

# **Views & Comments Number 30**

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## From the Editors

We have finally recovered from the confusion of moving the N.Y. Center and you'll note that we're back on a more regular publishing schedule. But an increased schedule and the increase in postal rates have hit us pretty hard in the money department. To maintain frequency of publication we need money—badly. If you can help, please do. Enough said.

## Sidelights on the Fall of a Tyrant

A few months ago, one of the bloodiest military dictatorships in Latin America was overthrown by a mass uprising of the Venezuelan people, who were joined finally by decisive sections of the armed forces themselves. The Perez Jimenez regime, had, like other reactionary dictatorships, enjoyed the favor of Messrs. Dulles, Nixon, etc. Like that of Batista in Cuba it had been particularly violent against the College and High School students, many of whom had been wantonly massacred. As in Hungary, Poland, Cuba and elsewhere, so also in Venezuela, the youth were particularly active in the fight for freedom. We reprint below three little vignettes of that movement, as reported by Jose M. Ferreiro in La Protesta of Buenos Aires.

## THE TYRANT'S ELEGANT SWIMMING POOL

A heart-warming spectacle was witnessed the day the residence of dictator Perez Jimenez in El Paraiso was sacked. While the people, women and men, were distributing the fallen tyrant's wardrobe, furniture and food hoards, a group of little Negroes—such as regularly bathe in the turbulent Guaire Creek or in the drainage ditches of their slum neighborhoods—took advantage

of the opportunity to frolic in the raw in the perfumed waters of the luxurious blue-tiled pool that the tyrant had built for the exclusive use of his four darling daughters.

Happy and smiling, slim, statuesque little Negroes leaped from the boards like aquatic birds, while others merrily urinated from on high, adding ornamental curves to the elegant lines and pure waters of the artistic, blue-tiled pool...

## **POLICE CAN BE DONE WITHOUT**

For three months, Caracas, with its 1,050,000 inhabitants lived without a police force. The Venezuelan capital is a happy, noisy, effervescent city. The Police Force, identified with the brutalities of the dictatorship, had been dissolved in the first weeks of the People's Rebellion, and the University students and Boy Scouts now directed traffic and kept order in the streets.

One young Scout, equipped with uniform and whistle, was managing to keep the heavy noon-day traffic of Urdaneta Square untangled. But the day was warm and the situation called for refreshments. Suddenly he blew his whistle strenuously. Its strident notes and his upraised hand stopped traffic in all directions while he called over an Italian vendor of ice-pops, made his selection, paid for it, and again returned to his task directing the traffic, alternating his attention between the whistle and the ice-pop.

Meanwhile, the drivers good-naturedly saluted the junior traffic volunteer with tooting of horns and applause.

## **THE BOY WHO RANG THE BELLS**

It happened in Guatire, a town thirty kilometers from Caracas where there are coffee and sugar plantations and various sugar-mills. Echoes of the rebellion in the capital had agitated the workers of Guatire; our mimeoed manifestoes had reached them and they were on the alert, prepared to join the movement.

It had been announced that when the nation-wide General Strike was called—in case the newspapers did not reach the town - the bells of the village church would be sounded to announce the moment of action to the workers of the fields, plantations and sugar-mills... Thus the same bells that had called the faithful to mass and that had for years bade farewell to the dead - would this day be the voice of the people arising to demand their liberty and a better life.

And so it was. The honor of sounding the call fell to a young lad of 14 years, who, fired with enthusiasm, climbed to the belfry. As his small hands nervously seized the rope, and the first sounds of the bells rang out for the general strike and for Freedom, a police officer of the dictatorship posted in the nearby Plaza, neatly picked him off.

He died—they tell me—like a little bird...fluttering from the belfry to the Plaza below.

But the people of Guatire answered the summons of the bells and rose in rebellion. The ire of the populace struck at the symbol of oppression, the uniformed lackey who had killed the town's first martyr. It is reported that this miserable character was tied to the tail of a horse that was stampeded, and that he was dragged to his death in the cane fields.

## **Prostitution in Portland by Reuel S. Amdur**

The Harlot's cry from Street to Street

Shall weave Old England's winding sheet.

—from William Blake's *Auguries of Innocence*

Beginning in February, 1957, the focus of attention was on Portland, Oregon, with regard to corruption, racketeering and rotten unionism. An aspect of this racketeering which was touched upon ever so lightly is prostitution. Now, this focus of attention was not the result of a wide-open city being uncovered, for Portland is not such a city. Portland, as with any city of any size, has its seamier side, but Portland is not a city akin to the Chicago of the Prohibition Era or anything like it.

Attention became focused upon Portland because of the uncovering by two reporters for the *Oregonian* of a key figure on that seamy side who was ready to " squeal. " These reporters did a good job in bringing to light all the information that they could on the rackets, but theirs was a largely empirical approach—e.g., such-and-such are the addresses of gambling dens, so-and-so is mixed up in prostitution, so-and-so charges that the then sheriff took a bribe to allow a gambling den to remain open, etc.

The *Oregonian*, good Republican sheet that it is, and their reporters, failed utterly to make any kind of social commentary on these rackets. (The *Journal*, the rival paper, spent most of its time trying to pooh-pooh the corruption uncovered by the *Oregonian*, but this approach by the *Journal* seems to be a standard one in local politics: what the *Oregonian* is for, the *Journal* is against. The *Oregonian* supported fluoridation of water; the *Journal* opposed it. A local youth who went to the Moscow Youth Festival received very unfavorable coverage in the *Oregonian*, after which the *Journal* called the boy's parents and commented on the tone of the article and asked for an interview. The article from this interview was much more complimentary.)

My interest in writing this article, however, is far less in the specific crimes uncovered than in the conditions that make for these crimes and the conditions that exist among those employed in the underworld. Specifically, I am writing about prostitution—recruitment for it, the standards of living for those engaged in it, toleration by the law, and the people who must share the guilt for its continued existence.

Recruitment to prostitution is commonly through the medium of the pimp. The easiest prey of the pimp is the girl between sixteen and eighteen without family or friends. Lonely and desirous of love and affection, she becomes enamored with a smooth-talking pimp, becomes his mistress, later, at his bidding and after he has broken down her sexual standards and her desire for the security of a single partner by more of his smooth tongue and by the hold which he, as her beloved exercises, she "entertains" his friends, and eventually she ends by letting herself be placed in the business. Other girls enter the profession by osmosis, as it were, through the nightclub beat: they are attracted to the gaudy glitter of the night spots and are enticed to become specialists in one sector of night life by some pimp, madam or some other marginal specialist in the world of immorality.

Some enter prostitution out of a desire for "easy money." Some enter to get money for drugs. Very few girls enter prostitution as an outlet for nymphomania, contrary to popular belief.

Conditions of existence for the prostitute are hardly glamorous. The independent operator who streetwalks on her own is corralled into one of the pimps' "stables"—this is the collective term used to describe the girls who are seduced into prostitution by the pimp; she does not even have the chance of being his favorite: the pimp has no favorites. He always has more than one girl in his "stable" as well for it is recognized that a relationship involving only a single girl or involving a favorite interferes with the most efficient, the most profitable operation of the business.

The girls soon know the truth, but at another level many of them hide it even from themselves. In addition, girls feel trapped. Once the label of prostitute is pinned to them, it is difficult to remove it. Let me give an example. One of Portland's madams entered prostitution through being arrested with a roommate she had who, unbeknownst to her, was a prostitute: she was labeled almost as thoroughly by her police record as was Cain by his mark of sin. She stayed in the profession the law chose for her.

Pay for prostitutes is negligible once they are caught in the pimp's web. The income from prostitution is split, essentially, three ways: the pimp, the madam, and the police. The prostitute receives only a token payment. Working conditions vary according to the type of business the prostitute is in—that is, call or house. The call girl is somewhat better off because she has an easier work load than the prostitute who works in a house. The call girl has no set timetable and may be called upon at any time. The prostitute in a brothel works eight hours a day, seven days a week, on one of three shifts.

The girl in a Portland brothel must put up with another man every ten or fifteen minutes. At this point she functions at essentially a machine level—even animal is too glorified a term for such existence. All prostitutes, call or house, cater to essentially the same three categories of customers—the young kid out for his sexual initiation, the confirmed bachelor with the prostitutes for his normal sexual outlet, and the sadist out for something he cannot get in his other sexual relationships.

The sadist is the most common and the most important customer. This person may be married and live an otherwise normal life, and even his wife may be completely unaware of this other side of him. Frequently he is some frustrated petty bourgeois who takes out his inadequacies by inflicting pain on these prostitutes. The sadist is encouraged by the prostitution racket because he pays extra for something "special." In one instance a girl came back from a "trick" with the lower half of her body completely smeared with blood. "You should have known better than to let that happen," charged the pimp. "Now you'll be unable to work for a couple of days!"

Commonly, the prostitute graduates down the ladder from the call racket to the lowest house. After that a few will become madams. Others may become maids in brothels or may be kept for some sadistic "specialty" that the younger, more attractive girls need not submit to. Some die soon. Others just drift. At thirty, the average prostitute looks fifty. Most, somewhere along the line turn either to dope or alcohol to deaden their senses. The pimp is quite willing to keep these girls on such rations: they are easier to control that way.

What happens to a personality when the most intimate embraces and expressions of love become mere commodities of exchange on the capitalist market? Just as the system is basically crude and brutal, so the prostitute becomes. The most sacred human relations are measured in terms of "five bucks for fifteen minutes." Love is turned into economic exploitation.

It is not solely the similarity of this form of economic exploitation to other forms (e.g., factory work) that leads "the law" and those forces in this society who determine what the law is, to tolerate prostitution, however. Many of the members of the enforcement agency, the police, come from the lower class, a class less imbued with the sexual mores of our society than the more Puritan-ridden middle class. These police often feel that even if there is a law on the books, prostitution is all right if it is kept "within limits." At any rate, prostitution can only function with the cooperation of the law and of "law-abiding citizens." Police and politicians are paid off—handsomely. Also, police exercise a certain control over prostitution. They limit employment in prostitution more or less to adult females, they prevent "rolling" of customers, they do not tolerate

dope peddling to non-prostitutes, they prevent white slavery in its more obvious forms, and they insist that the girls be "reasonably" clean. Yet, these girls create other legal problems, for many of the prostitutes eventually turn to stealing, often pickpocketing, generally at the instigation of the pimp.

The pimp is the one to profit from the thievery as well as the more "normal" work of the prostitute; he is the profiteer, and the racket functions because it is profitable. There is a demand for the service rendered and there are people willing to operate enterprises to fulfill this demand. Prostitution is a business and functions as such. It also has its connections with "legitimate" business enterprises. One of the largest chains of brothels in town is operated by one of Portland's leading jewelers. Prostitution is that business which is the most extreme example of capitalistic exploitation. Long hours, low pay, poor conditions. The employee is turned into a machine—as close as is possible. Her function, especially in the brothel, approaches the merely mechanical; her own feelings are destroyed. Preferably she is enslaved to alcohol—or even more effective—drugs. Her bargaining power is nil, and if she gets too difficult the city jail can cool her off. Only the bosses are organized.

Most people, at least in public, oppose the excess of capitalism that prostitution shows itself to be. However, it is often argued that prostitution cannot be entirely driven from Portland or any other city. This may be, but when Dorothy McCullough Lee was mayor of Portland the houses found it too dangerous to operate here. When she was defeated in the 1952 election, one of the main things that beat her was the charge that she was a "blue nose." She was bad for business, and the issue did not enamor her to the working people either.

At the present time there are several houses and call setups operating, one through one of Portland's best hotels. The situation is known by so many people that the blame must be shared by all segments of the population that do not actively fight it. Mayor Lee proved that prostitution could be virtually kept out of Portland, but she had insufficient support from the people. Of course, even Mayor Lee and those like her could merely drive prostitution out of the city limits; she could not abolish the business. Its abolition, however, can also be accomplished. For that feat we must take a page from the history of the Spanish Revolution.

In Barcelona, when the anarchists took power at the beginning of the Revolution, they closed the brothels and naked shows that catered to the wealthy. Since a prostitute generally progresses down the ladder from a "better" house to a worse one, and since a girl can more easily be cajoled into prostitution in a "better" house than in a worse one, recruitment was hurt. Then the profit was taken out of prostitution by collectivizing it. Finally, a tremendous propaganda campaign was waged to urge the girls to leave prostitution. And those that left were not regarded with the kind of smug suspicion one would expect in this country. Rather, they were thought of as like the one sheep that was lost and now is found. But the Spanish Revolution was crushed by the moderation of Stalinists and liberals and by the arms of the fascists. The profit motive has long since reconquered Barcelona, and prostitution is once more a profitable business—there as in Portland.

\* \* \*

"The State! Whatever the State saith is a lie; whatever it hath is a theft; all is counterfeit in it, the gnawing, sanguinary, insatiate monster. It even bites with stolen teeth. Its very bowels are counterfeit."

—Friedrich Nietzsche (Thus Spake Zarathustra)

## National Independence Is Not Enough

It is understandable and correct for people to sympathize with the underdog—the peoples of the small nations struggling for their place in the sun. Enthusiasm and sympathy leads them to applaud every nationalist movement without reservations. Critical examination is suspended and an objective understanding of events becomes impossible. It is therefore necessary to discuss some of the issues involved.

The term "National Independence" is a misnomer. There can be no such thing in the modern world. Small nations especially cannot stand alone because they are constantly being threatened by more powerful countries. They can exist only by placing themselves under the economic, political and military custody of the great power blocs: Moscow, Washington, London or Paris.

Assuming that Utopia becomes reality, and the small nations achieve sovereignty, would they be satisfied with just their independence? Would the independence and freedom apply to the population of the newly created states? History supplies the answer. Imperialism is manufactured at home and exported abroad. The new governments develop an insatiable appetite for power and loot. All states try to expand by invading each other and oppressing their own population.

The Nasser brand of Pan-Arabian nationalism, for example, is but another variation of Mid Eastern fascism. Nazi influence in Egypt and other parts of the Mid East is still potent. The German "desert fox" Rommel is still a hero in Cairo.

The *New York Post* (Aug. 1, 1958) says:

"Number one on the list of 250 Mideast Nazis is Johannes von Leers, who was the chief anti-Semitic mastermind for Nazi propaganda minister Josef Goebbels. Von Leers fled from Germany to Egypt after Hitler's defeat. He is now serving as Nasser's chief adviser on 'Jewish affairs.'

"Other leading lights among the Nazis in Nasser's camp are Oskar Dirlewanger, Johannes Daemling and Wilhelm Voss."

Dirlewanger was chief of the SS "special tasks" organization in the Nazi-occupied Ukraine. He is accused of having supervised the wiping out of entire villages as a "guerrilla-suppression" measure.

In Cairo, Dirlewanger is advising Nasser on guerrilla warfare. Anglo-American authorities say that Nasser has developed a formidable guerrilla organization, masterminded in part by Dirlewanger.

Daemling, who was an SS colonel, was the wartime Gestapo chief in the Ruhr. He has been helping Nasser "reorganize" the Egyptian police."

Nasser's aim is to carve out an authoritarian empire in Africa. The proclamation of the United Arab Republic in which Egypt swallowed up Syria is the first step in this direction. Now the U.A.R. is trying to do the same in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and other Mideastern lands. The ignorant masses fell for Nasser's clever propaganda, but that does not change the nature of his dictatorship. Nasser also supported Hitler, Stalin, the Pope and other demagogues. If the people would always support the right causes, the social problems would have been solved thousands of years ago. Nasser aspires to become a tyrant in his own right and is willing to accept help from Moscow or the West. What journalists call "the failure of American foreign policy" is the fact that Dulles and Eisenhower are not as quick or clever as Khrushchev and Co.

Neither the independence of Egypt nor the rise of Nasser can be regarded as a progressive step. The fall of the Egyptian Monarchy did not result in a democratic republic. The people are under the domination of a military state. Only one political party is permitted and all others



are liquidated. The meager resources of the country were not expended for the people, but were bartered away for arms.

There are many other examples which illustrate our contentions; for instance, Tunisia, which has recently won independence from France. J.P. Finidori, one of the founders of the Tunisian General Confederation of Labor (CGTT), in an article which appeared in *La Revolution Proletarienne*, gives interesting information about the economic and political situation in Tunisia:

"Life is hard for the workers. Misery mounts as unemployment increases and the wages are very low. While the representatives of other classes to the National Union press for the demands of their constituents, the representatives of the working class are interested only in exercising their power over the workers.

"Last year they engineered a split in the CGTT—at the request of the government. This year unity was established—again at the request of the government. A general secretary was silenced because he was too well liked by the workers.

"The officials of the CGTT are members of the Neo Destur party and are tied body and soul to the party. For them the State is sacred; the final authority on what is good or bad, from whose judgment there is no appeal.

"Nominally we live in a republic, but the power of the President is absolute. There is no constitution. Naturally the President is the father of the people and the father of the people desires only the best for his children. Workers who don't appreciate this fact and show signs of disobedience are punished.

"From the local police to the highest officials, from the party cells to the managers of the CGTT: the watchword is—Order and Obedience! The bourgeoisie must not be disturbed! Election of delegates to the CGTT is a farce. In order to stop discontent the small unions were gagged. At the last congress of the CGTT the only ones allowed to vote were unions who had more than 250 delegates. It is true that a strong minority sentiment showed itself at the congress but it was only a minority.

"The general secretaries have become statist. They often travel abroad on government and other missions. But they seldom if ever circulate inside the country except on special occasions when they travel together with the President himself."

While not in agreement with the outlook of the writer, there is food for thought in the following quote which concerns Algeria, but holds also for other colonies seeking independence. The author favors a genuine integration accompanied by sweeping social reforms (which the French imperialists won't grant!):

"...the masses of Algeria would fare much better in a modern western state than in a nationalist Arab state in which they would be dominated by the native feudalistic elements. Considering the aspect of political liberty, one must not forget that there are as many power-hungry cutthroats in the Algerian Front of National Liberation as there are in the Public Safety Committees (French Army Stormtroopers)."

—Livo C. Stecchini in *Dissent*, Summer, 1958.

Uprisings of oppressed peoples deserve our solidarity. Such movements could become the first phase of a deep seated social revolution whose ultimate objective can be only economic, social and personal freedom in a stateless society. If the nationalist rebellion does not become a social revolution, if it stops with the creation of new states and the old powers are exercised by new rulers, new struggles are inevitable. The State itself is the chief obstacle to the social revolution. The doctrine of nationalism is the religion of the state. Any movement that ignores this is

consciously or unconsciously abetting the counter-revolution. The revolutions of the past failed because the roots of the state and its supporting institutions were left intact.

The social revolution will not, by some miracle, be immediately realized. It can only take place after a long period of intellectual fermentation and great struggles. The decisive question is—to what extent, if any, can nationalist movements transcend their narrow limitations?

\* \* \*

"Civilization has accomplished improvements in every direction except that of politics, which continues to be a field for the display of deceit, intrigue and contempt for right and liberty."

—L. Proal (Political Crime)

## Answering Some Questions

The following letter was received from a reader:

Philadelphia, July 15, 1958

Dear Friends:

I have been reading Views and Comments for some time now. Though it is of considerable interest to me, it leaves many questions unanswered which seem to me to be fundamental to a convincing program of action. Perhaps these matters are too sensitive to be taken up in your pages for the general consumption, but I believe that the man who tends in the direction of your philosophy will steer harder toward it if he knows your own definite answers to specific problems. The questions I want to ask in particular are as follows:

1. Assuming the nation, or even the world, to have become an anarchist society, what happens to the currency? At present it is formally handled by a governmental department, with special mints to produce a proper amount, subject to the economic and psychological trends of the moment. It is assigned commercial value (by means I do not pretend to understand), which have fluctuated violently since 1900. It is subject to national conditions, i.e., the unit of German currency is a far different thing from the unit for the U.S.

Without the state's regulation, how do we manage? Are Privately controlled or directed agencies the solution? How can money be handled socialistically, with no authority behind the agencies? What shall be the standards for currency, and what shall determine the money-economy of any area—need? specified amount per person, or family? the type of commodity produced? For surely a farming area would not need vast expenditures on foodstuffs, whereas in a coal mining district, where soil is virtually non-existent, food would be placed on a high premium.

—J.M.C.

We welcome J.M.C.'s letter. It indicates an interest in our ideas and gives us an opportunity to discuss some of our economic concepts. We want to assure J.M.C. that no question touching libertarian principles is "too sensitive" to be taken up in our pages.

—The Editors

We cannot legislate for posterity or draw up a detailed blueprint, pinpointing every detail of a future Libertarian society. Firstly, because we cannot foresee the problems and circumstances that future generations will have to contend with. Secondly, because we do not believe in regulating and legislating for other people, either now or in the future. (The State has been doing this with disastrous results and it is against our principles to follow its example.) Thirdly, because the essence of our ideas is that people can cooperatively decide how to run their affairs by free

agreement. However, we can, as stated in *What We Stand For*, which is printed on the back page of *Views and Comments*, "indicate the general lines along which a solution to these problems can be found."

We reject completely the capitalist economics and its money system. Profit, rent, interest, buying, selling, wages or monopoly in any form, shape or manner, will be abolished. Money in a capitalist sense would also be abolished. Originally, money was a convenient way to exchange commodities and that is its true function. Money is the symbol for commodities. It would be worthless if we could not get commodities for it. It has no intrinsic value. It need not be gold or silver. It could be wampum, buttons, shoelaces or any other commonly agreed upon medium. Tobacco, for example, was accepted as currency in jails and concentration camps. We could live without money but not without goods and services.

In an Anarchist society, property would be commonly owned and commonly shared. Goods and services would be distributed in accordance with the principle of "From each according to his ability and to each according to his needs." The wealth of society is the product of collective effort and should be collectively shared. Where goods are plentiful they would be distributed free. Where the commodities are scarce they would be equally rationed. In a distorted and limited form this is practised even in a capitalist society. In many country schools, hospitals and playgrounds water and other facilities are open to all, while scarce goods are rationed in war time.

Currency, where needed, would consist of a certificate or token, certifying that the individual is a productive member of a community, or some other cooperative association and is therefore entitled to share its benefits. This principle also operates to some extent in clubs, fraternities, labor unions and a host of other voluntary organizations. Privately controlled agencies will not direct the economy. People will, of course, have the full freedom to associate for any purpose, providing that they exploit no one and do not infringe on the rights of others. They will also be free to leave or join any organization they wish. They would be free to join no organization if they are willing to forego the benefits that membership in a group bestows.

Production, distribution, coordination and all the other economic functions would be controlled and directed by the people themselves, organized in syndicates, producers and consumers cooperatives, technical associations, scientific bodies and other organizations federated in communities on a local, regional, national and international level. The form of organization will depend on the conditions and will be determined by the people themselves. They will be as wide, as flexible and as varied as life itself. There are now in this country and abroad, tens of thousands of useful voluntary associations organized for every conceivable purpose, federated in a vast network of local, provincial, national and international bodies, outside the orbit of the state. Anyone can give examples because almost everybody belongs to one or more voluntary organization.

The network of communities would agree among themselves upon a standard certificate or they could agree to accept each others' certificates. There are, in this case too, numerous examples of this practice. By arrangement, a person can order flowers which will be delivered to anyone anywhere in the world, because the international association of florists agreed to honor each others' orders. Similar services are provided for people who wish to rent cars, travel, collect stamps, or play chess. Within factories, large corporations and cooperatives, complex business operations are conducted without money. The currency is order blanks, memorandums, or other mediums. Could not this practice, divested of its parasitical obstacles and infused with libertarian ethical ideals be adapted in the building of a new society?

Where necessary, the relations within and between communities, producers and consumers organizations and other bodies, would be coordinated by special agencies. It would be a matter of bookkeeping which, in view of electronic computers and other devices, would be relatively simple. Just such an agency would direct the surplus foodstuffs to the mining region and the mine products to the food belt.

Libertarian principles can be applied in various situations and to various problems, successfully. This was demonstrated by the Libertarian collectives in the Spanish Revolution. J.M.C. and others are referred to the series of articles in Views and Comments which tell how these problems were handled, giving actual examples. This and other material on the subject is available from our literature department.

\* \* \*

"The great and chief end of men...putting themselves under government, is the preservation of their property."

—John Locke (*On Civil Government*)

## **Practical Experiments of Our Time: Two Collectives in Revolutionary Spain**

### **Alcoy**

Alcoy, the second largest city in the province of Alicante, has a population of 45,000, and is devoted entirely to industry and commerce, and the proportion of working men and women is very high. The manufacture and preparation of cloths and fabrics, in which large numbers of women are employed, is of greatest importance, followed by the paper industry.

Our movement there has a long tradition, dating back to the beginnings of Spanish anarchism, and has passed through alternate periods of success and despondency. It received a new impulse in 1919 as a result of the formation of the "sindicatos unicos."

There were also numerous anarchist groups, which in addition to their syndicalist activities, usually carried out specifically anarchist propaganda and educational work, with gratifying results. The periodical *Redencion*, a journal of advanced ethical and social ideas, had been published in Alcoy for five years. It had in fact, a higher proportion of militant anarchists in its population than any city in Spain. Mostly young people, experienced in study and struggle, they had a deep understanding of what actions were necessary.

In February 1937, the C.N.T. (anarcho-syndicalist) had 17,000 working men and women as members. The U.G.T. (socialist), despite the support of all the political parties, only had 3,000, chiefly civil servants and small traders.

The syndicates of the C.N.T, were:

Food; Paper and cardboard manufacture; Construction; Hygiene (barbers, launderers, street-cleaners); Transport Public servants; Chemical workers; Peasants; Cobblers and bootblacks; Technicians; Linen and clothing workers; Liberal Professions (school teachers, painters, artists, writers, etc.); Metal workers; Dressmakers. The activities of all these were controlled by the C.N.T.

The clarity of ideas that our comrades possessed enabled them to act quickly and vigorously. Alcoy did not pass through the stage of independent factory and workshop committees, as in many other localities. From the very beginning the syndicates directed the revolutionary initiative in

all the industries. This was in fact the most complete example one could find of "syndicalization of production."

\* \* \* \*

On the 18th July, 1936, the news of the fascist offensive had already reached Alcoy. It had been expected to break out any moment. Our press had denounced it constantly, overcoming the passiveness of the parties and the government. The textile workers' syndicate, which had 4,000 members, was not satisfied with the actions of the traditionally liberal municipal council. It presented to begin with, several injuries [sic], workers' control, work for all the unemployed. The insurance and unemployment pay were introduced immediately. The employers were unable this time to resort to the usual methods of repression, since the armed workers occupied the streets and denounced any opposition to their position as fascist.

Inevitably disputes arose. The employers did not accept workers' control as the syndicates intended it. For the employers it simply meant submitting their accounts to a commission nominated by the workers. For the syndicates however, it meant the gradual taking over of the administration and the production of the factories.

On the other hand, the payment of the workers presented great difficulties. Some of the factories had been paralyzed immediately by the crisis caused by the revolution. Others, although in working order, lacked the resources necessary to maintain wage payments to all the workers employed. This gave rise to a very curious situation, in which the employers had to borrow money from the syndicates in order to pay the workers' salaries.

The syndicates then nominated a technical commission of control, which after rapidly making inquiries, presented a report in which it was shown that the textile industry was in a state of paralysis and idleness, financial ruin, and administrative and technical chaos. The commission of control, which was constituted with the intention of supervising the activities of the employers, quickly transformed itself into a council controlling a textile industry directed and administered by the workers. The employers had been eliminated.

On September 14th, the syndicate officially took possession of 41 textile works, 10 spinning mills, 4 dye works, 5 processing factories, 24 wool factories, 24 linen works and 11 carding shops, which comprised the whole textile industry in Alcoy. Its day-to-day activities were determined by two sources, on the one hand the feelings of the workers, and on the other by the organization of the directing committee.

The technical organization of the factories was divided into five sections. Each of these nominated a delegate to the factory committee, and these committees joined together to form the directing committee of the syndicate. In this way the organization corresponded to the division of labor, and the internal structure of the industry.

The representative of these five technical divisions, of which the textile industry was composed, only formed half of the directing committee. The other half consisted of the control commission mentioned above, nominated by the committee of the syndicate, and the factory sections and ratified by its assembly.

Under the old administrative system practised throughout Alcoy, the bookkeeping was done in a disgraceful manner, with about twenty or twenty-five pages recording each day's transactions. Under the new system however, all the operations of each day were set out in a page and a half.

Only resumes were published, and the details were recorded in accountancy books under the headings: acquisitions, sales, money received, money paid out, acceptances, raw materials, manufactures, warehouses, various.

In this vast organization, which if not rigidly planned, was rationalized, the syndicate was the supreme body. Its assemblies guided the work of the technical committees. Through its president it authorized financial transactions, and it assumed juridical and social responsibility for expropriation, and for administration in general. It fixed wages, and in fact coordinated all kinds of activities, in the interest of the collective.

As was mentioned at the beginning, the other industries were organized along similar lines: complete organizations in the hands of the syndicates. In the metalurgical works that I visited, work was proceeding vigorously, under the direction of workers' councils. In a few months a new industry had been organized in Alcoy, without competition, private profit, or capitalism, all of which are necessary, according to writers of economic treatises, having played any part at all.

The organization of production in Alcoy was technically perfect, but that of distribution was incomplete. The reason for this was that in this matter the political parties did not all support complete socialization. They opposed it as being a too revolutionary programme, and consequently the commercial traders, who had themselves created a control commission, were able to centralize the trade in agricultural products, paying the peasants their own prices, which greatly increased the cost of the articles. The republican, socialist and communist politicians prefer this kind of speculation in the defence of the people's interests.

## **ELDA**

From "Ne Franco ne Stalin. Le coilettvita anarchiche spagnole nella Nitta contra Franco e la reazione staliniana" by Gaston Leval. (translated by P.H.)

Situated in the province of Alicante, Elda is a small city of 25,000 inhabitants. Its boat-making and paper industries are very important, and it is surrounded by a fertile agricultural belt.

Our movement, which dates back to the last century, has played a distinguished part in the syndicalist struggle, and the anarchist groups have also been active. Strikes have taken place, some of which have had deep revolutionary implications and social significance. The workers in the hosiery factories have sometimes been out for three months in order to force the reinstatement of a locked-out worker. For almost three-quarters of a century anarchist periodicals have carried out useful propaganda activities.

Naturally, in this city the revolutionary movement assumed a deep and profound character. From the very beginning the comrades realised that syndicalist activity by itself was insufficient to solve the problems of social living. Under the influence of the communalist tendencies, which have always been present among anarchist ideas, and at the same time restrained by the need for a united anti-fascist front, they immediately joined the communal council. The U.G.T. (socialist) was almost as strong as the C.N.T. (anarcho-syndicalist). The two organizations each had five representatives, the left republicans and the dissident syndicalist party two each, and the communists one. As in Granollers and Gerona, the chairman was of the C.N.T.

The commune of Elda, like others, was weighted down by bureaucratic parasites, and first of all its structure had to be changed.

A defence section was formed, and one for public education and general culture. Others looked after labour, agriculture, health, and social services. The syndicates were active, being in agreement with the communal council.

Up till that time, public education had been completely neglected by the local authorities. Six months after July 19th, two schools had been built, one with a capacity for 400 students, and the

other for 70. Others were being hurriedly got ready for children who had been evacuated from Madrid, who were lodged temporarily in the libertarian hall and in the headquarters of the local syndicates.

The municipality immediately tackled the problem of public health. The hospital was reorganized, and the services of three doctors, two assistants and two midwives were obtained. Several sanitariums and clinics were also reorganized.

\* \* \*

Of the seven thousand workers employed in the factories of Elda, four thousand five hundred belonged to the C.N.T. (five months later this figure had risen to 5,350). 2,850 workers had completely socialized the dozen most important factories. The others had been brought under control.

Each of the socialized factories was divided into six sections, five of which corresponded to the various stages of manufacture, and one to the storekeeping. Each section named a delegate, and these six formed the factory committee, which operated in cooperation with the technical council of the syndicate, which had taken over the general organization of work.

In the non-socialized factories the syndicates exercised careful control. But the failure to do away with money was a serious obstacle to the stabilization of the enterprises. In practice, it was the factory committees that organized the technical and financial operations. The role of the employers was reduced to a minimum. However, the efficiency of these controlled factories was certainly less than that of the socialized ones.

In Elda and the surrounding countryside, wages were retained. The type of economy made it necessary to carry on trade with other centres which had not all been socialized, which implied finance.

There was also an agrarian community in Elda. Some of the fields belonged to small holders.

The two agrarian syndicates of the U.G.T. and the C.N.T. were in agreement as to the requisitioning of the estates abandoned by the fascists. An administrative commission was nominated, consisting of delegates of the two organizations, each of which was about 250 strong. This met regularly.

Ninety-three estates had been socialized. These were dispersed among the lands of individual peasants and smallholders, and consequently the land was divided up into thirteen zones. Each had a delegate, who kept the administrative commission informed of the data necessary for the organization of the agriculture. The thirteen delegates met whenever necessary to make decisions, and to arrange with the committee as to the number of workers required in the various localities. The members of this collective did not work always in the same place, but moved from place to place according to the greater or lesser urgency of particular work.

The general line of policy was decided by the assemblies, which had the task of arranging the plan of work with the committee, and approving or disapproving of its policy. In this way, centralization and the danger of a hierarchy were avoided.

The agricultural community set up a distribution centre, in which provisions of the various types of produce were deposited, and from which all the workers could take their requirements. The collective proposed to set up others as soon as its resources permitted. There was a shortage of water. The collective had made plans for the sinking of a well in the near future. It required the outlay of 100,000 pesetas, but after that everything would have been easier.

From "Ne Franco ne Stalin. Le coilettvita anarchiche spagnole nella Nitta contra Franco e la reazione staliniana" by Gaston Leval. (translated by P.H.)

## The Student in the United States Today

The following article is a resume of a pamphlet which will be published by the Libertarian League in the near future. Any suggestions or criticisms made by our readers will be taken into consideration by the author, a graduate student and college instructor.

One of the causes of greatest concern to all those interested in finding a way out of the current trend toward totalitarianism in this country and in the world as a whole is the apathetic attitude of the U.S. student toward social problems and his lack of initiative toward doing anything about them.

This phenomenon is linked to another, equally sinister; the apathy of the American worker toward the same problem. The attitude of the workers has been dealt with extensively in these pages and in a pamphlet published recently by the Libertarian League, *Ethics and American Unionism*, by Sam Weiner. However, the student problem is just as complex, and perhaps more alarming. For what is to become of a country when the students, that traditionally rebellious element, have lost their idealism and intellectual curiosity? When they are content to conform in their roles as cogs in a vast bureaucratic machine, clanking relentlessly toward a regimented world and/or atomic destruction? This bodes ill for the future of what should be the country's intelligentsia and is instead an amorphous group of cynical official propagandists who have sold their intellectual integrity for dubious respectability.

This phenomenon is all the more puzzling when we observe that it does not hold true for students in most other countries. The students of Latin America and such European countries as Spain and Hungary are as socially minded and as socially active as they ever were. The Hungarian students were in the vanguard of their revolution. Spanish students have staged massive demonstrations and strikes in Madrid and Barcelona against the regime of Dictator Franco within the last few years. Students in Argentina and Venezuela were in large part responsible for the overthrow of Dictators Peron and Perez Jiminez. In Cuba students are fighting with guns in their hands against Dictator Batista and are indeed the backbone of that revolt. These are only a few of the more outstanding examples of student action in countries which have recently overthrown or are in the process of overthrowing their dictators. And they are more than enough to make us feel all the more keenly the lack of social consciousness among the students of this country.

This apathy can certainly not be ascribed to a lack of anything to protest about. The few student protests during the heyday of McCarthyism were the exception rather than the rule, and yet it was a period when every more or less liberal educational institution and independently-minded professor in the country was being subjected to the most open and shameless coercion by reactionaries. Students have failed to respond in any significant numbers to agitation on campuses against the construction and testing of atomic weapons. Even though their lives are intimately affected by military conscription, American students have meekly accepted this statist imposition and all of its implications with regard to the ever increasing militarization of American life. There have been no student protests over American aid to totalitarian governments which are oppressing their fellow students in other countries, even when, as is the case of Jesus de Galindez of Columbia University, one of their professors is murdered by one of the most brutal dictators on earth.

In short, at a time when the American intellectual is faced by a moral decision vital to his future existence, the American student is silent. Why? It is precisely the purpose of this work to investigate the causes of this condition and investigate ways of counteracting it.



It should be said at the outset that it is not because the U.S. student comes from a higher social class than his Latin American or European counterpart, because the reverse is actually the case. From the point of view of the economic background of the student it would seem that the U.S. student should be the most rebellious of all, Nor is it because the U.S. student lacks a non-conformist background. One has only to consider the intense activity of American students in the '20s and '30s to see that this is not the case.

What then is the explanation? I believe that we must look for the answer in a complex of partial factors which, when taken as a whole, may throw some light on the psychology of the U.S. student of today. And, once we know why the condition exists, we have gone a long way toward eliminating it. Outlined briefly, these factors are:

1. The bankruptcy of existing political groups. There can be no doubt that the colossal farce of the Communist Party and its various campus fronts has done a great deal toward disillusioning the American student with social action. He is suspicious, afraid of being deceived into supporting a group he does not believe in. However, even when he still feels like engaging in some activity, his field of activity is extremely limited. On the one hand he has the student organizations of the Trotskyite Socialist Workers Party and the Socialist Party, which have discredited themselves completely by their implicit or explicit support of the totalitarian policies of Russia in the case of the SWP, and of England and France in the case of the SP. On the other hand he has a number of liberal organizations such as SANE, which, although they are working to attain certain worthwhile limited goals, such as the elimination of atomic tests, nevertheless have no sound ideological basis for their programs and hence achieve absolutely nothing. However, this isn't the whole explanation of student apathy in the U.S., because in other countries students have created their own organizations when they either could not or did not want to collaborate with other groups.

2. The general atmosphere of apathy and complacency throughout the country. Students, just as the other segments of society, cannot help being affected by the general atmosphere of that society. This is not to say that they cannot rebel against their environment, but they are inevitably affected by it. And in this country the general atmosphere is one of complacency and conformity, from the working class on up. Indeed, the "bourgeoisification" of the U.S. working class is a generally recognized sociological phenomenon, and the lack of any widespread, socially-oriented rebellion among the workers has undoubtedly had serious repercussions among the students. Not only are the students unable to base their activities on any sector of the American radical movement, but they are not even able to inspire their protests in the discontent of the American workers, a discontent which incidentally, has every reason to exist and is growing at this very moment.

3. An imperialist mentality. However, more far-reaching even than this atmosphere of bourgeois complacency is what I believe to be a positively imperialist mentality permeating every strata of American life. This is not to say that the majority of U.S. students are in favor of the imperialistic foreign policies of the government, but I do believe that they are not altogether displeased with their country's position of domination in the world today. I don't believe that the average Russian student or worker could repress a small feeling of pride when their country launched the first space satellite, or that the average American student or worker can help feeling slightly self-satisfied when told that his country is the most advanced and powerful in the world. It's no coincidence that the least rebellious students in the world today are to be found in the United States, Russia and England, the most imperialistic countries in the world. Nor is it

mere coincidence that the most rebellious students are to be found in the countries most directly under the political and economic influence of these powers and which are revolting against that influence.

What can be done about the situation in the light of these factors? At first sight it seems difficult to see that anything can be done, especially when we consider that the last two factors cited are objective conditions about which little can be done by any one group.

However, the picture is not as black as it seems. Just as objective conditions produced this state of affairs, so there are powerful objective forces working against it. To anyone who honestly analyzes conditions in the world today it is obvious that there are severe economic and political crises approaching which will rock our present society and the self-satisfied, complacent attitude it has created to their very foundations. Blind faith in the leaders of economy and government will be made impossible by these events, and not only the students but all sectors of the population will be receptive to those very ideas for building a better world which they now reject.

In addition, there is no doubt that more and more students are already coming to the conclusion that all's not well in the world, and that the answers provided by capitalism on the one hand and by Russian-brand Communism on the other hand are, far from solutions, the causes of the present disastrous world situation. To these students, who already represent a significant force within the student population, but who are not making themselves heard at the present time because they are disoriented, confused and disunited, we libertarians can offer a positive social philosophy which, far from being discredited, has been amply confirmed by the history of the last hundred years. We cannot and would not want to give them a dogmatic set of beliefs into which they would have to squeeze their own ideas and cut off the loose ends. The modern student is not interested in political or religious dogmatisms, having seen the harm they have caused in the world. However, we do offer them a general philosophy, an undogmatic, scientific approach to the great problems of our times. We have no place in our movement for unquestioning conformity; we only want inquiring minds open to new, daring avenues of thought. We believe that an illogical idea or theory which has been disproved by actual events should be dispensed with without further ado. We also believe that any less scientific approach leads inevitably to sterility and totalitarianism. Our only use for the past is as a guide to the future, not as a dead hand which stifles all originality.

This, then, is the role of the libertarian among the students of this country at the present time: to group together and make articulate the most rebellious and progressive elements in our society. Only thus can the students break through their barrier of silence and hopelessness and become a positive force working for social change, the only path by which our society can prevent the disasters which are relentlessly approaching. And of these disasters the worst is intellectual and moral slavery.

## **Trends in Labor**

The trend in the labor movement is toward bigger unions. The big unions will not recruit additional membership from the millions of unorganized. Instead they will grow by absorbing the more than 200 smaller unions. An alliance is now in the making which would include all transportation workers on land, sea and air, with a membership of at least three and a half million. The promoters are James Hoffa of the Teamsters, William Bradley of the longshoremen and James

Curran of the National Maritime Union. Paul Hall of the Seafarers Union and Harry Bridges of the West Coast longshoremen are favorably disposed toward the alliance.

Reuther's United Auto Workers has concluded a pact with the machinists to work together as a unit in negotiations with aircraft companies. John L. Lewis's District 50 includes construction workers, television and radio engineers and, of course, coal miners. The Teamsters have organized office workers, food handlers and processors, and even real-estate salesmen.

The reasons for this are various. The employers prefer one contract with one union to dealing with a bunch of small unions. Years ago, workers would face the boss and tell him what they wanted, reach an agreement or go on strike. Now things are different. The complex laws and regulations require large technical and legal staffs. This costs more money than the smaller unions can afford. Sooner or later they are forced to go to the big unions, with big treasuries for help. This drives them closer and makes it easier for the big fish to swallow the small one. The Industrial Union Department (I.U.D.) of the AFL-CIO, for example, offers this service for its smaller unions. One official explains, "Many of our affiliated unions aren't big enough to match the technical assistance arrayed across the bargaining table from them." Some of the services are technical advice on pension plans, health and welfare programs, legislative research, legal aid, training officials and public relations. The I.U.D. says that it will not interfere with the autonomy of the unions using its services, but they both have the foot in the door. The advantages for the small unions are obvious, the connections are closer, and sooner or later they are bound to amalgamate.

The direction of industrial development makes it necessary for unions to amalgamate, not only on an industrial, but on an inter-industrial basis. From the Wall Street Journal (Feb. 14, 1958) we extract the following explanation of this trend:

Prof. Mark L. Kahn of Detroit's Wayne University has made a study of long-range union trends and concludes, "the stream of raw materials, new processes of manufacture and new products continuously upsets established jurisdictional boundaries...this makes for multi-industry unionism." In other words, fewer but bigger unions.

Prof. Kahn, in support of the bigger unions thesis, notes the "rash of bilateral inter-union agreements during the past decade covering jurisdictional problems, joint action in organizing or bargaining, and no raiding." He argues that unions would face increasing trouble trying to stick to old ideas of jurisdictional lines.

Professor Kahn's point is well taken. That could be better than the abolition of the old barriers to solidarity of the working class against the concentrated might of the employers? It would be perfect, except that the increased power of the union would not remain in the hands of the workers, but would only add to the already great power of the leadership. What the leadership does with its power is well known even to superficial students of the labor movement. It is used by the employers to rob the workers of the fruits of the increased unity. We know that in Italy, Argentina, Germany and Russia, the fewer and bigger unions did not benefit the workers. They turned out to be an efficient club with which to beat down the membership and prevent opposition. This can happen here. We know that the leadership of these unions are business unionists who believe in cooperating with the employers. We know also that corrupt leaders like James Hoffa, who aspire to even greater power are not going to use it in the interests of the workers.

Sal Hoffman, president of the Upholsterers Union, voices reasonable objections to the centralization of power. In a letter to Walter Reuther he objected to the way the I.U.D. handles organizational disputes. The same issue of the Wall Street Journal mentioned before quotes him:

"If unlimited monopoly and concentration in the hands of a few is bad in industry, is it any better in the field of organized labor? Obviously this type of provision will result in a reduction in the number of unions and an enormous increase in the power of the already powerful unions."

If Hoffman would change the last three words to read "already powerful union leaders" he would be exactly right. The workers can control their unions and increase their solidarity, without handing over their organizations to a few power-mad dictators. If this is not so then freedom is a lie and all the totalitarians in history were right.

Superficial remedies will not cure the sick labor movement. A revolutionary change will have to take place in the attitude of the men in the shops. Only the revolt of the workers on a massive scale is able to cope with the immense power of the labor fakers and their allies. Nothing less than a new type of labor organization inspired by genuine working class principles and tactics will do. Such a movement will not deal with its enemies on their terms and conditions. The workers will choose their own field of battle and will use their own tested weapons. When they do victory will come!

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### **LIBERTARIAN LEAGUE FINANCIAL REPORT**

#### **JUNE**

##### **EXPENSES:**

Press Payment \$ 30.00

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Upkeep of Libertarian Center 80.97

Telephone... 14.54

Electrician. 101.20

Plumber 100.00

Total expenses: \$327.21

##### **INCOME:**

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Total income: \$141.35

Deficit for May \$ 438.67

Deficit for June 185.86

Total Deficit \$624.53

## **What We Stand For**

Two great power blocs struggle for world domination. Neither of these represents the true interests and welfare of Humanity. Their conflict threatens mankind with atomic destruction. Underlying both of these blocs are institutions that breed exploitation, inequality and oppression.

Without trying to legislate for the future we feel that we can indicate the general lines along which a solution to these problems can be found.

The exploitative societies of today must be replaced by a new libertarian world which will proclaim—Equal freedom for all in a free socialist society. "Freedom" without socialism leads to privilege and injustice; "Socialism" without freedom is totalitarian.

The monopoly of power which is the state must be replaced by a world-wide federation of free communities, labor councils and/or cooperatives operating according to the principles of free agreement. The government of men must be replaced by a functional society based on the administration of things.

Centralism, which means regimentation from the top down, must be replaced by federalism, which means cooperation from the bottom up.

THE LIBERTARIAN LEAGUE will not accept the old socio-political cliches, but will boldly explore new roads while examining anew the old movements, drawing from them all that which time and experience has proven to be valid.

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