, lest the soldiers in the trenches learn how things stand. Prussian censorship takes good care that this does not happen. Poor German soldier, he really deserved pity. Under the compulsion of a warlike Government he has invaded a foreign country, and is doing his bloody work, suffering untold horrors. Death reigns on the battlefield and his children at home are succumbing to hunger and want. The poor mother in is distress and cannot share her grief with her husband.

"The workers of Germany have to bleed because such is the will of the capitalists, of the super-patriots, of the cannon-makers. The people have to make blood-sacrifices without a murmur in order that these robbers may mint gold out of their valuable lives. The war was ushered in with a lie, so that the workers would rush to the battlefields, and now the lie still presides over the continuance of this awful carnage."

Liebknecht had scarcely completed the last sentence when the police broke through the crowd and, throwing many of the crowd and trampling others underfoot, arrested him. In the days which immediately followed he addressed his famous letters to the Royal Court-Martial in Berlin. There were circulated in leaflet form and are dated the 3rd and 8th of May, respectively. Liebknecht boldly indicts the German Government for its reckless championship of expansion and junkerism in world politics, and its activity as an agent of world war. He denounces its suppression of the working people, its war on their liberty of speech and writing. He indicts its system of specious legality and sham nationality as a system of actual force, of genuine hostility to the people, and of guilty conscience as regards to the masses. And he adds that struggle of the most strenuous character, class struggle against the Government is the duty of every champion of the welfare of the proletariat.

Liebknecht's trial and condemnation followed in July. The public prosecutor demanded that the public be excluded. Liebknecht protested against this demand in the following strenuous terms :-

“Gentlemen, you are powerful, but you are afraid. You tremble at the effect my poor words might have on the public and on the prudently chosen Journalists. You who have at your disposal a force of police, an army, cannon, everything! It is cowardice, on your part, gentlemen. Yes, I repeat that you are cowards If you close the doors. You should be ashamed of yourselves.”

When the court excluded the public, Liebknecht shouted to his wife and to Rosa Luxemburg who were among the audience:—

“Leave this comedy, where everything, including even the judgment, has been prepared beforehand! Go away!”

The sentence passed upon Liebknecht at this trial was one of live years penal servitude. He was released on October 24th, 1918, together with other political prisoners.

## **Chapter 18 : Militarism and the General Strike**

## Liebknecht–Nieuwenhuis Debate

At the congress of Brussels, in 1891, Domela Nieuwenhuis, on behalf of the Dutch Socialist Party, proposed that the Socialists of all countries should answer the proposal for war by an appeal to the peoples to proclaim a general strike.

KARL LIEBKNECHT, on behalf of the majority, opposed this proposal on the ground that this was Utopian and failed to reach the economic sources of the evil. He supported a proposal to conduct incessant propaganda against militarism and capitalism, with a view to developing the international organization of the proletariat, and throwing the responsibility of the world war upon the ruling class.

There were proposals for provoking, in case of war, the strike and military insurrection. They were made by delegates whose countries did not bear the crushing weight of militarism borne by the nations having an absolute military *regime*.

The project had been submitted to the effect that in all countries May Day should be celebrated not only as a Labor Celebration Day, but also as one of the fraternity of peoples.

Socialist Congress could not take on that subject, the attitude of a bourgeois philanthropic congress. There was a war which was ever present—the class war—and the war between peoples was but an aspect of it. The enemy of the German worker was not the French citizen, but the German bourgeois. On the contrary the French proletarian was his ally. The German bourgeoisie would like disarmament, but they needed an enormous permanent army to resist the German proletariat.

A war, compared to which that of 1870, would be but child's play, was menacing the world, and might put civilization back for a century. The proletariat must prevent it by an incessant propaganda, in order to save the world from that fearful catastrophe, by assuring the triumph of Socialism. The only guarantee against the disasters of militarism resided in the Socialist organization.

DOMELA NIEUWENHUIS replied to Liebknecht by pointing out that it was easy to obtain unanimity. All that was necessary was to introduce a proposal put down in terms that were very vague. The Pope could accept if it one word were altered, that of Socialism into Christianity. The last sentence of the resolution threw upon the ruling class, before humanity and history, the responsibility of future wars. Rulers could not be moved by such a platitudinous protest. The resolution threw the same responsibility upon the laboring class. It reminded one of two urchins quarreling, and each blaming the other while spectators laughed at their expense.

Chauvinism must be rejected everywhere, as also any distinction between offensive and defensive wars. Diplomats, if they wished it could declare any war upon which they had decided.

Passive resistance was most efficacious. For instance, Napoleon's whole energy did not succeed in breaking the resistance of the Polbrokers who refused to serve in the army. When a rifle was put into their hands they dropped it. At last they had to be relegated to the ambulances.

It must not be forgotten that Governments had a much more ferocious hatred against Socialists than they had against one another, even when they were at war. Socialists must not kill one

another for the Governments. By refusing to fight, Socialists risked being put to death, whereas if they went to battle they were sure either to kill or to be killed.

Working men had begun to think. Yet their sons still entered the armies. The result was that the ruling classes already felt their powers shaking. It must be said frankly that civil war between proletariat and bourgeoisie was to be preferred to war between nations. The decision of war ought not to be in the hands of the Governments. It should rest with the peoples. For they would not have war.

It was necessary to struggle against militarism, which was one of the means capitalism used for maintaining its supremacy. Capitalism but sustained itself by bayonets. When the wielders of the bayonets became intelligent the bourgeois order became lost. Frederick the Great said that if his soldiers had thought, not one of them would have remained in the ranks.

The triumph of the proletariat would mean universal peace. By showing courage, energy, and perseverance, Socialists could prevent war from ever breaking out again. Governments, when they declared war, committed a revolutionary act. The peoples had the right, and were in duty bound, to answer such declaration by revolution.

LIEBKNECHT, answering on behalf of the German delegation recalled that Nieuwenhuis had asserted that the Pope could accept the proposed resolution if the word Socialism in it was replaced by the word Christianity. It was news to him that the Pope had pronounced for the class war.

The Dutch delegate had declared the German resolution to be a tissue of phrases. There were no phrases in that resolution. But if phrasing was the pronunciation of big words, containing no realizable ideas, Nieuwenhuis's proposal of the general strike in opposition to a declaration of war was phraseology.

The revolution of which the Dutch speaker had spoken so much, was not something to be announced. When the people really wanted it, they would accomplish it. It was the same with many different things which one executed under the pressure of necessity, but did not predict in advance.

Domela Nieuwenhuis had remarked that at the moment of the declaration of war, peoples had to be encouraged to the military strike.

Nieuwenhuis had forgotten that those who would make that appeal would have no time to execute their object for they would be taken and shot before they could act. Nieuwenhuis's proposal was, therefore, utopian in character because it was impossible of realization.

The attacks directed by Nieuwenhuis against German Socialists were unjust. They were no more stained with Chauvinism than the Socialists of other lands. They had proved this in diverse circumstances.

In 1870, during the Franco-Prussian war, German Social Democrats had combated the war at the price of their liberty and their lives. Constantly they had sacrificed themselves for the cause of Socialism, and had proved that they, leader and rank and file, knew how to stiffer for their convictions.

Domela Nieuwenhuis had spoken of Chauvinism. But Nieuwenhuis had been a Chauvin. In 1870, German Social Democrats had tried to stop the war. Several of them were compromised and imprisoned. Under these circumstances, a Dutch journal, edited by Domela Nieuwenhuis, violently attacked them and indulged in some most detestable Chauvinism. The speaker had shown that the Dutch resolution was unacceptable and absurd. The congress would do its duty by accepting the German proposal.

NIEUWENHUIS stated that there were Chauvinists among the German Social Democracy. He had not accused all German Socialists of being Chauvins. All Socialist parties had endured persecution and sufferings for the cause of the people. It was not necessary for the German Socialists to extoll the sacrifices which they had suffered for their convictions. Comrades should not glorify themselves at meetings, but should content themselves with the knowledge that they had done their duty. He recommended the workers of the different countries to oppose to the declaration of war the proclamation of a general strike, pending the regulation of wars by international arbitration. He invited members of parliament to introduce bills reducing the budgets of war.

## Chapter 19 : Biographical Note

*L'Avenir International* for June, 1919, contains an interesting note on Doinela Nieuwenhuis, from which we call the following: "The Anarchist movement properly so-called is rather strong in Holland thanks to the influence of the celebrated Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis. He is an old man of 72 years, with a white beard; an ex-Lutheran priest and the son of a theological professor. He became a Socialist early in life and is looked upon as the father of all Netherland Socialists."

# Chapter 20 : Domela Nieuwenhuis

## His Life and Work

(This essay is abridge from a study, written in French, by Andre Lorulot.)

I think I see them again at the far end of that smoky room in the *Rue de Brelange*

- . *One, young and petulant, fiery and vehement, the glint of the southern sun on his black hair. The other, the old man of the North, whose blue eyes and smiling face, framed in long white hair, indicate an immense goodness. There they were, both stigmatizing the war. Almereyda, angrily, Domela with the softest of ironies and the calmest of conviction. Methinks I again see these two founders of the International anti-militarist Association of Workers.*

Almereyda had renounced the pure ideas of his adolescence, because he knew not how to resist the attraction of gold, by which the bourgeoisie buy and corrupt so many consciences. He had abandoned——if not entirely, at least in a great measure——the hard conflict against social iniquity, and like so many other lovers of Utopia had ranged himself alongside of the opportunists.

What a contrast with Domela Nieuwenhuis!

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Domela recounted his evolution in an interesting auto- biography. From "Christian to Anarchist." He there explains how he, a Protestant clergyman, was led to separate himself from religion in order to embrace Freethought and Socialism. Religious convictions had not succeeded in obscuring this vast intelligence. Besides, it is certain, that, if Domela was a zealous pastor, it was not through love of dogma. He was ripe for that large and powerful idealism which characterized his whole life, for that love of the humble. For that faith in a better world—to he realized on this earth and not in a very hypothetical "Beyond."

Domela understood Protestantism in the most human fashion. "Protestantism is in fact anarchistic." I will not discuss this point of view here. The reformation symbolizes the spirit of revolt in a very ephemeral manner only. Luther showed himself very authoritarian, and the exploits of the melancholy Calvin are not forgotten, no more than are the persecutions inflicted upon thinkers and philosophers—particularly on Jean Jacques- In reality the present day Huguenots have no cause to envy their ex-enemies the Roman Papists in relation to Sectarianism and narrowness of views—although their beliefs are, on the whole, less childish, less gross, and not so absurd as those of the Catholics.. Domela recognized this himself when he wrote his letter of resignation to the Church (Council, of which a short extract follows :—"I have always lived under the illusion that the Church- might be filled with a new life, that it might yet animate society. the world. But little by little, I perceive that the Church, as such, is not in a state to undertake this task, that it holds on to the sides of society, and will always do so, like a relic of the past, powerless and without energy, dragging out, through the force of routine, a languishing existence. Hence I am convinced it is no longer possible for me to work in the Church, for there is



nothing more mortal for enthusiasm, no work more demoralizing than to set one's heart on a dead cause. One may, thanks to artificial processes, appear to prolong the life of such causes, but it is impossible to render them health and strength."

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Thus we find Domela among the apostles of the Red Flag. He gives himself up to the work of social emancipation with his whole strength. He publishes several works, numerous pamphlets, a widely circulating bi-weekly newspaper. He attends many an international congress. For some time he was even deputy in the Nieuwenhuis Chamber.

But the great intelligence and profound sincerity of Nieuwenhuis did not permit him to be a vulgar politician, nor a dogmatic and narrow exponent of Socialism. In his eyes this doctrine represented all the hopes of liberation. It had to substitute itself for Christianity, whose failure was more manifest every day. Domela was not slow to observe that the spokesman of the new religion were, morally speaking, scarcely superior to the bad shepherds whom Jesus invoked. He closely followed the evolution of social democracy, and saw it become more and more authoritarian, reformist, and middle-class. In his remarkable work, *Socialism in Danger*, he is among the first to show the rocks upon which socialism would hurl itself. He foresaw the grave consequences of compromise and the inevitable results of electoral equivocation. In vain he denounced the peril. In vain, he strove to conserve for Socialism its indispensable characteristics of liberty, independence, and cleanness. The actions of the German Marxists especially aroused him. To authoritarian Socialism, born in Germany where it became all-powerful, he opposed libertarian Socialism. To numerous but inert organizations, to- uneducated and floating electoral masses, he preferred autonomous and combatative groups, conscious, proud and free individualities. Like Bakunin, Kropotkin, and Reclus he mistrusted parliaments, for "the revolutionary idea is suppressed by confidence in parliamentarism." For him numbers had no significance. "When I wrote that the party had gained in quantity what it had lost in quality, I was treated as a calumniator of the German party." Politicians require large followings, and they are not fond of those who hamper the recruiting of such followings. Neither do they love those who would induce the workers to dispense with leaders, chiefs and place-seekers. Moreover, politicians fight treacherously, consciously calumniating their opponents. Domela found that out for himself. "As soon as one is not of the same opinion as he (the elder Liebknecht) one is dubbed 'Anarchist,' and there is only one step from that to being treated as a police spy."

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"A movement is never purer, nor more idealistic than at its commencement," states Domela when studying the evolution of Socialism. The first few apostles of the collectivist religion had a more robust faith than the present prophets of Socialism, with the exception, of course, of a few rare cases. For example, the first members of the Confederation du Travail do not in the least resemble those of 1914-1918. Every doctrine, seeking before all and at any price, the assent of the masses must be toned down without delay. The pseudo conquest of political power, one knows well enough, had the most fatal of consequences upon the proletarian ideal. Domela saw this clearly and took up his stand. "I perceived gradually that my Socialist principles, modeled after Marx and the German party were in reality State Socialism, and far from being ashamed, I recognized it; I have disowned them because I have the conviction that they constituted a negation of the principle of liberty."

Domela evolved more and more towards libertarianism. Besides, he never ceased, even whilst figuring among the Marxists, to abhor tyranny in all its forms. He proclaimed more gladly the

revolutionary Marx, the Marx who wrote: "The State, to abolish pauperism, must abolish itself, for the essence of the evil lies in the very existence of the State," than the Marx distorted by ambitions and pedantic disciples.

Domela turned his back on parliamentary Socialism, as he had done formerly upon the Church. He remained faithful to the doctrines of the Jurassienne Federation and of Bakunin.

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The Church, the Army, Capitalism, are, for Domela, the three eternal and inseparable enemies. He has remained an active freethinker and has taken good care not to lend his ear to jesuitical voices which insinuate that "religion is a private concern." To achieve a world without exploitation and oppression, Domela thinks rightly that we must sap all institutions which render tyranny possible. Thus we must lead a triple combat: anti-religious, anti-militarist, anti-capitalist.

I imagine I hear him again declaring at the Paris Congress of 1905: "A century of Freethought will do more for civilization and progress than eighteen centuries of Christianity! "

But, at the side of clericalism he made haste to point out the other enemy! "When you give a finger-point to militarism, it takes the finger, the hand, the arm, the whole body! "

And has he not written elsewhere: "The State has always been the oppressor's instrument of force against the oppressed."

"Property and authority are closely bound; they both rest on ignorance and brutality. It is necessary, then, to destroy these two evil powers."

Domela is the author of a very substantial study on *Libertarian Education*. Nothing short of a practical, scientific rational education and culture is of any use against the brutalizing effect of capitalist and religious teaching.

"It is not the despot who renders the people docile and submissive, but the absence of libertarian aspirations within the masses, which renders the tyrant possible . . . It is not the Jesuits who create the Tartuffes, but our social hypocrisy which proves a propitious field for the development of jesuitism."

Domela is a revolutionary. He thinks that the future society can only arise out of the ruins of capitalism overthrown. He foresees, now and then, details of the world of to-morrow, based on Federalism, mutual understanding, and free organization- His dream is not at all the disorder, the chaos that interested detractors of libertarian Communism obstinately pretend to believe it is. On the contrary he wishes order and this order will evolve out of reason, not tyranny. In the society of his imagination no one will sulk at his task, no one will rebel against the necessities of a harmonious social life, and the indispensable concessions and restrictions it imposes: "The pursuit of the abolition of ALL authority is not the characteristic of a superior mind, nor the consequence of the love of liberty but generally a proof of poverty of mind and of vanity," our Dutch comrade declares, not without reason.

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I remember remarking to Gustave Herve, of noisy and burlesque memory, that the anti-patriotic theories whose fraternity he claimed were only a restatement of the ideas expounded by Domela Nieuwenhuis twenty years before him. "Not a man, not a centime for militarism." That is what Domela has not tired of proclaiming for more than twenty years. More logical than Herve, Grave, Jouhaux, and many others, he has conserved his ideas intact, and, in November, 1914, he called a meeting of Dutch Anarchists and Freethinkers at Amsterdam which adopted the virile resolution read by Domela.

“All parties, beginning with the clericals and finishing with the social democrats, wanted the war, either consciously or unconsciously, and they are all guilty because they have voted the credits of the war without which the governments would not have had the means of declaring war . . .”

In making this statement Domela only confirmed the experience of his whole public life, of his forty years’ social activity. Yes, Clericalism and political parliamentary socialism have failed. And no one is better qualified to know it than the ex- pastor, ex-deputy and ex-social-democrat.

Domela’s conclusion to the resolution is also peremptory. It states that “the insignificant material possessions, and the small amount of political liberty possessed by Dutch workers to not worth the sacrifice of a human life,” and adds:

“This meeting protests energetically against this famous slaughter menacing civilization and humanity.”

“Protests also with all its force against international Christianity and against international social-democracy, which have both abused their influence over the people in order to encourage an abominable national hatred.”

Let us note that this proclamation was uttered at a time when Holland might have been drawn into the conflict. Domela did not permit the serenity of his mind to be disturbed. Maintaining all his coolness, he affirms that the existence of frontiers and the conservation of a dynasty or a political regime does not interest the workers, that they must participate only in the revolutionary struggle that will lead them to their own freedom.

“Down with frontiers anti national hatred! Down with the war! Long live the international fraternization of the workers.”

Thus terminates Domela’s vigorous challenge to the criminal world. Alas! his cry of revolt, his appeal to reason was not to be heard.

## Chapter 21 : Herman Gorter

*Abridged and adapted from an article written for "The Commune" by the Dutch Anti-Parliamentarian, II. Canne Meijer.*

Herman Gorter died at Brussels, on September 15, 1927. He had gone to Switzerland from his home in Holland to renew his health, but he felt that the end of his life was near, and so he broke off his stay in Switzerland and tried to return home. But he was obliged to break his journey at Brussels, and he died the same night in an hotel. His dying was as brave and true as his living. He had death before his eyes ten hours before he died. And he spent the time arranging about his unpublished writings and issuing strict instructions that nobody should speak at his grave.

When the world war broke out, and the so-called "Socialist" movement put itself in every country under the command and at the disposal of the national bourgeoisie, Gorter did not fall. He impeached all the "theoreticians" who surrendered the proletariat to the capitalist class, and analyzed the causes of the collapse of the Socialist movement, in his work, *Imperialism, Social Democracy, and World War*.

Herman Gorter was the son of a famous Dutch litterateur. He was born on November 26, 1864. He was a keen student of the classics and became a teacher of Greek and Latin at the gymnasium. Here he astonished the literary world by his poem *May*. It is a poem devoted to the worship of nature in a language never heard before. He broke with tradition and established rules and expressed the feelings as they were actually felt. In other words, he placed poetry on the basis of truth. A storm of enthusiasm shook the literary world, and the poem was acknowledged to be the finest and best of its kind. Gorter gathered about him a group of young poets and developed the literary revolution, known as "The Movement of the Eighties." This was in 1880.

But Gorter soon perceived that this movement did not go very far. It effected nothing. It lacked depth. He sought for the cause and studied anew the ancient culture of Greece and Egypt to understand the reason of their powerful development. The result was expressed in an essay: *Critique of Tire Movement of the Eighties*.

He studied philosophy, translated the Ethics of Spinoza, and reveled in Kant. Then he read *Das Capital*. In Marx he found what he wanted. He studied profoundly the writings of Marx and Engels.

In 1890, Gorter joined the Social Democratic Labor Party, S.D.A.P., in Holland. At first this party rejoiced in his member-ship. But he was too capable and too clever to please this party for long. He rapidly emerged as one of the greatest theoreticians on Communism and Marxism in Europe, and one of the most powerful speakers in Holland. *Het Volk*, the Social Democratic organ, complained that Socialism was, to him, a fine dream, a holy unseizable ideal. It admitted that he was a clear and convincing speaker, but added that he disrupted the party. Which means that he opposed Socialism to the political corruption of social democracy, to careerism, to the struggle for possession of the highest places in the capitalist State. To the "Socialist" parliamentarians there was nothing holy or unseizable. In the name of Trades Unionism and Social Democracy they were willing to become the murderers of the masses.

The tendency to smooth down the class struggle, the tendency to reformism, became more marked in the S.D.A.P. Armed with the critical weapon of Marxism, with the understanding given by historical materialism, Gorter exposed the capitalistic compromises and treacheries of the S.D.A.P. The fight became sharp and vigorous, and a powerful Marxian Group was formed within the S.D.A.P. Most of this Group was expelled in 1909 and formed a Marxian Party under the title of the Social Democratic Party. Gorter joined the S.D.P.

That year the S.D.P. issued Gorter's work, *Marxism and Revisionism*. This work exposed the anti-socialist character of all revisionist activity. Down to the outbreak of the world war, the S.D.P. did good work by its clear analyzes of capitalist society. Then a change came. The leaders, Wijnkoop and Ravensteijn, were elected to parliament and turned immediately to opportunism. The syndicalist laborers of Holland, as an organized body, were opposed to "Prussianism" and inclined to sympathy with "Allied" Imperialism. So Wijnkoop and V. Ravensteijn, who wanted the syndicalist workers' votes at the ballot box, upheld the "Allied cause" in parliament. This caused Gorter, who would not desert the irreconcilable class-struggle to publish his work, *Imperialism, Social Democracy and World War*. Gorter showed that it made no difference to the workers which of the Imperialist alliances won the war. For the workers in all lands the issue remained the same. All Imperialism had to be fought and destroyed. But Imperialism was not destroyed by capitalist wars. -There was only one way in which the workers could destroy Imperialism: that was the way of world revolution. The workers had to oppose Socialism to war.

The Russian Revolution of October, 1917, found in Gorter an enthusiastic defender. But he was too sound a Marxian student not to see the double character of that revolution. To triumph, the revolution had to be a world revolution. Otherwise, it must retreat and cease to be. All forces, therefore, ought to have been released to bring the world revolution nearer.

With his friend, Anton Pannekoek, another much neglected famous Dutch Marxian student, Gorter analyzed the Russian Revolution in the terms of historical materialism. They show how this revolution was in part, a proletarian, and in part, a farmer. that is, a capitalist revolution. For the farmers desired small holdings and private possession and division of the land. Against ten million workers, inclined to Socialist understanding, there were over one hundred million farmers, with capitalistic ideology. If the world revolution of the proletariat came to help, these ten millions would become part of the mighty proletariat that had conquered and emancipated the world. But if the world revolution did not come to help, then it was determined by the class conditions existing in Russia that a new capitalistic period would set in. And the consequence would be that Russia would change from being the center of world revolution, into a powerful ally of world capitalism, allied to other capitalist states, in enmity to the working-class struggle.

Gorter traveled, in 1921, illegally, to the Third Congress of the Third International, to defend this viewpoint, as a delegate of the K.A.P.D. Lenin had chosen already for the retreat to capitalism. He had published his work on *The Infantile Sickness of the Left Wing*. And at the Congress the revolutionary proletarians, who would put an end to capitalism, were expelled from the Third International, and a bridge to capitalist politics was found in the slogan of *The United Front*.

Gorter sharply replied to Lenin's *Infantile Sickness* in a small brochure, entitled *Open Letter to Comrade Lenin*. In a masterly demonstration, he showed how Lenin's tactic must break down the Russian Revolution of October, 1917: must collapse the world struggle towards Socialism; and must entail the irreparable arrestment of the world revolution. Leninism would prolong the struggle and increase the cost in suffering and hardship to the workers.

Gorter showed that Lenin liquidated Communism not only as an expression of existence in Russia, but as a propaganda of the Communist Party. He developed the tactics of the *Left Wing*, that is, of Anti-Parliamentarism, against the capitalistic methods of Lenin, the retreat to world-wide parliamentarism and trades unionism, the dictatorship over the proletariat, and the gradual reduction and elimination of the Communist Parties in every land, to "legal" parties.

Gorter outlined the historic materialistic foundation of the Left Wing or Anti-Parliamentarian tactics. He declared that the tactics of placing the shop committee in the center of all class movement was not "discovered" or 'invented' by the theoreticians." Every period of the class-struggle has its own laws, according to which the rank-and-file develops its own forces. The workers discovered that, in those countries where they had made parliamentarism and trades unionism possible, the organization they had built and developed opposed every proletarian action. So the shop co-founded its vent. *Left wing tactics were evolved by the proletarian themselves.*

Gorter analyzed the causes of this behavior of the revolutionary proletariat, and explained, in his "Open Letter," that it was not an accidental deviation, but the inevitable expression of the class-struggle.

Gorter thought that Lenin did not understand western capitalism, and, therefore, erred in the tactics he urged on the workers of Western Europe. It is useless to speculate on this point today, when Western civilization is in chaos, and the East is ruined with war. First, Second, and Third Internationals have passed. The Fourth does not exist, and Anarchism has failed in France and Holland.

Gorter and Pannekoek developed the theoretical statement of the *Left Wing*. They declared that the proletariat is the only power for revolution, and must grow in class-consciousness and power-consciousness. Parliamentarism must be destroyed as the safety-valve of class society, intended to divert proletarian activities, and the trade unions must be repudiated, as parliamentarism on the industrial field, a ramification of parliamentarism. The *Left Wing* would not accept the 21 points, and was expelled from the Third International. But Gorter viewed the breaking down of the Third International as inevitable, and saw Communism before him, reviving and conquering at last, after the disasters caused by the Russian retreat.

When Gorter became a Socialist he issued a book of poems, which no longer had Nature for their theme, but the class-struggle. As he says in one of his poems, he "had found something much greater than Nature." He next worked at a great poem of 500 pages, called *Pan*. He spent nine years, from 1907 to 1916, writing it. This work traces the history of the labor movement. In it, he sees the factory as a wonderful thing, the condensation of the spirit of mankind, the growth of generations, the parent of revolution and commonweal.

In the unpublished works of Gorter, there is one poem, *Der Arbeidarraad* (The Soviet Committee). Gorter pictures the shop-committee the center of revolution, bringing Communism into being. He wrote this poem with all his love for his class, the workers. But the ruling class of to-day, the world of bogus culture, can never understand how a great poem can center around the theme of a Soviet Committee.

# Author's Appeal

## To Editors, Readers and Librarians

It was the author's intention to collect his pamphlets and publish them in one volume. The war may make this impossible. But each pamphlet in The Word Library will be sent round as suggested. So the appeal stands, applied to the entire series. Collection in one volume is postponed.

This collection of essays will be sent to a number of papers in- all parts of the world for review. It will be sent specially to the press in Britain, America, the American Colonies, and the British Dominions. Editors are asked, as a favor, to send copies of their papers containing review notices to the author.

The volume will be sent, also, to the chief public libraries in- Britain and the United States. It will be sent post free to any public library in the world on the receipt of an application from the librarian. Readers are reminded that the first editions of each of the pamphlets, revised and collected in this volume, can be consulted in the British Museum. Some of them are to be found in the Public Library at New York.

Readers are asked to purchase several copies of the work and to circulate the copies among their friends. Order small quantities at reduced rates. The struggle for bread and freedom, for culture and liberty as well as security, must be revived and rewaged. If the reader belongs to some organization that conducts meetings, he should arrange for the author to visit his town, and to be afforded a free platform from which to define his position. The author may be wrong on a thousand points, but the revival of thought and discussion must be right. The Glasgow Clarion Society did this in» 1912. Why not your organization to-day?

The widespread circulation of this work, apart from its cost of printing, will be an expensive business. It will be followed by other books that will be circulated in the same way. If the reader has enjoyed reading Essays in Revolt, and if he can assist in the cost of popularizing the book, he or she should do so. The author welcomes donations in the struggle and the money so received will be used in the public interest and to further the cause of thought and freedom to which he has dedicated his energies. A thousand people, helping from a thousand quarters, are an organization of strength and energy for progress, the force of which cannot be estimated. Help now.

Also, if you are critical, send along your criticisms. If you see a notice of this book, friendly or unfriendly, send it along.

Whatever your communication, address it to the author at his private address: GUY ALDRED, 5 BALIOL STREET, Glasgow, C.3., SCOTLAND

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