

TWO AGITATORS:

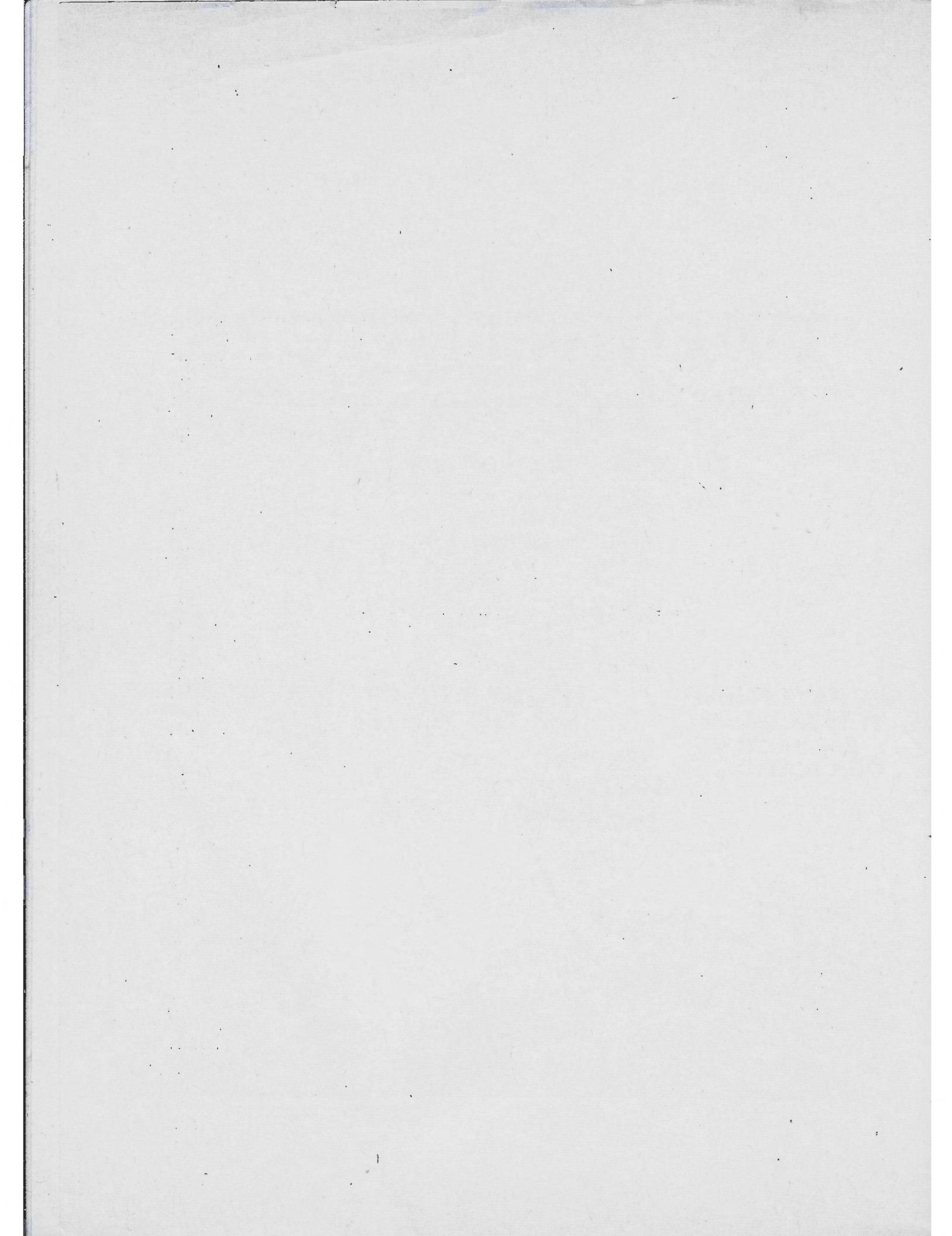
Peter Maurin—Ammon Hennacy

WE HAVE FOUND
THIS MAN
PERVERTING
OUR NATION!

HE STIRS UP
THE PEOPLE!

SAYING THAT
HE IS CHRIST
THE KING!





TWO AGITATORS:

Peter Maurin — Ammon Hennacy

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Compiled by Ammon Hennacy

Layout by Robert Steed

Illustrated by Ade Bethune

INTRODUCTION

This introduction to a few short selections from the writings of the founder of the Catholic Worker movement in the United States, and of Ammon Hennacy, one of its editors today, are brought out in this slight pamphlet to make men think. Though Peter Maurin, the French peasant, declared that there was no party line at *The Catholic Worker*, he had a platform and the first plank in that was "round table discussions for the clarification of thought." He quoted Lenin as saying that there could be no revolution without a theory of revolution, and he quoted Ibsen as saying that truth had to be restated every twenty years. I think that Ammon Hennacy in his life makes a restatement of *Catholic Worker* positions.

Peter was a French peasant from a commune in the south of France, many of whose brothers and half brothers and sisters, are teaching school in France today.

Ammon, one might say, is an American peasant, though we in America dislike the word. Peter came to this country in 1910 and died in 1949. He lived always as a worker and a poor man, taking literally the words of the Bible—"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." "Bear one another's burdens." And in the words of the Sermon on the Mount: "You have heard it said 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,' but I say to you, not to resist evil; but if one strike thee on thy right cheek, turn to him also the other, and if a man will contend with thee in judgment and take away thy coat, let go thy cloak also unto him. And whosoever will force thee one mile, go with him the other two. Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not away. You have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies, do good to them that hate you and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you, that you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven."

Ammon is not only an American peasant he is an American *salesman*. He likes selling things whether they are Fuller brushes or corn flakes, both of which he sold to help pay his way through college. He was so good a salesman of his book, "*Autobiography of a Catholic Anarchist*" that it is now out of print.

Peter's book of "*Essays*" came out in 1949 and is also out of print, though we have reprinted many of them repeatedly in *The Catholic Worker*. Peter Maurin died in 1949 and of course the ideas of a man who is dead are far more acceptable than those of a living man. Peter was a cradle Catholic, Ammon a convert, baptized in 1952 by Fr. Marion Casey, diocesan priest in Minnesota. Peter always

wrote impersonally, packing into his short essays ideas which could be expanded into a book. He had a great reserve about himself, and told us only the bare facts of his life. This was because he had a profound belief in the power of the idea to change men's minds and lives.

Ammon is the opposite and will tell you the story of his life at the drop of a hat, because he feels that so much of it illustrates what he is trying to convey in the way of ideas. I may be crediting him with a virtue which he does not possess, but it seems to me that there is a *profound humility* too, in Ammon's talk of himself. Like all prophets, he has a keen sense of the emergency—"now is the time" and what each man does now is going to have its effect on history. With Peter Maurin this meant constant repetition and great terseness of expression in the written word. With Ammon this humility meant, "What I can do, every man can do, if he will put fear far from him." Ammon often says that he has the virtue of courage and knowledge, but lacks love; he knows how critical his attitude is about others. It is true he judges, but without malice.

Peter Maurin's platform included besides the round table discussions which could take place not only in formal conferences but on street corners, in busses, on a park bench or in "houses of hospitality." These are set up in the slums of cities where people could gather to perform the works of mercy, and by mutual aid feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter the harborless, as well as enlighten the ignorant, counsel the doubtful, rebuke the sinner, and so on through the seven corporal and seven spiritual works of mercy. Indeed the performance of these works and our interpretation of them astounds the faithful to the point of attack. Only this month, two Catholic journals of renown have printed articles attacking our particular interpretation of the teachings of Jesus Christ. It is true that the most visible of our work is feeding the hungry, sheltering the harborless. (We pay, at the present moment, \$734 a month in rents for the remains of the group who were dispossessed from our House of Hospitality last January. Some is for "flop" money, for cubicles on the Bowery. The rest of the rents are for scattered apartments and for a loft which is our headquarters.) This is the way we began back in 1933, with apartments and a store, and we have gone back to our beginnings, which is a healthy thing. Certainly there is not much chance of the Catholic Worker Movement becoming static.

Everyone wants to feel settled, stable, and to put down roots. But city dwellers are torn up again and again and finding a place to live, space to breathe, is one of the great problems of the day. Peter Maurin and Ammon Hennacy exemplify the free man in our day, men who are not dependent on place, home or office, field, factory or workshop. The world, and specifically, the United States, is their home. There they are pilgrims and wanderers, preaching the gospel, witnessing the truth of their ideas. And their ideas shock and startle.

It used to shock Catholic policemen and the readers of the diocesan press to see Catholic Workers out on picket lines during strikes. We were the first recognized Catholic group to cover strikes and organizing campaigns in this way. We were the first Catholics to picket the Mexican and the German Embassy, to protest the persecution of the church in Mexico and the persecution of Jews and Catholics in Germany. We have picketed the Russian Consulate and have consistently pointed out our fundamental opposition to atheistic communism.

Over and over again (this last month before an investigating committee in Congress) our use of the name Catholic has been disputed. We have as much right to use the name Catholic as the Catholic War Veterans have. We have used

it for twenty six years without protest by our own Chancery office in New York City.

Sometimes when people send us money to pay these bills for housing and feeding people, they tell us they want the money to go for bread, not for the propagation of our "ideas." But it is our ideas that make us do these things. "All men are brothers." God is our Father and we must be "our brothers' keeper." It is the first murderer who asked that question, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

We believe that we must love our enemies, do good to them that persecute us. We believe that we cannot say we love God and not love our brother. These profoundly simple but serious ideas have made us pacifists and have brought us into courts and jails. During the last five years we have been arrested each year for refusing to take part in the war game of the compulsory civil defense drill. There is no defense against atomic weapons, and we try to call attention to this fact by disobeying what is in effect a foolish law, a law which is not "according to right reason." If this law compelled us to sin everyone would understand our position. But we fall into sin by "little and by little" as St. Paul says, compelling people to take shelter during mock air attacks, and ours is considered a foolish act. But its very folly compels the military, the Civil Defense, the police, the courts, the prison officials, and of course the public, to think of what we mean, what we are saying.

Then too, going to jail is visiting the prisoner, and that is a work of mercy. Being prisoners ourselves brings us closer to our brothers. It is truly compassion to share the sufferings of the prisoner. Printing articles about Morton Sobel, a prisoner sentenced to thirty years on insufficient evidence during the hysteria of the Korean war, is also visiting the prisoner. We are not afraid of "guilt by association." Fr. Gutzwiller says, "too many are busy taking care of the one sheep that remains safely in the stable while the ninety-nine lost are left to their own fate." Our Lord dined with publicans and sinners and indeed we are all sinners by omission if not by commission, in ignorance if not with due deliberation. But Jesus said, in reply to those who asked "when were you in prison and we did not visit you?" "Inasmuch as ye did not do it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did not do it to me."

Peter Maurin's articles speak for themselves. Ammon's chapters deal with two periods of his life, the time he spent in jail during the first world war, and how he came to be a "one man revolution." There is a period then in his life when he married, built a house, raised two daughters and earned a living as a social worker, and made those compromises which the average man has to make living in the present social order. He never ceased, however, being the agitator. At the coming of peacetime conscription however, he refused to register, and due to the breakup of his family, and the passing of the withholding tax, he became a wandering migrant worker. It is this part of his life that makes up the second part of his writing.

For the last seven years, he has been a member of the Catholic Worker staff, and as one of the editors does a good deal of travelling and speaking. In this last year he has spoken to groups at Princeton, Yale, Brandeis, etc.

There is much to clarify in his thinking and writing. He uses words too loosely. When he rejects such words as "law and order" he is rejecting the disorder of the modern world. He himself desires the law and order of God; he is a follower of the Sermon on the Mount. When as an anarchist he talks of freedom, he is saying the same things St. Paul did when he talked of the liberty of

Christ and—"for such there is no law." When he talks of anarchism and the rejection of authority he does not realize that he, more than any I know accepts the authority of the functional society, though not of the acquisitive. When he, like most Americans, reacts against the word "obedience" he is really reacting against "obeisance" and the lack of the recognition of the dignity of man and his conscience, but of all the men around the *Catholic Worker* he is the most obedient to his duty, his work, his daily routine and to the needs of others who call on him for help.

When he shocks, when his inexactitude of expression causes antagonism, I can only hope that with charity, those who know better, those who are skilled in theology, philosophy, economics and dialectic, will with meekness and charity, instruct him. The only trouble is that the best of men, laymen and priests, in their humility, feel his greatness and goodness and leave it to God to straighten out his mistakes. Certainly the way he lives is a challenge to all, and it can never be said of him, "What you *are* speaks to me so loudly that I cannot hear what you say." His life itself more than his words is the best thing about him.

As we go to press Ammen is again in jail in Sandstone, Minn. Federal correctional institution, serving a six month sentence for trespassing on the Omaha missile base and distributing *The Catholic Worker*. We hope he will be selling this pamphlet in the spring.

We will not be using the money which is sent for the care of the poor to pay for the printing of this pamphlet. Our printer (who also prints *Variety*) has given us credit these last 26 years, though once when we were very late we received a terse note, "pray and pay!" and the pamphlet will sell quickly enough to pay the bill. May it go forth with God's blessing.

Dorothy Day
October, 1959.



EASY ESSAYS

By Peter Maurin

BLOWING THE DYNAMITE

Writing about the Catholic Church,
a radical writer says:
"Rome will have to do more
than play a waiting game;
she will have to use
some of the dynamite
inherent in her message."

To blow the dynamite
of a message
is the only way
to make the message dynamic.

If the Catholic Church
is not today
the dominant social dynamic force,
it is because Catholic scholars
have failed to blow the dynamite
of the Church.

Catholic scholars
have taken the dynamite
of the Church,
have wrapped it up
in nice phraseology,
placed it in an hermetic container
and sat on the lid.

It is about time
to blow the lid off
so the Catholic Church
may again become
the dominant social dynamic force.

RIGHT OR WRONG

Some people say:
"My country is always right."

Some people say:
"My country is always wrong."

Some people say:
"My country is sometimes right
and sometimes wrong,
but my country right or wrong."

To stick up for one's country
when one's country is wrong
does not make
the country right.

To stick up for the right
even when the world is wrong
is the only way we know of
to make everything right.

ATLANTA PRISON—1917

By Ammon Hennacy

I was arrested when I spoke against the coming war at Broad and High in Columbus, Ohio before about 10,000 people on the evening of April 5, 1917. The next day war was declared and I was released for trial May 30. Meanwhile I distributed leaflets over Ohio for the Socialist Party, advising young men to refuse to register for the draft. When I was picked up again I asked to see a lawyer but was told I could not see one. Detective Wilson said that unless I registered for the draft by June 5th, which was registration day, I was to be shot on orders from Washington. I was shown a copy of the local paper with headlines "Extreme Penalty for Traitors." I only saw it through the bars and was not allowed to read it. The detective said that the young Socialists arrested with me for refusing to register had all given in and registered. (Later I found out that he had also told them that I had registered.) I felt that if they gave in someone had to stick, and I was that one. Spike Moore, an I.W.W., the radical union of that day: the Industrial Workers of the World, founded by Debs, Haywood and others, from Pittsburgh who was in Columbus, sneaked me a note and a clipping from the paper in which a reporter asked my mother if she was not frightened because I was to be shot soon. Her reply was that the only thing she was afraid of was that they might scare me to give in. This gave me added courage. June 5th passed and no move was made to shoot me. Detective Wilson said that the Government had postponed my execution thinking I would give the names of those who had helped me distribute the leaflets. I pled guilty for my refusal to register. My partner and I each got 2 years in Atlanta. After this term was served I was to do 9 months in Delaware, Ohio County Jail nearby for refusal to register. The two guards who accompanied us to Atlanta chained us to our Pullman berths and gave us sandwiches prepared by their women folks, kidding us that they were marking up good meals on their expense accounts.

Friday, July 13, 1917 was the date of my arrival in Atlanta. My number was 7438. I was sent to the top floor of the old cell house, to a certain cell. This was occupied by someone else it seemed, for pictures of chorus girls were on the wall, and magazines and cigarette stubs on the floor. This cell was 8 feet long, 8 feet high, and 4½ feet wide and was made of steel. In half an hour a large, burly, but good natured man of about 40 came in.

"Hello kid, my name's Brockman, Peter Brockman from Buffalo, doin' a six bit for writing my name on little pieces of paper. Got one to go yet. How do you like our little home? What's your name?"

The next morning after breakfast, Blackie, the runner in the block, brought

me a note, saying that he knew the prisoner who had written the note, and had done time with him in Alleghaney prison years ago; I read:

"Blackie, who gave you this note is o.k. See me in the yard this afternoon if it does not rain; otherwise come to the Catholic Mass tomorrow and I will talk to you there. Your cell mate has paid \$5 worth of tobacco to the screw in your cell block to get the first young prisoner coming in to be his cell mate. You are the 'lucky' one. Watch him, for he is one of the worst perverts in the prison. There is no use making a fuss for you may 'accidentally' fall down four tiers. Get \$5 worth of tobacco from the store and give it to Blackie and he will give it to the guard and pull strings to have you transferred out of the cell. This will take weeks; meantime get along the best you can.

Yours for the revolution, A. B."

A note from Alexander Berkman, the great Anarchist! I read it over and over again and then destroyed it, per the first rule in prison: don't keep any unnecessary contraband. For the first time in my life when I had read a book I had sat down at once and written to the author. This was in Warren, Ohio, in 1916, when I had read Berkman's *Memoirs*. I did not get an answer, but now I was to meet him personally. Hundreds of workers had been killed by the Pinkertons, a notorious detective agency, at Homestead, Pa. Frick was manager of Carnegie Steel at Homestead. Berkman, then a young anarchist, had stabbed and shot Frick, and had done 14 years and ten months actual time in Alleghaney prison, 3½ years of this in solitary in a dark hole. He had been in prison before I was born and here he was again with a fighting spirit that jails could not kill. I had read his paper *The Blast*. I had but a faint idea of the word pervert, and I wondered how and why I could talk to Berkman in a Catholic chapel.

The sun shone brightly that afternoon on the packed ground of the prison yard. In the shadow along one prison wall Blackie had pointed out Berkman to me. I hastened to greet him. His kindly smile made me feel that I had a friend. He told me of a means of getting out letters, *sub rosa*, and explained how to talk in your throat without moving your lips. He said that on rainy Saturdays, when we could not meet, we could see each other at the Catholic chapel, as the chaplain was an ex-prizefighter who was sympathetic to workers and did not mind those who came to visit each other. He gave me four things to remember. "(1) Don't tell a lie. (2) Don't tell on another prisoner; it's the job of the screws to find out what is going on, not yours. (3) Draw your line as to what you will do and will not do and don't budge, for if you begin to weaken they will beat you. (4) Don't curse the guards. They will try to get you to strike them and they will have the excuse to beat you up; and if one can't, two can; and if two can't, ten can. They are no good or they wouldn't take such a job. Just smile. Obey them in unimportant details but never budge an inch on principle. Don't be seen talking to me very often, for the guards are watching and will make trouble. Write to me by way of Blackie and I will do the same."

John, in my cell, was boss of the paint gang and was from Columbus, Ohio. He had me transferred to his gang, and when he left in about six months I was made boss of the gang. I had a pass to go anywhere I wanted inside the prison. The editor of the prison paper, *Good Words*, asked me to give him something to print. I told him that was what I got in for, printing things in papers, and that my ideas were too radical for him. He insisted so I gave this quote which, believe it or not, appeared in a box underneath the editorial caption of the Department of Justice on April 1, 1918: "*A prison is the only house in a slave state where a free man can abide with honor.*" Thoreau. This had the o.k. of the

warden and was not sneaked in. The ignorant official thought it praised prisons. *The Conservator*, edited by the radical Horace Traubel, literary executor of Walt Whitman, was allowed in because they thought it was conservative. *The Irish World* which was much against the war came to the Catholic chaplain and he got copies to us radicals through John Dunn, a conscientious objector and Catholic, from Providence, R.I., who was boss of the plumbing gang.

The conscientious objectors were scattered in different gangs and cell houses over the prison. The warden told me that the orders from Washington were to put us all in one place, but he knew better and scattered us out, for if we were in one place we would plot. This reminded me of the farmer who caught the ground-mole and said, "Hanging's too good; burning's too good; I'll bury you alive." So we conscientious objectors were scattered around where we could do propaganda instead of being segregated where we would argue among ourselves. John Dunn and I were good friends. His number was 7979 and he got 20 years. After his release he studied for the priesthood and is now a priest in Portsmouth, Ohio, and a reader of the *Catholic Worker*. Paul was a young, Russian born Socialist who had quit a good job to come to prison. Morris was a quiet, very short Russian Jewish anarchist, whom I met often at the vegetarian diet table. Louis was just the opposite; an erratic boisterous Nietzschean who felt that everything that you had was his and what he had was his own. Morris was deported at the same time as Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, after the war. Louis after many years came to an appreciation of God, but finally committed suicide. Tony was a Russian who did not speak English, but whose quiet manner marked him as some kind of a religious sectarian. Walter was a college man who came from an old anarchist family, and who had despised his father's ideas until the crisis of war brought him to prison. His partner was John, a seaman who belonged to the I.W.W. maritime branch. He had been banished from Australia as a radical, and had refused to register for the draft. Theodore and Adolph were young Socialists from Rhode Island who were enthusiastic and helpful in any prison rebellion. Gilbert was an Italian I.W.W. who spoke little English. He worked in the stone gang. I never met him personally; we just smiled from a distance. Al and Fred were two older comrades who had unwittingly been sent to prison. They were not left wingers, but were in official position in the Socialist Party, where the extreme conservatism of their communities made them martyrs. They were not active in any plans that we younger rebels formed. Francisco was the only local comrade from Atlanta in prison against the war; he was a Puerto Rican and had the advantage of his family coming to see him often. The young Hollander from Vermont was not a radical in the accepted sense of the term; he simply refused to fight against relatives who were in the German army. Fritz was a young Russian Socialist who was also quiet, but who went along with us in any of our plans.

The Russelites came along later when I was in solitary and I never saw any of them. Their leader Judge Rutherford was with them and they came to be called Jehovah's Witnesses. Nicholas, the Mexican, was dying of tuberculosis. I only saw him from a distance for he lived by himself in a tent the year around. He was a Mexican revolutionist. Two Negro objectors from some Holiness sect in the Carolinas would not mix with us. I sent candy to them but they did not respond. We were not religious and I suppose we shocked them. My especial friend was William McCoy of the McCoy-Hatfield feudists in Kentucky. He claimed to have killed six Hatfields. He could not write and I wrote his letters home for him. He had started out with Phillips, a friend, to shoot up the government when he heard that a war was on. The warden told me he was afraid of him.

Before the transfer had come through for my work on the paint gang I had

worked with hundreds of others on the construction gang, wheeling "Georgia buggies," a slang for wheelbarrows, full of concrete mixture and pouring it into the foundation walls for a mill to make duck for mail sacks. There were about 80 of us in a line. The platforms had been built in such a way that we had to make a mighty run to get to the top. Complaining did no good. So John, the "wob" from Australia and I took turns slowing up the line; stopping to tie a shoe lace, to look intently at the wheel as if something was wrong with it, etc. About the time one of us would have the whole line waiting he would behave and the other one would take up the sabotage action. One afternoon of this and the boss took the hint and made the runways like they should have been in the first place.

Oklahoma Red had been in Atlanta doing a five year bit and was wanted for a murder rap that he felt he couldn't beat. In a few months now he would be released and turned over to the authorities for trial for murder. One day he saw an old fashioned flat coal car come in full of coal. It was made of wood and in the place where modern cars had a steel brace this wooden car had a nice little hiding place for such a skinny fellow as Oklahoma Red. He was working on the construction gang and said that the next time that car came he was going out with it in this cubby hole at the end where the brakes were. It is an unwritten law in some prisons that if a prisoner can make anything contraband and not get caught making it or taking it to his cell he can have it and no questions asked. Oklahoma Red had outgoing shoes, hat, suit, etc. made in the different prison departments, paying for them in tobacco, and hid this precious bundle of outgoing clothing in the rafters of the cement shed. Several weeks later that car came in. Red found out from the fellows at the power house that it would be switched out at 11:15 that morning. Some of us watched the toilet so no guard or stool pigeon could see Red changing his clothes; others of us kept the guard busy in conversation with head turned the other way. A preacher was watchman at the gate (in for violation of the Mann Act). This preacher trusty was reading his Bible and did not peer closely as the car went out with Red in the hiding place. About a quarter to twelve, guards were scurrying around making another count to see if they had made a mistake, or, if there was a man missing, who he might be. Finally the whistles blew and the guards and the trusties looked in every corner for Red. As far as I know they never got him.

A white man and a Negro had been killed by guards and I was incensed about it. My cell mates laughed and said I should worry about the living, for the dead were dead and no one could do anything about it. That if I wanted anything to do I should raise a fuss about the poor fish served on Fridays by the new mess guard, who was accused of making his rakeoff by charging for good food and giving us junk. Accordingly I got cardboard from John Dunn and painted signs which I put up in all of the toilets around the place telling the prisoners to work on Fridays, but to stay in their cells and refuse to go to dinner or to eat the rotten fish. The guards and stoolpigeons tore the signs down, but I made others and put them up. The first Friday 20 of us stayed in our cells. The guards came around and asked us if we were sick. We said we were sick of that damn fish. The next Friday 200 stayed in their cells; and the next Friday 600. That was too many people thinking alike, so on the next Thursday the warden came to the second mess and said that those who did not come to dinner the next day would be put in the hole. Some kid squeaked out in a shrill voice: "You can't do it warden; there's only 40 solitary cells and there's a thousand of us." The next day 900 out of the 1,100 who ate at this shift stayed in their cells.

The next Monday I was called to the office and was told that I had been seen plotting to blow up the prison with dynamite, and was promptly sent to the dark hole. This was on June 21, 1918. I was left in my underwear, and lying in

the small, three cornered, dark hole. I got a slice of cornbread and a cup of water each day. I kept a count of the days as I heard the men marching to work, and at the end of ten days I was put in the light hole. White bread, which I got then, tasted like cake. This cell was on the ground floor, back of the deputy's office. It was about 18 feet long, 15 feet high, and 6 feet wide. A small dirty window near the top to the east faced a tall building, which kept sunlight from coming in, except on very bright days. A bunk was attached to the wall to the right; a plain chair and a small table, with a spoon, plate, and cup on it. There was a toilet; and a wash basin attached to the wall. A small 20 watt light was screwed in the high ceiling and was turned off and on from the outside. There was a door of bars and an extra wooden door with a funnel shaped peephole through which guards could watch me at any time. I walked around examining my new home. The cell was exactly 8½ steps from corner to corner. The walls were dirty, and initials and home made calendars with days crossed off had been left by former inmates.

After the dark hole this cell was a relief. A Negro lifer brought in meals, three times a day, and ladled grits, beans, raisins, etc. out of a large bucket onto my plate, while Johnson, the fat guard, stood at the door. The Negro found out that I did not eat meat and he always grabbed my portion. Perhaps this helped him in his favorable attitude toward me, for he gave me notes and candy from Berkman and Dunn, and took my notes in return. The first morning I said "hello" to the guard, but he did not answer me; after a few days of silence on his part I ceased to bother him with a greeting.

When I had first come to prison I had met the Protestant chaplain. My red-headed cousin Georgia, who was his daughter-in-law, had told him about me. He wanted to know what church I belonged to, and when I told him I was an atheist he would have nothing to do with me, even when I was in solitary. Catholics were taken care of by the priest and the Protestant had all the rest, so I sent a note to him for a Bible to read in solitary, for I was not allowed anything else, or to send or receive mail. After a few weeks a Bible with good print and maps and references in the back was sent to me. After a few days this was taken away and one with very small print and no maps was given to me in its place. I asked Johnson, the guard, why I was given a Bible with small print, as this was more difficult to read with the small light 15 feet above me, and he simply grunted. The colored trusty later spoke, down in his throat without moving his lips, in the manner we all learned, and told me that anything was done which would make it more difficult for those in solitary. I do not think that the chaplain had anything to do with this; probably the deputy or the guard took this means of teasing one of their caged animals. You hear the groans of fellow prisoners and when you do not know how many months you may remain in solitary you have a weight over you that precludes any joyfulness of spirit.

Here is the way my day went in solitary:

I hear the six o'clock gong ring for the early mess. I know at 7:20 I will get my mush. I am not sleepy, but I stretch out and relax. In a minute I wash and pull on my few articles of clothing. I pick up my chair and swing it thirty times—up-right-left-down; up-right-left-down. Then I walk 100 steps back and forth in my cell—arms-up-arms-out-arms-clenched-arms-down, as I walk back and forth. This I repeat several times. It is now 7 o'clock. I make my bed and then wash my face and hands again. Then I hear the clanging of the door and I know that breakfast is on the way. I hear the doors open and shut and the jangling of the keys and the rattling of utensils. I sit and watch the door like a cat watching a mouse. The shadows of the guard and the Negro trusty lengthen under my door; the key turns in the lock; the wooden door opens and Johnson,

the fat guard, stands back after he has opened the iron barred door. The Negro steps in and ladles out my oatmeal, hands me a couple slices of bread, and pours out a large cup of coffee. Today he has no note for me; tomorrow he may have one. He smiles to me as he turns his back to Johnson and I smile in return. I look up at Johnson but he scowls; no fraternizing it seems. The trusty leaves and the doors are locked. I am not very hungry, and I prolong the breakfast as much as possible to take up my time. At last the food is gone. I leisurely wash the dishes and dry them. Perhaps I spin my plate a dozen times, and see how long I can count before it falls to the floor off the table. I lean back in my chair and think of Selma, my girl in Milwaukee, and of my folks at home. Then I realize that I am within these four walls: a jail in a jail. I walk back and forth for 5 or 10 minutes and then throw myself on my bunk; take off my shoes and hunch up on my bunk. In a few minutes I am restless and turn on my side. I hear the men marching to work and stand near the outer wall hoping to hear a word or two but I only hear mumbled voices and the shouts of the guards. I hear the whistle of the train in the distance. I kneel by the door and strain my eyes seeking to discern someone in the tailor shop on the second floor next door, but everything is a blur. I walk around the walls reading the poetry I have written on the wall and all the inscriptions others have engraved.

I try to figure out what the possible history of this or that initial may mean, but soon give it up as waste time. I hear the voice of the deputy in the hall greeting the guard in charge. It is now 9 a.m. and according to my schedule, time to read the Bible. I lie on my bunk for half an hour reading the chapter for that morning. Then I sit on the toilet and take my pencil which I found the first day hidden in a small crack in the plaster, back of the toilet. A pencil is precious, you either have one or you don't. The toilet is near the door and the only place in the cell where a full view of the occupant cannot be gained through the peephole. I do not want to be caught with my precious pencil. I place the toilet paper on which I have written my notes in the Bible and sit on my chair and study what I have written. Then I return to the toilet seat and write some conclusions. Then I lie on my bunk and with my eyes closed think over what I have read.

I try to sleep for half an hour but become restless and walk back and forth in my cell for a mile and a half and take my exercises. I spin my plate again. I look up to the dirty window many times but can see nothing. For fifteen minutes I look steadily, after I have noticed a bird flying near the window, hoping that it may return. But why should a bird stop by my dusty window? It is now 11:15 and the guards are outside watching the men enter for the first mess. I feel that this is the opportune time to write a few words, which I have not finished, on the wall. I sharpen my spoon on the floor and stealthily carve two letters when I hear a step in the hall and cease my carving. I walk aimlessly around my cell for fifteen minutes and then sit and wait for the door to open for my dinner. Beans, oleo, bread and coffee. I eat the beans carefully, for often I break my teeth from biting against the stones which are included in the beans. I again wash my dishes leisurely, rest on my bunk for half an hour, then become restless again and walk to and fro for a mile or two. I read for an hour as the afternoon passes slowly. Then make notes and think about the subject matter for a time. I hear the train at 2 p.m. I am tired of thinking and tired of exercising. I again walk aimlessly about my cell, examining the walls. Perhaps I take some toilet paper, wet it, and wash a section of the wall to see if there is a message written underneath the grime; perhaps I figure out a calendar six months ahead to discover on what day of the week Selma's birthday occurs.

I think again of those on the outside and of the radical movement. An hour passes by in this manner and I try to sleep for half an hour but turn from one

side to the other. I hear Popoff rattle his chains and groan in the next cell. He is a Bulgarian, a counterfeiter. He invented some kind of a gun and offered the plans to the War Department but they never answered him. He does not speak English and did not explain his sickness to the doctor so it could be understood at once, and was put into solitary for faking. He had sent a poem to the prison paper and this was sent back. He sassed the guards and was beaten up. What with all this he thought if he knocked the deputy warden down someone would then come from Washington and then he could tell them about his invention. He struck harder than he thought and the deputy died. He got life imprisonment, but it was not supposed to be hanging by his wrists from the bars. He was not a pacifist or a radical, and when he called the guards names they strung him up.

I take strenuous exercises punching an imaginary punching bag; I try walking on my hands; I sing a song or recite some poetry for another hour. Finally a break in my day comes with the first mess marching by at 4:30. Supper comes and is soon over. I walk aimlessly around my cell. The guards change for the night shift. Now the other fellows in jail, outside of solitary, are getting their evening papers and mail; visiting with each other; playing games on the sly and having a good time. It is dark and the night guard, Dean, turns on the light. Again I read the Bible for an hour and take notes on what I have read. I rest on my bunk; sing some songs; perhaps curse a little if I feel like it; walk back and forth. Finally it is 8:30 p.m. and my light is turned out. I undress and go to bed. The lonesome whistle of the train howls in the distance. I lie on my back; then on one side; then on the other. Sometimes I cry; sometimes I curse; sometimes I pray to whatever kind of God listens to those in solitary. I think it must be night when the door opens and Dean flashes the light on to see if I am in my cell and shouts to the other guard, "o.k. all in at 10 p.m." I toss about, am nearly asleep when the bedbugs commence. I finally pass a night of fitful sleeping and dreaming. Again it is 6 a.m. and I cross off another day on my calendar.

I had read the Bible once when I belonged to the Baptist church, and now that was all I had to read. I commenced with Genesis and read at least twenty chapters a day. I also walked what I figured was four and a half miles a day. Berkman sent me a copy of Edwin Markham's "The Man with the Hoe," and I learned it by heart and recited it aloud several times a day. For the first few weeks the time did not go so slowly, as I was busy planning a routine. I found that on one day, perhaps a Thursday or Friday, I would suddenly be called by the guard to go across the hall and get a bath. Meanwhile my cell would be searched for contraband. For three minutes at some other odd time in the week I would be taken across the hall to be shaved. It was summer time and I asked to have my hair shaved off to make my head cooler. I could not see myself and whatever the trusty or Johnson thought of my appearance did not make any difference to me. Once when I was going to get a shave I saw Popoff entering his cell with his head bandaged. This must have been the result of the blows which I had heard faintly the day before. He was mistreated for a year or more until he went insane. Selma and I visited him in 1921 at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D.C. He did not recognize me until I said "Johnson, the guard." I sent notes to my sister Lola for the newspapers about the treatment of Popoff. I heard the chains fall which bound him to the bars and then the thump of his body to the floor. I was told that papers in Atlanta printed something about it but no official investigation was ever made. My mood was to curse the damned capitalist system, the guards and everyone connected with the government and prisons. Once in a while I would crouch by the door of my cell, on bright sunny mornings, and see the top of Berkman's bald head as he worked at his regular

table by the west window of the tailor shop on the second floor of the building next to my solitary. I thought that if he did 3½ years in solitary, in Alleghaney prison, in a cell with slimy walls, I could do the balance of my time in this comparatively clean dry cell.

It was now nearly three months that I had been in solitary. Fred Zerst, the warden, came in and asked me to sign a paper. It was registration for the second war draft. I told him that I had not changed my mind about the war. He said I wouldn't get anything around here acting that way. I told him that I wasn't asking for anything around here: I was just doing time. He said that I would get another year back in the hole for this second refusal to register. I told him that was o.k. It was September 21, 1918. The warden came in again and said this was all the longer they kept prisoners in solitary and that he would let me out in the regular prison the next day; if I would not plot to blow up any more prisons.

"You know I didn't do that," I said.

"I know you didn't," he replied, "but what do you suppose I am warden for? If I had told the prisoners that you were put in solitary for leading in that food sit-down, all of them would be your friends. When you are accused of plotting to blow up the prison they are all afraid to know you. Why didn't you come and tell me about the food?"

"Why didn't you come in the kitchen and find out? No one but stoolies go to your office," I answered. He left hurriedly.

In about five minutes he returned, saying, "I forgot to ask you something, Hennacy. I'll leave you out tomorrow just the same."

"What's on your mind?" I asked.

"Have you been sneaking any letters out of this prison?" he asked in an angry tone.

"Sure," I replied, smiling.

"Who is doing it for you?" he demanded.

"A friend of mine," I answered.

"What is his name?" was the query.

"That is for you and your guards and stool pigeons to find out."

He stormed around my cell, somewhat taken back by the fact that I had not lied or given in.

"You'll stay in here all your good time and get another year, you stubborn fool," he said as he left.

I picked up the Bible and threw it in a corner, pacing back and forth, thinking and mumbling to myself: the liars, the double-crossers, tempting me with freedom and then telling me the only way to obtain it was by being a rat. This was bad enough, but to talk the Golden Rule and religion, as they did whenever outsiders came around. Love your enemies, turn the other cheek; fine stuff, after they frame you, and admit it. The world needs a Samson to pull down their whole structure of lies. Debs is arrested near my home town in Ohio for defending my comrades Ruthenberg, Wagenknecht and Baker who were doing time in Canton jail and he will come to Atlanta soon. He did time when he was a young man. He's not so bitter; but then, he's older, and won't allow the capitalist class to tramp on him either.

That night I was nervous and tore the buttons from my clothing in order to have something to do to sew them on again. I paced my eight and a half steps back and forth for hours and finally flung myself on the bunk. It must have

been the middle of the night when I awoke. I had not had a note from anyone for a month. Were my friends forgetting me? I felt weak, lonesome and alone in the world. Here I had been singing defiance at the whole capitalist world but a few hours before, and had boasted to the warden how I would bravely do my time; now I wondered if anyone really cared. Perhaps by this time Selma might be married to someone else with a real future ahead of him instead of being lost in a jail. The last letter I had received from her was rather formal. Would she understand why I did not write; and could I be sure that some of the letters I had sent her had been received, with the officials opening the mail I had sent to my sister Lola? How could one end it all? The sharp spoon with which I had carved poems and my calendar on the wall could cut my wrist and I would bleed to death before a guard arrived. But then that would be such a messy death. Then the warden would be sorry for the lies he had told me and the tricks he had tried to play. The last thing I could remember before falling asleep was the long wailing whistle of the freight train as it echoed in the woods nearby.

The next day the deputy came to my cell and said that I was looking very pale, that number 7440, a man just two numbers from me who had come in the same day with me, had died of the flu, and that thirty others were buried that week. If I did not get out and breathe the fresh air it was likely that I would die sooner than the others, he said. Why should I not tell what I knew and get out? In reply I asked the deputy to talk about the weather, as I was not interested in achieving the reputation of a rat. He asked me if it was a prisoner or a guard who had sent out my letters. I walked up to him closely and in a confidential tone said, "It was a prisoner or a guard." I did not know the nature of the flu but thought that this might be a good way to die if I could only get it. Fate seemed to seal me up in a place where I couldn't get any germs. Late that afternoon I was called across the hall to take a bath. The guard accidentally left my wooden door open when he was called to answer a telephone. I could not see anywhere except across the hall to the solid door of another cell, but I could hear Popoff in the next cell groaning and calling for water. He was still hanging from his hands for the eight hours a day as he had been for months. As the guard came down the hall he opened Popoff's door, dipping his tin cup in the toilet and threw the dirty water in Popoff's face. Then he came and slammed my door shut and locked it. How soon would I be strung to the bars? How long could a fellow stand such treatment? As soon as it was dark I sharpened my spoon again and tried it gently on my wrist. The skin seemed to be quite tough, but then I could press harder. If I cut my wrist at midnight I could be dead by morning. I thought I ought to write a note to Selma and my mother and I couldn't see to do it until morning. Well, I had waited that long, I could wait a day longer. That night my dreams were a mixture of Victor Hugo's stories of men hiding in the sewers of Paris; I.W.W. songs; blood flowing from the pigs that had been butchered on the farm when I was a boy; and the groans of Popoff.

The sun shone brightly in my cell the next morning for the first time in weeks. I crouched again by the door and saw Berkman's bald head. Tears came into my eyes and I felt ashamed of myself for my cowardly idea of suicide just because I had a few reverses. Here was Berkman who had passed through much more than I would ever have to endure if I stayed two more years in solitary. How was the world to know more about the continued torture of Popoff and others if I gave up? The last two verses of the I.W.W. prison song now had a real meaning to me as I sang them again. I was through with despair. I wanted

to live to make the world better. Just because most prisoners, and for all that, most people on the outside, did not understand and know what solitary meant was all the more reason why I should be strong. I sang cheerfully:

“By all the graves of Labor's dead,
By Labor's deathless flag of red,
We make a solemn vow to you,
We'll keep the faith, we will be true.
For freedom laughs at prison bars,
Her voice reechoes from the stars;
Proclaiming with the tempest's breath
A Cause beyond the reach of death.”

* * *

Two months later I heard the whistles blow and shouts resound throughout the prison. The war was over. The Armistice had been signed. It was not until then that I was informed in a note from Berkman that November 11 was also an anarchist anniversary: the date of the hanging of the Chicago anarchists of the Haymarket in 1887. I had ceased by this time my nervous running back and forth like a squirrel in my cell and was now taking steady walks in my cell each day, and also hours of physical exercise. I was going to build myself up and not get sick and die. I would show my persecutors that I would be a credit to my ideals. I had painted the ceiling of the Catholic chapel in flat work before I got in solitary, and had left no brush marks. The priest appreciated my good work. He knew I was an Irishman who was not a Catholic, but he never tried to convert me. Now, as I studied the Bible, I was not thinking of any church but just wanted to see what might be worthwhile in it. I had now read it through four times and had read the New Testament many times and the Sermon on the Mount scores of times. I had made up games with pages and chapters and names of characters in the Bible to pass away the time. I had memorized certain chapters and that I liked. As I read of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Micah and other of the prophets and of Jesus, I could see that they had opposed tyranny. I had also spent many days reviewing all of the historical knowledge that I could remember and trying to think through a philosophy of life. I had passed through the idea of killing myself. This was an escape, not any solution to life. The remainder of my two years in solitary must result in a clear-cut plan whereby I could go forth and be a force in the world. I could not take any halfway measures. If assassination, violence and revolution was the better way, then military tactics must be studied and a group of fearless rebels organized. I remembered again what Slim, the sort of Robin Hood Wobbler who was in on some larceny charge, had told me once to the effect that one could not be a good rebel unless he became angry and vengeful. Then I heard Popoff curse the guards and I heard them beat him. I remembered the Negro who had sworn at the guard in the tailor shop and was killed. I had read of riots in prison over food and I remembered the peaceful victory which we had in our strike against the spoiled fish. I also remembered what Berkman had said about being firm, but quiet. He had tried violence but did not believe in it as a wholesale method. I read of the wars and hatred in the Old Testament. I also read of the courage of Daniel and the Hebrew children who would not worship the golden image: of Peter who chose to obey God rather than the properly constituted authorities who placed him in jail; and of the victory of these men by courage and peaceful methods. I read of Jesus, who was confronted with a whole world empire of tyranny and chose not to overturn the tyrant and make Himself King, but to change the

hatred in the hearts of men to love and understanding—to overcome evil with goodwill.

I had called loudly for the sword and mentally listed those whom I desired to kill when I was free. Was this really the universal method which should be used? I would read the Sermon on the Mount again. When a child I had been frightened by hell fire into proclaiming a change of life. Now I spent months making a decision; there was no sudden change. I had all the time in the world and no one could talk to me or influence me. I was deciding this idea for myself. Gradually I came to gain a glimpse of what Jesus meant when He said, "The Kingdom of God is within you." In my heart now after six months I could love everybody in the world but the warden, but if I did not love him then the Sermon on the Mount meant nothing at all. I really saw this and felt it in my heart but I was too stubborn to admit it in my mind. One day I was walking back and forth in my cell when, in turning, my head hit the wall. Then the thought came to me: "Here I am locked up in a cell. The warden was never locked up in any cell and he never had a chance to know what Jesus meant. Neither did I until yesterday. So I must not blame him. I must love him." Now the whole thing was clear. This Kingdom of God must be in everyone: in the deputy, the warden, in the rat and the pervert—and now I came to know it—in myself. I read and reread the Sermon on the Mount: the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters of Matthew thus became a living thing to me. I tried to take every sentence and apply it to my present problems. The warden had said that he did not understand political prisoners. He and the deputy, in plain words, did not know any better; they had put on the false face of sternness and tyranny because this was the only method which they knew. It was my job to teach them another method: that of goodwill overcoming their evil intentions, or rather habits. The opposite of the Sermon on the Mount was what the whole world had been practicing, in prison and out of prison; and hate piled on hate had brought hate and revenge. It was plain that this system did not work. I would never have a better opportunity than this to try out the Sermon on the Mount right now in my cell. Here was deceit, hatred, lust, murder, and every kind of evil in this prison. I reread slowly and pondered each verse: "ye have heard that it hath been said an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth . . . whoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek turn to him the other also . . . take therefore no thought for the morrow . . . therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

* * *

I fancied what my radical friends in and out of prison would say when I spoke of the above teachings of Jesus. I knew that I would have to bear their displeasure, just as I had born the hysteria of the patriots and the silence of my friends when I was sent to prison. This did not mean that I was going to "squeal" and give in to the officials, but in my heart I would try to see the good in them and not hate them. Jesus did not give in to His persecutors. He used strong words against the evil doers of His time, but He had mercy for the sinner. I now was not alone fighting the world for I had Him as my helper. I saw that if I held this philosophy for myself I could not engage in violence for a revolution—a good war, as some might call it—but would have to renounce violence even in my thought. Would I be ready to go the whole way? At that time I had not heard of Tolstoy and his application of Christ's teachings to society. Berkman had just mentioned his name along with other anarchists and he might have told me more if I had had a lengthy conversation with him; but I never saw him again. I could see the warden's honesty in admitting that he had "framed" me. I could

even see that the deputy had only been used to violence in his years of supervising the chain gang. I did not know much about the outside world and it was up to me now day by day to solve this problem of repressed hatred, and when I was finally released to see in what manner I could apply my new ideals to conditions as I found them. The most difficult animosity for me to overcome was a dislike of the hypocrites and church people who had so long withheld the real teachings of Jesus. I could see no connection between Jesus and the church.

I continued my study of the Bible. Popoff was still being manhandled. My teeth ached much of the time in solitary and I asked the deputy to allow the prison dentist to fix my teeth. The prison doctor gave one pint of dreadful tasting salts for whatever ailed a prisoner. Very few men would fake a sick call with this dose in view. However, the dentist could not give me a pint of physic for my toothache, and neither could he bring his dental chair to solitary. The deputy replied that I knew how I could get my teeth fixed: that was to tell what I knew; otherwise I could ache for all he cared. So loving my enemies was not altogether a theoretical matter.

It was now in February of 1919 and I had been in solitary for 7½ months. Mr. Duehay, Superintendent of Federal Prisons from Washington, and his secretary, and Warden Zerbst came to my cell. Duehay wanted to know why I was being held so long here. I told him I was telling the world of evil conditions in the prison and would not divulge the source of my outlet for contraband mail. He felt that I was an intelligent and educated man who was foolish to endanger my health in solitary by trying to better the conditions for a lot of bums in prison who would sell me for a dime. I told him I was learning to take it. I had read a poem in **The Appeal to Reason** years before and had remembered it and written it on the wall. He and the warden read it and laughed.

SURPLUS VALUE

The Merchant calls it Profit and winks the other eye;
The Banker calls it Interest and heaves a cheerful sigh;
The Landlord calls it Rent as he tucks it in his bag;
But the honest old Burglar he simply calls it Swag.

Duehay changed his tactics and began to swing his arms and berate me as a fool and a coward. The warden had called me names often but he disliked to hear an outsider do so.

"If he's a fool or a coward he must be a different kind, for no one ever stood more than three months in the hole without giving in. He must be a God's fool or a God's coward."

Years later I was to write an account of my prison life and call it "God's coward." Portions of it were printed in the November and December **Catholic Worker** in 1941. It must have seemed especial advice for those about to oppose World War II.

I did not lose my temper or fight back at the warden and Mr. Duehay; just smiled and held my ground. Suddenly Duehay turned to the warden saying, "Let's make out parole papers for this stubborn fellow. Half of the time I can't trust my own men. This Hennacy is honest and can't be bribed. I will give him a job in the secret service."

The warden nodded and smiled. I shook my head saying I wanted no job hunting down radicals and criminals for I was on their side and not that of the oppressor. The secretary of Duehay was taking all this down in shorthand. Finally they left. The next morning a runner came down from the office to measure me for an outgoing suit, saying: "The warden told us, that damn Hennacy wouldn't tell anything in 7½ months; he won't tell anything in 7½ years."

Get him the hell out of here; give him back his good time and let him go to his other jail. He is too much of a nuisance.'"

The next month went very quickly. It was now March 19, 1919, and I was to be released the next day. That night the deputy came in and said:

"Going out tomorrow, Hennacy?"

"That's what they say; sure a fine feeling," I replied.

"We give; we take. You tell who is getting out your contraband mail or you'll stay here another 5½ months and lose your good time and then another year for refusing to register. You don't think we will allow anyone to get by in backing us, do you?"

Tears came to my eyes as I chokingly replied, "I can do it. Go away and don't bother me any more." After he left I wept, but I was at the stage where I felt strong enough to take it.

The next morning after breakfast I wrote on the wall that I was beginning to do the "good time" that I had lost, when the door opened suddenly and old Johnson smiled for once, saying, "Going out of this jail, Hennacy." I did not believe him; and even while the barber was shaving me I thought it was some trick to bedevil me. I was given my outgoing suit and an overcoat. It is customary for the warden to shake hands with those who leave and to admonish them to live a good life out in the world. A guard gave me my \$10 outgoing money and a bundle of letters that had come to me while I was in solitary, but the warden never appeared.

When I walked out of prison a plain clothes man met me saying that I was being arrested for refusing to register for the draft in August 1918 and would be taken to the county tower to await trial. We took a street car there, at the end of South Pryor street and walked a few blocks before we got to the tower. A second hand clothing merchant noticed my prison clothes and asked if I wanted to sell my overcoat. I was not handcuffed but I guess my white face from my months of solitary was sign enough to anyone as to my being an ex-convict.

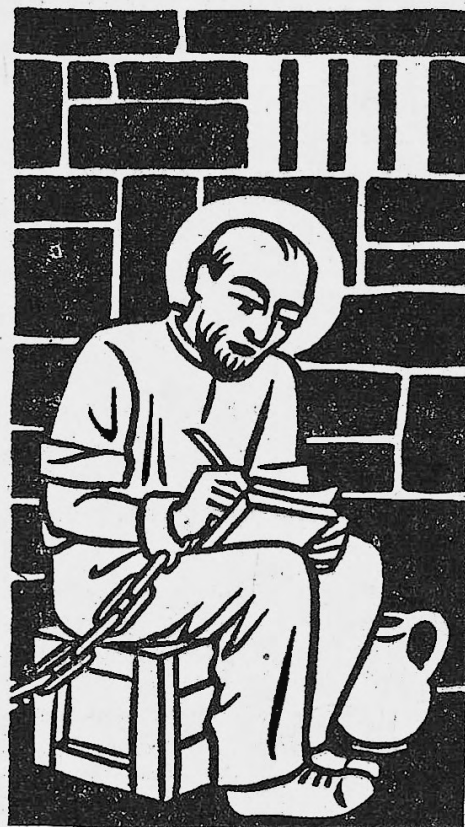
I was ushered into a cell where Joe Webb, a mountain boy, also slept. He had been found guilty of murder, and was to be executed. Through influential friends I was able to get him a new trial, and he got life on the chain gang instead. I asked for radical books to read and among other books Tolstoy's **Kingdom of God Is Within You** was brought.

Debs had entered Moundsville, West Virginia prison to start his twenty years. He could not be allowed to receive letters from another convict so I wrote to his brother Theodore in Terre Haute expressing my admiration for one who in his old age was still a rebel. Sam Castleton, who was to be Debs lawyer in Atlanta, was also my lawyer. My case came up for trial after seven weeks. Castleton told me that if I was not too radical he might get me off with six months. I was asked if I had really refused to register for the first and second drafts and if I had not changed my mind and would I be ready to register for the third draft if and when it came along. I replied that I had entered prison an atheist and not a pacifist. I would fight in a revolution but not in a capitalist war. I had got locked up with the Bible in solitary and read it and became a Christian and a pacifist. If I had been locked up with the phone book, the cook book, or the Book of Mormon I might have come out an expert on these, but my study of the Bible had made me see that Christ was the greatest Revolutionist. And a few weeks ago I had read Tolstoy and had become an anarchist.

"What's an anarchist?" asked the judge. My lawyer shook his head and put his finger to his lips as a warning for me not to be too radical.

"An anarchist is one who doesn't have to have a cop to make him behave. It

is the individual, the family, or the small cooperative group as a unit rather than the State." And, I continued for about ten minutes to quote Tolstoy to the effect that one had to obey God rather than man. The District Attorney, Hooper Alexander, an old fashioned looking southerner, came up to the judge and whispered, and the judge said, "case dismissed." I looked around to see whose case it was and it was mine. My lawyer seemed bewildered and so was I. I had approached the court this time with love for my enemy and had never thought I would get my freedom, for he allowed me to go 10 days on my own before I reported to the court in Columbus, Ohio to do my 9 months in Delaware County jail for my first refusal to register.



SAINT PAUL

EASY ESSAYS

By Peter Maurin

MONEY CHANGERS IN THE TEMPLE

Christ drove the money changers
out of the Temple.

But today nobody dares
to drive the money-lenders
out of the Temple.

And nobody dares
to drive the money-lenders
out of the Temple
because the money-lenders
have taken a mortgage
on the Temple.

When church builders build churches
with money borrowed from money-lenders
they increase the prestige
of the money-lenders.

But increasing the prestige
of the money-lenders
does not increase the prestige
of the Church.

Which makes Archbishop McNicholas say:

"We have been guilty
of encouraging tyranny
in the financial world
until it has become
a veritable octopus
strangling the life
of our people."

SELF-GOVERNMENT

People go to Washington
asking the Federal Government
to solve their economic problems,
while the Federal Government
was never intended
to solve men's economic problems.

Thomas Jefferson says that
the less government there is,
the better it is.

If the less government there is,
the better it is,
then the best kind of government
is self-government.

If the best kind of government
is self-government,
then the best kind of organization
is self-organization.

When the organizers try
to organize the unorganized,
then the organizers
don't organize themselves.

And when the organizers
don't organize themselves,
nobody organizes himself.
And when nobody organizes himself
nothing is organized.

LOOKING FOR A BOSS

A Catholic working-man
once said to me:
"There is only one thing
between me and the Reds
and that is a good job."
Everybody is looking for a boss,
and nobody wants
to be his own boss.
And because everybody
looks for a boss
the Reds want the State
to be the boss of everybody.
Because everybody
consents to play
somebody else's game
for the sake of a pay-envelope
the Reds try to find the way
to assure a pay-envelope
to everybody
so as to force everybody
to act like everybody.
But nothing will be changed
when the Reds
will force everybody
to act like everybody,
since nobody is nobody
when everybody
tries to keep up with everybody.



TAX REFUSAL AND LIFE ON THE LAND

By Ammon Hennacy

Before World War II income taxes were not paid by those in the lower brackets so it was not a problem to think about. I was still too nervous from jail to work steadily, so to get the jail out of my system my wife and I started from New York City on June 21, 1921 (the anniversary of my entrance into solitary in Atlanta in 1918) with packs on our backs and \$100 in our pockets. We never asked for rides but took them if offered and went 22,000 miles in every state in the union distributing pacifist propoganda, with stickers "Stop the Next War Now." We stopped to work most of the time, but on my birthday, July 24, 1925, we bought 10 acres with \$100 down near Waukesha, Wisconsin, built one room in the woods, and another next year. I helped Carmen get born there June 17, 1927, and Sharon on Oct. 23, 1929. (The very day the depression started) I had led in a strike in a dairy where I worked and lost my job. Friends suggested that I become a social worker in Milwaukee. I thought this work was too bourgeois, but for me it was either take relief or hand it out. I told my examiners for the job that I was an anarchist and would break rules when I thought it best to do so. They needed male social workers badly it seemed and I got a job with the county of Milwaukee. I organized a union and was active in pacifist circles.

In 1936 a client locked me up in a room and came after me with a butcher knife because I would not give him something that he didn't have coming. After a time I dared him to knife me (I didn't double dare him) and I shook hands with him. He put the knife away and we became friends. My boss was a Catholic and head of the American Legion in Wisconsin. He wanted me to take this man to court. I refused for he had been in jail twice for knifing social workers and had done time for it, and had not learned anything. My boss thought I should get acquainted "with those crazy Catholics in New York." I asked Father Kennedy in the same block, editor of the **Herald-Citizen** about the **Catholic Worker** and he gave me a copy. Then I became acquainted with Nina Polcyn and Dave Host and worked with the CW House formed there the next year, where my daughters sang Christmas carols, and I took Muriel Lester, the English pacifist to bless our CW house. I met Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin that same year as they spoke in Milwaukee. I liked their pacifism and radicalism but not their church. In fact I sold CW's every Sunday in front of churches but would not go inside except to get warm.

When World War II came the American Legion wanted to have me fired from my job because I sold CW's on the street. I had a private hearing for an hour with a court stenographer taking notes before the Corporation Counsel. I told him that I would not quit my job nor would I cease selling CW's on the street, and that I would insist upon a public hearing. They dropped the charges that week. However, when the time came for me to register for the draft on April 27, 1942 I openly refused to do so and resigned my job. I thought I would get 5 years but the government had secretly made a rule that those over 45 would not be prosecuted. I was 48, and was only in jail a few hours. My wife and daughters were in the west at that time so I went to Denver and got a job at a dairy. Selling CW's on the street I was imprisoned incommunicado for 4 days for not carrying a draft card, and I was rearrested a week later for selling CW's at the same place.

On Jan. 1, 1943 the withholding tax went into effect. About the only place where a person could work without paying taxes for war was on a farm. For

here the tax was to be paid at the end of the year. The brackets had been lowered so that even a dishwasher in a restaurant had to pay about a dollar a day for war. The New York Times in a recent editorial declared that 83% of the income tax went for past, present or future wars.

I found work on a farm near Albuquerque with a farmer whose wife was a Quaker and at the end of the year when I refused to pay my tax I was fired but got a job with another farmer. I also sold CW's on the streets in Albuquerque for 4½ years and the police never bothered me.

I moved to Phoenix in July of 1948. Here the tax man was a Quaker and I was at once arrested for picketing the tax office in 1949. Again in 1950 on August 6th I picketed the tax office and fasted for 5 days because it was 5 years since we had dropped the bomb at Hiroshima. I turned in a report to the tax office, not as my duty or their right, but as a courtesy to my enemy, the State, saying: "This is my name, this is where I live, this is what I made. Try and get it." I had sent all of my money to my daughters who were taking music at Northwestern University.

Finally in 1953 I came to New York City and the Catholic Worker as my daughters had graduated, and since then I have not earned enough by speaking to owe any tax. The tax men have been here several times to investigate my income and have called me into the tax office when I have been picketing them. I can get 5 years for each of the 12 times that I have refused to pay my income tax. Young toughs have threatened me at times as I have picketed in New York City. Now on August 6, 1959 I will fast 14 days until the 20th as it is 14 years since Hiroshima. I do this as a penance for the sin of our country in continuing atomic testing and warfare. The following is a chapter from my life as a laborer near Phoenix, Arizona.

LIFE ON THE LAND

My entrance into Phoenix, Arizona, with one cent in my pocket in July of 1947 is typical of the method by which one who "bootlegs" work must act. I walked around that morning asking for work at each farm. Around noon a Japanese farmer gave me as much watermelon as I could eat. Later on I ate some peaches at another farm, and ended up by eating cantaloupes that I picked up crossing a field. Just about dark I met a young Molokon who had read my Tolstoy booklet, "Thou Shalt Not Kill" while in a conscientious objector camp. These Molokons are a dissident sect from Russia, somewhat like the Doukhobors, who came to this country at the turn of the century, bought land and lived communally. They were pacifists and went to prison for refusing to register. Now most of them were prosperous and owned land individually, but they were still pacifists.

I put my sleeping bag under the trees in his yard and the next day worked for his uncle in the harvesting of beet seed. It was very hot and I drank plenty of water and had only melon for breakfast. After three days I worked on a farm in the middle of the desert cleaning ditches for ten hours a day at 60c an hour for 18 days straight. Then I walked for miles seeking another job which I finally got in a dairy. The farmer had wanted to go on a vacation so he taught me the work and when he came back from his vacation fired me. Then I went to the cabin of an old time anarchist in Phoenix and slept on his floor and got up early before daylight in order to get down to the slave market at Second and Jefferson, jumping on the first truck which was there to pick up workers. I did not know if I was going east, west, north or south. I was packed in this closed truck with about thirty others of all nationalities. I worked in a field for a big produce company trimming beet plants which were to be planted. At quitting time I asked the foreman if I could sleep in one of the company shacks and he

said they were only for "Nationals" by which is meant imported Mexican laborers. Native workers had to find their own place to live. He said that maybe some Molokon had a shack vacant. I walked down the road and asked the first person I met if he knew a Molokon who had a vacant shack. He laughed and said he was a Molokon and had a shack I could live in up the road in the middle of a cabbage field. My presence there might keep people from coming in and taking the cabbage wholesale. No one minded the "gleaning" of a few cabbage heads or any other field product for much went to waste anyway.

I was soon sleeping on an old spring mattress. I got an old stove from a neighbor and fixed the place up. I worked day by day for the produce company at 60c an hour at different kinds of stoop labor in the fields. One Saturday an old man across the road asked me to cut wood for 75c an hour. This was Lin Orme, the Old Pioneer, who was my friend until he died in 1953. I moved into a shack on his property not long after. All the roads that run north and south, west of Phoenix have irrigation ditches from the main canal of mountain and pumped well water and each road is called a "Lateral." I lived on Lateral 20.

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"It's good to have you around; you give one confidence in life, you live off the land like an Indian," said the Old Pioneer when he saw me come home from work for a neighbor and gather my cap full of peas from our garden, and a bowl of mulberries for breakfast from the huge tree by the Lateral. I replied that I had never bought any canned goods, although at times my fare might seem monotonous to the glutton who thought only of variety and out of season vegetables. After peas came fine red tomatoes. Then there is corn, regular sweet corn, Hopi Indian corn, and popcorn, okra, a little of which goes a long way, and always onions and carrots. The chard wilts in this hot weather after being on hand since last November. We surrounded some of the tomato plants with stakes and a small mesh wire, and these plants did better than before. Bell and chili peppers are now on hand until frost, and egg plant will be my staple in about a month. These are difficult to start but grow like weeds when they have passed a certain stage. We have five rows of watermelons. Banana and hubbard squash established ownership at one end of the garden. The oven in my stove is no good, so often when I come home from work the Old Pioneer has baked a squash for me. He has electric stove but claims that food tastes better with a fragrant wood fire of desert mesquite.

Today, May 15, I received a notice that I owe \$2.15 interest and penalty on my \$192 tax bill for 1951 and unless paid within ten days my property and wages will be attached. This is an old runaround and I am not worrying. Today I ate the first Irish potatoes from our garden, which is more important in the life of man than paying taxes. The persimmon tree which the Old Pioneer's daughter-in-law gave me last winter now bears premature fruit. Watermelon, eggplant, tomatoes, squash, peppers and onions are doing fine.

* * *

While cutting lettuce in the fields one morning the boss told us to get in the closed truck and we would all go to the sheds. I had never been there. I found there was broccoli to pack. We finished all there was in a few hours. Meanwhile, I had heard the conversation of the workers and had picked up a bulletin of the union and found that there was a strike of the shed workers. The fields are not organized but the sheds are. I then looked outside and saw the pickets. The foreman told us he would take us home early for dinner and pick us up and pack lettuce until late that day. I told him that I was not working in the shed that afternoon because I did not want to be a strikebreaker. He

replied, "you are already a strikebreaker." My answer was that because I was dumb I didn't have to stay dumb. Here the pay was \$1.25 an hour but in the fields it was 60c and at times 85c. Afterwards they never asked me to work in the sheds and did not discriminate against me because of my refusal to scab, although the foreman would at times jokingly refer to me as a strikebreaker. Two I.W.W.'s, one of them also a Mormon, also refused the next day to scab. The strike was finally lost and the head of the union resigned and started a tavern.

During this winter I did not have steady work. Ordinarily Mexican men will not chop wood and it is up to the woman to do it. The Mexican neighbor women were scabbing at the sheds so had plenty of money and did not feel that they had to chop wood, so they asked me, an "Anglo," to do it. I chopped for several days while the Mexican men sat by laughing at an Anglo working for them. I like to chop wood. Some of my friends accuse me of pride but if they could see me chopping this wood they would not see much pride. Although I am really glad and proud in the right way, to do useful labor.

"Doing it the hard way, eh?" spoke the Mexican goodnaturedly as he was driving the huge caterpillar disc in the field next to the 75 by 75 feet garden which I was spading.

"Yes, but I eat from this garden every day of the year and don't plow under my crop like you folks do." I replied.

True, the disc was ten thousand times more efficient than my primitive method, but for what? Their lettuce and melons are not raised to be eaten but only for the profit to be made. If the price drops the crop is plowed under or the sheep are turned in on the field. Three years ago my Molokon neighbor received \$5,000 for the cabbage on his 20 acres. Next year he put in 40 acres and did not sell a head.

Having nearly fathomed the mysteries of the harness which equipped the blind and deaf mules borrowed from a neighbor (I milked his cow while he caught the wild animals), I hitched them to a disc and prepared the garden, irrigated two weeks before. A clump of Johnson grass here and there definitely showed remnants of green after the rest of the garden was a pleasant brown. A harrow leveled off the ground nicely. One row of egg plant and peppers remained from the summer garden. The hot August weather had nearly burned them up, but now near the end of September they were blooming again and would produce until heavy frost. The Old Pioneer brought twine and we measured out straight rows. We hitched the blind mule to the plow and the Old Pioneer led as I made—not the straightest row in Missouri or Arizona—but one good enough for the purpose. We came back over the furrow to make the ground even on both sides of it. By 1 p.m. I had turned the mules and had started to plant. The rows are 81 feet long. I have never worked elsewhere in such fine mellow ground: not a hard lump to be found. It had rained recently thus any clods that remained from the plowing were now dissolved. The furrows were about a foot and a half in depth. I leveled off the ground between them with a rake, then took a hoe and chopped half way down the edge of the furrow to make sure the ground was fine and crumbly as a bed for the seeds. Then I made an inch furrow along this edge where I judged the line of irrigation water would about reach. First I planted a row of radishes. Then taking a chance that we would have a late frost I planted 46 hills of Irish potatoes in the next row. Last year I had planted them in August, and it was so hot that they dried up in the hill instead of growing. The trick with potatoes is to have the ground loose and high enough above the furrow so that the top is always dry; the water on

either side subbing up and making sufficient moisture. Next I planted two rows of chard, the green leaves of which would mix well with the carrots, to be pulled each day for a salad, from the next two rows. A row of onion seed and onion sets provided a different shade of green in the garden, followed by three rows of beets. We had made four rows for the planting of peas in November, two beds for the tomatoes in the spring, and two beds for watermelons in the spring. Very few times in my life have I had such a feeling of satisfaction as when after dark I looked over the even rows that I had just planted. All had been planted except two rows of beets. Supper tasted especially fine that night.

Long before I had known that Gandhi ate from one bowl—the aluminum one which he brought from prison—I had told women folks that they cluttered themselves up with too many dishes. Sometimes my sister-in-law at whose home I lived for a year in Milwaukee, called me “one-bowl-Hennacy,” and cut down the quantity of utensils around my place at the table. To my mind the simple life means that one should eat that which is at hand and buy from the store only what is absolutely necessary. As long as I have Irish potatoes in the garden they form the bulk of my main meal. When they are gone I do not buy potatoes but eat egg plant, peppers and onions, which are delicious fried. When I worked in a dairy I made my own cottage cheese, but now that is one thing that I buy at the store. Except for the months of August, September and October I have chard and spinach and carrots which make a fine salad, so then I really have two bowls instead of one. When I worked at a chicken ranch in Albuquerque I ate cracked eggs by the dozen. Since then I seldom buy eggs. When I worked in a large apple orchard I had apples every day of the year—and apple dumplings—and apple cider part of the time, except in April, May and June. Here also I had asparagus seven months of the year. It grew wild in the orchard and all that was needed was to cut the shoots every few days and not allow them to go to seed. Apples do not grow around Phoenix and I never buy them. Orange and grapefruit trees are nearby and I have worked picking them, and pomegranates and figs in season. The Old Pioneer will plant some grapevines this month. We had watermelon each day from June first to August twelfth. And of course we had free access to the hundreds of acres of cantaloups and other vegetables around us. We have used no commercial fertilizer as I have a small compost pit and chicken manure. The second Monday after I planted my garden the Old Pioneer called his brother-in-law Joe, and he and I hitched ourselves to each end of a broomstick which had a rope in the center, attached to a small cultivator. The Old Pioneer was the driver as we roughed up the ground between the rows. “Damn burros,” mumbled Joe.

During the month of May 1945 and around that period I lived on \$10 a month, sending the rest of my income to my daughters in Santa Fe. Of this \$1 was for electric lights; \$2.40 for Catholic Workers and the Conscientious Objector paper that I distributed, and \$2.05 for postage stamps and haircut. The balance of \$4.55 was as follows:

Whole wheat flour, 25 pounds (could grow own wheat)	\$1.25
Vegetable shortening, 3 pounds68
Cornmeal, 5 pounds (could grow own corn)46
Oleomargarine, 2 pounds38
Rice, 4 pounds (price is too high)58
Raisins, 2 pounds23
Syrup, 5 pounds47
Yeast, sugar, salt, etc.50

"There's only one way the poor class of folks can beat this system," said the poor tubercular Oakie as we shivered together on the cotton truck on a dull February morning.

"What is that?" I asked.

"I could take my wife and six kids; rent me a few acres in Arkansas away from the main highway; get me a mule, a cow and an old sow, and no one could boss me and starve me like they do now. I did it once, and I'll do it again one of these days if I ever get away from this damned desert."

"I agree with you. Many professors have written books about just that way of life but few have gone back to the land," I answered.

"Folks hereabouts was talking the other day of breaking in the stores to get something to eat. But I told them they are beat before they start at that game. Got to get back to the land. That's what I told them, but they didn't want to get too far away from the dime stores, shows and taverns," he continued as we came to the cotton field.

"You can't farm in this commercial valley though. Takes too much for machinery and if you lose a crop through lack of water, bugs, or poor prices, then the big company grabs your land for what they want to give. Have to get to the sticks," he added with a smile, "away from the places where you think you have to spend money. And the more noise, the more traffic and the more big whirring machinery, the more we seem to forget that the man next to us is our brother. I know folks back home in the country who never saw a city, who feud like all blazes though, so it isn't only where you are or what you do that counts; it must be what you have inside," my friend said as we ended another row.

A huge fat man said as we were waiting for the cotton truck that there was an ad in the paper the day before asking for 300 women to sew parachutes in nearby Goodyear. When hundreds of applicants arrived they sorted them out and hired 25 which was all they wanted in the first place. Any who were over 30 or under 20 or weighed more than 120 pounds were not wanted. He added: "A fat woman I know who is about my size has had 20 years experience in sewing could not get a look in there. Getting's so people's got to be all one size and one age, and I suppose pretty soon they'll want them all to look just alike."

We met some Oakies on the way home clustered around a woodpile in their yard enjoying the sun. One boy was wielding an ax and the father rested, snuggled a few inches away against a log, much as cartoons depict certain long-whiskered hillbillies. The subject of continued rain here and snow further north came up. One young man remarked that it wasn't fair to drop food to the Indians while the white ranchers got nothing. How much he knew of white ranchers was another thing. The inference seemed to be that no airplanes dropped anything near this particular woodpile. All the poor kid knew was depression and war so for him to think of an all time Santa Claus was understandable.

There being no lettuce or citrus to harvest I went to the slave market one cool morning where I took my pick out of eight trucks and several pickups. Most of them were shaped like the traditional covered wagon with canvas. There were benches on either side and in the middle. Those regulars who had sacks were wrapped in them but being new I had to rent one in the field for a quarter. They are of canvas 8 to 12 feet long, fastened with a strap around the shoulders and dragging behind in the row like a giant worm.

"Last call! Take you there and bring you back. \$3 a hundred pounds. All aboard gentlemen!" shouted a good-natured Negro in a bright mackinaw. The truck to which he pointed was box shaped, of wood veneer, with a short ladder leading inside from the rear. I entered and found a seat between a colored woman and a colored man. After a few more calls the doors were shut and we

could see each other only as one would light a cigarette. Later on the truck stopped and we were joined by a large group of laughing Negroes of all ages. There were three whites beside myself, and one Indian. Our destination was nine miles beyond Buckeye, which is thirty miles west of Phoenix.

After several sharp turns, when all in the truck were thrown this way and that, we came to the field. This was tall cotton and harder to pick than the small variety. The field was a quarter of a mile long and a mile wide. A young white man worked one row, then the Indian, then myself. The Indian, a Navajo, said this was to be clean picking, he understood. Where the cotton was fluffy it was easy to grab, but where the boll was partly open it was difficult to extract and you hurt your fingers. As we worked along the row from the far end of the field toward the weighing scales and truck we talked about Indian problems. After we had worked three hours we took our cotton in to be weighed. I had 30 pounds and he had 42. The white man near us had 85. In talking over this discrepancy we found that we had been picking only the clean white cotton, while the more experienced pickers grabbed the bolls along with the cotton and more than doubled the weight. As we waited our turn for weighing our cotton, groups were shooting dice in the roadway. A Negro woman served coffee, chili, pie, weiners, etc. at reasonable prices. Some of the truck drivers sold food to their passengers. Returning to the field, we picked in more of an orthodox fashion and in the total five and a half hours the Navajo picked 82 pounds and I picked 62.

Each day that week it happened that I got a different cotton truck. I learned to pick cotton with both hands and could make over \$6 by picking over 200 pounds. While a sack will hold 100 pounds I found that to put 65 pounds in it was enough to carry up the ladder and dump in the truck.

Another day that week I walked the two miles to the highway by 6 a.m. and stood with my white cotton sack over my shoulders in the dark so the cotton truck would not miss me. In the truck it was chilly and each of us was wrapped like a mummy in his sack and wobbled like a pin in the bowling alley when the truck swerved corners or hit bumps. In the center of the truck was a dishpan with sticks of wood burning and smoking. If we ever upset we would all burn before we could get untangled from our cotton cocoon. By 10 a.m. I had taken off my shirt and coat and tied them around my waist in the fashion of the fields. Looking closer I found that the man next to me was doing two rows to my one and did not seem to work any harder.

The next day I missed this truck and rode 50 miles near Arlington to a desert cotton ranch which employed none but white people. The man next to me in the truck recently came from California and said that after a strike last year cotton pickers were now receiving \$4 and \$4.50 a hundred. There the union allowed all races to belong. In the packing sheds here I never saw a Negro, Mexican or Indian have a good paying job. Here the cotton was hard picking and I only made \$4.26. They did not pay by the day but when the truck was full of cotton, so I have to go that 100 miles again to get my pay. Later I discovered that this is a common trick, for I was not able to find that truck again.

Another day I worked in a picked over field and only was able to pick 36 pounds all day and when the time came I only got 2c a pound instead of 3c. A Negro who was working with me said, "Lucky we gets the 2c. The other day they gave us slips of paper and told us to come the next day if it didn't rain. I told them to go to hell with such paper and I walked off the field, but most other pickers stayed for they had families."

"Got to watch these belly robbers," another picker said. "They'll doctor up the scales and cheat you of half the cotton. The other day I picked around 100

pounds and the weighman said he was only paying for 50 as he was not making much money on the second grade cotton. I wonder what the hell he thought I was making. I remember pickers telling of a contractor who short-weighed and ticket-paid the pickers and made \$1,000 a month from pickers who were as poor as he had been a month before."

I slept in a cot-house in Eloy, Arizona one night so as to be up early for the cotton trucks. In the morning as I had hot cakes and coffee in the crowded restaurant a saintly looking middle aged man sat next to me greeting me with a southern drawl. His kind voice was in keeping with his countenance. Old, decrepit and unshaven men; stocky kids; white women, colored women and a few Indians around the L shaped counter. I am not especially hardboiled and there have been a few times since I left Atlanta prison that I have shed tears. I have seen much of suffering and misery and I know that the poor do not have many of the common virtues which the rich applaud. Yet this morning I could hardly eat as the tears came because of the spectacle of those faces around me.

"See that woman who just left," said my friend at the right, "she sure has picked up; last year she was a regular cotton-whore, laying around the trucks all day long. Haven't seen her drunk this winter."

"You shovel like a Mexican," said the Old Pioneer as he watched me make a check to damn up the water on the low side of a "land" in his small wheat field. After eight years in this southwest I finally have received this compliment. This Irishman generally dug his shovel deep into the ground, put his foot on it and leaned on it, thus making a hole where water could settle and start a washout. The right way—the Mexican way—is to scoop up dirt in a swinging motion. This is harder but it leaves no hole for a washout.

The water gurgles in the ditch past my cabin all during the night. I hear the soft whistle and song of the Mexican National employed as irrigator as he skilfully guides the water evenly by the quarter-mile long rows of cantaloups. Now it is morning and the shift changes. The Big Company has the straightest, cleanest rows and their ground is well worked. There is a garnishee automatically by the tax man against anything I would earn working for the big company, so I now work by the day here and there and it is difficult for the tax man to know where I am for I only know myself a few hours ahead.

Unless one understands the problem of water in this country all other information amounts to very little. As I write these pages I am waiting for James Hussey, four miles down the road, to come and get me to irrigate his alfalfa tonight. This type of irrigating is fairly easy. The "lands" are thirty to forty feet wide and the ports do not have to be dug open and filled in again with the shovel, but are of cement with a tin which is inserted in a groove. (The port is where the water comes from the ditch into the field to be irrigated.) We generally run three lands at once. As the water comes across the head of the field the up-to-date farmer has a concrete dam, with a huge tin to open and close it, about four to a quarter mile. Otherwise a canvas tarpaulin (called a tarp) is slanted on poles which rest on a beam across the ditch, and this makes the dam. Two skillful irrigators can insert a tarp in running water five feet deep and form a perfect dam.

The chief worry of an irrigator is that rodent vegetarian who fills canal and ditch banks with holes. When you figure on so much water in one place, a greater portion of it is apt to be following the serpentine burrowings of Brother Gopher, whose pouches outside his cheeks must literally carry tons of dirt during his lifetime. At least he is "riding high" in this western country, as did Noah's Ark, built of gopher wood.

Irrigating alfalfa is easy work compared to running the water over bare land.

for unless you are used to the field you cannot know where to put the checks so that all of the land will get wet. I remember irrigating such land for a jack-Mormon (backsliding Mormon) and right even with the flow of water a thousand red-winged blackbirds would be hopping from dry clod to dry clod, gobbling up the insects which were driven from their sequestered domiciles by the oncoming water. Walking down the lateral early one Sunday morning to get to the bus to town to sell the *Catholic Worker* in front of churches I saw a great flock of these same birds roosting and gaily chirping on the backs of the sheep which were grazing on lettuce culls. How they kept from entangling their feet in the wool I do not know, but I never saw one that seemed to have any interference on that account. Maybe this is the way they keep their toes warm early in the frosty morning.

One thing to remember when irrigating is not to scatter the water. One night I irrigated 50 rows of maize at one time. Some rows would be finished ahead of others, so water from one or more rows would be changed over into a dry row and irrigation would proceed twice as fast. When water has started down rows or lands it takes a couple of hours to see where it is missing. In irrigating plowed lands the water has a tendency to flow on one side or the other, and you are never sure just where until it gets going. To wade deep in mud which nearly pulls your boots off when you make each step and to make a check that will deflect the water is quite a chore. Most of my irrigating was done at night with a flashlight or a lantern, for one likes to irrigate at night, and I took the left over jobs.

Lettuce is the main crop in the part of the valley where I live. The efficient farmer discs, drags, scrapes and floats his land over and over until it is really level. In this southwest everything runs southwest, even the wind comes from the southwest—and it blows the atomic dust from Almagordo and Las Vegas eastward. Often rye or other green grass is planted and then sheep graze at 4c per head per day. It is irrigated again and again as the sheep graze. Then it is disced and the remaining green and the sheep manure add to the value of the soil. When once water is ordered it generally takes a day and a night or more to irrigate a large field.

Mormons and Mexicans make the best irrigators. The saying is that, "a Mormon can make water run uphill." The shift is generally 12 hours at 60 or 70 cents an hour and you stay there until the relief man comes. After the ground has been soaked, vegetation, which includes the weed seeds, is thus given the chance to grow and then is disced under. When the weather is just right for planting special machines make straight, level beds about two feet across, with irrigation runs in between. The lettuce comes up on the very edge of each side of this bed. First come the thinners who generally work by contract and thin out the lettuce to one head every 14 inches. Afterwards it is found that in many places there are two heads or what is called "doubles." These are then thinned. All this is done with a short hoe, handle about 2 feet long. A worker on the end of a long handle tends to get careless and chop anything in sight if the lettuce is small. Later, when the lettuce is bigger, long hoes are used to cut the weeds and grass.

The reason hundreds of people have to work at this job is that the weeds have to be removed before the next irrigation, and then you have to wait a few days until the ground is dry. Meanwhile, at daylight or dusk when there is little wind, an airplane dusts the field to kill bugs and worms. Every season some of these dusters are killed and the planes are wrecked. A liquid fertilizer in tanks is emptied gradually into the irrigation water at the intake from the Lateral. The advantage of having a large farm is that at times the run-off water from one field is used on the next field—or in some cases far out in the desert it is saved

in reservoirs. Otherwise the water runs back in the Lateral and is sold to another farmer down the line. There are three kinds of water rights, A which belongs to old timers, B which is for newcomers, and C which is only water once in a while.

When a good proportion of the lettuce has solid heads, and especially if the price is high, the long, yellow trailers are at the end of the field. Three men line up on each side of the trailer and two behind it and it is pulled slowly by a small tractor or, if the ground is wet, by a small caterpillar. The tool used to cut the lettuce is about one and a half inches wide, sharp, and curved a bit. The handle is about one and a half feet long. First, you feel the lettuce with your left hand and see if it is hard, and, if so, you cut it with the knife in your right hand and throw the head with your left hand into the trailer. I generally work on the outside row and, if possible, get the side away from the exhaust, for it would soon give you a headache. This means throwing further but there is less likelihood of there being a collision between human and lettuce heads.

At times I have steadily cut lettuce without straightening up for the quarter of a mile row. Generally there are enough immature heads to give you a rest in between. This work pays from 75c to a dollar an hour depending upon how many hours you are able to work in a day, for at times there is frost until noon. When there is no frost you can commence at daylight, but when it is hot in the afternoon it is best not to handle the lettuce. If touched when frosty it leaves a black mark on the lettuce. No portal pay in this agricultural work as when you enter a mine and pay starts at the time of entrance. You stand around shivering and waiting on the frost to melt and if it is then not too hot you can work until dark.

The lettuce is hauled to the packing sheds—two trailers at a time—which are in town or in sheds along the railroad tracks in the suburbs. Here the lettuce is wet packed in crushed ice. It is dumped in huge hoppers, one person cuts off the excess leaves or discards unfit heads. Another places paper in the boxes at the head of the belt line. Another keeps him supplied with boxes. One hands the packer the heads and another tops the crate. When the price is high and the crop is coming in heavily, the big money is made in these sheds with overtime. Many make \$30 a day. Here the packers get more than the others. The union books are closed and it is difficult for a newcomer to get work in the sheds. If the price remains high the field will be worked over and over again to get all possible good heads of lettuce. We worked half of Christmas. The saying is, "when there is work you work night and day, Sunday and Christmas morning."

In the midst of the season crews of Filipinos come from California. There are about 45 in a crew. They man a huge combine. As far as I can make out this is the system they use: a crew goes ahead and cuts lettuce in the rows where the combine travels. This combine looks like an airplane. These heads of lettuce are placed to one side. A truck with empty boxes keeps pace with it on one side, and one on the other side takes care of the full crates. Lettuce heads are tossed on the wings of the combine by the cutters and worked over just as in the packing shed. The girl who lines the boxes with paper, the cutters, the sorters, the packer, and the man who nailed the boxes, all ride on the machine. This is winter packing and not spring, and so no ice is needed. They sure eat up the field. They have huge lights and work most of the night if necessary. The only drawback is rain which would bog down the heavy machine. They work as a crew and each man receives a more or less equal share of the 55c a crate the farmer pays. These workers are very quick and sober and dependable. I know of a case where a Filipino leased land and raised lettuce, hiring men of his own race. Some Anglos grumbled about it so he built a shed and hired Anglos also. This was dry packing of lettuce in the field. He found that the shippers had to repack most of the crates of

lettuce which the Anglos had packed. And in hoeing, the Filipinos could hoe twice as fast as the Anglos and much better. I will admit that I would not speed up the average of the Anglos myself.

The lettuce fields to the north of my cottage had been planted earlier and a fair crop was taken from them. One field to the far south was spoiled by the salt-marsh caterpillar. Some say that the DDT used previously had killed the bug that ate the caterpillar eggs, but the DDT did not bother the wooly caterpillar.

The next day I was told to work in the cauliflower dry packing stand at the other end of the field. Coming to work that morning I was picked up by my Basque friend in his truck and the radio told of Gandhi's assassination. "Our Gandhi is dead," he exclaimed. I had worn a white cap similar to that which Gandhi and Nehru wore, with the words in small red script "Free India Now" upon it, for years until India was free, and my Basque friend recognized my interest in Gandhi. Amplify the Fellowship of Reconciliation, a pacifist group to which I belong, had members wear this cap as a protest to British rule in India. Arriving at the field where cart loads of cauliflower were dumped and sorters quickly discarded the small, broken and discolored heads I found that my job was to fork the culls away so that new cart loads could be emptied. Farmers came and got the culls for their cattle. The good heads were thrown on a table where four packers put them in crates and slid them over rollers to the cutter who with an enormous knife cut off the tops even with the crate. The man at the end of the slide put on the tops, and several fellows loaded the boxes on the truck.

The mystery which I never did get explained, by boss or workman, was why the packers, who had the easiest job of all with no stooping or even skill of sorting out culls, were paid from \$18 to \$40 a day and the rest of us got 85c an hour. It was a custom for the packer to get more was all the answer I could get. I worked here for three weeks and as the Indian lives off the country wherever he may be, this vegetarian had the one dish of cauliflower every night for supper. A one-track mind and a one-track stomach. I found a combination of cheese and jelly made good sandwiches for lunch.

Broccoli here in Arizona comes as near to looking like a tree among vegetables as you will find. Huge green leaves which, even in this dry country, always seem to be wet. Around Thanksgiving work commences on the broccoli. It is four to five feet high and in between the big leaves the succulent broccoli buds shoot up. Scores of rubber boots and aprons are in the truck. The morning is cold, so I pick out what seems to be boots which are not for the same foot, and an apron, and go over to the fire to try them on. The frost is now off the leaves and two of us get on each side of the cart and two behind. Each armed with a big knife with which we cut the ripe shoots which are discerned by their purple color. The right way to do is to keep going straight ahead and not turn around for then you will get wet from the leaves. Hands are cold at first and the feet really never do get warm. There is little stooping as in lettuce and the work is not hard except for the coldness. By the time the field is covered, it is ready to be worked over again, for new shoots come out constantly. As long as the price is good cutting continues even until March. Broccoli for supper every night. The workers are nearly all local Mexicans and a jolly crew to work with.

Carrot work is piece work and workers are paid as the crates are filled, so here too there is no withholding tax for Caesar. Soon my Basque friend picked me up in his truck and even then I was late, for scores of Mexican families had come early this spring morning and were singing, laughing and working. Here there were no Indians as there had been in Deer Valley where I had worked the week before. Here it was where I saw a storekeeper charge an Indian more for the same item than he charged a white man.

A mechanical digger went ahead and loosened the carrots. The foreman gave me a "claim," a space three rows wide and thirty steps long. I pulled up the carrots and laid them in a row. I was checked out with four bundles of wire covered with tough paper, which cost 4c a bundle and was used to tie four to eight carrots in a bunch, depending upon the size. Larger carrots were put in one crate and medium ones in another. Crooked, broken, small or deformed carrots were discarded. Farmers came and got them by the truckload for their cattle, free of charge. Mormon farmers can much of the waste from fields and ship it to Salt Lake City and in turn applesauce is shipped from there to Phoenix. 3,000 Mormons will pick cotton for the church on a Saturday. The clothing made from this cotton in Salt Lake City is then sent all over to needy Mormons, or others.

By noon I had five crates full, which netted me \$1.04 after paying for my wire. Then because of the heat, which was around 95 and would wilt the carrots, we had three hours for lunch and came back and worked until dark. Now the carrots were of good size, but the next day there were too many small ones and it was difficult to make time. The Mexican parents bought soda pop and ice cream at 10c for their children without any coaxing. The children played but when they worked they worked fast and got much done. Several families of Anglos were in the field and there was a continual harangue on the part of the parents to get their children to work. They made more commotion than the whole field of Mexicans and were the only ones who cursed their children. In three and a half days I made \$8.48 and did not go back to get my last 96c, as I had work the next day in a date grove and on my way home saw that the carrot crew had disbanded.

In my work in a date grove the first day I helped a skilled man cut huge shoots from the side of date palm trees with a wedge. These were sold for from \$2 to \$6 each according to variety to start new groves. The man who had left when I commenced to work at the date grove had already tied male pollen in each bunch of potential dates in the female trees. There are usually eight to ten bunches on a tree. Three male trees furnished all the male pollen needed and some was sold to growers who lacked pollen. My job for the next month or more was to saw off limbs that were dead or in the way of picking later on, and to tie each bunch of dates to a limb above with wire in order that when the dates grew and became heavy the branch with the dates would not break off. I also clipped out every other string of dates—they were now the size of a pea—thus giving the tree strength to make larger dates of those remaining. (With apples there is the "June drop" which lessens the amount on the tree nearly automatically, but not with dates.) Although I cut off thousands of "ice picks" as the spines growing out all over the tree are called, I found later when picking dates that there was always a stray one to pierce my hand or arm at an unexpected time. Some of the trees needed a ladder extended 20 feet and others were younger and smaller. The big ones were 28 years old.

Much of my time in August was spent in putting paraffined cloth bags over the new large bunches of dates. This was so that June bugs and birds would not destroy them, also in case it rained they would not become wet and spoil. The dates ripen a few at a time. Generally the ones exposed most to the sun ripen first, although a few on the hot inside of the huge bunch would also ripen sooner. The bag was slipped over the top and the whole bunch explored from beneath for ripe dates which were put in a small basket and then emptied into wire trays that were carried three at a time to the date room to be sorted and then placed in cold storage until the tourist trade came in November. A canvas was placed under the tree to catch the dates that would fall. All over-ripe or smashed dates were supposed to be placed in one corner of the tray to be used for date-butter. However, many pickers threw them out of sight in the grass rather than bother

with them. Here I was paid 62½c an hour, although in most groves pickers were paid so much a pound.

From about December 10 to 20 was a busy time with the dates. My job was to pack the processed dates in containers holding a pound and cover them with cellophane kept in place by a rubber band. If packed too far ahead they would dry out. These were shipped in special containers to customers who bought them for friends in the north and east. The best eating dates were those that could not be shipped. They were brought as needed from the cold-storage room. The nice dates you pay a good price for in stores are generally processed with gas in ovens and are not as good as those which may be more wrinkled, but dried by natural process.

IN THE MARKET PLACE

In the spring of 1953 the Old Pioneer died, being baptized a Catholic by Father George Dunne a few days previously. Coming to New York City I began to sell CW's on the street and to write about my adventures. My fellow editor Tom Sullivan suggested that I entitle my column, **In The Market Place**.

One day when I was soapboxing at Broad and Wall Streets a man asked me what came first with me: Catholicism or anarchism? I replied that Catholicism came **First** and daily Mass and Communion. **Second**, to live poor as we did at the CW. **Third**, to love your enemy, for as Dorothy quotes some saint: "You love God as much as you love the person you love the least." **Fourth**, to bring this out in some association with others. **Fifth**, Don't be a parasite, which of course cuts out all Wall Street. **Sixth**, to be an anarchist for if one lived a dedicated life and put first things first, to vote for one millionaire or another whose business was to return evil for evil in courts, prisons and war, was a poor way of being a Christian. **Seventh**, in order to be effective in the spiritual and radical life I do not smoke, drink, eat meat, or take medicine.

Selling CW's at 43rd and Lexington a cop arrested me for selling papers without a license. I told him that according to the Supreme Court decision in the forties the Jehovah Witnesses had won the right to sell papers without a license. He said to tell it to the judge. The magistrate let me out on my own name for trial in three weeks. I went back next Friday and another cop said I had to have a license but I talked him out of it. The next Friday Eileen Fant'no and Bertha Tisius stood on one corner and I was on my regular corner when the first cop arrested me when the girls were not looking. Dorothy came up to help and finally discovered that I was in jail. They sold CW's all afternoon and Jackson MacLow, an anarchist friend came along and helped also. They were not arrested. I got 5 days in jail or a \$10 fine and as I never would pay money to the state I did the time on Rikers Island. The American Civil Liberties Union wanted to use me as an example to provide freedom for those who always moved on when told to do so. After six months, although losing the first appeal, the highest court in the state affirmed my right to sell the CW and my book as I was not doing it for profit.

Across the street from St. Patrick's Cathedral a policeman told me that I should not sell "that Communist paper." I told him it was not a Communist paper, and if it was I had the right to sell it there, and I showed him a press clipping of the court decision.

"I don't care anything about the law. If I don't want you here I'll have you pinched and you'll be in jail, you won't be here. If the judge lets you out as you say, I'll arrest you again, and if he frees you, I'll arrest you again. I'll wear you out."

"What if I wear you out?" I replied.

He shrugged his shoulders and walked away. You have to be ready to die or you are not ready to live. I was never bothered again on that corner.

In 1955 there came the first air raid drill in New York City. The state law says that if you do not take part you can get a year in jail and \$500 fine. I called up Ralph DeGia of the War Resister's League and other pacifists and we told the authorities that we would openly refuse to take part in their war game and would sit in the City Hall Park. Television and radio gave our message as we handed out our leaflets. 29 of us were arrested. Dorothy, being a better basic radical than I, persuaded me to plead guilty instead of not guilty. We Catholic Workers and some atheistic anarchists pled guilty and the others carried the case on appeal and it is still in the courts. We all got suspended sentences. The next year we had our demonstration in Washington Square and 19 of us got 5 days in jail. Those of us who pled guilty served them. In 1957 there were only 12 of us in the demonstration in the park across from our house on Chrystie Street and we got 30 days in jail from a Catholic judge who told us to read the Bible. Dorothy spoke about the terrible conditions in the woman's prison on NightBeat on television, and I spoke twice on the same program later. So in 1958 when 9 of us were arrested while picketing the Atomic Energy Commission near Columbus Circle during the air raid drill our sentence was suspended. In 1959 five of us who had been demonstrating annually were accompanied by 14 others at City Hall Park during the drill and we got 10 days in jail, after waiting 5 days in jail for our trial. The newcomers got a suspended sentence. This time when the judge asked me about "rendering unto Caesar" I answered that Caesar was getting too much and God was getting very little so I would render unto God by disobeying Caesar as St. Peter did.

For several years, Bob Steed, my fellow editor, and I and others have picketed the Kohler Company uptown and also the Atomic Energy Commission. More recently we picketed the hospitals in the strike of Local 1199. I have met thousands of people on the street corners as I have been out every day selling CW's. And I have spoken at Fordham University seven times and in hundreds of schools and colleges and churches in Canada and nearly every state in the union.

In June 1957 I went to Las Vegas, Nevada and fasted for 12 days and picketed the AEC with its atomic tests there. (The Bishop of Nevada publicly stated that my position was not in line with the Catholic Church but I did not see this paper until I came back to New York.) The terrific heat weakened me but the AEC folks were kind and I rested a lot. On the last day when the biggest bomb of all was to explode it did not go off. The army captain in charge told me, "You stopped this one, Hennacy; you better get back home and let us get to work." And the headline in the paper said: "Pacifist wins 'moral' Victory; bomb didn't go off."

In 1958 I along with others picketed the missile base at Cape Canaveral, Florida. We gave out leaflets at the different churches and the ushers at the local Catholic Church had me arrested twice and said they would tar and feather or drown me. I didn't run and nothing happened.

During this past year I fasted 40 days in Washington, D.C. and picketed the AEC there, and also 46 days during Lent, going about my regular daily work. This is not a fast against the authorities, but is a **penance** for our sin of exploitation and atomic war. This is my way of doing what the Quakers call Speaking Truth to Power.

EASY ESSAYS

By Peter Maurin

CAESAR OR GOD

Christ says:

"Render to Caesar
the things that are Caesar's
and to God
the things that are God's."

The Fascist Caesar,
the Nazi Caesar
and the Bolshevik Caesar
are not satisfied
with the things
that are Caesar's;
they also want
the things that are God's.

When Caesar sets up a claim
to the things that are God's
he sets himself up
as god.

And when Caesar
sets himself up as a god
he sets himself up
as a faker.

When Caesar
sets himself up as a faker
he should be denounced
as a faker.

FASCIST CAESAR

The Fascist Caesar
claims that the child
belongs to the State.

The child does not belong
to the State;
it belongs
to the parents.

The child
was given by God
to the parents;
he was not
given by God
to the State.

The parents
must teach the child
to serve God,
from whom
they received the child.

When the parents
allow the State
to grab the child
and to act
toward the child
as if God

did not matter
they lose their claim
to the allegiance
of the child.

THE NAZI CAESAR

The Nazi Caesar
claimed that there are
superior races
and inferior races.

The superior race
is always the one
one happens to belong to.

The inferior race
is always the one
that refuses to recognize
that superiority
and claims to be
the superior race.

If a race is superior
to another race
then the extermination
of the inferior race
is the moral duty
of the superior race.

The superior race
tries to believe
that God works
through the superior race.

It conceives God
as a racial God.

THE BOLSHEVIK CAESAR

The Bolshevnik Caesar
says that there is no God
but that there is
a messianic class
and that the working class
needs to be guided
by those who are aware
of the messianic mission
of the working class.

The Communist Party
claims to be the guide
of the working class
in the fulfilling
of its messianic mission.

Those who contest
the superior wisdom
of the master minds
of the Communist Party
are considered
as the enemies
of the Bolshevnik revolution.

Many old-timers
in the Bolshevik movement
are now considered
the worst enemies
of the Bolshevik revolution.

LET IT STAND THIS YEAR TOO;
SO THAT I MAY HAVE TIME TO
DIG & PUT DUNG AROUND IT;
PERHAPS IT
MAY BEAR
FRUIT.



ST. LUKE
13: 6-9

The Catholic Worker Movement

By J. MICHAEL McCLOSKEY

"The Catholic Worker Movement" was written by J. Michael McCloskey as the first chapter of his thesis for the degree of Bachelor of Arts at Harvard University, and printed in *The Catholic Worker* for May, 1957. The entire thesis, which is entitled "The Diversity of Opinion Within Contemporary Catholic Political Thought in America," was graded magna cum laude and is now on file in Widener Library at Harvard.

Experience has taught us that many of our positions are erroneously or partially understood, and we hope that an attentive reading of this pamphlet will contribute to that "clarification of thought" so earnestly sought by the late Peter Maurin, who founded our movement.

Two of Mr. McCloskey's statements demand qualification:

As to the paragraph on p. 45, beginning "Because of their anarchism," we are afraid readers may be misled into believing that there is a large body of Catholic Workers who "refuse to register for the draft, to pay income taxes that will be used to buy armaments, to participate in civil defense drills," and who are "constantly in jail and being tried for violations of the law." We editors would like to see—and soon—such large scale participation in non-violent resistance. However, there are thousands who may agree with us but are not able to match thought with action.

As to the comment in the concluding paragraph on page 46, "the hierarchy on the whole remained rather cool," we would amend it to say that from the beginning we have received material support from cardinals, archbishops, bishops, abbots and monsignori, the "princes of the Church." This support has of course been for the charitable aspects of the Catholic Worker movement and does not necessarily imply agreement with its principles. But there have been notable expressions of approval, too, from many of them.

THE EDITORS

IN 1933 THE CATHOLIC WORKER movement was founded. The movement has never grown large numerically, but its moral and intellectual influence on Catholicism is incalculable. "Those who adopt the Catholic Worker completely are few. Yet, those who have been untouched by it are fewer."¹ Some who advocate social reform may regard the Catholic Worker movement as essentially reactionary. The movement does urge a return to an economic society existing over 700 years ago and a return to a spiritual climate existing even 700 years before that. It may seem reactionary because it opposes government intervention as a solution to most modern economic and social problems. But the movement is essentially a radical movement of the extreme (non-communist) left because it is primarily an absolute reaction against the industrial conditions characteristic of modern capitalism. For the Catholic Worker movement, capitalism is as complete an evil as communism itself. As far as the movement is concerned, there is really not too much difference between them. Because of the absolute, uncompromising opposition of the Catholic Worker movement to the *status quo*, it is convenient to begin an analysis of the various phases of contemporary Catholic political thought with an analysis of the Catholic Worker position, for all other thought marks a recession from it or a compromise with it.

The Catholic Worker movement is not a movement of Catholic workers. Rather it is a movement of a few exceptional Catholics who go among the workers and the poor. These are largely lay Catholics, and they go among the poor "not to save but to be saved."² In the slum dweller, the skid-row alcoholic, and the prostitute they see Christ Himself ("I was thirsty and you gave Me to drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; naked and you covered Me, sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to Me."³) When He was in the world.

Christ chose the most humble level of life and the most menial of tasks. As He is in the world now, He is in the slums, in Harlem, and wherever men are deserted, degraded, and outcast. In helping those who so need help, the Catholic Workers are really being helped themselves for they are being given the opportunity to help out of love for Christ those in whom Christ stands, and in doing this they earn their own salvation. Catholic Workers are only concerned with helping those who need help and not with converting them, though this may be the outcome of their charity.

This mystical devotion to the poor in the tradition of St. Francis of Assisi and this deep spirituality provide the impelling drive behind the movement. Yet, paradoxically this devotion and spirituality are combined with a social consciousness and an activism of this world. The late Cardinal Suhard of Paris resolved the paradox in these words: "One cannot be a saint and live the Gospel we preach without spending oneself to provide everyone with the housing, employment, goods, leisure, education, etc., without which life is no longer human."⁴

The Catholic Worker movement was founded by "Peter Maurin, a French-born itinerant social philosopher, and Dorothy Day, a journalist . . . converted from communism."⁵ Peter Maurin died in 1949. The movement has its headquarters in New York City and at various times had as many as thirty of its Houses of Hospitality in various cities. The movement publicizes its social philosophy through the penny newspaper it publishes, **The Catholic Worker**.

Some have maintained, notably Ed Willock in writing on "Catholic Radicalism," that the Catholic Worker movement is primarily "a perspective rather than a **summa**, doctrine, or party line."⁶ Willock has said the movement "has its roots in no school of thought" and that it cannot be traced back scholastically to any European philosophy or movement.⁷ It is true that the perspective of seeing society always from the bottom up—from the standpoint of the longshoreman in the shape-up, the striker in the picket line, and the unemployed on relief—has radically reoriented the approach of the Catholic Worker to every problem. Yet, it is not true to say that the Catholic Worker movement does not embrace a philosophy and that this philosophy cannot be traced to movements abroad. For the Catholic Worker movement embraces one of the most consistent and complete philosophies ever propounded, and it consciously traces its antecedents as far back as they go—to the beginning of Christianity itself. There is some disagreement among the members of the movement over some of the fine points of the philosophy, but it is possible to describe it in broad outline.

The Catholic Worker's distinctive positions can be labeled, as far as labels are ever accurate, as distributism, anarchism, pacifism, personalism, voluntarism, decentralism, agrarianism, and, in a special sense, Christian communism. The Catholic Worker also believes in pluralism, inter-racialism, civil libertarianism, and condemns materialism. Most of these positions overlap but do so because they are natural outgrowths from one another.

Distributism is the solution the Catholic Worker proposes to the economic problems of modern industrial society. It is the alternative to both capitalism and communism. In essence, distributism is the widest and fairest possible distribution of property and power among all people. The Catholic Worker tends to agree with Marx that capitalism has an inherent tendency towards the concentration of wealth rather than the distribution of wealth. The concentration of wealth is not only inimical to society, for it implies the unjust withholding of property from those who do not have property, but it is also inimical to the spiritual welfare of the individual. Christ said "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God" and "it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God."⁸ The Catholic

Worker holds "that what anyone possesses beyond basic needs does not belong to him but rather to the poor who are without it."⁹ For man holds property, as St. Thomas Aquinas said, not in private possession but in stewardship for common use of all.

Most of the criticisms that the Catholic Worker makes of existing capitalism are the traditional Maxian criticisms and criticisms of European Christian Socialism. The present system produces for profits rather than the needs of society. Instead of producing to provide for those who are without the necessities, capitalism produces for those who have money and already more than enough. The motivating force in capitalism is personal greed rather than generous love of one's fellow man and the desire to provide him with what he needs. Capitalism brings out the worst that is in man rather than nourishing the best. Capitalism prescribes the jungle law of the survival of the fittest in economics and canonizes those who come out on top by crushing all opposition. Capitalism always develops "a non-producing class which is maintained by the labor of others with the consequence that the laborer is systematically robbed of that wealth which he produces over and above what is needed for his bare maintenance."¹⁰ The unearned wealth of the non-producing classes undermines the capitalistic economy because it diminishes the capacity of the economy to consume what it produces. Wealth is withheld from the working classes who have a high marginal propensity to consume and expropriated by the upper classes who have a low marginal propensity to consume. The present capitalistic economy of the United States is kept from collapsing only by large scale government expenditures on armaments which absorb the excess production the people cannot consume.

Capitalism necessarily implies class warfare because management and labor have opposite aims. Management aims at securing the most labor for the least amount to maximize profits, and labor aims at providing the least labor for the greatest amount to maximize wages. Management aims at selling at the highest possible prices—to charge what the traffic will bear, and labor and the consumers aim at buying at the lowest possible price. There is irreconcilable class conflict in capitalism. In capitalism prices and wages are determined not according to the demands of justice but according to the fluctuations of the market or according to the outcome of the power struggles between capital and labor. The medieval concepts of the just price and the family wage find no place in the philosophy of capitalism. In capitalism men do not what they are best suited to do but what they must do to subsist. Capitalism regards the working man as just a factor in production, merely a commodity to be exploited. It regards him as a machine rather than as a child of God, created in the image and likeness of God. Industrial capitalism disfigures the land with grimy industrial districts, squalid slums, denuded forest lands, and polluted rivers.

Modern capitalism is the product of an alien Protestant tradition — of puritanical Calvinism. It is fundamental contradiction to the economic ethics of Catholic philosophy. Capitalism is the invention of Nordic and Anglo-Saxon lands and is foreign to the non-materialistic, agrarian culture of Latin Catholic countries.

Capitalism is in fundamental contradiction to Catholicism for, in the words of the Vatican newspaper *Osservatore Romano*, "Capitalism is intrinsically atheistic. Capitalism is godless, not by nature of a philosophy, which it does not profess, but in practice (which is its only philosophy), by its insatiable greed and avarice, its mighty power, its dominion."¹¹ It denies all morality in business and recognizes only brute power and the irresponsible and uncontrollable "invisible magic hands" of the market place.

The distributists urge what they call the Green Revolution. This will be a

revolution from the bottom rather than the top. It will be a revolution in the conscience of every man rather than a political revolution of the organized masses. Each individual must recognize the inherent evil in capitalism and, having recognized it, must personally withdraw from it and abandon it completely. This recognition of personal responsibility is part of the doctrine of personalism. Personalism means that instead of waiting for society or agencies outside of the individual to act, each person will take upon himself the moral responsibility of combatting evil and correcting that which is wrong in the world as far as he is able. Personalism requires the reform of each person as a prerequisite to the reform of society as a whole. In the Green Revolution, each person who can will take upon himself the moral responsibility of abandoning the industrial cities and of returning to the land—the land where things are green rather than black and filled with soot and where the family in God is a social unity once again. The immoral climate of the cities will be left behind for the soil where the faith always grows strong.

In returning to the land, men will voluntarily organize themselves into communities of farmers or into communities in the villages. This must be done voluntarily (voluntarism)—as an exercise of personal moral responsibility. It cannot be coerced. In these communities as in religious orders, all property, excepting the most personal, will be communally owned and cooperatively controlled. Land, buildings, machinery, and shops will be owned by the community and used to promote the interests of all. What small factories there must be in the villages will not be operated by huge corporations but by workers in each plant themselves, and they will share with the community in the ownership of each plant. An employer class as such will cease to exist. Individual hand craftsmanship in the villages will be encouraged to help restore the pride and dignity of the workman. In distributist communities workers and craftsmen will organize into voluntary associations resembling medieval guilds which will provide social recognition and a sense of solidarity. Outside of the communities, labor unions must be reformed and strengthened and move in the direction of an industrial democracy in which industry at every level will be owned and operated by the workers. In the distributist economy, exploitation, speculation, over-production, and unemployment will be at an end for the economy of each community will be democratically planned in the interests of all, and only that much surplus will be produced which can be sold elsewhere for things which the community cannot efficiently produce. Decentralization of the national economy into largely self-sustaining, autonomous, rural communities will be the pattern of the distributist economy.

There is no contradiction between community ownership and the aim of the distributists to distribute property as widely as possible. The title of all property and the ultimate control of it will be vested in the community, but every family will be granted as much property as possible for its permanent, personal use. Community ownership only prevents the abuse of property as a result of the doctrine of absolute private ownership. The economy of the distributist communities will be directed according to the formula which Marx borrowed from Proudhon—"From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." The economy will accommodate itself to the varying abilities of all, realizing that the untalented get just as hungry as the talented and that everyone equally appreciates the decencies of life. The economy will be geared to satisfying the real needs of all rather than just the whims of those with money.

The doctrine of community of goods is in the best tradition of Christianity. It is in the tradition of the teaching of St. Jerome, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Clement of Alexandria, St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyprian, St. Gertrude, Pope

Gregory the Great, and St. Thomas Aquinas. The goods of the earth belong to God, and He has provided them for the equal use of all men. In the words of St. John Chrysostom, private "property is theft." For in the beginning "God gave us every necessary thing as a common possession." He "did not make one man rich and another poor."¹² But some men through greed, deviousness, and injustice have acquired for themselves that which was provided for the use of others and have become rich. St. Augustine said "The superfluities of the rich are the necessities of the poor. They who possess superfluities possess the goods of others."¹³ "Community of goods is a far more suitable mode of life for us than private property and it is natural," St. John Chrysostom declared.¹⁴ St. Clement of Alexandria reiterated this saying "I know that God has given us the use of goods . . . and He has determined that the use be common."¹⁵ St. Gertrude taught that "Property, the more common it is, the more holy it is."¹⁶ Community of goods will combat the prevailing materialism—the lust for luxury and personal gain. It will promote the detachment from material possessions that Christ taught.

In effect, the Catholic Worker advocates a re-creation, in so far as is realistic, of the medieval economy. To many this may be a regression, but to the Catholic Worker it is the only true path of progress, for the present course of capitalism can lead only to the nightmare of "1984"—to the amoral, materialistic totalitarian and garrison state. The increasing complexity and inter-dependency of modern capitalism and its many parts inevitably demand more and more centralized control by the state, and the conflict between the competing blocks of centralized state power inevitably leads to perpetual preparation for war. The creation of the distributist economy is not an impossible, utopian task. It can be done. Gradually and imperceptibly family after family will withdraw from the present capitalistic economy to leave it to flounder and collapse in the gloom of its own creation. It will have fewer and fewer people to sell its products to. To paraphrase the words of the old I. W. W. preamble, a new society will be created within the shell of the old society—a Catholic society in place of a capitalist society.

The Catholic Worker has already set up a few experimental communities or communes, Maryfarm and Peter Maurin Farm, and its followers have begun small communities from Oregon, to Michigan, to Massachusetts. The Catholic Worker points to the Hutterites in South Dakota and the Bruderhof in New York State and in Paraguay and Uruguay in proof that the plan it advocates is not utopian and impractical. The communities of the Jesuits in Paraguay, the Amish, the Mormons, and the Quakers also show what is possible. And the Catholic Worker stoutly maintains with statistics that the small family farm, intensively cultivated, is more productive than the large corporation farm. In an age of multiplying populations—an age in which two-thirds of the world's population is under-fed, surely means can be found, to distribute current food surpluses and new food surpluses to the under-nourished millions of the world. The demise of the corporation farm will also mean an end to the exploitation of migrant farm labor.

The agrarian distributist doctrines of the Catholic Worker have been primarily inspired by the teachings of a school of English Catholic distributists. The school found its leaders in Hilare Belloc, G. K. Chesterton, Rev. Vincent McNabb, O. P., Eric Gill, and Harold Robbins. These men began propagandizing the distributist philosophy early in the 20th century and planned an ill-fated "Back to the Land" movement in England. They received some encouragement from the clergy. Their works are advertised in **The Catholic Worker** and frequently referred to.

The Catholic Worker advocates an agrarian, Christian communism. This is a

communism far removed from that of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin for the Catholic Workers are anarchists as well as distributists. They oppose all organized, coercive government as incompatible with the spirit of Christianity and the moral responsibility of the individual. Russian communism is nothing but monopoly capitalism carried to the logical conclusion of concentration in the totalitarian state. The Catholic Worker anarchists wish to banish dictatorial coercion, whether in the oppressive capitalistic or communist state, from the earth. Democracy is a sham in the capitalistic state as well as in the communistic state. Under the guise of democratic procedures which are really carefully controlled, oligarchies and self-selected elites rule in both states. The individual decides nothing. He is merely told what to do. The personalist doctrine requires that the individual be morally responsible for everything he does and not be forced to do things by others or by the state or be able to shift responsibility for his actions to the state. In the modern state the bombardier who dropped the atom bomb on Hiroshima and the German generals who liquidated Jews shift responsibility for their actions to the state saying they were just obeying orders, and no one is held responsible. But someone is responsible and must be held responsible! The unquestioned authority of the state becomes the excuse for every legalized horrible form of persecution, torture, and terror. The third degree, fines, imprisonment, and execution are as surely abuse, robbery, captivity, and murder when committed by the state as when committed by the individual. The so-called crimes of most sane men are but the inevitable products of the oppression and degradation of capitalism and communism alike. Political coercion is contrary to the non-violent tenets of basic Christianity—to the Sermon on the Mount and the death on the Cross. Men are supposed to love one another and not coerce one another. By the moral irresponsibility of its use of coercive power the state becomes essentially immoral. As Catholic Lord Acton said, "All power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." What more absolute power is there than the power over life and death itself which the state holds.

The Catholic Worker opposes organized government too because in providing social services government tends to deprive the individual of necessary opportunities to practice corporal works of mercy. A forced, impersonal care of the needy is substituted for the generous charity of the individual. The state acts as if it owns the poor. Salvation cannot be attained without the frequent performance of acts of charity. When the state performs services for the needy no merit is earned, and another chance for the individual to exercise Christian charity is forfeited. The care of the poor is in conscience the duty of the individual, and he cannot delegate this duty to the state. Each individual must personally do everything within his power to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to shelter the homeless. Catholic Workers do this by building their Houses of Hospitality in large cities where all are welcome to whatever there is and nothing is asked in return.

Catholic Workers are conscious of the anarchist traditions that they have inherited and incorporated into their doctrines. Ammon Hennacy, the leading anarchist in the Catholic Worker movement, often refers to the works of Proudhon, Kropotkin, Tolstoy, William Lloyd Garrison, Enrico Malatesta, Mahatma Gandhi, and Vinoba Bhava.

Anarchist opposition to the coercive, dictatorial state means that in distributist communities all decisions must be made by direct democracy. Those not concurring in a decision will not be required to obey it. If unanimity for some reason is required, those not concurring will be permitted to withdraw from the community. No one will be compelled to do anything against his will. Communities will be kept small so that no permanent political-administrative per-

sonnel will be needed. Communities can be confederated into loose alliances if purposes of foreign relations and joint action require it.

Because of their anarchism, Catholic Workers are pledged to Gandhian non-cooperation and non-violent resistance to the unjustified, coercive authority of all governments, local, national, and international. Disapproval of coercion and violence causes Catholic Workers to be pacifists and to especially oppose all governmental activities connected with war or preparation for war. Catholic Workers refuse to register for the draft, to pay income taxes that will be used to buy armaments, to participate in civil defense drills. Catholic Workers are constantly in jail and being tried for violations of the law. In wartime, Catholic Workers are conscientious objectors and refuse to contribute to the war effort. They believe that "Christ went beyond natural ethics and the Old Dispensation in the matter of force and war and taught non-violence as a way of life."¹⁷ Christians in conscience must refuse to obey laws contrary to the teachings of Christ. The Catholic Workers literally believe in turning the other cheek. They believe it is much more meritorious to suffer conquest and persecution than to be responsible for the killing and maiming of anyone, let alone millions. They believe that today in practice there can be no such thing as a just war, if there ever could be. If true Christians and men of good will everywhere refuse to participate in modern war, there can be no wars. War cannot be fought if people will not fight and will not allow their governments to arm.

The anarchism and pacifism of the Catholic Workers is motivated by a love of fellow man—by belief in the brotherhood of men under the Fatherhood of God. Racism in any form—anti-Semitism, white supremacy, segregation—is an impossibility for Catholic Workers because racism "is blasphemy against God who created all mankind in His image and who offers redemption to all."¹⁸ Discrimination is a sin in denial of the equality of all men and the love of God. Religious persecution is a sin in denial of the free will of men. The Catholic Worker believes in religious fraternity and has very cordial relations with Jews, Methodists, Quakers, Baptists, and even atheists, tolerating and respecting the views of all.

Naturally the Catholic Worker believes in vigorous protection of civil liberties—to protect all from coercive power of the state. It believes in a pluralistic society—a society in which all groups no matter how unorthodox and unacceptable are guaranteed the right to exist, even the communists. The Catholic Worker condemns the trial and imprisonment of communists and despises those who inform on them. It has no use for McCarthy or for any dictators like Franco or Peron who promise to eliminate the communists. The Catholic Worker regards most communists as men who, though grossly misguided, are motivated by an idealism and devotion to humanity that far away excels that of the self-centered, grasping men who glorify capitalism.

All of the sympathies of the Catholic Worker are with the unfortunate and the mistreated. The Catholic Worker is very sympathetic to organized labor, though it is frequently critical of the materialism of union members. Catholic Workers have participated in innumerable strikes and have walked in picket lines for days. News of most strikes, especially in plants newly being organized, is reported regularly in **The Catholic Worker**. The Catholic Worker never has anything good to say about business. The whole capitalistic system must be abolished. It is so thoroughly evil that there can be no compromise with it. Wall Street and the banking interests are favorite Catholic Worker targets for castigation. The Catholic Worker is always very concerned with the plight of the

unemployed, the handicapped, the aged, immigrants, and minority ethnic groups like the Puerto Ricans and Negroes.

The Catholic Worker is not discouraged if the world shows no signs of adopting its program as such. The canons of success of the world are not those of the Catholic Worker. The doctrine of personalism only demands that each individual preach what he believes to be right and do everything possible to realize it. When the individual has done this, his responsibility is satisfied, and it is society's responsibility to respond to the right that has been set forth. The important thing is that the individual remain true to his ideals "though the whole world go otherwise."¹⁹

The response of the Catholic clergy in America to the philosophy of the Catholic Worker has been mixed. Many members of the lower clergy have been attracted by the Catholic Worker philosophy and have been inspired by it, but the hierarchy on the whole has remained rather cool to it. This cool response may be a reflection of the desire of the hierarchy to make the Catholic Church acceptable to American bourgeois society. Association of the Church with radical doctrines would jeopardize acceptance. However, there have never been any indications from the hierarchy that the doctrines of the Catholic Worker are incompatible with those of the Catholic Church.

1. Ed Willock, "Catholic Radicalism," *The Commonweal* (October 9, 1953), p. 632.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 631.
3. Matthew 25: 35-36.
4. Edward Marciniak, "Catholic and Social Reform." *The Commonweal* (September 11, 1953), p. 559.
5. Aaron I. Abell, "The Catholic Church and the American Social Question," *The Catholic Church in World Affairs* (Notre Dame, Indiana, University of Notre Dame Press, 1954), ed. Waldemar Gurian and M. A. Fitzimons, p. 397.
6. Willock, *op. cit.*, p. 631.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 630.
8. Mark 10: 23-25.
9. "Catholic Worker Positions," *The Catholic Worker* (September, 1954), p. 5.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Dorothy Day, "Distributism Versus Capitalism." *The Catholic Worker*, (October, 1954), p. 6.
12. St. John Chrysostom (from the Twelfth Address on the First Letter to Timothy), "Property is Theft," *The Catholic Worker* (February, 1954), p. 3.
13. St. Augustine, "Superfluities," *The Catholic Worker* (March, 1954), p. 8.
14. St. John Chrysostom, *op. cit.*
15. St. Clement of Alexandria, "When So Many Are Hungry," *The Catholic Worker* (March, 1954), p. 8.
16. "Catholic Worker Positions," *op. cit.*
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*

EASY ESSAYS

By Peter Maurin

BOURGEOIS CAPITALISTS

Bourgeois capitalists
don't want their pie
in the sky
when they die.
They want their pie
here and now.
To get their pie
here and now
bourgeois capitalists
give us
bigger and better
commercial wars
for the sake of markets
and raw materials.

But as Sherman says:
"War is hell."

So we get hell
here and now
because bourgeois capitalists
don't want their pie
in the sky
when they die,
but want their pie
here and now.

BOLSHEVIST SOCIALISTS

Bolshevist Socialists
like bourgeois capitalists
don't want their pie
in the sky
when they die.
They want their pie
here and now.
Bolshevist Socialists
give us
bigger and better
class wars
for the sake
of capturing the control
of the means of production
and distribution.

But war is hell,
whether it is
a commercial war
or a class war.

So we get hell
here and now
because Bolshevist Socialists
don't want their pie
in the sky

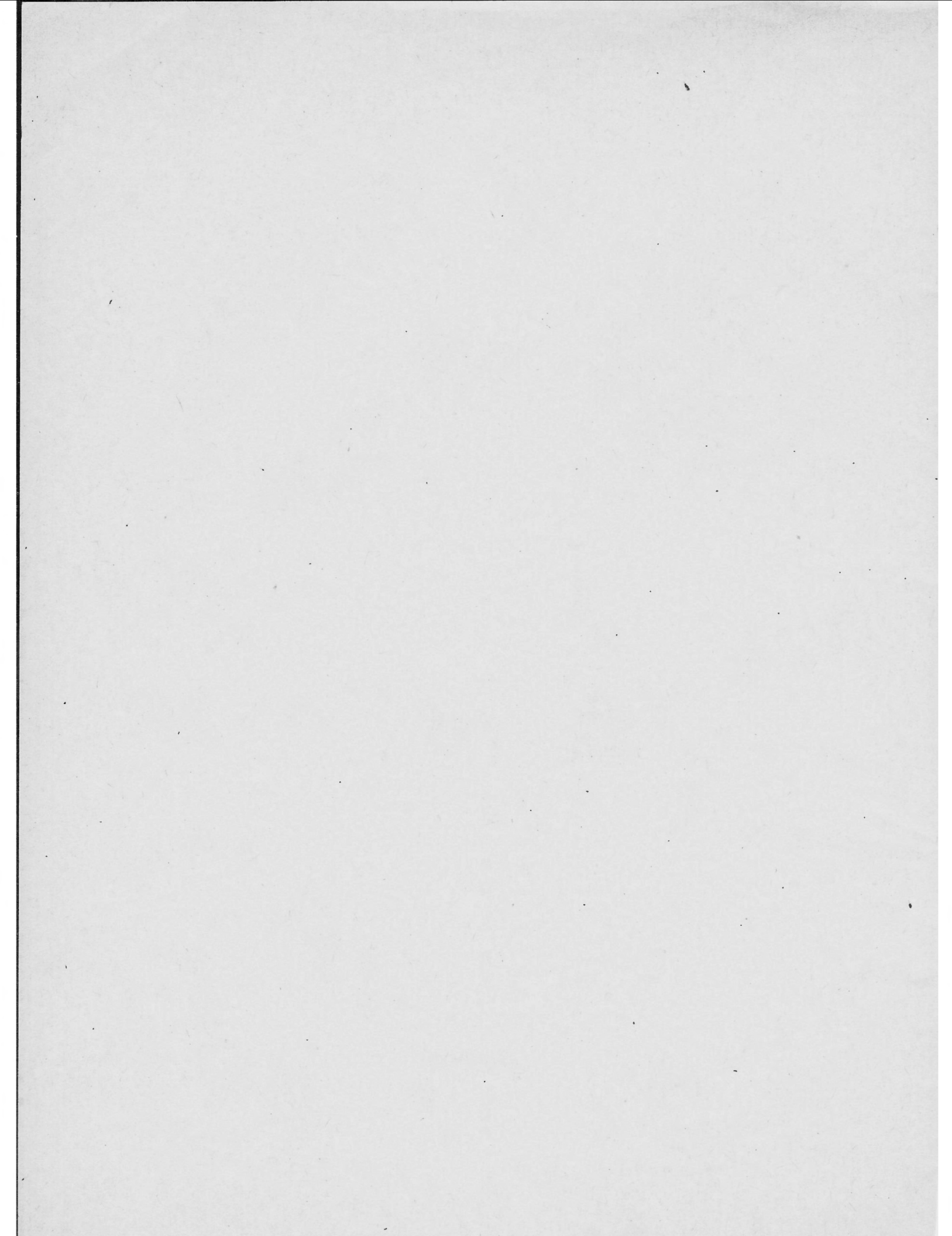
when they die,
but want their pie
here and now.

CATHOLIC COMMUNISM

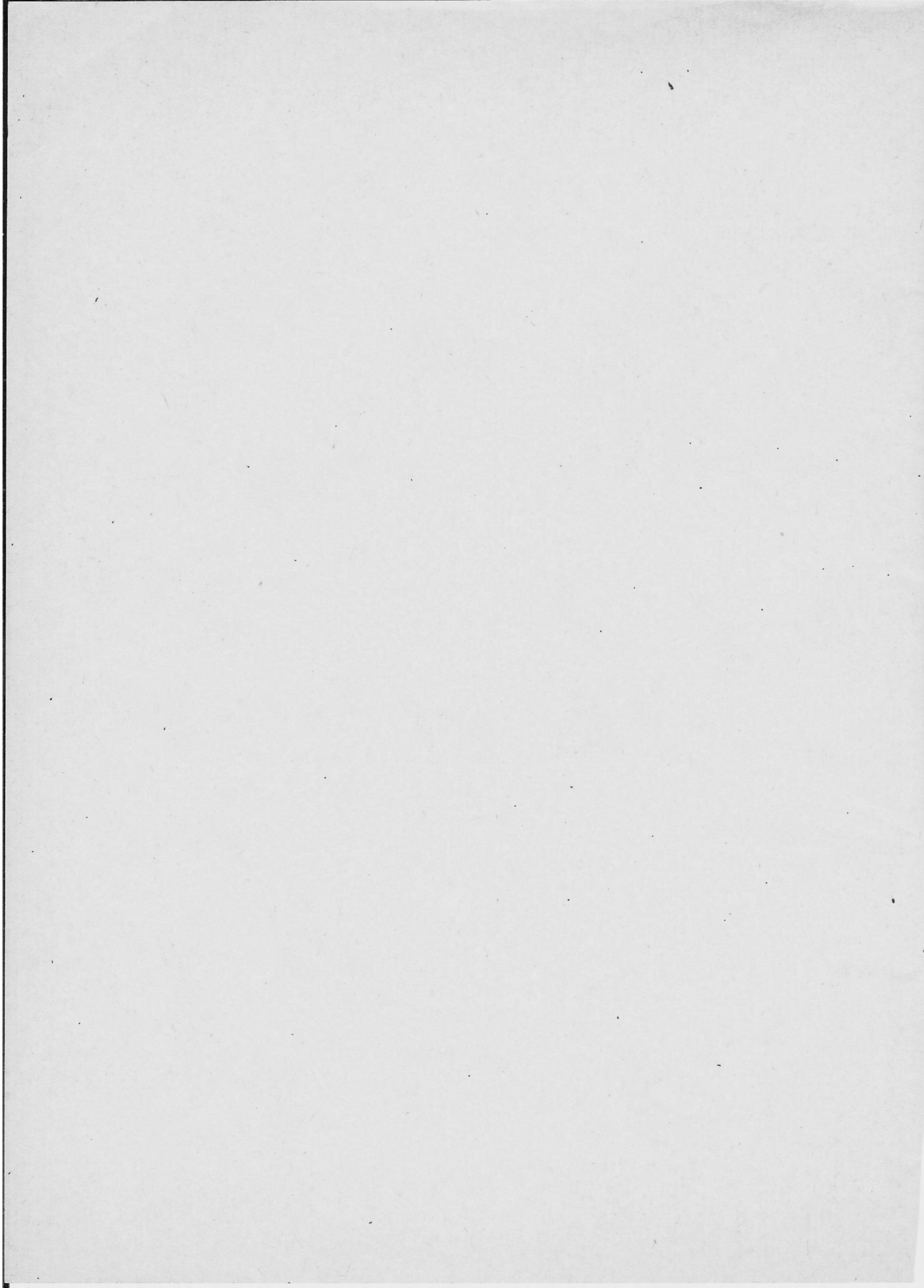
Bolshevist Socialists
as well as
bourgeois capitalists
give us hell
here and now
without leaving us the hope
of getting our pie
in the sky
when we die.

We just get hell.
Catholic Communism
leaves us the hope
of getting our pie
in the sky
when we die
without giving us hell
here and now.











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