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Individual Action - 1952, November 18, Tuesday

John Goldstein

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INDIVIDUAL ACTION

Vol.1, No.2

New York, N.Y. November 18, 1952

Price Five Cents

MURDER AND HAVOC STILL RAGE IN KOREA

The War Stepped Up

John's Corner

It is alleged by some that the individual cannot play a role in influencing history. These people say that the radical must conform to society until a "mass" labor movement is ready to seize power. I think that those who hold this view are utterly mistaken. To prove my point, I shall cite some magnificent work done by individuals who belong to no organizations.

Al Bofman is devoting all his spare time to promoting peace. Not only does he mimeograph peace literature for groups and individuals, but he distributes leaflets and pamphlets all over Chicago. Even though, I disagree with Bofman on many points, I believe he is doing wonderful work. If there is anyone who desires to assist him, he can contact Bofman at 6329 South May Street.

In Chicago, Joffre Stewart is known as the "one man revolution". When the Democrats held their convention near the stockyards, Joffre had the courage to distribute anti-voting literature outside the convention hall. The cops of course chased him and seized his leaflets. Stewart has also waged a one man battle against racial discrimination.

Such a column as this could not be written without paying tribute to Ammon Hennecy who has fought the ruling class incessantly for over 40 years. This conscientious revolutionary was imprisoned during the first world war for refusing to register for the draft. He does not pay income tax and has not done so for the past eight years. He in addition pickets the tax collectors office every year. While other radicals squirm and pipsqueak — they all give phony reasons for their compromising — Ammon is fighting with all his heart for the beliefs he so dearly holds.

It would be inexcusable negligence on my part not to mention the printer of the paper, David Dellinger. Dave served two prison terms for refusing to register. And recently he to-

Lovers

It has been reported that the bloody butcher Franco and the United States Government have reached an agreement stipulating that the arsenal of democracy shall render economic aid to the fascist Government in return for the right to use Franco's military bases, whose value is questionable to say the least. The United States, in fact, wishes to stabilize the inhuman regime. It seems that the "free World" condemns red dictatorships while supporting black ones which are, as a matter of fact, just as totalitarian.

gether with other pacifists made an underground sortie behind the Iron Curtain, distributing pacifist literature to Russian Soldiers, for the purpose of bringing peace to the World. He is one of the few printers who has the courage to print radical literature.

These fine individuals bear out my contention that the individual is not totally helpless. As a matter of fact, a mass movement can never be formed until each individual makes the one man revolution.

* * *

I have received a postcard which states that I am a traitor for making some derogatory remarks about the American Government. I would like to inform this particular individual that I am opposed to all Governments and shall fight them until they are utterly obliterated. Governments are — and have always been — the prime war makers.

* * *

I would like to thank all those who have helped me get out the issue. These fine people had devoted their time and energy without receiving any compensation whatsoever. I would also like to remind the readers that the paper is not — and was never intended to be — a one man organ. So I hope that some of the readers will contribute articles; their views do not have to correspond with mine.

The unpopular war in Korea continues despite the promises of the politicians. Fine young men on both sides are needlessly dying in a cause for which they are in no way responsible. Cities and towns are being devastated by bombers from the "peace loving" United States. It appears that there is no end in sight for this harrowing spectre.

The issue which is allegedly delaying a truce is the forcible repatriation of prisoners. The American Government considers the forcible repatriation of prisoners to be immoral. But this country has shown no prior concern for the Orientals in view of the fact that our immigration laws allow few of the "inferior" peoples to immigrate here. Besides never before in all history have prisoners been consulted on whether they want to return to their "homeland" or not. The United States Government is using the issue as an excuse to perpetrate the inexcusable holocaust.

Meanwhile fighting continues for useless mountains such as "triangle hill" and "sniper ridge." The "reds" have been thrown back in their assault on "sniper hill." It is reported that both sides have suffered heavy losses.

While this ground fighting was going on, allied bombers raked Yangdok destroying 58 buildings, a fine accomplishment.

Syngman Rhee, the aspiring dictator of all Korea, has just announced that the draft quota for South Korea will increase from 700 to 1,000 daily. This should make the young lads very happy indeed.

Millions of people have been

forced to suffer because neither the United States nor the Red Chinese desire peace—and their actions corroborate the fact. At the present time, peace means breadlines, reduced profits, unemployment, and possible revolution to the ruling powers of these benighted states. The kremlin, on the other hand, realizes if peace were proclaimed, it would be forced to grant civil liberties and other reforms. Stalin and his henchmen do not wish to relinquish their power. And so the slaughter-fest perpetuates, resulting in the premature death of bright lads who might have rendered some worthwhile contributions to humanity.

Thieves

The Bolivian Tin Companies, which are controlled by Wall Street, are fighting the nationalization of the mines. The present rulers of Bolivia are Statists. Trotskyists, as a matter of fact, have a powerful role in that Government. As far as this periodical is concerned, however, it is a battle of one set of slave-drivers against another — and the people will suffer no matter who wins.

The Dark Continent

The African National Congress has declared it will call a stay at home strike unless the Johannesburg City Council revokes its ban on non-religious meetings and abandons its decision to invoke a curfew during "emergency" periods. Action of this sort will bring far more results than writing letters to politicians.

Individual Action

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COMMENT ON THE ELECTIONS

The election results offer us some good signs along with some ominous ones. The people have expressed their opposition to the status quo.

The Republican orators, throughout the campaign, have not only condemned the Korean war but also universal military training. It is apparent that the people felt—of course wrongly—that the Grand Old Party would greatly reduce militarism. The voters too were fed up with graft and corruption. However, this periodical believes that if the people stayed home, they would have displayed to the ruling powers that they would no longer support its shams and hypocrisies.

In addition, the election has proved that the unions' bosses are not able to dictate to their rank and file and for this we should be thankful. The CIO, AFL and even United Mine Workers, which had not indorsed a candidate in years, enthusiastically supported Stevenson. They, in fact, collected vast sums of money for his campaign. Yet, in the industrial areas, where Stevenson was supposed to receive at least 75% of the votes, the candidates ran neck and neck. A good percentage of workingmen voted Republican to protest the action of the piecards. It is common knowledge, however, that the workers cannot improve their miserable working and living conditions through the ballot box.

One of the ominous signs of the election is Eisenhower's huge vote in the South. It is a known fact that many Southern politicians repudiated Stevenson because he favors civil rights for Negroes and other minorities. Mr. Byrnes and Mr. Shivers are—and their records prove beyond any doubt this statement—racists. It is shame and a disgrace that people in these United States regard racial minorities as inferiors.

Possibly the most interesting aspect of the campaign was the struggle between the encroaching Government bureaucracy and the private capitalists. Stevenson represented the former while Eisenhower espoused the latter's cause. For example, Steve favored Government ownership of the tidelands oil while Ike "thought" that private companies should control them. But we do not believe that the general will reduce the power of the State once he is inaugurated.

Even if "good men" were running for office, we would not vote. On the contrary, we want to make it impossible for men to rule other men. One of the steps in the right direction would be for us to boycott the elections.

We can work for peace much more effectively if we will take a personal stand against the war; that means revolutionists should not work in war factories or do any work calculated to augment the war effort. Once we depend on ourselves, instead of upon politicians, we will have taken a stand for peace.

WAR is the health of THE STATE

Letters to the Editor

Dear John:

I object to the article "Holy Crusade" in your first issue which seems to me to attack the Church as such. I do not think such attacks have a place in a publication that should oppose all intolerance.

I think liberals, in general do a lot of sloppy thinking on this whole subject. Those who run a paper like "Expose", for example, feel that, to prove their Liberalism, they must print all points of view. Which means that, to be consistent, they should have articles by Gerald Smith and the whole pro-fascist crowd. The point of the matter seems to me that, while defending the right of any group to publish, one need feel no obligation to assist or contribute to that publication if it contains matter which is, in the individuals opinion, erroneous.

The Catholic Church cannot be written off as a war mongering organization. To characterize her as such is indicative of Liberal stereotyped thinking. The Roman Pontif at no time has advocated violent resistance to Stalinist countries. During the last war, despite pressure brought to bear by both Germany and Italy, His Holiness constantly refused to sanction the war against Russia. Indeed there are more things in Catholicism than are dreamt of by Liberals of the Paul Blanshard school. I do not place you in the Paul Blanshard category for I know you disapprove of his worship of the State. Nevertheless your conviction that the Catholic Church is an evil institution that must be wiped out in the interests of "Justice" is a proposition I could not accept and consequently would not care to promote.

With personal regards,
ROBERT LUDLOW

Editors Note:

I would like to unequivocally state that as an anarchist I am op-

posed to all religions and institutions. I consider the premise of religion, not only Catholic but Jewish and Protestant as well, vicious and pernicious. The religious institutions without exception inculcate fear into the hearts of their adherents. It is a matter of record that they teach that those who obey their "leaders" shall, after death, live in paradise while the recalcitrants, according to their theory, will burn in Hell. And because the Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish Churches have decreed that the only purpose of sex is procreation, millions of men and women have lived, and are living, frustrated lives. It would be dishonest of me to ignore such salient facts.

As far as the attitude of The Roman Church to war is concerned, the facts bear out that the Church is not now, and never has been, pacifistic. Every Schoolboy knows that the Church sponsored the crusades which literally looted the "Holy Land". Besides, the Pope's proclamation after Franco's slaughter the Spanish workers is by far the most despicable utterance made by a Clergyman. He told the butcher "As a pledge of the bountiful grace which you will receive from the Immaculate Virgin and the Apostle James, patrons of Spain, and which will merit from the great Spanish Saints, we give to you, our dear sons of Catholic Spain, to the head of the State and his illustrious government, to the Zealous Episcopate and its self denying clergy, to the heroic combatants and to all the faithful, our apostolic benediction."

Nonetheless I do know several religious people who have worked diligently for peace and a better world. I hope I shall have the opportunity to work with them until this rotten system is obliterated regardless of personal differences.

JOHN GOLDSTEIN

Unionism - Pure and Simple

Many revolutionaries have been debating whether the labor organizations have helped or injured the working man. It is my contentions that unions, particularly the jobite ones, have precipitated considerable harm to the revolutionary movement.

This statement, of course, seems rather blatant. Thus it is necessary for us to examine it thoroughly. The very existence of a collective bargaining agency presupposes a boss-worker relationship which is the basis of capitalism. Revolutionaries, on the other hand, advocate — or should advocate — the elimination of class distinctions. So a revolutionary philosophy and pure and simple trade unionism are utterly incompatible.

Some radicals, however, will say that our statements are mere theory. They will demand that we examine the practices of the unions for the purpose of determining if they have hindered or aided people who are forced to work for a living. This we shall do. The unions claim that they have acquired a high standard of living for the bulk of the workers through wage increases. Such a statement is an outright lie. For example when the city of New York granted the transport workers a wage increase, the transportation fare was doubled. As a result of this, 95% of the working class of the number one cesspool in the World was made to suffer, while the other 5% enriched themselves only slightly. Likewise, when the Chicago milk-drivers were given a small wage increase, the price of milk went up. So working class parents were compelled to pay more for milk than they could possibly afford. We, personally, know a few families that were forced to deprive their children of milk. Are such practices helpful to the average working man?

And the policies of the unions have divided the workers. Most of the unions today are organized by crafts. The so-called more skilled crafts obtain much more pay and look condescendingly upon their "less skilled" brethren. The Plumbers and Bricklayers, for instance, often make insulting remarks about the plain laborers who work harder and longer than they do. As a matter of record, there is not a union today which does not have a craft structure.

Perhaps the most despicable aspect of the unions today is their role in the present war. Murraby procured the Steelworkers a substantial pay increase re-

Typical Unionism

A strike of Flight Engineers, AFL, has forced the United Airlines to cancel three-fourths of its flights. The company stated that it offered the union up to \$8,000 annually for domestic flights and up to \$9,900 for the Honolulu stratocruiser run. The engineers were also offered a raise in starting pay from \$5,000 to \$5,500 according to company spokesmen.

But the company refused to grant a union demand for 52% of the salary paid flight captains. It calls the demand "excessive".

As was to be expected, Korean air-lift will not be halted. Such action proves the point that the unions do not have a social conscience but are only concerned with infinitesimal problems such as the two percent wage for the workers of the Skunk Oil Company.

sulting in making war production more lucrative for the workers. Because of this situation, workers will be producing steel for tanks and other war weapons more efficiently. These weapons, in turn, will be used to kill other workers. The CIO or the AFL would never contemplate striking against firms producing the article of destruction. It would be out of character for them to do so. Reuther has even gone as far as to demand more "defense" production so that he would not lose more dues payers. How can a revolutionary support such unions?

We, unlike other superficial thinkers, do not blame the piecards for this dismal state of affairs. The workers, unfortunately place "their" officials in authoritarian positions to escape responsibility themselves. The piecard naturally abuses the power given him but so long as he is able to win a slight rise in pay for his workers, his position is secure. It is not a question of electing good or bad leaders, but of eliminating the leadership complex.

Than what should a revolutionary worker do? We believe that if it is at all possible he should refuse to join the unions. Some will call us saboteurs. We plead guilty to this charge. We desire to sabotage organizations which support political action, which uphold the status quo and

(Continued on page 4)

HAYMARKET ANNIVERSARY

This week commemorates the sixth-sixth anniversary of the legal lynching of the Haymarket Martyrs. They were murdered because they believed that workers should receive the full product of their toil, that wars are inhuman, that Governments are oppressive, and that individual liberty should prevail. They expressed these ideals with convincing fervor and they spoke the language of the plain people.

During this era, the capitalist class was treating the workers with great brutality. Not only had soldiers shot striking railroad workers, but the capitalists had refused to grant the workers an eight hour day. Fortunately

So Parson Spies Lingg, Fielden, Schwab, Fisher and Engle called a mass meeting to demand the eight hour day, among other things. The meeting was progressing in such an orderly fashion that when the Mayor inspected it, he declared that nothing is likely to happen which would require interference.

But the police came to disperse the crowd 15 minutes after the Mayor visited the gathering. Fielden was finishing the last speech of the evening when suddenly a bomb exploded. The police, as to be expected, blamed the workers and began using violence against them. The workers fought back but were easily defeated. About 150 workers were either murdered or incapacitated.

On the ensuing day the editorial writers demanded the blood revenged. They erroneously stated that the anarchists were ready to seize Chicago. And the press called upon the "proper authorities" to extricate Anarchism, socialism, and communism from the fair State of Illinois.

Therefore, a Grand Jury composed of respectable businessmen indicted the anarchist spokesmen. The ruling class was able to convict these innocents — and it is a matter of record that they were innocent — after creating a hysterical atmosphere.

Despite the efforts of radicals, liberals and enlightened conservatives to save them, the Anarchists were hanged. But they died without quailing or appealing to the Government. Spies, in fact, expressed these thoughts before he was sent to the gallows, "there will come a time when our silence will be more powerful than words".

When we fight for peace today, let us remember the Haymarket Martyrs and their supreme sacrifice for the betterment of mankind.

MUSICAL NOTES

by Michael Edwards

A revolution has taken place in music.

The widespread use of the long playing technique of record production has been responsible for many changes. Little known works — especially early and pre-Bach music — is now available in increasing variety. Some of the more esoteric of these have been put out by small companies, some of which have not had too long a life. But they have been put out. You can find Orlando or Josquin de Pres in almost any record shop.

Technically, the lp's are superior to the old 78's. The 45 rpm is probably the best in terms of fidelity of reproduction, but in a no-holds-barred capitalist fight it lost out to the 33s — probably because an entire symphony can be recorded on a single 33. Another improvement is the non-breakability of the new form, and the savings in space which are extremely important where shipping is involved.

In at least one case, the lp makers refused to transfer an old 78 to the new speed because they were not satisfied with the reproduction: Madeline Grey's magnificent Songs of the Auvergne in the Canteloube arrangement. When they did give in to popular demand, a warning was issued on the album cover stating that it was not up to lp standards. As a result of this increased variety and betterment in technique, some magnificent records have been made. One of these — Ernest Ansermet's Petrouchka, done with the L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande — is probably among the very finest records in existence, both technically and aesthetically.

This is not to say that all is beer and skittles. Serious music is still the province of a fairly small coterie, and the improvements of technique and variety must be made far more social than they are now. Yet the superiority of the lp over the 78 in every department has made a real revolution possible: one in which the musical heritage of man can be transmitted to a mass audience at low cost.

NOTICE

This paper needs subscribers and volunteers in order to operate successfully. Anyone desirous of assisting the editor in typing labels and mailing should contact him at the paper's address. He would greatly appreciate all the help he could get.

Unionism

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which actually divide the workers. We are not opposed to concerted action but this does not necessitate membership cards, dues payers, and picards. Workers can work together through voluntary association. "Authoritarian organization is not a prime requisite for our welfare.

Workers, instead of demanding mere wage increases, might cooperate to manage some factories or — for that matter — a whole community — in order to demonstrate that we can live together without bosses, judges, politicians, policemen, salesmen, insurancemen, and the military.

The workers, together with other segments of the population, must learn how to practice mutual aid so we can rid ourselves of the monstrous institutions of capitalism and Government.

S. O'S.

War Prosperity

There are signs that the British economy is collapsing under the rule of Mr. Blood, Sweat and Tears. As of now, one dock worker out of five is unemployed, production has been reduced by 10%, and the British are exporting only 54% of their manufactured goods while desiring to export at least 80% of their production. Let us hope that the British people will become so incensed with the status quo that they will eliminate all war mongers from the commonwealth. Perhaps our contemporary, FREEDOM, has more advice to offer the English people.

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

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

Potential Stoolpigeon

The French Communist Party hack, George Guingouin, has threatened to "expose" party leaders if he is purged. It is an undeniable fact that the Stalinist movement has produced a great number of first class informers, so one more on the list would not surprise us. It only bears out the contention that Marxists are complete opportunists.

Mike Again

Mike Quill is demanding that the Board of Transportation and Privately Owned bus lines grant the workers a \$.25 an hour wage increase together with other "benefits". The Board has naturally expressed opposition to the demand and the private bus companies have stated that

Paper Folds

The New York **Compass**, which generally followed the Stalinist line, has ceased publication because of lack of funds. The paper sold its equipment to Corlis Lamont who financially supported the publication.

Many think that the paper's collapse can be accredited to its support of Stevenson for president. This is the third time within ten years that a fellow traveler publication has folded.

they cannot possibly increase pay without a substantial fare increase. What is likely to happen is the workers will get a boost of \$.03 an hour while the fares on the busses and subways are doubled. The workers will always lose so long as the capitalist system endures.

Dangerous Talk

Representative Fino, an undistinguished Congressman from the Bronx has just declared that the U.S. ought to issue an ultimatum to the "reds" and he further stated that if they do not accept it, we should invade Red China. Talk of this sort is not calculated to promote peace and understanding.

Notice

Story of Eugene Victor Debs

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

Democracy Calls

Approximately 50,000 men face the prospect of being drafted next January. The politicians are eternally blabbing about freedom and security. We wonder how any young man can feel secure when he realizes that he may be killed in one of Uncle Sam's holy wars to preserve democracy. These thoughts we know, are mighty dangerous, especially to the powers that be.



More Deaths

The defense department has announced that our casualties now total 124,569, an increase of 1,174 since last week. About 230 of the new casualties are deaths. It seems that peace and tranquility will never come to Korea. Let us hope that we are wrong.

INDIVIDUAL ACTION

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