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### Individual Action - 1952, January 13, Tuesday

John Goldstein

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# INDIVIDUAL ACTION

Vol.1, No.5

New York, N.Y. January 13, 1953

Price Five Cents

## REIGN OF TERROR GROWS IN SOUTH AFRICA

### Population Suppressed

#### John's Corner

Among the most vicious parasites are the landlords. Because of a slip of paper which states that a person is the owner of a certain piece of property, tenants are forced to pay tribute to him. And often if a tenant loses a job, he is evicted immediately—and the landlord does not care whether he has to sleep in the park or not. Nor do landlords usually paint when they are required to do so. It is shameful that in this day and age millions of tenants are subjected to the idiosyncracies of property owners.

Recently, an event in Chicago displayed the cruelty of many landlords. A girl tenant who contracted polio was evicted by her mother-in-law for non-payment of rent. Her husband has started divorce proceedings against her. He accused her of infidelity, a most world shaking crime. With her eviction, landlordism has reached its nadir.

It is up to us tenants to unite for the purpose of combatting the loathsome practices of property owners and for ultimately expropriating the landlords of their stolen property. The Landlords are strongly organized so it is necessary for us to combine—or else we will all be on the streets.

Various forms of pipsqueaks have been begging us to alter the policy of the paper. They want a safe paper for which to write. Speaking for myself, and I am sure my co-editor will agree with me, I shall continue calling a spade a spade regardless of petty considerations. This column shall try to take a forthright stand on every issue. It shall not cater to obscurantism.

Many people assert that they are radicals merely because they love their fellow man. They intimate that they are not at all motivated by selfish reasons.

I, conversely, am an Anarchist because I want to improve my own living conditions. For



"We pledge Allegiance to the H Bomb and to the illusion for which it stands, one nation indivisible with poverty and destruction for all"

example, I do not enjoy working for a boss and consequently I desire to organize with my fellow workers to expropriate the means of production and distribution to establish workers' control of industry.

Similarly, since I do not wish to be imprisoned — and I do not think others should be incarcerated either — I advocate — and have been advocating — the abolition of prisons.

Nor do I want to indulge in wars for I know an (enemy) soldier might kill or incapacitate me. On the other hand, it is against my nature to kill or hurt other people. Thus if wars become obsolete, I would have the opportunity to enhance my own happiness.

And because cops prevent me from satisfying my desires I believe that the police should be made extinct. Hence, if I am hungry I could take some food without being clubbed by sadists who are placed in positions of authority.

Of course, I recognize that for me to be happy others must also be contented. And so it is necessary for me to work with my fellow creature, not because I love him, but because I cannot be free while he is enslaved.

The American public often hears how harrowing the conditions are behind the Iron Curtain. The propaganda mediums of the American ruling class delineate the suppression of civil liberties by the Kremlin monsters. The American people, by and large, agree that Stalinism is perhaps the worst tyranny ever imposed on human beings.

At the same time, the people are told that the "free world" champions liberty and justice. Nothing could be further from the truth. This is demonstrated by the obvious fact that the racist Dictatorship of South Africa is considered part of the "free world". It is a matter of record that South Africa has the most vicious segregation laws ever conceived by mankind—and such a Government is countenanced by the United States and England.

According to a report by Americans For South African Resistance, the Malan Government has provoked several riots which led to the death of thousands of helpless people.

The Police, in fact, were ordered to shoot whenever there is a "threat" of a clash between natives and Europeans. In plain language, the order means that the cops are allowed to molest the population physically regardless of circumstances.

As was to be expected, the police took full advantage of the situation. For example, in East London, the cops broke up an open prayer meeting for which a permit was granted. A preacher was reading about the oppression of the Israelites to the crowd before a Junior police officer suddenly decided that the meeting should be dispersed because the speech was much too "subversive". The participants were walking away peacefully from the gathering when "our" protectors made a bayonet charge at them. Some shots were fired, probably by some civilians, and then the cops raced down the street while shooting their revolver aimlessly. An individual who was reading a paper in his home was murdered and two others who were holding a beer party were wounded. This is just one example of police brutality in South Africa.

In other parts of the country, whenever the people have tried to passively resist the segregation laws, the police treated them with great brutality. At Denver, for instance, the police murdered and wounded several people who were protesting the 80% increase in rent decreed by the municipality. It seems that some of the recalcitrants threw some stone at the hotel, which did little or no damage. The police, of course, arrived and the stone throwing ceased. But the cops must have their fun. And so they began firing haplessly, apparently with no concern for the health and happiness of the population.

Surely such facts should enable us to discern that the South Africans are living under a reign of terror. Other Governments of the "free world" are also brutally repressing their workers—and they will continue perpetrating their ruthlessness as long as the people in these benighted States allow themselves to be befuddled, deceived, and hoodwinked. It is mandatory for us not only to work against both war camps but to build an anti-war movement which would ultimately eliminate all exploiters, be they communists, capitalists, or politicians.

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### My Anarchism

It is no easy task to state what anarchism means to me. Voltaire de Cleyve once wrote that at bottom all convictions are due to temperament and therefore cannot be explained by reason. While I do not wholly subscribe to this point of view, I nevertheless consider that one cannot explain one's convictions by rational means alone: a personal statement of belief can come from what one feels as much as from what one thinks. It is with this in mind that the reader should approach what follows.

To some people anarchism is just another social theory. They look upon it as something to be discussed or read about once or twice a week, but not something that should interfere too much with their personal lives. Often the authorization is still alive in many who accept the title of anarchist. It usually overtly manifests itself in minor rather than major matters — insistence, sometimes apologetic, upon the observance of redundant conventions and purposeless politenesses for example. Very often it goes with what one may term a petty cowardice, a refusal to face the fact that to become an anarchist is also, in one sense, to become an enemy of society as we know it; that a person who advocates such a fundamentally revolutionary change in the relationships of men, cannot expect the little privileges and securities that rulers bestow upon those who conform to their demands. Such people are merely sham libertarians, who must either go forward to a genuine anarchism or fall back into the acceptance, of authority and its attendant oppressions.

Anarchism only has meaning for me as a way of life. My endeavor is that what I do and say shall reflect in an increasingly concrete manner the ideas I hold; that I try to maximize on every occasion the freedom of my will in the conduct of my life. I know full well that it is impossible to be a complete anarchist as long as the authority of man over man exists, that far too often one is forced into humiliating compromise with things one seeks to overthrow, out of the impossibility of behaving anarchically in many directions even today I have to be persuaded. So often circumstance is made the sanction of spinelessness.

To certain people what I have written may appear like a religion; like enslavement to an ideal, as discipline of Stirner's ideal call it. It has always been a mystery to me how belief in an ideal of liberated man—which is anarchy—can be called enslavement. I fear me much that those who so think but contradict themselves, for if anarchism has any meaning it is that of owing no allegiance to any enslaving ideal or principle, be it God or government. It is only by conceiving anarchism as a liberating principle, not as a static system, that it can become dynamic. And we should always remember that by liberation is implied not just the abolition of oppressions such as government, exploitation, the marriage institution and so on, but also the freeing and intensifying of man's capacity to experience joy and sadness, love and hate, the beauty and the tragedy of life.

No longer fear love or death; set free your soul and body; free yourself by struggling for the freedom of others! That is what it means to be an anarchist. One day, perhaps, some of us may see a time when compulsion has vanished from the affairs of men; when fear and cowardice, deceit and vulgarity have been left with all man-made oppression in, as Engels put it, 'the museum of history! And even if we do not live to see it; even if our efforts seem to result in nothing, even then our struggle will not have been in vain, for it will have brought its own achievement, and pride, and strength, if not its victory.

That is what anarchism means to me.

—S. E. Parker

### Warning

Israeli foreign minister Moshe Sharret has issued a warning to the "western Democracies" to

stop shipments of arms to Arab countries. Of course, the "benevolent" Government of Israel would take same said arms and with thanks.

### Concentration Camps

"3000 men, women and children will be squeezed into an oblong single story cement block structure. They can sleep in wooden, shelf like beds—5 levels to a section. They won't have it any better than the Japanese—if as good."

Guy Crerod

Warden of "prison camp,  
Allenwood, Pa."

Reprinted from New Statesmen  
James V. Berret, director of

the Federal Bureau of Prisons, reports \$774,000 spent on 6 American Concentration Camps, which will hold up to 100,000 people.

The McCarren Act which became law Dec. 24 authorizes the Att. General to apprehend and detain in such places . . . all persons that **probably** will engage and conspire with others to engage in acts of espionage and sabotage.

—John Bailey

## Letters to the Editor

Dear John:

I think I expressed my point of view badly in my former letter to you since Dave Dellinger did not see the point I was trying to make. That was that though I certainly would defend your right to publish and express your views, be they atheist or otherwise, IF they were atheist and IF there were constant attacks on Catholicism in INDIVIDUAL ACTION I did not see how I could be identified with it to the extent of contributing articles. Unless, of course, I would be allowed the freedom to answer the attacks. Since you have allowed me such freedom then I withdraw my objection to writing an occasional article though I do not withdraw my objection to the "tone" of your and Dave Dellingers criticism of Catholicism. For, if we are going to have the "mutual tearing down of the walls which prevent us from sharing experience in these areas with our fellows" (as Dave writes), I hardly see how that can be done unless we speak and write respectfully of each others ideas. While Dave writes with the usual "tolerance" liberals at times show to Catholics it hardly seemed necessary for him to refer to a cardinal Catholic dogma as "Fairy stories of the Virgin Birth". I am aware of the treatments of "higher criticism" of the Scriptures by liberal Protestants—I do not find the results of their scholarship convincing—but it would seem that the results of such findings could be expressed in a less offensive manner than to refer to a belief which many intelligent people hold as "fairy stories". You also used this phrase in referring to the life of St. Francis of Assisi. Besides which you refer to Catholicism as "superstitious nonsense" and to religion in general as a "God racket".

In your own case it is because you are an atheist. But must you express your atheism with the stock phrases found in Klu Klux Klan literature? Or repeat tiresomely the cliches of Thomas Paine? If it were a case of undersanding what the Catholic Church teaches and then rejecting it I could take it more seriously. But when you make

factual mis-statements such as when you assert the Catholic Church teaches that the SOLE function of sex is procreation (whereas the Catholic teaching is that the PRIMARY purpose of sex in marriage is procreation and that there are secondary purposes) you merely build up a picture of Catholicism that does not exist in reality and then proceed to tear it apart.

As to Dave's request that I explain the papal "benediction" of Franco what am I expected to say? I have no means of checking on this, you took the information from Alvo Manhattan's book (a somewhat more refined anti-Catholic book than Blanchard's, but suffering from the same lack of scholarship and understanding of Catholicism) but I shan't argue the accuracy of it as I feel that Eugenio Pacelli was sympathetic to Franco. That in his opinion and I do not agree with him. I agree with him when, as Pope Pius XII, he teaches the faithful on matters of faith or morals and does so in his official capacity of Vicar of Christ on earth. I accept without question and without mental reservation his definition of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. I do not accept some of his political views. I and some thousands of other Catholics did not agree with him on the Franco business. His Holiness was quite aware that many Catholics did not agree and of course he never threatened excommunication because he knew that his personal political opinions were not part of the Faith or in any way binding on Catholics.

Despite these differences I feel there are areas in which we can co-operate, I dislike theological disputes and would sooner see INDIVIDUAL ACTION utilize its space for other purposes. But that, of course, is your affair. If, in conscience, you feel the Catholic Church is an evil institution, then you have to obey the dictates of your conscience. I feel that the Catholic Church is the extension on earth of the Incarnate Christ, as such I obviously cannot agree with you.

ROBERT LUDLOW  
Catholic Worker



## Anarchism, Religion, and Sex

Throughout the past two centuries, Anarchists, with few exceptions, have opposed all religions and have never minced words about their feeling towards superstition. I am in complete agreement with my predecessors. In fact, I cannot discern how one can espouse the revolutionary philosophy of anarchism while praying to a fake God.

In the first place Anarchists reject—or should reject—authority. The Christian and Jewish Anarchists, on the other hand, renounce man-made governments, but countenance church authority, an authority that stifles men's minds more thoroughly than States do. In view of the fact that religion teaches the pernicious thought that certain human beings will be saved while the rest of us will be damned for eternity, it is quite impossible to reconcile Anarchism and religion.

Secondly, the religionists believe that man is born in Sin. Conversely, Libertarians propagate the idea that man is naturally good and therefore free of sin at birth. Anarchists further contend that man has been thwarted by artificially imposed institutions. In other words, free thinkers feel that man is capable of making his own decisions while religionists believe that the "saved" must govern the rest of the population. Certainly, religion is the anathema of liberty and justice.

And politically, the religious institutions have played a reactionary role. Priests, Rabbis, and ministers have invariably sanctioned the ruling powers. For example, it is a salient and undeniable fact that the Catholic Church, a Church which perpetrated a most horrible inquisition, supported the feudal landlords in their endeavor to enslave the peasants.

Nor is the history of Protestantism permeated with radicalism. It is a matter of record that the hypocritical founder of Protestantism, the infamous Martin Luther, contributed to the murder of thousands of helpless peasants when they revolted against the cruel landlords. And the Protestant Churches have blessed the capitalist system. During the advent of capitalism, when men and women were forced to work 12 hours a day in poorly ventilated factories, the Protestant ministers promulgated the notion that the workers should satisfy the propensities of the capitalists even though they were victimized with deadly diseases by so do-

ing. These factors alone are enough to condemn religion.

But even worse, is the religious attitude towards sex. All religions support monogamy and hence reprove those who are committing—or have committed adultery. Despite the protestations of the alleged moralists, I consider monogamy to be unnatural and thoroughly immoral.

It is so because it presupposes that one is the exclusive property of another. As has been often said before, love for one precludes love for the human race as such. Therefore, if a couple are really practicing monogamy—either legally or otherwise—they are compelled to withdraw from society.

Since relatively few couples live monogamously, either the boy or girl becomes incessantly jealous when he or she learns that the "beloved" has had relations with another party. Sometimes this jealousy even leads to murder. Neither the boy nor girl, however, is to blame for such a horrible and tragic situation inasmuch as they were taught by their Priest, minister, or Rabbi that promiscuity is the product of the Devil. And so a married person is discouraged, if not forcibly prevented, from gratifying his desire for other partners besides his "lawful" one.

Moreover, monogamy leaves many boys and girls sexually frustrated. And if a future anarchistic society attempted to practice monogamy, it would degenerate into an authoritarian Statist society. It has been proved that a sexually frustrated individual incurs inhibitions which, in turn, produces a neurosis. These individuals, in order to release their inhibitions, commit violent acts against their fellow human beings. In a free society, they would establish a State, a State which would be oppressive to say the least.

Anarchism and monogamy are incongruous and since religions of all descriptions condone monogamy along with performing other reprehensible deeds, anarchists should exorcise religion in clear and understandable terms.

—John Goldstein

### Horror of Horrors

France was without a Government for the period after Pinay's resignation, during the attempt to form a new cabinet. We wonder: How the French people could have possibly existed without Government. One never knows.

## AMERICAN JUSTICE

(Concluded from last issue)

Government policy in relation to my appeal is one of persistent stalling. I was sentenced on September 7, 1951, ten months after my arrest. Securing the minutes of the trial cost six months and \$1400.00. They were released only after the last referendum on the Constitution, at the same time that bail was finally set. Even then the minutes of the first and last days of my trial were missing, and could not be secured until October, seven months and \$100 later. These delays prevented the case from being placed on the November calendar of the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico, but we still hoped to get it on the January calendar. The hearing on corrections of the minutes was set for November 12th, and on November 8th my attorney here dispatched to my attorney there the corrections that we considered absolutely essential. All mail entering or leaving Puerto Rico, however, passes through the Post Office in San Juan, in the Federal Building which also houses the Puerto Rican offices of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other federal services. Strange delays and losses of correspondence are frequent, particularly of correspondence sent to or by persons who labor for the independence of Puerto Rico. My Puerto Rican attorney did not receive the corrections of the minutes of my trial until November 13th, the day after the hearing was scheduled for, although they should have been delivered to him by November 10th. Not having heard from us, he had to request a postponement of the hearing, which has not yet been re-scheduled. We will not get on the January calendar of the Supreme Court, and will have to hope that by March the Government may be willing to go to Court.

One persistent rumor is that the Governor of Puerto Rico may, in time, grant me an unsolicited pardon for what I did not do. If he does so it will be a present, not to me, but to the District Attorneys of Puerto Rico, who can not be blamed for not wanting to play again the ridiculous role of prosecuting a case without any legitimate foundations. RUTH M. REYNOLDS

### Thank You

We would like to thank the Peacemaker, an excellent pacifist publication for urging their subscribers to read Individual Action. We believe that that people who are sincerely opposed to wars and want a better world should subscribe to both publications.

## Puerto Rico: Past and Present by Felix Ortiz

Apologists for American Imperialism are very fond of stating that conditions in Puerto Rico are much better now than they were under Spanish rule.

It is my purpose here, in the interest of the Puerto Rican workers, to contradict these sycophants who have been repeating the same lie for many years.

I shall begin by reviewing a bit of history.

Spain had been a ruthless exploiter of Latin America for centuries, but by the last half of the 19th century she had been very much weakened. It was during the last half of the 19th century that a series of revolts in Puerto Rico against Spanish rule convinced the "mother country" that she should give up the island.

After granting virtual independence Spain agreed to give Puerto Rico its full independence in 1898. This plan was frustrated when, in the same year, the island was forcibly subdued by a North American Military invasion. Since then Puerto Rico has been a colony of the U.S.A.

At the time of the invasion most Puerto Rican families owned a bit of land where they grew most of the food they needed. Also each of these families owned a few cows or hogs, poultry, etc. Thus, wealth was comparatively well distributed.

These facts and many others pointing to the general well-being of the Puerto Ricans at that time were recorded in the official reports made by the first chiefs of the U. S. Military occupation.

In 1898 a military dictatorship was imposed until the U. S. built a new bureaucracy of politicians to administer the island as puppets of Washington.

By 1930 over 50,000 native landholders had disappeared and four Wall Street corporations already owned over 60% of the total wealth of the country.

U. S. Imperialism destroyed the agriculture of the country by turning it into one big sugar plantation.

By establishing a mercantile and financial monopoly thru tariff and credit laws, U. S. capitalists were able to swamp Puerto Rico with food unfit for human consumption and other products they could not sell anywhere else.

The newest bunch of political stooges are under the Machiavellian direction of Chief Stooge Governor Luis Munoz Marin. For instance, my uncle, Benjamin

Continued on page 4



## RACISM

Race prejudice is a disease that afflicts the downtrodden masses. Even though people are of the same species, they infer that one alleged race is superior to another. So long as this condition prevails, a social revolution cannot and will not take place.

Of course, a great deal of race prejudice has an economic base. For example, in New York City, the employers are importing cheap Puerto Rican labor in order to reduce the wages of other workers. The Puerto Ricans are compelled to immigrate here not because they love the United States, but because Wall Street Bankers have created such miserable conditions in Puerto Rico that it is impossible for a man to earn a living. The average wage in that most exploited country is \$500 a year—and the cost of living is quite high. But the native workers, instead of uniting with their Puerto Rican brothers for the purpose of fighting the bosses, make caustic remarks about their fellow workers. One hardly hears the employers using the term "spic" but how often does one hear that term of opprobrium uttered by workers? The answer is astronomical.

Likewise, when the Polish

Stockyard workers were striking against meat packing companies, Negroes were employed to break the strike. The Polish workers deeply resented this—they fallaciously blamed the Negroes—and today a Negro dares not walk into a Polish neighborhood in Chicago. Of course, if these Polish workers were not pervaded to a great extent with prejudice, they would have been able to cooperate with their Negro Fellow Workers and thus have won the strike.

And the Negroes and Puerto Ricans are forced to move into "pure" American neighbors. The good Americans are totally intolerant of their recent neighbors and they humiliate them if they do not molest them physically. In fact, Good American boys have organized themselves in vicious gangs in order to inflict harm on their less fortunate human brothers. Naturally, the Puerto Ricans and the Negroes have formed groups to protect themselves and their families from these inexcusable attacks.

The churches and Synagogues also inadvertently help foster race hate. They teach their subjects that they are greatly superior to other people, if they are not God's chosen people. And in most Churches, the Whites and the Negroes are seg-

gregated thereby causing much friction. Seldom have religious institutions relieved race tension.

Neither do the reformers—a contemptible lot—promote racial equality despite assertions to the contrary. They attempt to persuade rather recalcitrant Negroes and Puerto Ricans to become "useful" Americans. They build institutions which try to impose "the American way of Life" on the Negroes and Puerto Ricans. And the good doers are greatly upset when a Negro or Puerto Rican commits a "crime". Usually a reformer considers himself superior to the racial minorities and looks condescendingly upon them.

We believe that the only way we can expunge race prejudice is to approach people whose skin happens to be darker than ours as fellow Human beings. If, for example, some of us work in shops with Puerto Ricans, we should join with them in fighting for more admirable working conditions. By participating in such an endeavor, they as well as we, will become cognizant of the fact that the interests of all workers are identical. In addition, it is mandatory for us to picket all places which discriminate, either directly or subtly, against people because of race, creed or color.

When human beings are able to associate with one another without feeling any sort of prejudice, a social revolution will occur creating a free society. But as long as race prejudice exists, we will be subjected to this miserable exploitative society—and the issue of racism is not negligible. Nor is discrimination merely a will of the wisp evil which we should not chase after. On the contrary, the fight against intolerance is our fight.

—JOHN GOLDSTEIN

—o—

Puerto Rico Past and Pres.....

Continued from page 3

Ortiz (a former Senator and now a Justice of the Supreme Court) is the puppet of the sugar plantation owners. My father, Judge Felix Ortiz Sr., sees to it that Puerto Ricans behave like "good Americans".

Since the Honorable and Illustrious Judge Ortiz will be reading this article I shall take this opportunity to say a few words about him. He has been a political opportunist of the first water ever since he, as a young attorney, discovered that noble ideals don't put a dollar in your pocket. It was after he had made this discovery that he was appointed Judge by that master hypocrite Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Puerto Rico, all who have visited the place will agree, is a very beautiful tropical Island. Its climate is one of the best in the world.

In sharp contrast to the natural beauty is the social ugliness.

I have spent over 14 years in Puerto Rico. Having been abandoned by his Honorable and Illustrious father at a tender age yours truly shared all the miseries of the poorest Puerto Ricans during most of those dreary 14 years. During that time I saw many of my friends die quite young as a result of malnutrition. Diseases run riot there. The infantile mortality rate is one of the highest in the world. Over 50% of the population is chronically unemployed and those employed get miserable wages. In Puerto Rico are to be found the worst slums in the Western Hemisphere.

In short, the vast majority of the people of Puerto Rico now live in utter destitution.

Apologists take notice.

### Only the Workers Work

Salesmen and shopkeepers sell to the people.  
Beggars beg from the people.  
Lawyers defend the people.  
Policeman, judges and jailkeepers imprison the people.  
Scientists invent weapons to kill the people.  
Pharmacists poison the people.  
Doctors, sailors and soldiers kill the people.  
Morticians bury the people.  
Priests, Ministers and Rabbis preach to the people.  
Philantropists do good to the people.  
Politicians, journalists, radio commentators, teachers, advertisers and psychiatrists bamboozle the people.  
Workers work for the people.

—FELIX ORTIZ

### The Exiled Eagle Speaks

*You Wanton Winds go stir my sleeping child  
Who sighs because her regal wings are clipped  
By scissors of society. Her wild  
Instinctive love for nature's gifts is kept  
A captive in the court of Custom Law  
Which sits upon the throne of Eagle Kings  
And mashes ageless beauty in its maw  
And swallows it alike with transient things.*

*You winds must whisper catholic commands  
Tell her how times and manners can ensnare  
The mind of freedom's heir and bind his hands.  
Go carry truth to cleat the cuts of fear.  
Go blast the silly little billikin  
Who dares to call my daughter's virtue, sin.*

(Proteus Quarterly)

Hyacinthe Hill

### INDIVIDUAL ACTION

Apt. 2F, 15 Sheridan Square  
New York 14, N. Y.

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