KKK activities
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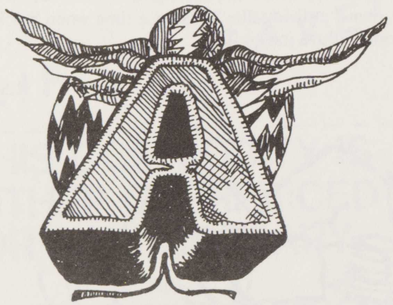
that provides the thrust of anti-racist activity, frequently against the grain of city and state governments. But also, in a situation where there is no rooted community, there is little one can do but cure the symptoms after racism actively surfaces, rather than deal with the social inequality and unstructured, atomized social forms that form a context in which racism, as well as other types of chauvinism and violence, can break out.

Nothing expresses the vulnerable situation in which all minorities in a fundamentally community-less society find themselves than the famous statement of Martin D. Neimoller:

> In Germany, they came first for the communists, and I didn't speak up because I was not a communist. Then, they came for the Jews and I didn't speak up because I was not a Jew. Then, they came for the trade-unionists, and I didn't speak up because I was not a trade-unionist. Then, they came for the Catholics, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then, they came for me and by that time, no one was left to speak up.

If there is no community, then there is no way to combat racism. And if we do not commit ourselves to forming a grass-roots, democratic solidarity which dissolves "mass" society and the atomized, atavistic "egos" which inhabit it, then there is a continual danger of resurfacing violence and racism.

"The essence of anarchism, the one thing without which it is not anarchism, is the negation of authority over anyone by anyone."
— Nicolas Walter



"When enough people have seen through the swindle of authoritarian systems clearly enough to feel cheated themselves, then it won't matter whether they vote with their hands or their feet. One way or another society will just have to move in an anarchist direction."

— Bob Green, *Anarchy* June 1962

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WE ALL LIVE IN POLAND

"Communist" or "Free" world, but against them both. U.S. banks, in particular Chase Manhattan and Bank of America, supported by the U.S. government, have loaned over $3 billion to the Polish government. Polish workers will be expected to make sacrifices to pay back the debts. The Polish standard of living is reported to have declined 20% due to sacrifices made in the last two years.

One can recognize that it's the same banks and government that have demanded sacrifices from us, contributing to the decline in our own standard of living. This is why our government cannot intervene in Poland. Our government is just as treacherous as the governments of the Soviet Union and Poland.

We can protest in rallies against martial law and against Soviet or U.S. intervention. If the solidarity movement is crushed and martial law lifted, packages of clothing, soap, and other necessities will probably be able to be sent to people in Poland. (See address below as we have some contacts.)

The only way bloodshed of workers can really be prevented in Poland or anywhere is if similar actions are attempted everywhere, in other words, if workers everywhere occupy their workplaces to bring the rule of the capitalist and "Communist" worlds to an end. At that point there will be no need for hopeless negotiations in isolation from each other.

We're interested in a project of this magnitude. How about you?

Malcontents
c/o Bound Together Books
1901 Hayes St.
San Francisco, CA 94117
Poland

MARX AND ANARCHISM: THE ANARCHIST MISTAKE

I have just read with interest the recent *Lone Wolf* pamphlet "An Anarchist View of Marxism." I had been forwarned that this pamphlet's publication was imminent and that the pamphlet would present a view of Marxism with which I would likely disagree. But when I actually came to read it, I found—not a view of Marxism that I considered mistaken—but no view of Marxism at all.

The argument of the article's author may be summed up briefly thus: That while Marx's avowed aim was to end "the economic exploitation of some people by others," the societies revolutionized by movements claiming the inspiration of Marx have developed monstrous forms of social tyranny, that this development was the inevitable consequence of the establishment of proletarian dictatorship through political means that Marx prescribed, and that the sole lesson Marx and Marxism have to offer us is the example of the objective failure of the supposedly Marxist revolutions to achieve anything that anarchists can approve of.

That's it? That's an anarchist view of Marxism? Absent from that view is any concept of what Marxism *is*. This is the sort of mistake that anarchists seem perversely eager to make. Bakunin and Marx—both rather difficult and even unpleasant personalities—had a dispute over revolutionary strategy more notable for its acrimoniousness than for its relevance to the revolution that both wished for, and so succeeding generations of anarchists—with the dismal failure of the Bolshevik revolution fixed unalterably and eternally in their minds—must throw aside the only theoretical apparatus ever proposed that offers a coherent explanation of how societies work and what, in effect, it is we are fighting against.

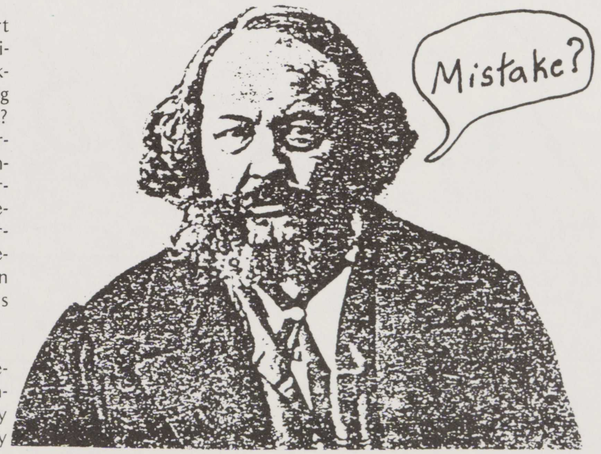
Let me hasten to say that, of course, in the narrow field of Marx's and Bakunin's intense disagreement, Marx was wrong and Bakunin right. Dictatorship of the proletariat (a much misunderstood and, perhaps, deliberately misconstrued concept) imposed by a political party is not my idea of a revolution. But no matter how much of Marx's political energy was expended on this idea in the First International, it is among the tiniest, least important bits of his mature scholarly writing. In his most important work—the first volume of *Capital*—it is not mentioned, as far as I know. But the impression I get from the anarchists who are so eager to attack or dismiss Marx is that they haven't read what he wrote.

It does not suffice for us, as anarchists, to believe and to assert that we all ought to be free and that, as society is now constituted, we aren't. We must, beyond this, know what we're talking about. We must in some way be able to answer the following questions: What is a society? What makes it behave as it does? Is there a force that drives society? What is it? How do the particulars of a society relate to its general character and functioning? What causes individual people within a society to have particular beliefs? How do people's beliefs about their society relate to its actuality? What is the source of the divergence of perception and reality? What is freedom and why is it to be desired? Does everyone want it? If it is a universal desire, how can the forces obstructing it endure? How do people's perceptions change? How do societies change?

All of which is to say, in order to present a coherent, comprehensive political philosophy, anarchists must understand and encompass the social context within which a political philosophy operates. But anarchists tend to shrink from this responsibility or to approach it in a haphazard, unscientific way, which amounts to the same thing.

It is hard to imagine how a serious anarchist could reject much of Marxian theory. The various parts of the theory—the materialism on which all the rest is based, the dialectical movement of history, the explanation of capitalism through the labor theory of value and the theory of surplus value, the theory of ideology based on the "fetishism of commodities," and classes and the state—taken together all of this precisely defines the context within which the philosophy of anarchism has meaning. It is *the* theoretical basis for a materialist study of social reality and social possibilities. It is the only critical or scientific apparatus I know of for studying social reality without reference to anything outside the material world.

To attempt to study and understand society—what it is, how it works, and how it changes—without studying and understanding Marx is as preposterous as studying physics without Einstein or biology without Darwin. The willingness of anarchists to make the attempt is the result, on the one hand, of ideological co-optation, and has as its consequence, on the other, the general failure of anarchism to present a case compelling enough to succeed practically as a revolutionary philosophy. All that anarchism tends to be left with is an appealing emotional point of view. And that isn't enough.

If we are going to reject Marxian theory, and I see no reason why we should, at least let us be clear about what we're rejecting. Let us not fasten on to a very minor point, which is not really integral to the theory as a whole, and argue that because this point has been proved wrong in practice and has led, if it has, to things we rightly abhor, that the whole of Marxian theory is invalid. And further, if we are to reject the Marxian theory *in toto*, we must be prepared to propose an alternative theory of society that similarly accounts for the specific features of a given society and explains why they are what they are. If anyone has an alternative social theory to propose, I would be most interested in knowing about it. Meanwhile, I think the anarchist movement would be well advised to examine Marxian theory to see how useful it can be to us.

Kyd Wake