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### Individual Action - 1952, October 31, Friday

John Goldstein

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# INDIVIDUAL ACTION

Vol.1, No.1

New York, N.Y. October 31, 1952

Price Five Cents

## OBJECTIVE OF THE HOUR

These are times that ought to stir men's souls. Never before has the threat to the liberty, the happiness, and the lives of men everywhere been greater. Never before has the needle of the historical compass swung so far in the direction of blank chaos. Never before have the shibboleths of the hour been more hollow, the shams and hypocrisies more blatant and glaring.

On all sides the gentlemen of the press, the pulpit, and the Pentagon cry peace! peace! the while they diligently prepare, or supinely assent to the preparation of, a gigantic war machine designed to totally destroy. And the people in general listen to these weasel screams without believing, but in fatalistic resignation.

Against all this there is scarcely a voice whispering in the wilderness of doubt and despair to which the men of good will have retreated. Most of those who might be, or should be, in the forefront of the struggle against the drive to destruction are wasting their substance in a futile search for organizations with a panacea, magic formula for peace which will enable the individual to shift the burden of his personal responsibilities to other hands. They seek to salve their social conscience with the unguent of "joining."

They join and then they cease to act, or to even think any more of acting. Action is henceforth left to the "leaders," who are, above all, concerned with not acting, or at best in acting in a manner that will be certain not to offend seriously those against whom they are supposed to be acting. Or worse, they join some group that is for "peace on our terms", but "war on yours" — and the name of these is legion.

It is the chief purpose of this periodical to awaken those who read it to the need for personal action and the acceptance of personal responsibility. In endeavoring to carry out this project we will offer no blueprints for a brave new world. The moment when the blind Samsons are tugging mightily at the pillars is not the propitious time to retire to an inner chamber of the temple to sketch the plans for a new structure. The plain and clearly discernible fact is that there is no time for theorizing. The paramount issue of the hour is peace or war, and all efforts must be bent toward preserving the peace, however, precarious, uncertain and incomplete that peace is. All other issues are so minor as to be negligible and will most certainly become utterly meaningless at the moment every man, woman and child in the world is chained to the wheels of the war juggernaut. That moment is imminent; it comes on apace and will most certainly arrive in all its stark and stultifying ugliness if we waste our extremely limited energies in chasing after will-o-the-wisp evils.

Much of what we have to say in the future will be labelled "negative," particularly by those who are looking for outlines of and guideposts to a never-never land of ultimate perfection. We reply in advance to such critics that our primary purpose is the negation of the drive

## OPTIMIST

Brig. General C. N. Barclay of the United States Army in an article in the armed forces year-book expresses the opinion that an all-out atomic war will be over quickly. The General believes that with both sides using nuclear arms the slaughter will be so great that "at a comparatively early stage both groups of belligerents will be prepared to discuss armistice terms." That is if there is anybody left to do the discussing.

## FRAUD

A Federal court has ruled "null and void" the sale of the Williamsport Wire Rope Co. to the Bethlehem Steel Co. The amount of the sale was \$3,300,000 and, in handing down his decision, the federal judge said that it was fraudulent to the stockholders of the Williamsport Wire Rope. The sale was made in 1937. When there are a few millions involved the mills of the law can grind exceedingly slow.

toward total war and total destruction of the few hard won values that we now possess — those values that represent the sum of the sacrificial efforts of the men of good will throughout the ages.

An army that is beset by overwhelming forces is not taking a negative, but a positive stand in holding at all costs its key position. Without benefit of blueprints, it is positive to dispell illusions, to expose false prophets, and to point out to the individual that he cannot change the world merely by plans and sketches, but only through squarely meeting the tasks of the hour regardless of personal consequences. These things we propose to do.

There is no royal road to peace or to a better and saner world, no "party line" or infallible philosophy that will lead inevitably toward these desirable ends. You cannot halt wars or create Utopias through the medium of writing letters to legislators. All history proves the point.

And it proves too that there is a way, a clear and unmistakable road. The positive way is through uncompromising individual opposition to war and to all war measure, through absolute refusal to sponsor or assist all such moves in any way.

Our right to life, to liberty and to the peaceful pursuit of happiness is being more sternly challenged than ever before. Each and every one of us who has the faintest hope of perserving and extending the measure of these great values must take up this challenge without quibble, without equivocation, and without evasion. Those who are now aware, but are afraid to speak or to act against the war-mongers will soon be unable to think — and thinking itself will be listed among the high crimes.

It will be our intent to encourage and stimulate insofar as we are able all the efforts of all who desire peace, not of the unilateral variety, and are willing to work and personally sacrifice for it. To that end we will outline and suggest in future issues the means which we deem most efficacious for the attainment of our objectives. We will also open our columns to the suggestions of others if they are not faddists or crackpots. We have no time for nonsense. We will deal only in a serious way with the news of the day that is directly pertinent to the main issue. In brief, this periodical aims to combat war and the



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drive toward war that is now the most salient and sinister feature of our national life.

## NEW SOCIETY

Although this publication will devote most of its space to the purpose of combatting war propaganda, we realize there is a need to suggest ways to eradicate the present miserable social order and usher in a society bereft of war, exploitation, and inequality.

The editors of the publication know that so long as capitalism and the institution we call Government exists, war and destitution will afflict mankind.

Radicals of all descriptions agree that the capitalist system is decadent. The proof of this is that the citadel of world capitalism needs a war to bolster up its economy. Even the conservatives have come to the conclusion that if the Korean war and red hysteria ended, we would be in the middle of a depression, a depression more desperate than the one Franklin D. Roosevelt never resolved.

But some alleged radicals believe that the State can and will bring about peace in view of the fact that it has eliminated capitalist crisis. The reasoning of these people is quite foolish. As has been said before, war is the health of the State. During periods of war, the State has an excuse to aggrandize more power. Therefore, it is in its interests to create a war atmosphere, if not a shooting war. The American State, for example, greatly increased its power while we were ostensibly fighting Prussianism. Taxes were colossal, the Government seized the railroads, and the bureaucracy grew. Can one expect Mr. Truman or Mr. Eisenhower to relinquish this power? The answer is a flat NO.

Then the State must be abolished. We have no blueprint for performing such a task, but believe that the individual must learn to live without the State. In other words, it is mandatory for us to abandon Government. It might be done through a General Strike. Anyway, we should work against the immoral institution.

Of course, some may ask us to outline our desired society. This we shall do, but the reader must take cognizance of the fact that it is impossible to explain every detail because problems may arrive which would necessitate an utterly different solution.

Considering the fact that centralism causes diseases, over-crowding, and otherwise destroys the individual, we favor a decentralized system of federated communes. We further believe that since war production would be eliminated, there would be little use for gigantic factories. Hence we could return to handicraft production. This would give the individual worker pride as he could produce an article by himself. Art, science, and recreation would also be encouraged. The best qualities of man would be brought out instead of the perverse ones.

Contrary to Marxist thought, a free society is not inevitable. As a matter of fact, a Totalitarian State may enslave us all. Thus we must inculcate a desire in individuals, regardless of class, to expunge Statism and establish a free and equalitarian society. This is the ultimate goal of the publication.

## The Sixth Column

Unlike most election campaigns, the current contest for the highest office in the nation is somewhat conducive to optimism. There are in it certain signs and portents that auger well for the future. Foremost among these is the obvious apathy of the voting public. Except for the professional politicians and the job-hoppers, no one seems to be the least bit excited about the outcome, and it is an odds on bet that the total vote cast will be relatively light and in all probability will fall considerably short of 50% of the eligible voters.

The reason is plain. People in general realize that the only real issue with which they are faced is war or peace, and they are likewise well aware that neither the General who has just been organizing a European army nor the Governor who supports the President's bloody Korean "police action" are likely to lead the nation along the paths of peace. Both major candidates are in complete agreement about atom bombs, big military machines, and a "tough" foreign policy. In fact, they differ only on the question of who is best qualified to steer the war juggernaut. And the man in the street who still believes that his vote is of some importance will have to cast it on that basis and that basis alone.

\* \* \*

Recently we had a graphic demonstration of the wild excitement that has been stirred up by the whistle-stoppers and corruption-chasers. While strolling through the highways and byways of New York we ran into a couple of campaigners perched on fairly adjacent hustings. From one height a prominent politico of the Progressive Party was holding forth to exactly seventeen faithful followers, and a block or so away a Republican Senator was haranguing a mob of forty-six.

At the Progressive meeting the decorum was scarcely disturbed by very occasional and very faint flutterings of hand-clapping. But at the G.O.P. gathering one honest and liquidly enlightened potential voter did become wildly enthusiastic when a fairly personable female orator for Ike mounted a platform which afforded a good view of her shapely gams.

\* \* \*

The Progressive Party brings to mind the fact that it would be unfair to leave off commentary on the campaign without mentioning the "licked-before-they-start" candidates. Chief of

### Notice

#### Story of Eugene Victor Debs

Five cents — David Berking-off, 315 East 209 St., Bronx 67, N. Y.

### NON-UNILATERAL KNOW HOW

Chinese artillery fire has become so accurate and intense that the whole atmosphere of the Korean front has changed. It is reported from the Canadian area that where fifty enemy shells a day were average a year ago, the figure has now touched 2,500 daily. The trouble with war "know-how" is that the other side always get it in a hurry too. As Napoleon said of the "enemy" when he began to lose battles, "The fools are learning." The only people who never seem to learn anything from a war are the soldiers who do the fighting on both sides. The fact is pointed up by the Canadian official report to the effect that the morale of the Canadian U.N. troops is "surprisingly good" despite the multi-multiplied enemy shell fire.

### NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

Contributions should be limited to 600 words. All mss. must be typed and double spaced.

these, Mr. Hallinan, who has the real distinction of having been sent to jail for fidelity to his party line, declares himself a genuine peace candidate. And in a unilateral sense there is no doubt that the gentleman is speaking the truth. He is for peace at the moment and will probably continue to be so just as long as no directives to the contrary arrive from distant places.

"But surely," some will say, "Mr. Darlington Hoopes, the Socialist candidate, is a real peace risk. If the actions of his political counterpart in England, Mr. Clement Attlee, are any criterion there isn't much hope in Hoopes. Mr. A when he occupied the top office was every bit as enthusiastic a big war machine and atom bomb man as his "reactionary" successor, old "Blood, Sweat, and Tears."

\* \* \*

All in all, we hope our side wins, that is the side that doesn't have sufficient confidence in any of the candidates to vote for them. And it is a matter of record that it usually does get more support than all the other parties combined.



# Bread and Circuses

Three years out of four football replaces baseball at this time of year as the chief public sport. But this is the year when almost as many people follow the fortunes of Eisenhower and Stevenson as of Notre Dame and Maryland. As a matter of fact, I hung on every pitch of the World Series myself, so I get a mild kick out of following the daily box scores in the Presidential Campaign.

But the Presidential Election is a more dangerous escape than the World Series—not that it makes so much more difference who wins but because so many people think it does. The "freedom" to mark an X for one or the other of two pro-war, machine-dominated candidates—and the presence on the ballot of other candidates who don't have a sion that we really have some enough money to conduct a campaign—helps foster the ill-control over what goes on in this country. A kid who is a Dodger or Yankee fan probably gets some healthy, outdoor exercise by playing on a sandlot team by the same name. But the people who Like Ike or Believe in Steve are that much less likely to assume genuine political responsibility by taking action in their daily lives on behalf of economic equality, civil liberties, or the fight against war.

In the current campaign, Eisenhower has turned out to be more of a bore and a dud than seemed possible a few months ago—and for this we should probably be thankful. Possessed of an immense personal popularity amongst a hero-hungry populace who really knew almost nothing about him, he once loomed as more of a threat as a potential dictator than he now seems to do. Given the right conditions it could still happen. But the smile seems too empty, the speeches too dull, and the brain too confused and halting for him to be able to carry it off except under conditions when dictatorship would have become practically inevitable anyway.

Perhaps Eisenhower looks so dull and incompetent because he is hopelessly outclassed. Who would have guessed six months ago that the Democrats could have come up with a man as refreshing personally, as principled, honest, and humane as Stevenson appears to be. Although he has quite a different personality than Lincoln must have had—being smooth, sophisticated, and privileged—he seems to possess many of the personal virtues that have come to be associated with Lincoln. The tragedy is that he can be

of such apparent personal stature and still be so wrong on the fundamental questions of the day. It is a mark of the times in which we live that a man of Stevenson's apparent caliber can be so tragically blind to the folly of trying to overcome Communism by policies which intensify the problems out of which Communism originally grew,—war (at present the brutal, senseless murder of a thousand American youths each week and of even larger numbers of Koreans, Chinese, et al), international and domestic inequality of wealth and power, and the crushing burden of armaments. Of course Eisenhower was right when he charged the United States has a phony prosperity based on an artificially maintained armaments boom. That rather than any concern for Chinese prisoners of war is the real reason the war continues. Politicians who speak out of different sides of their mouth are apt to get into trouble by speaking the terrible truth from time to time.

Peace-lovers who try to study the form charts and cast their votes under the illusion that they can figure out which candidate will do less harm are tending to support Stevenson this year, if only because it is more satisfying to vote for a man than for a toothpaste ad. Also because a General is a General is not a rose.

But history plays strange quirks on such opportunisms. Since the fundamental policy of each party is bound to be a continuation of the present Military Folly and a necessary inability to deal with the underlying problems, it might work out better if "the sacrifices, the doubts, and fears that are necessarily created by this struggling for peace" (President Truman) were channeled against a vapid, unprincipled General and Tory rather than against a warm and humane personal liberal. Those who vote for "the lesser evil" are really voting for a more attractive salesman who might be able to keep public discontent and opposition to lesser proportions than otherwise. With Eisenhower as President, popular dissatisfaction to growing inflation and mounting deaths would tend to develop around an anti-military, pro-humanity attitude. Under Stevenson, popular opposition to the same evils would be encouraged to develop in a pro-fascist, "let's-get-tough" direction.

But why try to figure it out? The only real voting for peace we can do is the voting with our daily lives—by becoming

## Book Review

Constructive Anarchism, by G. P. Maximoff, International Printing Co., 152p, \$2.50.

Anarchists will be debating over this book for years considering that the author offers some solutions which this writer considers utterly authoritarian. Maximoff asserts that he is a "realist" as opposed to the "Utopians". I, on the contrary, am an idealist who believes that Anarchism can only come when the people are ready to accept his revolutionary philosophy because of altruism.

Nonetheless, I cannot quarrel with many of his points. For example, he is correct in asserting that there are two types of existing exploitative societies, capitalism as epitomized by the United States and Statism as epitomized by the Soviet Union. Both social systems repress individuals and need wars to maintain themselves.

Nor do I disagree with his thesis that the workers, through their associations, should run industry, the transportation system, and communication. But such groups must be without any type of hierarchy or else they will become the new ruling class.

I am, however, vehemently opposed to a transition period. Maximoff sees the need for one. When the people are ready for anarchy, they will establish it in its pure form—and anything else will lead to the road of slavery.

In this transition period, the author advocates a banking and labor check system. Now this is very unanarchistic. First of all we anarchists have been asserting that people should receive goods according to needs. So if we renounce this for the sake of expediency, we will be rewarding the strong and punishing the weak. Such a philosophy has much more in common with Malthusianism than with Anarchism. Secondly, if there is a shortage of goods, they can be rationed so that the needy would get preference. Kropotkin, together with other anarchists, advocated this humane approach. There is no reason why anarchists should reject Kropotkin's ideas in favor of Maximoff's.

And the reviewer does not

conscientious objectors who refuse to make or bear arms, by practising economic and social equality, by standing up in the local tavern or church for the civil rights of Communists and other dissenters, by growing in our understanding and practice of all-embracing brotherly love.

-David Dellinger

countenance the author's statement to the effect that he who does not work shall not eat. Anarchists have pointed out on numerous occasions that work, under the present system, is drudgery. A worker today has someone watching over him for the purpose of forcing him to produce more than he is capable of producing. In an anarchistic society, people would work at a speed that suits them and there would be no bosses. So work would become practically a pleasure. Still, if there are people who do not work and who are physically able, we would tell them that they are our brothers and can choose their occupation. With such encouragement, the so-called lazy would be induced to contribute to the well being of all. Never should we resort to punishment of any kind.

Maximoff has the temerity to advocate courts and judges to punish "wrong doers", despite all the anarchist writing which delineates the absurdity of legal justices. The author, like the statist, does not go to the root of the problem. It has been discerned that those crimes which do not have an economic base are caused by sexual frustration. Thus if the anarchists initiate a society in which a person has an opportunity to satisfy his sexual desires together with his economic ones, crime will be all but eliminated. I shall discuss the sexual problem in a future article.

Also, these judges would establish themselves as a government, as they would have power to do so. Once we permit any authority to regulate our lives, despotism will be the result. Anarchism will eliminate courts and prison regardless of the opinion of Maximoff and his followers.

Of course, because the author is an authoritarian, he supports the family and states that they ought to have authority over their children. It seems that it does not occur to some who label themselves anarchists that a family is a miniature state. Moreover, most mothers and fathers do not know how to raise children. Taking these factors into consideration, I believe that children should be brought up in nurseries so they might develop their talents freely without coercion from the father or mother. My own personal experience corroborates the fact that parents by nature are not only tyrannical but tend to frustrate the child's wishes.

But the most appalling section of the book deals with his advocacy of a "peoples' militia" after the anarcho-communist system is established in an area. He goes as far as to suggest

(Continued on page 4)



that all able bodied men must serve in this army. I wonder how an anarchist community could possibly compete with the State in producing atom bombs and other militaristic weapons. Moreover, our best defense would be to show the world by example that people can live together without authority. Militarism is the anathema of freedom.

The author appears desirous of appealing to the baneful instincts of man instead of the good qualities. He is a materialist who does not trust the creative instinct of the masses. I do not believe we can induce the people to eradicate our system by suggesting that they would be able to acquire more bread by so doing. Conversely, I think that anarchists should propagate the idea that anarchism will permit the individual to have the maximum freedom to carry out his or her propensities. Anarchism is not materialistic but utterly idealistic.

—John Goldstein

## MUSICAL NOTES

by Professor G

It is interesting to note that radicals join American Legion picket lines to protest against an alleged fascist artist performing. Action of this sort might be fine if it were followed to its logical conclusion. Unfortunately this is not so. The same radicals, who criticized foreign musicians for helping "their governments" applaud American ones who raised the flag and sold war bonds. It is a sad fact indeed that no musician spoke out against the last holocaust.

A good case in point is the one of the greatest Wagnerian soprano of our time, Kirsion Flagstad. The Communists joined nincompoop Walter Winchel in condemning her. They asserted, without offering much proof, that she is a fascist. The truth of the matter is that she is too dumb to master the theoretical concepts of fascism—few people understand its basis. We wonder if it is right to deny music lovers the opportunity to hear her magnificent voice because she "helped" the axis powers.

The same people tried to prevent a noted German pianist from playing in this country. We suppose that these "radicals" wish to psychoanalyze all artists to make sure they are red blooded Americans. True music lovers, however, are not concerned with the political opinion of a particular musician, but are only interested in his or her ability. It is to their credit that they welcomed the German pianist.

## THE FOES OF YESTERYEAR

The men who designed and built the Luftwaffe are getting ready to do the same old business at the same old stand once more. French, British, and other "western democracy" aircraft manufacturers have been in close contact for some time with representatives of the Heinkel, Dornier, and the recently re-founded Junker works, and these gentry have been invited to French air shows and to the British industry's recent display at Farnborough. On their return the German manufacturers said that the western allies were ready to give the go-ahead signal to the German aircraft industry.

### HUMANITARIAN

Screws at New Jersey State prison used machine guns to break up a prison "riot". Two of the prisoners were badly injured as a result of such humanitarian action. The prisoners were demanding better living conditions, a small demand to say the least. They also struck for the purpose of gaining sympathy for their fellow prisoners who were put in "solitary" as a result of previous "riots". We are sympathetic with all the oppressed who revolt against authority.

### WHO WON THE WAR?

In a recent address to the Radical Socialist Convention (the party is neither radical nor Socialist, but is one of the largest political parties in France), Rene Mayer, former French Minister of Defense, stated that France would be better off to have Germany for an ally than she would be to run the risks involved in the proposals of her "democratic" allies in the Western Bloc.

We are opposed to witch hunting under all circumstances and we shall fight against it with all our strength. We are especially incensed with radicals who countenance it.

The other night we were listening to a piece by an "eminent" Russian composer. It had a promising beginning, but degenerated into inharmonious noises, noises that are exceedingly annoying to the sensitive ear. The orchestra, which is the best in the "workers paradise" is inferior to the Chicago Grant Park one. The soloists — the piece is an oratorio—are poor. And the chorus sounded strained. It appeared to the listener that it was exceedingly regimented. We sincerely hope that we will not be compelled to listen to such gibberish again.

## LIBERATED

In its annual report to the General Assembly, recently released, the U. N. Korean Commission announces that the number of registered refugees, war sufferers, and destitute persons in the peninsula is 10,406,000. Of this number 4,972,000 (less than half) are receiving some sort of war relief. The total population of North and South Korea combined was in the neighborhood of 30,000,000 before the "police action" started, but it is considerably less now since an undetermined, but large, number of Koreans on both sides have been finally and completely liberated from the toils and travails of this world.

### SUBVERSIVES

The infamous McCarron committee, which caused the firing of several school teachers who refused to state whether they were commies or not, is now investigating UN employees who are "reds". UN Secretary Lie has promised to cooperate with the committee, stating that he did not want to employ Americans

## HOLY CRUSADE

Pope Pius XII in a speech to Catholic Action in Rome declared that the World is threatened by a "violent and subtle enemy", an enemy which is allegedly creating a "godless" economy. He intimated that the "enemy" must be fought with all the forces possible. We wonder if the pontif or his stooges in the College of Cardinals will do any fighting? Most likely, they will be in their safe dwellings while good Catholic boys are murdered on the battlefield by others who consider themselves Catholic. The church has caused enough bloodshed already. So we believe that "his holiness" should go back to his shell and stop making war propaganda. The world would be much safer if the Pope and the Church ceased to exist.

who are "betraying their country". We have taken cognizance of the fact that the UN at best is an inefficient organization. At its worst, it is the defender of the Western imperialist bloc. Thus we do not think that the "reds" could possibly alter the role of the organization.

### INDIVIDUAL ACTION

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