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Mikhail Bakunin
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A Fragment from 1848
1848

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“The revolution will circle the earth!” Such was the prophetic cry that resounded in France at the end of the 18th century when the old world of lies, the world of an age-old servitude shaken by the powerful arms of an angry people, perceived the first cry. That call expressed the certainty that the revolution was a common call for all the peoples, the redemption of all the oppressed. And even more: a great principle was thus established, a principle that from that moment should dominate the history of the world and that will dominate it: the principle of *the solidarity of the human race*.

The solidarity of men and nations in good as in evil, in misfortune as in good fortune, such is the last word of ancient civilization, but at the same time the beginning, the foundation of the morality of a young, new world! It reflects the consciousness of the fact that not only does my liberty not exclude the liberty of the other, but that it is through that liberty of the other alone that my liberty can become a truth and living reality. I am what I am only among all the other men, only through that relation. The malice and stupidity

of others are my own stupidity and my own stupidity. Their lack of liberty limits and stifles my liberty. No one is completely free as long as there is a single person in the world who is a slave and, for me, to liberate myself means to liberate all the others.

From all this follows for each and all the right and even the most sacred duty to carry out a revolutionary propaganda. That propaganda is nothing other than self-preservation, the preservation of what must appear to our eyes as the utmost, the source of all morality and all truth, the preservation of our liberty.

It also follows that the highly extolled politics of non-intervention is a politics of stupidity, hypocrisy and bad faith. Whoever makes an apology for the politics of non-intervention stupid or malicious. Every being exists only to the extent that I produces a result, and to not wish to act is to renounce oneself, to not wish to be. And to not wish to be is absurd.

The liberty that disowns itself by non-intervention is at once absurd and harmful. For in not wishing to act for itself, it acts for non-liberty, it is non-liberty, which is to say absolute vileness, and it is at once lies and repulsive hypocrisy since it still dons the name and appearance of liberty.

Who invented the politics of non-intervention? Louis-Philippe. And what was its fundamental idea...

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