

2016

## Jay Fox: the life and times of an American radical

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JAY FOX: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF AN AMERICAN RADICAL

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A Thesis

Presented To

Eastern Washington University

Cheney, Washington

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts in History


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By

David J. Collins

Spring 2016

THESIS OF DAVID J. COLLINS APPROVED BY

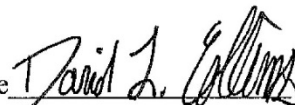
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## Acknowledgements

First, I have to acknowledge Ross K. Rieder who generously made his collection of Jay Fox papers available to me, as well as permission to use it for this project. Next, a huge thanks to Dr. Joseph U. Lenti who provided guidance and suggestions for improving the project, and put in countless hours editing and advising me on revisions. Dr. Robert Dean provided a solid knowledge of the time period through coursework and helped push this thesis forward. Dr. Mimi Marinucci not only volunteered her time to participate on the committee, but also provided support and guidance to me from my first year as an undergraduate at Eastern Washington University, and continues to be an influential mentor today. I also want to acknowledge David Kingma and Stephanie Plowman, from the special collections of the Foley Library at Gonzaga University, for providing me access to the Fox papers and listening to me tell story after story. Thanks to Rosina Vertz and the librarians at the Key Center Branch of the Pierce County Library for being friendly and helpful in making the Fox papers available to me. Dr. Nathaniel Hong from Olympic College was helpful in finding some of the Fox papers, as well as offering guidance despite not having me as a student for years before I contacted him. Thanks to Dr. Greg Hall from Western Illinois University for helping me track down sources and for sharing insight on Jay Fox, in addition to making available his essay on Fox in *Left History*. Thanks to Dr. Athan Theoharis at Marquette for help me navigate the Freedom Of Information Act (FOIA) process. I would also like to acknowledge Leila Luginbill, daughter of Stella Retherford, who invited me to her house overlooking the former Home colony and shared stories and photos from the colony. Thanks to the Key Peninsula Historical Association for making that meeting possible, as well as showing me the press Fox used to publish *The Agitator*, which rests in their museum. Tiffany Magazzeni and Russell Mottram deserve huge thanks for reading draft copies and providing helpful edits over the last year. Finally, Dr. Laura Hodgman gave encouragement along the way, and her support and kind words during some difficult patches helped me finish this project on time.

This project would not have been possible with the intellectual giants of the anarchist movement. Starting with Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Mikhail Bakunin, Peter Kropotkin, Voltairine de Cleyre, Dyer D. Lum, Hippolyte Havel, Jay Fox, Alexander Berkman, and Emma Goldman – to name just a few. These charismatic figures have made the study of anarchism an enjoyable and enlightening experience. Finally, thanks to Paul Avrich and Howard Zinn. Without the work of these two giants, I would not have continued my formal study of history. This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Nicola Sacco, Bartolomeo Vanzetti, August Spies, Albert Parsons, George Engel, Adolph Fischer, Louis Lingg, and all the other anarchists who have given their lives for the cause around the world. Your memory and spirit live on through the work of projects like this.

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## Introduction

Numerous revolutionary movements of a radical, anti-capitalist nature extolled the virtues of the proletariat. Tran Tu Binh described his effort to proletarianize himself in his 1985 memoir by leaving his job as a bible teacher to work on a rubber plantation in *Red Earth: A Vietnamese Memoir of Life on a Colonial Rubber Plantation*.<sup>1</sup> There are a myriad of examples from the Bolshevik revolution that further indicate the imminent place of workers in the revolutionary vanguard. Indeed, the notion of workers primacy in all revolutions are such that the leader of the Communist Party is nearly always the General Secretary.

From the late nineteenth to the middle of the twentieth century, Jay Fox was involved in a number of revolutionary movements. From his initial introduction to anarchism through the Knights of Labor to his membership in the Communist Party of the United States, Jay Fox was involved in the fight against capitalism for his entire adult life. It was precisely his role as a worker that granted him the revolutionary credentials to be an intellectual.

For many radicals – particularly for anarchists, there is an inherent problem with

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1 An example of one such conversation, while the author speaks of a man he met named Tran, who told him, “If you want to secure land for the impoverished tillers, then you must strike down the feudal landlords.” “If you want the workers to trust you, so that you can make a revolution together,” he advised me, “you must proletarianize yourself.” I was at a loss, and asked, “How do I proletarianize myself?” “You must frequent the places where workers are – like ports, factories, rubber plantations,” Tran explained. “The goods of this life are all created by their hands, and they will control the destiny of humanity. You must go in and live among them, campaign with them and learn from them in order to make the revolution together. Only then can you succeed.” Tran Tu Binh, *The Red Earth: A Vietnamese Memoir of Life on a Colonial Rubber Plantation*, ed. David G. Marr, trans. John Spragens, Jr. (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Center for International Studies Monographs in International Studies, 1985), 11.

authority. Many early anarchists were also highly suspicious of people who were not workers. Intellectuals combined two problems in one, they were not workers and did not toil, and they often attempted to dictate to workers how to live their lives. What is unique about Jay Fox was that he was a worker first with minimal education. When he critiqued leading figures of the anarchist movement like Alexander Berkman for not being a real worker, he was echoing the words of others. It is for this and other reasons soon to be mentioned that this project looks at the life and work of Jay Fox.

The analysis herein pursues a few main goals. First, it tells the story of the life of Jay Fox in a way that has not been done before. While other historians have examined his political philosophy (this project will too, to an extent), this study gives the first examples of some ideological positions held by Fox that twenty-first century morality would find objectionable. In addition to looking at the interesting stories that make up the life and times of Jay Fox, it is also my goal to look at whether Fox meets the criteria put forward by Antonio Gramsci for an organic intellectual. Finally, where possible, it is my goal to map the trajectory of the radical left with the proclivities of Jay Fox. In this way, I hope to show how the life of Jay Fox truly was one of an American radical. Ultimately, my research and Fox's writing demonstrate that he was an organic intellectual, that his credentials as a worker with minimal education gave him the authority to be a writer and an authenticity that he criticized other leaders of radical movements for lacking. Lastly, though it does not perfectly fit, there are similarities between the political evolution of Jay Fox and the revolutionary movement against capitalism in the United States, and this project will explore them.



### Previous historiography

Thus far, the two most comprehensive examinations of the life of Jay Fox have been a presentation by Mary M. Carr in 1987 entitled, *Jay Fox: Anarchist at Home* and a 2012 article, published in *Left History* by historian Greg Hall, *Jay Fox: A Journey from Anarchism to Communism*. In this most thorough analysis of the life of Fox outside the difficult to find presentation by Mary Carr, Hall makes a similar argument to one that will be made in this paper, “In many respects, Fox's most active period in the labor movement and as a writer, from the 1890s to the 1920s, dovetails well with the history of the left wing of the American labor movement.”<sup>2</sup> Despite briefly appearing in a number of other places, an extended examination of Jay Fox has not been attempted outside the two projects listed above. Works like *Utopias on Puget Sound* by Charles Pierce LeWarne (1995) and Justin Wadland's more recent *Trying Home* (2014) briefly discuss the character of Fox, but lack the in-depth analysis this project strives for. While the works of Hall and Carr are tremendously important, and provide excellent starting points, this project will seek to examine different aspects of the life of Fox in greater detail than the aforementioned scholars. This will manifest itself in a few ways. First, this work includes seven essays from Fox, including two chapters from his unpublished memoir only available in a few libraries and archives in the state of Washington. Second, it provides a

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2 Greg Hall, “Jay Fox: A Journey from Anarchism to Communism.” *Left History* 16.1 (Spring/Summer 2012): 31. For those interested in Carr's thesis, the full lecture notes are available in the Key Center branch of the Pierce County Library in Lakebay, Washington in one of the numerous folders on the residents and history of the Home colony. There is also a slightly different version in the Foley Library at Gonzaga University in their collection of Jay Fox papers.

more complete look at Fox by showing some of his ideological positions not mentioned by the previous scholars – including including his ideas, shocking by contemporary standards, on race and gender. Lastly, it will consider the question of whether Fox fits the profile of a Gramscian organic intellectual, an argument not made by any of the previous scholars.

Furthermore, as briefly mentioned above, this study includes a second section, an appendix, that contains seven essays written by Fox I have transcribed from a vast trove of documents made available by Ross K. Rieder. These appended documents allow the first section to proceed without being encumbered by substantial sections of quotation. Moreover, they allow a more in-depth look at some of the fantastic stories of the life of Jay Fox, told in his own words, while demonstrating a homespun writing-style born of necessity and directed towards a working class audience. Finally, I have included an essay considered controversial by present standards, a text called, “Men, Women and Morals.” The positions put forward by Fox we might likely find problematic today, nonetheless they allow the reader to understand a more complete portrait of the man, one that was previously absent from the historical record.

### **Clarification of terms**

Traditionally, politically leftists politicians or partisans have pursued their goals using one of two strategies – the ballot box or revolution. While conventional leftists and even some socialists contend that revolutionary change can occur through the vote,

radical leftists argue that this change can only come from a revolution. While it was the case that a figure like Eugene V. Debs could run for President of the United States of America five times on the Socialist ticket - his most successful showing was in 1912 when he received nearly a million votes.<sup>3</sup> It would be only five years later that the Bolshevik revolution would seize power in the Soviet Union rather than wait for an election. It is in this most fundamental way that the radical left differs from the traditional left, though this is just one interpretation. Further, some argue that any movement away from capitalism and towards something different is radical, regardless of whether the change comes through revolution or vote. For the purposes of this paper, I adopt the loosest interpretation for the radical left – that being any group interested in the overthrow of capitalism. Anarchism, as defined by George Woodcock, is “... a system of social thought, aiming at fundamental changes in the structure of society and particularly – for this is the common element uniting all its forms – at the replacement of the authoritarian state by some form of non-governmental cooperation between free individuals.”<sup>4</sup>

Antonio Gramsci was one of the founding members of the Italian Communist Party and member of parliament. After the rise of Benito Mussolini and the fascists, Gramsci was sent to prison. Despite the stated goal of the regime to stop his mind from working for twenty years, Gramsci managed to smuggled out a number of notebooks which would come to be known as *Quaderni del carcere*. In one of the essays contained in the notebooks, he outlined a theory of intellectuals. Gramsci thought that there were

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3 Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Introduction to *Writings and Speeches of Eugene V. Debs* (New York: Hermitage Press, 1948), x.

4 George Woodcock, *Anarchism* (New York: Penguin Books, 1975), 11.

two types of intellectuals – those with formal training and people who were seemingly intuitively smart. Gramsci believed that all men had the capacity to be intellectuals, and organic intellectuals were just naturally endowed with intellectual talent. In his own words, Gramsci wrote,

All men are intellectuals, one could therefore say: but not all men have in society the function of intellectuals.<sup>5</sup> When one distinguishes between intellectuals and non-intellectuals, one is referring in reality only to the immediate social function of the professional category of the intellectuals, that is, one has in mind the direction in which their specific professional activity is weighted, whether towards intellectual elaboration or towards muscular-nervous effort. This means that, although one can speak of intellectuals, one cannot speak of non-intellectuals, because non-intellectuals do not exist. But even the relationship between efforts of intellectual-cerebral elaboration and muscular-nervous effort is not always the same, so that there are varying degrees of specific intellectual activity. There is no human activity from which every form of intellectual participation can be excluded: *homo faber* cannot be separated from *homo sapiens*.<sup>6</sup> Each man, finally, outside his professional activity, carries on some form of intellectual activity, that is, he is a “philosopher”, an artist, a man of taste, he participates in a particular conception of the world, has a conscious line of moral conduct, and therefore contributes to sustain a conception of the world or to modify it, that is, to bring into being new modes of thought.<sup>7</sup>

More specifically, to the question of organic intellectuals, Gramsci writes,

Every organic development of the peasant masses, up to a certain point, is linked to and depends on movements among the intellectuals. With the urban intellectuals it is another matter. Factor technicians do not exercise any political function over the instrumental masses, or at least this is a phase that has been superseded. Sometimes, rather, the contrary takes place, and the instrumental masses, at least in the person of their own organic intellectuals, exercise a political influence on the technicians. The central point of the question remains the distinction between intellectuals as an organic category of every fundamental social group and intellectuals as a traditional category. From this distinction there flow a whole

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5 There is a footnote in the text that reads, “Thus, because it can happen that everyone at some time fries a couple of eggs or sews up a tear in a jacket, we do not necessarily say that everyone is a cook or tailor.”

6 There is another footnote in the text that reads, “i.e. Man the maker (or tool-bearer) and Man the thinker.”

7 Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, trans. and ed. by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 9.

series of problems and possible questions for historical research. The most interesting problem is that which, when studied from this point of view, relates to the modern political party, its real origins, its developments and the forms which it takes. What is the character of the political party in relation to the problem of intellectuals?<sup>8</sup>

With the terms adequately defined and the historiography established, the next section of the project is a biographic sketch of Jay Fox.

### **Jay Fox: A Biography**

Born August 20, 1870 in New Jersey to Irish Catholic immigrants, the Fox clan moved in short order to Chicago where, according to Mary M. Carr, Jay grew up, “in the back of the stockyards in the midst of a medley of other poor foreigners.”<sup>9</sup> His parents were both staunchly Roman Catholic and were disappointed that young Jay was not a pious youth who would one day become a priest. In the first section of his unpublished autobiography, Fox noted,

In those days about every Irishman one met was a Democrat. The reason was that while the Republicans held all the federal jobs, the large cities and states were ruled by Democrats. As for me, I was expected to follow in his (my father's) footsteps. Thus on the day of my arrival squalling on the American scene I was both a Democrat and a Roman Catholic; a stable combination of the creeds that should suffice to keep any normal youth squarely on the path of virtue and respectability. However, 'such trash was not the food for me,' to quote the fox in the nursery rhyme. I became a rebel, to the great dismay of my parents and friends who thought that if I followed in the beaten path on which so many mighty men had

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8 Ibid, 15.

9 Mary Carr, “Jay Fox: Anarchist at Home” (Presentation, Pacific Coast Branch, National Historical Communal Societies Association, Second Annual Meeting, Tacoma and Home, Washington, May 15-16, 1987). Also, Fox indicated that his mother's brother lived in Chicago, which was part of the appeal for moving the family there, as he seemed to have a line on a job for Fox's father.

trodden I might indeed reach the top.<sup>10</sup>

Dropping out of school at the age of fourteen to earn fifty cents a day working for the so-called sauerkraut-king of Chicago, Fox noted that all a worker needed to know was how to read, write, and make change.<sup>11</sup> Even a cursory look at the writing left behind makes it clear that what Fox lacked in formal training he more than made up for in a rustic style which had a unique appeal for the workers of the day.

By the time Fox was sixteen he found employment at the Malleable Iron Works factory and had joined the Knights of Labor, one of the unions participating in a general strike that would shut down the city beginning on May 1, 1886. By May 3, striking workers trounced the workers trying to break the strike and set their buses on fire. When the next shift ended, those who had crossed the line earlier emerged from the factory to discover the smoldering ashes of the buses sent to return them home. More police arrived on the scene and responded to rock-throwing from the crowd with their guns. Fox wrote that more police arrived and began shooting the workers.<sup>12</sup> Fox went on to write that a bullet passed through him and killed the worker in front of him. He described this as his introduction to the class war, which after this was no longer mere hyperbole.<sup>13</sup> Despite being wounded, he attended the now-infamous meeting at Haymarket square the

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10 Fox, Jay, "Fox's childhood experiences", No Date, Jay Fox Papers, File 1:1, Gonzaga University Foley Library, Spokane, WA.

11 Mary Carr, "Jay Fox: Anarchist at Home" (Presentation, Pacific Coast Branch, National Historical Communal Societies Association, Second Annual Meeting, May 15-16, 1987, Tacoma and Home, Washington). It is worth noting here as well that different versions of his writing indicated that workers only needed to know how to read and to work. (It appears to be from his autobiography, though it is labeled "Fox's childhood experiences." and is located in the Foley library at Gonzaga University.)

12 Jay Fox, *Autobiography*, roughly on page 12, and can be found at Gonzaga University under the heading "Fox's childhood experiences" and in the Ross K. Rieder papers under the heading "autobiography."

13 There are conflicting reports of where the bullet struck Fox, whether it was through the arm, finger, or ear. Regardless, what is not in question was whether he was wounded by police bullet on that day.

following day, where someone threw a bomb in the middle of a group of police – wounding many and killing a few.<sup>14</sup> This experience would manifest itself as Fox's introduction to anarchism, and would ignite the smoldering embers of resistance to what he viewed as the dual evils of capitalism and the state.

There were many examples from different anarchists who discussed the importance of the Haymarket affair in their radicalization. Renowned anarchist historian Paul Avrich noted, “The Haymarket affair – the unfairness of the trial, the savagery of the sentences, the character and bearing of the defendants – fired the imagination of many young idealists and won more than a few to the anarchist cause.”<sup>15</sup> Many of those who would go on to become leading figures in the anarchist movement were first exposed to the ideology through the Haymarket affair. One of the most pivotal figures in the history of anarchism, Emma Goldman, explained that the Haymarket affair was her first exposure to the ideal of anarchism, to provide just one of a number of examples.<sup>16</sup>

Anarchism was not the only radical cause that Fox was involved in. His personal relationships were rarely inhibited by the traditional norms and mores of society. Fox met his first wife in Chicago while she was married to a man named Morris Rasnick.<sup>17</sup> After leaving Rasnick for Fox and taking her two children to New York, Fox rented a room

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14 The number of dead vary depending on who you ask and how the event was framed. Technically, whatever the final number is needs to have five added to it, for the four men who were executed for giving speeches and the one who committed suicide in his cell.

15 Paul Avrich, *An American Anarchist: The Life of Voltairine de Cleyre* (Princeton: Princeton University press, 1978), 49.

16 Emma Goldman, *Living My Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knof, 1931), 8.

17 Though I cannot be sure, it is possible that Fox may have been married to someone else at the time as well. Fox almost never wrote about his personal affairs, and even the paternity of Esther's children is still a question.

from Rasnick before following his new wife and adopted children east.<sup>18</sup> A picture from an anarchist-leaning commune based in present day western Washington state called the Home colony around 1910 depicts Rasnick visiting and staying with Fox and his ex-wife, suggesting that Rasnick held no grudge or ill will towards the Foxes.<sup>19</sup> In continuing this trend, when the General Secretary of the Communist Party USA William Z. Foster came to visit Jay and Esther at the colony, she ended up leaving with Foster.<sup>20</sup> While one might think this would be a problem for Fox, to the contrary the two remained lifelong friends. Indeed, Foster sent a letter to Fox where he recommended revisions to the autobiography manuscript Fox had been working on, and concluded the letter by letting Fox know that Esther was sending her love.<sup>21</sup>

Haymarket would not be the only infamous case in the history of American anarchism that would involve both Fox and the eyes of the entire nation. In 1901 Fox was employed as a blacksmith in Chicago when in August a man inquired about renting a

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18 In his personal writings, Fox indicated that they nearly always traveled this way, with Esther and the children traveling first while Jay stayed back to work and save funds. Also, as mentioned above, the paternity of the children was somewhat in question.

19 The photograph, which I viewed in the private collection of Leila Luginbill, the daughter of former Home resident and historian Stella Retherford, which is also available in the Washington State Historical Society, has a question mark after 1910.

20 Esther had a son from the marriage with Rasnick, named David, who helped Jay with the newspaper during his time at the colony and had taken his last name. Later in life, however, David would change his last name to Foster. While in contemporary society, the idea of “monogamish” or non-traditional unions are increasingly *en vogue*, Fox and others living at this particular colony over a century ago were already practicing similar experiments in progressive sexual politics. Emma Goldman described having relationships and feelings for more than one man at a time in her autobiography – further indication that this idea was not uncommon in various radical circles. Though sexual politics is not the focus of this study, it remains a possibility for exploration by future historians or those more specifically interested in its history. It also serves to add an additional layer of complexity to an already complicated man. As questions of strict monogamy become increasingly popular, it is worth providing a historical context that shows these ideas are not as new as people might think. Indeed, as historians that first began studying gender would later move on to writing on the question of masculinity, it is not unreasonable to think that future historians may not be interested in investigating questions of alternatives to monogamy.

21 This came at the end of his life, as Foster edited the manuscript for Fox's unfinished autobiography.



room. He was sent upon the recommendation of Abe Isaacs, editor of the anarchist newspaper Free Society. Though Fox was not a landlord, he did have a spare room at the time. This young man introduced himself as Neuman and, despite being pressed by Fox, did not make much conversation, went to bed early, and was gone in the morning before Fox could speak with him further.<sup>22</sup> A few weeks later, on September 7, Fox was shocked to see the face of that man on the cover of his newspaper. The headline revealed that the name of the youth was not Neuman but Leon Czolgosz, and the accompanying picture was a mug shot. The young man assassinated President William McKinley. Fox immediately knew that he and his anarchist comrades would spend time in jail for this, if not lose their lives outright, and he was half-right.

Swept up amongst nearly every other radical the police could find, Fox was ushered off to jail in short order. Making the best of a bad situation, Fox wrote that he loudly sang a famous labor tune, alerting his comrades on the other side of the jail that he was captured. After about a week of being held, Fox was called in to explain to the Chief of Police how anarchists would bring about their revolution. "Here was my opportunity. These club swinging bums are an ignorant lot who never read anything but the sports page. Now let them listen to a lecture on Anarchism. They asked for it."<sup>23</sup> After which he launched into a detailed explanation of anarchism, and proved to his captors that he was not an easily manipulated simpleton, as they had previous thought, but instead possessed

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22 Fox noted that he called himself Neuman, though others indicate he called himself Nieman, from the German for nobody. Since Fox did not write very much about himself, I cannot say for certain if he spoke German and knew what it meant, or didn't and thus misspelled his name.

23 Jay Fox, "Autobiography" from the Ross K. Rieder collection of Jay Fox Papers at the Key Center branch of the Pierce County Library, Lakebay, WA. The full chapter of this story appears in the appendix.

a nuanced understanding of both the state and capital, and the nature of the oppression which every man in the room was experiencing.

Perhaps the most important shift in the political thinking of Fox was his decision to join the Communist Party in 1923.<sup>24</sup> In the aptly named, “Why I joined the Communist Party,” Fox described his decision to join the CP for a few reasons. He began by explaining that he had not abandoned the cause of anarchism, a cause to which he had been committed since he was sixteen years old, but instead that he was changing his method of struggle. Viewing anarchism as outmoded and ineffective, Fox went on to detail the numerous downfalls of the movement during his years of involvement. Perhaps chiefly among them was the fact that there were more anarchists or individuals sympathetic to the cause after the events at Haymarket in 1886 than there were nearly forty years later when Fox joined the CP.<sup>25</sup> Fox describes the shift to syndicalism and how it mirrored moves in Spain, perhaps unaware how Spanish syndicalism has been co-opted or crushed by the Primo de Rivera dictatorship. Here, Fox began to allude to the evolution of thinking from anarchist-communism, to syndicalist, to member of the Communist Party. There was also a current in his writing of the time that argued the best chance for the worldwide overthrow of capitalism was through the CP. To his dying day, Fox extolled the virtues of the Soviet revolution and reminisced about how close it had

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24 There were a number of iterations of the communist party in the United States. For the purposes of this paper, it is less important which iteration of the party Fox was involved with, nor how long he maintained an active or even quasi-active membership. What is important was the shift in his philosophy based on the belief that the best chance for revolution was through the party. Additionally, the term CP will be used interchangeably with the term Communist Party and also denotes more specific support for the party than a specific iteration of said party.

25 In later writings, Fox indicated that when Berkman and Goldman were deported following their agitation against World War I, that the anarchist movement more or less left with them. In his work *Anarchism* George Woodcock argued that the Haymarket affair was the height of the anarchist movement in the United States.

come to breaking the back of capitalism. Soon, he thought, the workers would reach a surplus, the price would go to zero, and money could be eliminated. Clippings Fox saved showed he kept brochures about trips to the Soviet Union, though he was almost certainly unable to able to afford even one.<sup>26</sup>

Sylvia Retherford, in her introduction to the transcriptions of the Ross K. Rieder papers located at the Key Center branch of the Pierce County Library in Lakebay, Washington, wrote that Fox spoke until the end of his life about the virtues of socialism and the Soviet revolution. While it may seem counter-intuitive that a lifelong anarchist would join the Communist Party, this was part of a larger trend in the radical left.

In his work *The Red Scare, A Study in National Hysteria, 1919-1920* historian Robert K. Murray wrote,

... immediately following the Bolshevik Revolution, both the Wobbly and the anarchist press switched almost completely to the Bolshevik line. Berkman and Goldman's *Mother Earth* and *The Blast* revealed that the two anarchist authors were decidedly outspoken in their initial support of the Bolshevik viewpoint and agitated for Communist upheaval in the United States.<sup>27</sup>

These two bits of anecdotal evidence indicate that, although he was condemned by some of his contemporaries for siding with the Bolsheviks and joining the Communist Party, he was not the only anarchist to offer support for the revolution, even if that support for many would only be temporary.<sup>28</sup> Forwarding a similar line, historian George Woodcock

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26 Given how Fox tended to write about the events of his personal life in his memoir, including describing a trip he and Cora took to California, he certainly would have written about any travel opportunities he may have had to the Soviet Union. As such, it is safe to presume that he never visited the Soviet Union.

27 Robert K. Murray, *Red Scare: A Study in National Hysteria, 1919-1920* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955), 39. Also Berkman and Goldman referred to Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman, two foreign born and perhaps most well-known anarchists in the United States. Lastly, Wobbly was a term for a member of the Industrial Workers of the World, or the IWW.

28 Goldman would write disapprovingly of her time in the Soviet Union after the Bolshevik revolution in a book that Doubleday called, "My Disillusionment in Russia" though her autobiography indicated she

noted that, "... the advent of communism, which in the United States as in other countries attracted many of the younger anarchists and syndicalists into its ranks."<sup>29</sup>

In the late 1890s there was a push by leaders of the radical left to socialize the new territories on the west coast.<sup>30</sup> In June of 1897 Eugene V. Debs was making appeals in the *New York Times* for radicals to move to the new Washington territory in droves to tip the scales of the government in favor of socialism, and to then establish a collective worker's commonwealth.<sup>31</sup> Jay Fox was one of the charter members of the American Railroad Union, and part of the welcoming committee to greet Debs after his prison term surrounding the Pullman strike.<sup>32</sup> Though he would not heed that call until 1908, Fox would later expand on this ideology in his personal writings and there is an argument to be made that the present-day Cascadia movement is the evolution of this idea.<sup>33</sup>

By the time he was in his thirties, Fox was living at the Home colony, an anarchist-leaning commune in western Washington state located near present-day unincorporated Home. Fox's decision to move to the colony was at the behest of the colonists, who had been without a functioning newspaper since its suppression by government.<sup>34</sup> Using a revolutionary era printing press from 1793, Fox began publishing

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submitted the work with the title "My Two Years in Russia." Emma Goldman, *Living My Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knof, 1931), 953.

29 George Woodcock, *Anarchism* (New York: Penguin Books, 1975), 441.

30 As the west coast would become one of the last areas to be granted statehood, there was a push by certain elements of the radical left, including the forthcoming discussion of Eugene Debs, who wanted all the radicals and rebels to move to the new states, Debs advocated for Washington in particular, to move (and vote) to create a bastion for progressivism in the United States.

31 Charles Pierce LeWarne, *Utopias on the Puget Sound, 1885-1915* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1975), 130.

32 Jay Fox, "Autobiography" from the Ross K. Rieder collection of Jay Fox Papers at the Key Center branch of the Pierce County Library, Lakebay, WA.

33 The Cascadia movement is a present day revolutionary movement that calls for a section of the pacific northwest to secede from the United States and become an anti-capitalist state.

34 There were numerous issues with the colony and the post office. From issues being able to ship second

*The Agitator* partly in an effort to raise funds for the colonies, but also because he believed deeply in newspapers. Since he only had a grade school education, Fox felt that the newspaper could act as a sort of university for the working man. Considering the quotes from Gramsci on the question of an organic intellectual, it shows that Fox still had a capacity to do intellectual work despite being from a working-class background.

### **Antonio Gramsci: his idea of an organic intellectual and historical relevance**

Antonio Gramsci was born on the Italian island of Sardinia on January 22, 1891.<sup>35</sup> As one of the founding members of the Italian Communist Party he was subjected to retribution from Benito Mussolini in the form of a prison term.<sup>36</sup> Many of his most important works emerged from a collection of notebooks smuggled from prison before he died of complications from poor health. In his seminal essay on the subject of intellectuals from one section of the prison notebooks, Gramsci indicated that all men were intellectuals, or had the capacity to be. It was impossible, he concluded, for anyone to be anti-intellectual, as all humans were endowed with an intellect, it was just that some men had formal training while others were innately intelligent.<sup>37</sup> It is through the misspellings and errors that occur in the writing of Jay Fox that the status of organic

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class – one of the only ways to make bulk mailing a profitable endeavor, was removed from the newspapers of the colonies, and eventually the post office itself would be removed entirely. Some of the mailings would also be used against the colonists in legal proceedings, including Fox himself

35 John M. Cammett, *Antonio Gramsci and the Origins of Italian Communism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), 3.

36 Once a member of the Italian Communist Party, Mussolini was expelled from the party before forming his own Fascist party.

37 The choice to say “all men” and not “all people” or “everyone” was Gramsci's, and when I talk about men having formal intellectual training, it is because the overwhelming majority of those with access to education at the time (1920s and earlier in Italy) were almost exclusively men.

intellectualism is borne out.

It was not only Gramsci who thought about the question of intellectuals, but it was also a hotly debated topic in anarchist circles. Early anarchism was closely associated with the poor and working class and had hostility to the ruling classes. This not only manifested itself in a distrust of the owners of the factory, but also on the intellectual class who did not have to toil. In his unpublished personal writings, Fox wrote about famous anarchist Alexander Berkman with derision, noting that he was not a worker and thus lacked revolutionary credentials. Coming from poor, immigrant parents and himself a lifelong worker and agitator, Fox very much fit the mold for the type of intellectual that was preferred in revolutionary circles.

After numerous run-ins with authorities, including a conviction under an anti-anarchist law passed in the wake of President McKinley's assassination, numerous arrests at the colony for bathing in the bay, and multiple removals of their mailing privileges, the courts dissolved the Mutual Home Association charter around 1919.<sup>38</sup> Following this, Fox briefly moved to Chicago and brought with him the press used to publish *The Agitator*. There he re-branded the paper *The Syndicalist* and began working with William Z. Foster. This association would be short-lived, with only a few issues of the paper published before folding due to lack of support.<sup>39</sup>

After this failure, Fox returned to the colony a few years later by 1919. Mary Carr noted that he spent the years 1912-1918 living between Home and Chicago. His final act

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38 The Mutual Home Association was put in receivership in 1919 and finally dissolved by the courts in 1921. Many people, including Fox, lived at the colony for years. He and his wife remained until the 1960s.

39 This was revolutionary parlance for, "it made no money and had to fold."

of political participation was the Seattle general strike of 1919, and in June of that year he married Cora Peterson.<sup>40</sup> In the appendix essay on the strike, Fox describes in detail the order that was maintained by World War I veterans without the use of guns or clubs, and also the smooth functioning of basic necessities without orders coming from the top.<sup>41</sup>

Fox noted that the capitalists fear was palpable when he wrote:

News of the coming General Strike caused consternation in the ranks of the local capitalists. Were the workers about to emulate the recent action of the Russian toilers who had thrown the capitalist masters off their backs and taken over complete control of the country? Was this the beginning of the Revolution? Many of them thought so and fled the city.<sup>42</sup>

To provide a more practical example of how the power had shifted from city hall to the labor hall, Fox describes how nearly 3,000 gallons of milk were brought in daily by independent milkmen to serve the needs of the families in Seattle.<sup>43</sup> Given his belief in the revolutionary potential of the general strike, the entire essay is provided in the appendix. It provides still more examples of the anarchist principals of voluntary association and mutual aid put into practice.

Fox's involvement with the Seattle General Strike would be his last real act of political agitation. Though he would be briefly involved in the politics of the colony when he was elected President of the Mutual Home Association in 1917, it would be disbanded by the courts officially by 1921. Life on the colony consisted of attempts at running a business selling eggs which faltered in the wake of the great depression,

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40 Mary M. Carr, "Jay Fox: Anarchist at Home" (Presentation, Pacific Coast Branch, National Historical Communal Societies Association, Second Annual Meeting, May 15-16, 1987, Tacoma and Home, Washington).

41 Thus showing not only the potential for revolutionary syndicalism, but also that ideas of decentralized, hierarchy-free organization are not simply utopian but can, in fact, be put into practice.

42 Jay Fox, "Seattle General Strike" from the Ross K. Rieder collection at the Key Center branch of the Pierce County Library System, labeled pages 177-82.

43 Ibid.

occasional trips out for union activities, and sporadic work in the shipyard of Seattle to make ends meet. Hall pointed out that after Fox married Danish immigrant Cora Peterson in 1919, and the two built a house together, they mostly got by with the earnings from paintings she did on porcelain and fine china while Jay settled into a life of semi-retirement.<sup>44</sup>

### Conclusion

There are a few conclusions this project draws. First, various factors suggest that Fox meets the criteria of a Gramscian organic intellectual. Although his basic education consisted only of the ability to read and write, Fox would go on to be a writer, journalist, editor, and publisher for numerous outlets. Additionally, there is a line one can draw from the political evolution of Jay Fox to the trajectory of the radical left in the United States during the period under review. Fox was involved in all the seminal events in the history of anarchism in the United States, beginning with the Haymarket Affair of 1886, to the assassination of President McKinley in 1901, to the Sacco and Vanzetti trials of the 1920s to his letter writing campaigns later in life on behalf of populist causes from Home.<sup>45</sup> There was likely something to the argument made by Fox that when Goldman

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44 Greg Hall, "Jay Fox: A Journey from Anarchism to Communism." *Left History* 16.1 (Spring/Summer 2012): 31. Also, through going through personal documents in the special collections of the University of Washington, I discovered that a man named Ed Padgham helped make improvements on the Fox house and shared the home with the couple. When Fox died, his will indicated that the house be left to Cora and Ed, and between the time that Jay and Cora passed away, they sold the house to a doctor on the condition that if Cora should pass away before Ed, that payments of the mortgage would go to Ed, and that he was further allowed to live at the home until he passed away. I have found little additional information about Padgham, and even discussions with Greg Hall over e-mail have not yielded answers about Padgham as yet. This remains an active question for examination in future iterations of this project.

45 Fox also wrote on the subject of Sacco and Vanzetti, indicating that he felt the two men were



and Berkman left on the Buford, they took with them the last gasps of hopes for the anarchist movement in the United States.<sup>46</sup> It was not long afterwards that Fox joined the CP and formally threw his support behind the Bolshevik revolution, a shift that created great acrimony amongst his former comrades in anarchist circles. Like the party itself, Fox was harassed by authorities and ultimately lost favor with the public at large and the working people in general. From a man who gave lecture tours across the United States and the UK and had his writings translated in to different languages, including Japanese, it must have been difficult to transition to a simple life on an egg farm and rely on the earnings of his wife. As a man who began working at the age of fourteen, it must have been vexing for him to spend the last forty years of his life not participating in any revolutionary causes.

Going through the collections of clippings and letters to the editor towards the end of his life, Fox was an ardent supporter of the Bolshevik revolution from its outset in 1917 and would maintain a lifelong support of the cause. Never one to simply toe the line, there are letters to the editor in the Rieder papers that showed Fox wrote letters to the editor describing the differences between state socialism and Communism, arguing that the Soviet Union was the former.

When Fox reached maturity in the late 1880s, anarchism was the most exciting political philosophy of the era and Fox discovered it through the Knights of Labor. When he joined the Communist Party in 1923, it was out of frustration with the stagnation of

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railroaded for a crime they likely did not commit and died as martyrs for the class war, not unlike the Haymarket martyrs.

<sup>46</sup> Goldman and Berkman were deported for agitating against World War I, an act that was made illegal by the Wilson government. The Buford was the name of the ship that carried them and other Russian radicals back to the Soviet Union.

the anarchist movement.<sup>47</sup> If there was any one current which ran constantly throughout his political life, it was unionism. In the conclusion of his essay on Fox, Greg Hall writes, “Even though both Havel and Kelly made excellent critiques of Fox's support for the Bolsheviks, they did not seem to understand that his motives were tied to his commitment [to] the labor movement.”<sup>48</sup>

There is ample evidence that Fox was harassed by the authorities throughout his life. Whether it was being shot the day before the Haymarket affair or being arrested for providing lodging for *Czolgosz*, Fox was no stranger to the authorities. In this way, too, we can further see additional examples of the life of Fox mirroring that of the radical left. By the end of his life, the focus of the bureau and other law enforcement groups had shifted to the new left, but during his more active years all indications are that he experienced his fair share of abuse at the hands of the authorities.<sup>49</sup>

This work also seeks to provide a biographical sketch of Jay Fox, the man. If possible, it is worth noting the similarities of Fox's life to the evolution of the contemporary radical left. As an organic intellectual, his contribution to the radical canon proved that it is possible for those with minimal formal academic training to contribute valuable intellectual work to a cause. One can also see, through numerous

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47 “For many years I was worried about the condition of the Anarchist movement. All our efforts were not producing satisfactory results. Too few new converts.. A movement must grow or it will bog down into decay. That is what had been slowly happening to the movement during the recent years, and I thought something should be done about it. Just what I wasn't sure. We were following the beaten path of propaganda without getting anywhere. There were more anarchists in the United States in 1886 than forty (sic) years later.” Jay Fox, “Why I joined the Communist Party”, n.d. [5 sheets] TS with corrections. Fox Papers 1:2, – Gonzaga University Archives, Foley Library, Spokane, WA.

48 Greg Hall, “Jay Fox: A Journey from Anarchism to Communism.” *Left History* 16.1 (Spring/Summer 2012): 31. Hippolyte Havel and Harry Kelly were two noted anarchists who wrote scathing critiques of Fox after learning that he joined the Communist Party.

49 The New Left is a term used to include a number of emerging political movements in the 1960s that sought to bring about broad social reform including civil rights and abortion rights.

anecdotes of personal experience, that radical ideology did not just include the political sphere. Fox lived his life in a way that sought to maximize freedom. Whether he was involved with the Communist Party or raising the black flag of anarchism, Jay Fox was proof that one could overcome poverty, minimal education, and violence at the hands of both the state and capital to live life according to one's dictates. Whether he died an anarchist or something else, he truly lived his life according to the old anarchist creed – no gods, no masters. Finally, there is a connection between the way Jay Fox lived his life and the way he wanted to be remembered at his funeral. Fox wrote:

It is common practice when a man dies, for his friends to dig up the memory of whatever little good he did in life; then weep and wail over the corpse and bemoan the fates that deprived the world of so great a lover of mankind.

When I die let the time-honored process be reversed. Instead of tiring themselves with a search for the good I may incidentally have done, let my friends pile up the crooked jobs I pulled off; and conjure up, so far as their imagination is capable of the task, a mental picture of all the rascality I intended to put over if death had not taken me off the job. Then let them fill their glasses to the brim and drink to the memory of one, who, if worse than themselves, it was only because of greater opportunity.<sup>50</sup>

Even in death, Fox goes out with one last call to his friends and comrades to defy traditions. Truly Jay Fox was an American radical.

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50 Mary Carr, “Jay Fox: Anarchist at Home” (Presentation, Pacific Coast Branch, National Historical Communal Societies Association, Second Annual Meeting, May 15-16, 1987, Tacoma and Home, Washington).

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## Introduction and notes on methodology

During the course of this research, I came across a trove of immensely valuable primary source documents. How I even came upon the documents is itself an interesting story. My undergraduate research project focused on the Home colony, the anarchist-leaning commune in the unincorporated area of Pierce county, Washington known today as Home. As mentioned in the first section of this paper, Fox ran and sold a newspaper called *The Agitator* as a way of raising funds. A tip from professor Nathaniel Hong from Olympic College pointed me to the Key Center branch of the Pierce County Library where I discovered hundreds of pages of the writing of Jay Fox, photocopied by someone named Sylvia (Stella) Retherford. With a little digging, I learned that her grandparents were among the original three founding families of the colony, and she herself was raised there. Retherford described knowing Fox when he was an old man, and how he spoke of the Bolshevik revolution and the need to struggle against capitalism. Unfortunately, she passed away a few years ago, though her daughter was kind enough to invite me into her home, the one passed down from her mother, which overlooks the bay nearby the original colony site.

In the course of subsequent research conducted as a graduate student, I discovered a letter that Mrs. Retherford had written to someone named Ross K. Rieder, thanking him for allowing her access to his papers. Included in these documents was a card that indicated Rieder was the President of the Pacific Northwest Labor History Association. I

sent an e-mail to the PNLHA asking about Rieder and the collection, and a few days later I received an e-mail from Ross himself. We met at a diner the following week to discuss the papers and, much to my shock, he brought an old cardboard box filled with papers to our meeting. I frantically took notes during our discussion at the table about his involvement in the labor movement, and as I wondered how I would possibly transcribe all the documents while we sipped coffee, he asked how long I needed the papers. I was confused and asked him to clarify, and he asked me again how long I required them for. He said that Dr. Hall had the papers for over a year, so as long as I had it back before a year, he was fine. I ended up keeping the papers for a few months, transcribing what I could and translating from his cursive as much as possible before returning the papers after the conclusion of the fall academic session. Put simply, this project would not have been possible without Ross and his collection of papers.

Initially, my intention was to edit an anthology of the writings of Fox to make available to other scholars, in conjunction with the work of the aforementioned Dr. Gregory Hall. Instead, as a compromise, I am including this appendix section containing seven essays from Fox. Each section of his work will be prefaced with a brief introduction explaining the document which will follow, laying out the central themes and establishing a framework for working with the documents themselves. As indicated in the first section of this paper, Fox was born to illiterate immigrant parents, himself dropping out of school at the age of fourteen. The following essays seek to show that, despite lacking the polish of other writers of his day, Fox was still a talented intellectual. Each essay shows not only the homespun charm of a worker turned writer, but also

displays a very distinctive and enjoyable flair.

There is a constant danger for historians to over cite sources, particularly when the subject matter is of great personal interest. By supplementing the first section with a small collection of the work of Fox, it minimizes the need to over cite his work while still making available some of the very interesting stories of a unique man.

Before presenting and contextualizing the documents themselves, a brief word on the editorial process is required. All of the work is presented as is, without being edited. Instead of clogging the text with [sic] for both ease of reading and to show that Fox did lack formal training, the essays are presented as it. This includes the material within the texts that Fox crossed out. It also includes work that Fox may not have wanted people to read.<sup>51</sup> He wrote very little about his personal affairs – the vast majority of his writings are about revolutionary questions. By including both things that were crossed out, as well as possible alternative endings, my goal is to maximize the available material to the reader of this project. It is also an attempt at showing that Fox meets the criteria for an organic intellectual put forward by Gramsci. In addition to his position on organic intellectualism, this collection will also show the homespun writing style of a worker who lacked a formal education. Most important of all, however, is that the reader can read the work exactly as it was written. Perhaps what I found most persuasive about Fox and his writing style was that he did not put on a mask or attempt to be something that he was not. Providing his work, warts and all, I hope will make some headway into showing not

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51 In fairness, there were some things that Fox scratched out or otherwise made impossible to read. On some level, it seems that a simple strike-through was an almost conscious choice. Put another way, if Fox wanted something to not be readable, it was not readable. The reader may draw whatever conclusions from this that they will.

only who Fox was, but also reveal he stood for.

In the context of present-day ethics and morality, Fox had some flaws. There is one essay in particular that in the twenty-first century we find problematic when it comes to issues of equality. In “Men, Women, and Morals” Fox puts forward both sexist and racist positions. He argues that women are inherently less intelligent and therefore less moral than men. He goes on to add his belief that, “just as there are occasional negroes who are the intellectual superior of the average white male, but that does not affect the proposition of the general racial inferiority of the negro.”<sup>52</sup> This assumptions reveal that Fox was from a time when individuals blindly accepted what they believed to be the inherent inequality of the races and sexes, which might also begin to explain some of the reasons why earlier unions did not include any people of color, despite their similar (if not worse) state of exploitation by employers. Also, it is important that this information be included in the project because I do not wish to paint a one-sided portrait of Fox. Even though he believed in free love, he held many of the popular opinions of the time on race and gender. Nonetheless, his work still provides valuable insight into a particular brand of worker-intellectual that is only today receiving its due attention.

As much as possible, the texts appear in a conceptually-chronological order. Unfortunately, Fox rarely included the dates he wrote each work, so the order of the essays corresponds to the time period they refer to rather than when they were written. Rather than provide inaccurate dates, the reader can instead attempt to determine for themselves when the texts were written, if you so desire.

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52 Jay Fox Papers from the Ross K. Reider Collection, Key Center Library, Lakebay, Washington. Unlabeled black binder containing a copy of Mary M. Carr's lecture notes in the front flap. “MEN, WOMEN AND MORALS.” Labeled p. 1-11 but actually pages 8-13



## Introduction to “Tramping on a bicycle.”

*In this essay, located in the Gonzaga University Library special collections, Fox describes his harrowing liberation of a bicycle. Unlike the modern machine we think of today, with pedals and gears, these were the first generations of bicycles and had neither. As Fox himself will describe, the rider straddles the bicycle and pushes with their feet. What makes this story so interesting is not only the description of travel in the days before paved roads, but that it also paints a wonderful picture of what America was like at the end of the nineteenth century from a first hand account. Ubiquitous paved roads in our world, some that even have specific lanes for bicycles, are called in to sharp contrast with the muddy, ruddy roads Fox attempted to traverse.*

*Additionally, this story really describes the sort of interesting character Fox was. One must keep in mind when reading this story that the bicycle was a luxury item at the time, the equivalent cost of two and a half months salary. As such, the idea that someone might go on a tramp (the nineteenth century equivalent of a hobo or homeless person), in a luxury vehicle paints quite a vivid picture. Finally, as an editorial note, I have included a section of the work that Fox did not intend to include, noted by the strike-through. While I cannot be sure why, one reason Fox may have opted to remove this section was that he always thought very highly of workers and farmers, and would not want to cast them in a negative light. Regardless of the revolutionary ideological position held by Jay Fox, all anti-capitalists venerated workers and farmers. This part of the story is very interesting, which is why it is included, despite the fact that Fox may not have wanted it to be.*

## TRAMPING ON A BICYCLE

In the Nineties the bicycle rose rapidly in public favor. Factories sprang up like mushrooms overnight. Everybody wanted to be on wheels. The sudden demand for that excellent means of transportation and pleasure was due to the invention of the pneumatic tyre, an invention that later made the automobile possible. I was one of many thousands engaged in producing these handy little carriers, but I didn't own one. Which was nothing unusual, since it is the universal law of capitalist economies that the workers who produce everything shall own nothing. However by going short of other things the workers in considerable numbers did possess bicycles; as by deprivation in later years numbers of them came into the ownership of motor cars.

One day the Sheriff came into the bicycle shop where I worked and ordered us all out. Just like that, we were without means of life. How long would we have to wait for our pay? Would we ever get it? I was wondering as I packed up my tools. Then a bright idea struck me: In a rack close to the one in which the workers parked wheels was one containing new bikes. In the confusion attending the Sheriff's visit I might be able to "borrow" a new one without attracting attention. With a new bike that cost less than \$50 to produce and sold for \$100 retail, I would be sure of my pay and a little over as a bonus for the loss of my job. I consulted two of the boys who had bikes in the rack. Fine, they said, we can help by acting as a screen between the rack and the office. It worked fine. I nervously slipped my tool bag over the handle bar and lead my new iron horse out. Nothing to it. As easy as eating apple pie. Brains and nerve is said to be the prime requisites of a successful crook, yet I succeeded without either.

Of course, I could still put in a claim for wages. But, no, I wasn't that crooked. Anyway I didn't want to hang around any longer. Now that I had a bike I was ready to travel, to see the country. A product of the young bustling West, I was anxious to get a glimpse of the effete East and see that it had to offer a stranger. Transportation would be cheap. I could sit astride my little machine and walk. (Before the introduction of the sprocket and chain bicycle riders did actually propel themselves with their feet in contact with the ground.) I had only a few dollars, but that didn't bother me. It was Summer, I could sleep under the trees. I could get short jobs and could offer to work for my meals. A bicycle tramp would be quite a novelty and would attract interest; and it turned out that way. People were attracted by my adventures and never turned me down when I asked for food. Some put me up over night. One house I stayed three days during a rainy spell.

I bought a case made to fit into the frame of the bike into which I packed a shirt, underwear, socks and such tools as I might need, while on the back of the seat I strapped a blanket. Thus equipped, I started off, the first bicycle tramp to hit the road, and probably the only one since there is no record of any similar adventure. One the way I conceived another idea to make an easy dollar. Having contributed to the Labor press for some years I thought myself a bit of a writer, So I called on small town editors for an interview or a story of my trip. I found them ready for something new to give to their customers. Small town papers are pretty drab affairs at best. I would sit at a desk and write a column drawing on my imagination for much of the interesting matter. I was careful to get the paper's political slant before starting to write. That was important because the Presidential campaign of 1896 was on in full swing. I could therefore report

favorably on the political prospects of either party, according to the politics of the editor. There was nothing crooked about that from the news-writer's point of view. It was legitimate journalism. I gave the editors what they wanted.

As every capitalist newspaper supports one or the other party, political news had to be written to order regardless of truth or the writer's private opinions. He is a hireling paid to lie for the boss. And that is not only true of politics it is doubly true of economics.

As I sat there writing that stuff, I knew there were thousands of men and women throughout the capitalist world also writing lies, dangerous lies, vicious lies, lies about unions, lies about socialism, anarchism, liberalism, lies about the alleged glories of "free enterprise." With the additional lying of merchants about the quality of their goods and the lying of preachers about a nonexistent hereafter. How long, I thought, will the great masses of honest people who abhor lies and liars permit this lying capitalist system to endure?

The farmers I contacted were not much interested in the outcome of the coming election. Experience had taught them that whichever party ruled made no difference in their income. I understood they felt themselves slipping and were anxious to hear what I had to say about conditions in general. I told them that they were the last individualists in a collectivist age. A corporation, I said, is a collectivist body. That's what makes it powerful. The railroads, the banks, the packers, the implement companies, and the grain elevators are all capitalist combines of men and dollars, all able to set the price they charge for their productions, while the farmer must accept the price offered regardless of the cost of production. I quoted from the Department Of Agriculture report showing that

in 1880 twenty-six per cent of the farmers were renters. Ten years later the number of renters had risen to 35 per cent. And of the farms still owned by the tillers in 1890 twenty-eight per cent were mortgaged. (Despite its shortcomings the family farm is still struggling to exist in 1954. In a report on "Variations in Farming" two farm organizations join the National Chamber of Commerce in recommending the elimination of a quarter to two-thirds of the farms in this country.)

On arriving in Cleveland, I went to the bicycle club I knew existed there. I was gladly received into the fellowship as a wandering brother. In answer to their questions I related stories of the road, that I was making a cross country trip without funds, working and bumming and sleeping in haystacks and having educational experience and a good time. The club provided me with eats and a room. Next morning when I was about to depart, the secretary slipped me a ten dollar bill and hailed me as the first bicycle tramp. About fifty of the members had assembled outside and acted as my guide and escorted me to the city limits, where we dismounted and in partying with my new friends, I addressed them briefly as follows: This has been the most enlightening and delightful experience of my trip. A stranger, you received me as a friend and comrade; a glowing example of the brotherhood of man, that innate human attribute ever growing larger in the human heart that will in time, and in spite of entrenched wealth and power, evolve a form of society where no man will need to tramp the country in search of an opportunity to make a living, where work and good wages will be provided for all as a natural right. Saying which, I mounted and rode on, the music of my friends cheers beating pleasantly on my ears.

In comparison with the find hard surfaced roads built in later years for the automobile, the roads of that time were bad indeed, especially those of the west. Deep wagon ruts and horse-hoof holes made bike going unpleasant on many stretches of highway where one had to hug the narrow shoulders of the roads. The older Eastern highways were mostly good macadam surfaced. On one of those speedways I got in trouble. Approaching Syracuse from the West is a steep valley. Night was near and I wanted to reach the city and enjoy the luxury of a bed for a change. Great oak trees reached out over the road forming an arch that darkened the way. Coasting down the incline, unmindful of a sharp turn just ahead, I didn't see it in time to avoid a smash. The bike sank its front wheel into a deep gutter and stopped abruptly, while I kept going, landing on my face on the gravelly road. Bruised and seared, I rose to my feet injured more in my pride than in my flesh. A man saw the spill and came to pick up the pieces. He invited me in where his wife brushed me off, while he brought me a glass of good old hard cider which I drank with great relish. They told me that several others had crashed in that same place. It comforted me to learn I wasn't the only mut to ignore the warning sign atop the hill. Returning to my bike to see what injuries it received, I found the front fork bent back so it wouldn't straighten out. Having no way at hand to straighten it, I just turned it round and it worked, funny as it looked. Thanking my good friends for their kindness, I rolled away.

The luxury of a bed in Syracuse was out. That highfalutin notion was deflated by the fall. Now I was back to normal, I was a tramp again and ready to flop by the side of the road and just dream about luxury. I soon came upon the tramps favorite bed, a stack

of hay in a field beside the road, and I soon was tucked into its comforting folds. No bourgeois bed could compare with the restfulness and the pleasant aroma of that primitive layout. As I lay awake early the next morning, having in mind the costly gear provided for sleeping, I wondered that perhaps in our mad quest for new pleasures, new ways for enjoying life, may we not be going to unnecessary extremes fashioning endless numbers of gadgets with endless days of labor, leaving little time for the enjoyment of the pleasures produced; while people who, being less mechanical, are content with the simples forms of pleasure are having much more time for its enjoyment. We who live in a mechanical age are the victims of our own inventions, only because we have not yet adjusted our social system to the demands of the machine, so it will work for the many and not for the few as is now the case.

Arising from my comfortable bed feeling a bit stiff and sore from the experience of the evening before, I turned to my poor crippled bike with a feeling of real comradeship. I had come to regard it no longer merely as a convenient contraption of steel and rubber, but as a patient, faithful companion sharing my ups and downs without protest. We took to the road and soon arrived at a village where we asked the blacksmith for permission to use his shop while I doctored my sic pal. When ready to go, I thanked the smith and asked how was business? "Good" he said, "only I need help for a few days". "I am your man" said I, "work is my way of life." So, after a good breakfast of ham and eggs, home made bread and coffee, I donned overalls and was on the job. I liked the blacksmith shop, having worked for a time as a helper and later as a blacksmith. I got into bicycle work when the shop I worked in changed over to making the popular little iron

horse.

After a week's work, I was on my way again pleased at the jingle of ten dollars in my pocket. For I had come to realise that it was much easier to buy than to beg. It wasn't my policy to ask direct for something to eat. I represented myself as a traveling mechanic seeking work in return for a bite to eat. If there was no job they couldn't very well turn me away hungry, which no one ever did. I generally found something to fix. The family bike most often had a wobbly wheel or other ailment I could adjust. One farm woman had a wheel she was learning to ride and like all learners had quite a few spills. In one she twisted the frame so it wouldn't work. Could I do anything about it? I could and I did. She was so elated I was invited to stay over till Sunday when we would ride to the village church two miles away. I, who was once a proud member of the Roman church and now more proudly a dissenter, wasn't going to waste any more of my precious time listening to the jabberings of w country parson, I politely declined and rolled away.

My atheistic pride lay in the fact that I had been able to free my mind of a powerful superstition. No mind can really be free and entertain belief in the supernatural. Christianity was originally a movement of the common people. Oppressed by the ruling class, they congregated together for their mutual protection. When the movement grew to a size regarded as a menace to the security of the Roman master class, that class pretended conversion and took over the leadership. Then heaven was invented as a paradise for the poor where they could live in eternity in idle splendor, after a hell on earth. Providing a paradise for the parasites. For eating grass here below, the poor were assured of pie in the sky. While religion is losing ground, due to the spread of knowledge,



it still continues to be “the opium of the people,” as Marx so aptly characterized it.

My next objective was Buffalo on the bank of Lake Erie. I found it to be just another American city of no particular interest, so I passed on to Niagara Falls and witnessed the flow of its mighty waters, some of which I learned was already being diverted to generate electricity. I thought it a mighty shame that so many millions of potential horse-power should be fulfilling no more useful purpose than that of furnishing thrills for observers. I would hitch every pail of it to a dynamo, and show the visitors through the power plants.

Contact with people on that trip added strength to my belief that the competitive struggle of man against man for the chance to produce the necessities of life no longer exists, if it ever did, that people today prefer to co-operate with each other if the opportunity is available. I passed through a number of villages and towns where one has a chance to meet the people, where no one was in a hurry, and neither was I. I was interested in getting rural folk reaction to my line of gab, and I found they were not the “hay seeds” smart cityites thought them to be. I knew that if we industrial workers are going to succeed in changing the world as we promise, we will need help from the country. Thus the importance of feeling out those who are to be our allies in the coming war on capitalism. The people were glad to meet someone from Chicago who talked wisely of their immediate conditions, but they had no charter of improvements beyond reforms that could be effected within reasonable time. Small-town residents lacked the cultural advantages of the larger cities, such for instance as public libraries.. When a person wanted to read a book he had to buy it. Low income people can't very well afford

the luxury of much mental food when their energies are heavily taxed to supply the bare necessities for their bodies. However I found them not averse to radical ideas. They were good listeners.

On a tour of that character the unexpected often happened. Here is an instance. One evening I settled down for the night under the shelter of a huge maple tree, whose broad leaves and spreading limbs I knew would protect me from the heavy Fall dew. About a hundred yards back from the road, on an elevation, stood a farmhouse whose occupants evidently saw me moving around the tree and proceeded to investigate. I saw someone approaching, perhaps to invite me in for the night. That had happened once. But two men were coming. Why two? As they came closer I saw that one had a rifle on his shoulder. Evidently this wasn't going to be as pleasant a visit as I expected. I wanted for the intruders to speak. The guy with the gun said: "Good evening, are you taking a rest." "It looks very much that way." I said. "Now let me ask you one. Why are you toting a gun at this house, what sort of game might you be hunting in the dark." He was evidently blustered by my question and would have backed away from it if he could. After a short pause he mumbled, "There have been some tramps around here stealing my potatoes." I was boiling mad. I knew that no tramp would use more than one fair-sized potato in his mulligan, and what decent farmer would refuse a potato to a hungry man? So I decided to implant a wholesome scare into that contemptible skunk parading in the guise of a man. I said: "So you came prepared for battle with a rifle and a hired man to frighten the wits out of a hungry tramp who might borrow one of your precious spuds. I don't fear your rifle, and it is well you keep it on your shoulder. For I am from the West where

~~many of us still carry revolvers and are quick on the draw. I am one of these and can tell you now that you were a near witness to an exhibition of Western marksmanship. For had you attempted to take that rifle from your shoulder I surely would have dropped you in your tracks and have your hired man as a material witness to my act of self defence." At that point he turned and walked away not saying a word, a surprised potato detective, as I thought. That was the only unfriendly contact I had on the trip.~~

~~———— As I started on my way the next morning I met a different type of farmer, who greeted me with a cheery good morning. I stopped to talk to him and ask what manner of man he had for a neighbour, and recited my experience of the night before. He was greatly pleased with the razzing I had given the orary cuss and exclaimed: "That's the best news I've heard in many moons. Sam Mason is the meanest and grouchiest man in the State of Massachusetts. Come in and have breakfast."~~

Arriving at the "Hub", I looked up Harry Kelly, a widely known Anarchist then arranging for the publication of an Anarchist paper to be called The Rebel. It died after three issues, lack of funds of course, the usual barrier to the efforts of enthusiastic rebels struggling to make a living and spread their ideas on small incomes. To sustain an Anarchist paper is an uncertain business, and The Rebel was just another of the many casualties due largely to the fact that the Anarchist had no dues-paying organization by which papers could be sustained with certainty.

With my critical Western eye I took a look at the old town, founded in 1630 by the Puritans and at this time regarded as the intellectual center of America. That I suppose was because it had Harvard University in its back yard. However that may be, we know

that today Boston has become a leading censor of things intellectual, forbidding the same of books its clerical snoopers do not like. I walked its crooked streets and thought this is what the Poet Sam Foss had in mind when he wrote "The Calf Path" that became a city street, ending with fine slam those to those who "go it blind among the calf path of the mind. Toiling away from sun to sun to do what other men have done." I greatly admired these simple lines, knowing of course that they didn't mean me.

Then there is Faneuil Hall, called "The Cradle of Liberty," a structure with a quaint looking tower, built in 1740. Two stories in height, the first floor for a public market, the upper floor for meetings. Originally it was without seats, but it has them today. Modern Bostonians want to sit at ease while being lectured to. The hall was a donation of Peter Faneuil, a rich merchant, the school history said, with no mention of the kind of merchandice he dealt in. Elsewhere I learned that all the rich merchants were ship-owners whose most profitable business consisted of smuggling and slave trading. They loaded their ships with rum and sailed off to Africa, where they traded the cargo for "black ivory," the cynical name given the wretched Negros whom they sold to the planters in the West Indies and the Carolinas for molasses to make more rum to buy more slaves. Thus the vicious round of merchandising was carried on by the best citizens of Boston: christians and patriots of course.

Those same good merchants smuggled tea from Holland and were underselling the British East India Company because the latter had to pay a tax of a shilling on every pound sold abroad. The English warehouses were stacked with tea, as the American sales had dropped to near zero. Because of that shilling tax the Boston boys were reaping

a rich harvest and hoped it a long life. Something had to be done about it, and King George did just that. He abolished the tax. Now the people could buy tea cheaper than the smugglers could sell it and make a profit. That was the King's purpose. He turned the tables on the smugglers. Their profitable business was gone. Patriotic citizens were glad to have cheap tea for the masses. The smugglers were not that kind of patriots. English ships loaded with tea were in the harbor. John Hancock, called, "the king of smugglers," and John Adams, organized a group, disguised them with Indian costumes, and in the dark of night they raided the ships and dumped the tea into the sea. The Revolution was on its way. Which goes to show that even great events arise unintentional out of small and questionable beginnings.

## Introduction to “Why I Joined the Communist Party”

*By the mid 1920s Jay Fox had been through his syndicalist phase and was convinced the best chance for a revolution against capitalism the Bolshevik revolution. Clippings and notes showed that Fox saved advertisements about moving to the Soviet Union, thus entertaining the notion but ultimately remaining near the defunct Home colony. Fox was seeking not only to explain his reasons for joining the CP, but also to respond to some of the criticisms he was receiving from his former comrades. More than simply articulating his reasons for joining the CP, this essay is valuable because it spells out what Fox viewed as the flaws that led to the downfall of the anarchist movement and conveyed his need to re-situate his ideological position to something he viewed as more practical. For an anarchist to decide to join the Communist Party is no small matter. History would later reveal great atrocities committed by communists against anarchist in numerous places, from the Soviet Union to Spain. This essay represents, in some ways, one of the opening salvos in the conflict between anarchists and communists – a conflict which still exists today.*

*For all these reasons and more, this essay is worth examining in great detail. Like many of our issues today, Fox anticipates some of the problems that would occur between various radical elements. While known anarchists have come forward and endorsed 2016 Democratic candidate for President Bernie Sanders, there is tension between ideological camps on all sides of the radical left, and this essay begins to examine some of the origins of that tension.*

## Why I joined the Communist Party

When I joined the Communist Party in 1923 some of my old comrades were shocked that, who had carried the banner of Anarchism since 1886 and sung its praises in millions of printed and spoken words, should desert the cause at this time when the movement needed support as never before. Was I perhaps approaching senility?

In the first place I did not desert the cause. That is something I could not do. I could not desert a cause that is a vital part of my intellectual life; I who at the age of 16 was infused with the revolutionary spirit and noble sentiments of the Chicago Martyrs and saw their legally murdered bodies laid to rest in eternal glory in Waldheim Cemetery. No, I could not desert the cause of Freedom at any stage of my life; but I could change my method of fighting the battle of freedom; I could discard a propaganda I was convinced had become outmoded and ineffective. That is just what I did, not swerving an inch from my original purpose.

For many years I was worried about the condition of the Anarchist movement. All our efforts were not producing satisfactory results. Too few new converts.. A movement must grow or it will bog down into decay. That is what had been slowly happening to the movement during the recent years, and I thought something should be done about it. Just what I wasn't sure. We were following the beaten path of propaganda without getting anywhere. There were more anarchist in the United States in 1886 than forty years later. That is not to say that all our efforts went for nothing. The many thousands that read our literature and heard our speakers certainly learned something about their status in society. No revolutionary thought is ever really lost. If our propaganda started workers to think, it

was all to the good. Still the question remained; why didn't they join up with us?

In 1916 I wrote to Alexander Berkman about the subject. At that time he was editing "The Blast," a little revolutionary paper in San Francisco. I carried on as usual in his own sweet way, a veritable autocrat. From lack of decisive means that group had dictatorship instead of anarchy in the publication of its paper. A majority decision on any of the points raised would have been an order to the editor he would understand. No doubt he thought he knew more about running the paper than they did. Still if the rank and file are to come into their own that surely is not the way.

On our difference on the union matter Berkman argued from theory, while I speak from experience, forty years of it; and as a result I am convinced beyond doubt that he was wholly wrong. To get the full confidence of union members you must be one of them. Comradship on the picket line is a mighty binding force that brings workers closer together, and more ready to listen to each others views. There the rebels can explain the true meaning of the strike for what it is --- the preliminary skirmish, to be followed by the greater battle that will eliminate the bosses and make an end to the necessity for strikes. Union workers are the best prospects for radical ideas. A union card in his pocket is proof that he has taken the first step towards his emancipation from "rugged individualism."

Anarchists who were on the firing of unionism had a far more realistic conception of anarchism than did the idealistic theorists. It was they who developed the idea of revolutionary trade unionism, that came to be known as Syndicalism, syndicate being the French word for union. The syndicalists had a plan to infiltrate the unions that were to finally take over the industries and operate them in the interest of all the people.



Syndicalism spread to other countries, especially to Spain where it had the largest membership and was driven under ground by fascist Franco. In other countries it disappeared after the Russian revolution. We American syndicalists joined the new Communist party.

Here the question arises: why did we change our course at that particular

### Decline of anarchism

For many years I had been worried about the condition of the anarchist movement. All our efforts were not producing satisfactory results. A movement must grow or it will bog down into decay. That is what had been slowly happening to the anarchist movement during recent years, and I thought something should be done about it, just what I wasn't sure. We were following the beaten path of propaganda without getting anywhere. In 1916 I wrote to alexandra Berkman about it. At that time he was publishing, "The Blast," a little revolutionary paper in San Fransisco. I suggested that a convention be called to consider the matter, and that a change in tactics could be made if found available. His reply was rather discouraging. He agreed the matter was important. "But it cannot be decided by shouting at a convention. A convention is only good for those who believe in majority rule." To my suggestion that comrades direct more attention to the unions, he replied that: Anarchist can help revolutionize the unions much better from the outside than from within."

Here was disagreement of major importance between two anarchist workers. I hold for majority rule. When a group of people join together for any purpose there must

be agreement on a mode of procedure, and I am sure anarchists would have to compromise on majority rule or face chaos at the outset of their new venture. Majority decision is a rule of action essential to the proper functioning of people. In a free society where all have a common purpose the minority will have no feeling of being oppressed by its operation.

I have attended meetings of the Frei Arbeiter Stimme group in New York, where editor Yanovsky was always the self appointed chairman. After hours of discussion in which many suggestions were made for improvement of the paper, But, since no vote was taken, it was not known how many favored any of the proposals. As a consequence Yanovsky carried on as usual in his own usual way, a veritable autocrat. From lack of decisive means that group had dictatorship instead of anarchy in the publication of its paper. A majority decision would have been an order to the editor he could understand. No doubt he still thought he knew more about running the paper than they did. Still if the rank and file are to come into their own that certainly is not the way.

On our differences in the union matter Berkman spoke from theory while I spoke from experience. To get the full confidence of union men you must be one of them. Comradeship on the picket line is a might binding force that brings workers closer together and more ready to listen to each others view. There the rebels can explain the true meaning of the strike for what it is, a preliminary skirmish, to be followed by the bigger battle later that will eliminate the bosses and make an end to the need for strikes.

It was the French anarchists who developed the idea of revolutionary unionism that came to be known as syndicalism, syndicate being the French work for union. The

plan was for the unions to take over the industries and operate them in the interest of all the people. Syndicalism spread to other countries, but faded out soon after the Russian Revolution. We anarcho-syndicalists join the new communist party.

Here the question arises, why did we change our course at that particular time?? A ship at sea changes its course when it encounters unfavorable conditions, its port of destination being always the same. So it was with us. The Russian Revolution had changed the sociological winds of the world. There is no mistake about that. Since we were headed for the same port we threw the helm over and followed in the wake of the revolutionary tornado. Revolutionists, while keeping their ideal ever in mind, must be realistic and not afraid to change their tactics when change will bring better results.

In this world nothing is static, everything is in constant motion. Change is the order of progress. The struggle for an ever enlarging body of freedom goes on perpetually. Freedom is the basic ingredient in the needs of every human being; it is the primary objective in the endeavors of every group of advanced workers. But the means of attainment change at times because of changed conditions and enlightened approach to world affairs.

A striking instance of anarchist awareness to the decline of anarchism was the assembly of fifty comrades at Mehegan colony, New Jersey, in September 1938, to consider the subject. After fifteen hours of discussion they decided the patient was beyond recovery and formed a new organization to take its place, calling it "The Libertarian Socialist League." and drew up a manifesto in which they proclaimed themselves "Libertarians and socialists in the broadest terms and suggest syndicalism as

one of the means of attaining their goal. There was no mention of anarchism. Harry Kelly, prominent in the anarchist movement for forty years, was elected secretary.

These comrades had worked for years in furthering the cause of anarchism only to find their labor of love had ceased to bring results, that no one seemed to be interested any more. Not willing to give up the fight for freedom and become pessimistic growlers, as many comrades have done, they decided to start all over again under a new man. TOO bad that their bold adventured failed and went the way of so many others.

### **Introduction to Chapter 15 of the unpublished autobiography of Jay Fox**

*In this chapter from his unpublished autobiography, Fox describes the weeks before and after the assassination of President McKinley. What makes this chapter particularly interesting is that the man who committed the act, Leon Czolgosz, rented a room for a night from Fox. Though it was unclear exactly what work Fox was doing at the time, he did have a room available temporarily. After the authorities became privy to this information, Fox was brought in for special questioning. It is in this section where Fox lays out his philosophy of anarchism to the top police brass in the city that his organic intellectualism shines. While the main project itself begins to touch on a bit of this story, the entire chapter of his memoir is well worth reading and is reproduced here. This was the fifteenth chapter of his unpublished autobiography, most likely written in the 1950s.*

*There are a few episodes from this chapter that are both interesting and insightful into the character of Jay Fox. In addition to the revelations about Czolgosz, the story of Fox lecturing the Chief of Police and his “club swinging bums” about the virtues of anarchism. This chapter also offers additional evidence that Fox lacked formal training, misspelling Czolgosz's name a few times, as well as more evidence about a writing style borne of necessity and targeted to a working-class audience.*

## Chapter 15 - PRESIDENT MCKINLEY IS SHOT

In 1901 I was employed as a blacksmith helper, working sixty hours a week for \$10.50. On that generous pay I was supposed to maintain an "American standard of living," with a wife and two children. Besides having a theoretical vision for the abolition of the economic system that was enslaving me, I had practical ideas for the improvement of my present lot while capitalism held me in its grip, I was president of the Blacksmith Helper's Union. Thus I was fighting on two fronts at one and the same time.

One evening in August of that year a man called at my home and asked to rent a room for the night, saying he was told by the editor of Free Society that we had a vacant room. He gave his name as Neuman and said he was leaving for the East on the morrow. Coming from the office of Free Society, near by, I assumed he was a comrade from out of town. On learning he was from Cleveland I asked if he knew certain well known anarchists there. His negative reply convinced me I was wrong. He could not be an anarchist in Cleveland and not know these people. He offered no explanation of his visit to the anarchist paper, and I didn't question him further, as he seemed disinclined to talk. A good looking chap of about twenty four, with a girlish face and sensitive blue eyes, he impressed me as a youth seeking in his own quiet way a solution to the riddle of poverty in the midst of plenty. HE retired early and I saw no more of him. It seems he talked more freely to editor Isaaks, who got the impression from Neuman, by reason of his questions and suggestions, that he was a provocateur, and in the next issue of Free Society he published a warning against him.

On the afternoon of September 6<sup>th</sup> word was flashed around the world that

President McKinley was shot and fatally wounded at the Buffalo Exposition by a man who gave his name as Leon Czolgosz. His picture, as it appeared in the papers, showed plainly enough that he was none other than my roomer Neuman of free weeks before. (Emma Goldman, then in Saint Louis, recognized the photo as that of a youth who accosted her at a Cleveland meeting and asked about Anarchist literature, saying he belonged to a Socialist local.)

Shortly after the visit of Neuman to our home, my wife and kids went to New York, I was to follow later. We always travelled that way --- in sections, due to monetary considerations. When the President was shot I thought: "This deed will be charged to the Anarchists and an action similar to that of the Haymarket will be framed. Some of us probably will be hung, if they can torture some form of connection from Czolgosz." I guessed right, for the next issue of the papers high-lighted the charge of an "anarchist plot," and stated that the police were scouring the country Emma Goldman. (I had sold my household and taken a room with Morris Resnick.

Next afternoon, when I returned from work, two portly cops were waiting for me. My room mate, Morris Resnick and a visitor named Michel, who happened in at the wrong time, had already been taken away. My books and shaving-set were also gone. "What this all about," I asked. "You are wanted for questioning about the shooting of the President." At the County jail there was no questioning. I was put into a cell with Resnick and Michel. Looking at the number I saw that there were three prospective gallows hangers were parked in a cell once occupied by Albert Parsons. And remembering that he sang his favorite song, Annie Laurie, on the even of his legal murder, I burst out with a

stanza of the delightful composition. My voice reached the Free Society staff in another part of the jail, a signal that I was there. Their presence was at yet unknown to me.

Apart from Emma Goldman, (something I cannot quite make out. Maybe John Most or something, cannot quite tell) we Chicagoans were the only Anarchist arrested in connection with the case; and our arrest was due to a blunder on the part of Comrade Isaaks, who, having nothing to hide, told a reporter that Czolgosz had visited his office and that he directed him to my home for lodging. The reporter carried the story to the police and the arrests followed.

In New York, the office of the Jewish weekly, Frei Arbeiter Stimmie, was wrecked by a mob incited by Hearst, who for two years had carried daily in all his papers a bitter attack on the President through a series of scurrilous cartoons. Now, being blamed by rival papers as a party to the shootings, he slashed out with a fierce barrage of vilifications against the Anarchist that was unmatched anywhere at the time; while his praise for the injured President mounted to the skies as his circulation dwindled. He approached the New York comrades with an offer of \$25 thousand if Emma Goldman, then being sought by the police, would come to New York and let him discover her, hoping thereby to save his financial neck from the noose of bankruptcy. Miss Goldman did agree to give the honor of finding her to the Chicago Tribune in return for its offer of \$5,000. But the police found her five minutes before the arrival of the Tribune man. Just like that, the Anarchists lost a tidy contribution to their propaganda fund from one of its most inveterate enemies, the enemy then as it is today of every shade of progress.

The President lived for ten days after being shot. During that time we were



allowed to mix freely with the other prisoners during exercise time. When the President died all except us were ordered to the chapel where services were held. We were kept locked cells, and from then on were not allowed to mingle with our fellow prisoners. "For your protection." the warden said there was danger the patriotic prisoners might attack us. The truth was that the jailers wanted to protect the other prisoners from our propaganda. The warden observed what good listeners we had during our exercise time when we delivered lectures on the why of prisons and the economic causes of crime. All that had to be stopped, and here was the opportunity. After that we could talk only to each other while exercising on an upper, unoccupied floor.

After about a week we were brought to the Harrison Street police court for a hearing. While waiting for the court to get in session, I was called out and taken back to the office of the Chief of Police, where I was introduced to a few gents. The interview was mainly about Anarchism. No mention of the President was made. I was puzzled about the purpose of these questions. The Chief asked: "What is the method by which the Anarchists hope to bring about a realization of their ideal?"

Here was my opportunity. These club swinging bums are an ignorant lot who never read anything but the sports page. Now let them listen to a lecture on Anarchism. They asked for it. Anarchists, I told them, have no ready made plan for the birth of the new order of society, that is something for a later date. Their present concern is with the spreading of knowledge. The workers must know before they can do. We call for the elimination of the landlords and the capitalist(s) and the organization of co-operatives in which every man and every woman will have an equal share. No rich, no poor, no

unemployed, no crime, no policemen. No jails. For who would steal when there is an abundance of everything. When the workers in sufficient numbers get these ideas under their domes they will get the urge to try them out; and it is not for us at this early date to know just how they will go about it. All will depend on the circumstance of the moment. Ours is a long range program. It may not be realized in our time. When it does come we have reason to believe the landlords and capitalists won't fall in line. We don't expect to convert many of them; and there will be need for strong policemen like yourself, Chief O'Neill, to lockup the Morgans and Rockefellows of the time; for they are sure to start a counter revolution, a revolution of force against a revolution of ideas. In such an affray you can easily guess on which side to find the Anarchists. Thus you see that, like yourself, Chief, I am a revolutionist. But I don't confine my revolutionary urge only to the Emerald Isle. That brought a smile from O'Neill, who was known to favor revolution in Ireland.

I am sure, I continue, you gents think this is all an ideal dream; that there is never going to be a revolution in this country; that the present status of society is fixed for all time, except for a little reform here and there; that in fact no further change is possible; and that only a handful of Socialists and Anarchists crackpots talk of a change. Many good people may like that the poor should have a better deal but don't know what to do about it. We do, and that is the difference, gentlemen. Have I answered your question?" "Yes, Mr(.) Fox, Thank you. That will be all." When I entered the next room the cop that accompanied me read the warrant for my arrest of a week past and remarked sympathetically that it was too bad I got mixed up in that mess, that if I ever ran for office

the thing would be brought up against me. He evidently didn't think I might be hustled off to Buffalo and hanged. That was just what my comrades in the Harrison Street bull pen thought when I was taken away. A great weight was lifted from their hearts when I greeted them on their return. In the mean time the remarks of the sympathetic police man suggested a possible cause for the interview. They knew that I was the only native American among those arrested; and since deformed mentalities could not conceive of a sane American being mixed up with a bunch of foreign Anarchists, I must be a sort of feeble-minded boob out of whom they might be able to extract valuable information.

Friends on the outside provided for our comfort as far as that was possible. Our meals came from a nearby restaurant. My union offered to send me on a vacation on my release, which I refused. I did however accepted my fare to New York. The capitalist press, true to form, labored nobly in an effort to create a reign of terror against us. A hotel owner, named Pierce, boasted through the press that he was going to organize a mob of 10,000 to storm the jail and take bloody vengeance on us, guilty or not. When he was reminded that Anarchists and their friends would compose three fourths of his mob, he slunked in his bourgeois hostelry and wasn't heard from any more. But the Sheriff took him seriously and made preparations to defend the lives of the distinguished guests by placing artillery and fire-hose in position to entertain the nonexistent Mr. Pierce.

~~In New York the office of the Jewish anarchist weekly was wrecked by a mob incited largely by Hearst, who for two years had carried in all his papers a bitter attack on the President. Now being blamed by rival papers as an accessory to the shooting, Hearst blasted out with a barrage of vilification against the anarchists unmatched anywhere at~~

~~any time; while now his praise of the injured President mounted to the heavens as his circulation dwindled. He approached the New York comrades with an offer of \$20 thousand if comrade Goldman would come to New York and let him discover her, hoping thereby to save his financial neck from the noose of bankruptcy. Before she got news of the generous offer she was in the hands of the police. She had agreed to let the Chicago Tribune have the honor of finding her at its offer of \$5,000, but the police captured her five minutes before the arrival of the Tribune man. Thus the anarchists lost a tidy contribution to their fund from one of its most inveterate enemies, the enemy of every shade of progress down to the present day.~~

Unable in any way to connect us with the shooting of the President, they turned us loose after thirty day of trying. News of our coming release spread thruout the jail and when our cells were unlocked goodbyes and hand claps rang out from every cell, to our great delight, and sorry that we couldn't take them with us. That was the answer to the jailers who had said these men would assault us(.)

~~The common people in the larger capitalistic prison outside, of which McKinley was the political head, were not greatly disturbed by his unusual death. Men are shot every day. Why make a fuss over a guy just because he happens to be President. That was the general feeling.~~ To the political watchdogs of capitalism the shooting had revolutionary implications. Czolgosz had staged a one-man revolution. What gains he expected to buy for the people at the price of his own life only he thought he knew. Certainly no sensible person would expect any general good to come from such an act. Thus many thought that

the young man was demented. The anarchist reaction varied from explanation to denunciation.

In an article in Free Society Emma Goldman wrote; “Czolgoscz and other men of his type, far from being depraved creatures of low instinct are in reality supersensitive beings unable to bear up under too great social stress. They are driven to such violent expression at the sacrifice of their own lives, because they cannot supinely witness the misery and suffering of their fellows.” Other Anarchists were not so philosophical in appraising the case. Some denounced Szolgoscz as a demented person, that his act was idiotic, and being charged to the Anarchists, it did much harm to the movement.

The Buffalo police used every trick known to third degree inquisition to force from Czolgosz that he had accomplices. After repeated torturing, all they could get from him was, “I did it for the people.” He withstood all the beating and went to his death with truth on his lips. They continued the inquisition to the last second of his life, only changing to deceptive pleading when in the presence of witnesses. As he sat strapped in the electric chair, the black mask over his face and the executioner's hand on the switch waiting for the signal, a lying warden addressed the youth in mock tenderness: “Leon boy, why do you shield that bad woman, Emma Goldman? She is not your friend. She has denounced you as a loafer too lazy to work. She said you were always begging money off her. She has betrayed you, Leon. Why do you shield her?” There was a brief moment of silence. The atmosphere was tense. The spectators moved to the edge of their seats. Then through the black mask came the quiet, clear tones: “It don't matter what Emma Goldman said about me, she had nothing to do with my act. I did it alone. I did it

for the American people.” The last chance of connecting others gone, the switch was pulled and Leon Czolgosz became a crisp corpse, and a memory.

When Theodore Roosevelt, then Vice President, took the vacant seat in the White House he made a violent attack on us Anarchists, in which he said that “Anarchist speeches and writings are essentially seditious and treasonable. By way of an answer I wrote a pamphlet, titled, “Roosevelt, Czolgosz and Anarchy.” that got a wide circulation. People were curious to learn the connection of the threat. The Washington National Tribune went the limit. It called for lynching. This is one of the times when an aroused public vengeance should have full sway unhampered by legal interference, and every avowed Anarchist have no further grace than the time to take him to the nearest tree.” There was an unequivocal call for murder, mass murder. Yet there is no record of that (maybe nefarious) criminal being brought to justice. The Congress passed a law forbidding Anarchists from entry into this free country, once the haven of the politically persecuted of the world. The different States took advantage of the hysteria to enact repressive laws against the freedom of speech and press. Twenty years later I was the victim of such a law in Washington State, the only person ever brought to trial under that law before or since.

Despite the fact that Czolgosz was not an Anarchist and never said he was, and the further fact that no connection was disclosed between him and the Anarchists, the police and press fastened the shooting upon us, and our small voice of denial and protest was drowned out in the thunderous howls of the wolves of capitalism eager to devour anyone who questions its rights and privilege to exploit the workers.

## **Introduction to chapter 27 of the unpublished autobiography of Jay Fox**

*This chapter from his autobiography talks about one of the most famous anarchists of his or any time, Peter Kropotkin. Born a Russian prince but renouncing his thrown for the cause of anarchism, Kropotkin was both scientist and a philosopher. Fox shares a story of meeting the anarchist giant in 1901 when the former prince was visiting the United States. This not only provides insight into the type of company he kept and the reputation that Fox had already cultivated for himself, it also adds additional context to his decision roughly two decades later to join the Communist Party. Kropotkin himself returned to the Soviet Union after the revolution, and was given a house by the new government. Unfortunately, his work was routinely subjected to censorship and he complained bitterly to Emma Goldman in her autobiography about his time there. Ultimately, this work provides some interesting examples of both the personality and political evolution of Jay Fox.*

*Additionally, Fox describes Voltairine de Cleyre, an anarchist without adjectives nearly lost to history, and their conversations. Renowned anarchist historian Paul Avrich recovered much of her work and released a biographic sketch of her, and Fox describes meeting her and spending time with her while she was alive. This chapter further shows how involved Fox was with the anarchist movement and some of the central and most important thinkers of their time.*

## Chapter 27 - PETER KROPOTKIN AND ANARCHISM

To Peter Kropotkin more than to any other person is due the credit of formulating the theory of Anarchist Communism. He was born a prince in Moscow in 1842; and in the accustomed manner of his class was educated to become a driver and exploiter of the workers and peasants. At that time the peasants were serfs, and Kropotkin's family owned enough of them to supply all the comforts and luxuries that royalty considered itself entitled to. When his schooling was completed, Prince Peter became an officer in the Russian army, stationed in Siberia. He soon discovered the false position he occupied in being an army officer and, in 1867, resigned and returned to Saint Petersburg, where he devoted himself to science, specializing in geology. Kropotkin took part in gatherings of liberals and was sympathetic with the workers, but he had no definite ideas of reform beyond curbing the power of the government. He heard about the International Workingmen's Association, only in a general way, as no detailed account could be published in Russia. In 1872 he made a trip to Western Europe to get the detailed facts. Arriving in Switzerland, he was impressed favorably by the Anarchist wing of the International. In 1871 the International, that had heretofore confined its actions mainly to the organization of the workers on the economic field, decided to urge the toilers to enter the political arena by the formation of socialist parties. This action aroused much opposition in the Latin countries, that favored revolutionary direct action. Thus, at the time of Kropotkin's visit the debate was going strong, and the contrasting ideas were being thoroughly aired. He heard all the arguments on both sides, and after two months returned to Russia an Anarchist, though the term was little used at that period. The ideas



that at a later date he elaborated in his anarchist communist writings were already prevalent among the Swiss watch makers.

Back in Russia, Kropotkin joined a group of young intellectuals engaged in carrying on propaganda among the workers. In 1874 he was arrested and confined in the Fortress of Peter and Paul, where he spent two years, and from which he escaped with the assistance of friends on the outside. He fled to England where he lived until 1877, when he again visited Switzerland and joined the Jura Federation of the First International.

After the practical dissolution of the International by removal of its executive council to New York in 1872, the anarchist wing, consisting of the Jura, Italian and Spanish Federations, continued to hold conferences for several years. These federations were opposed to political action by the workers. They were not only opposed to politics, they fought the idea of centralized governments, holding that local self governing communes and the free federation of these units the best form of organization for a liberated people.

Kropotkin became active in the Federation, and when its paper, Avante Garde, was suppressed by the Swiss government, he started in Geneva Le Revolt, in which he published material that was later to become the principal propaganda material of Anarchist Communism, issued in book and pamphlet form. On his expulsion from Switzerland in 1881, the paper moved to Paris where it was renamed Les Temps Nouveaux and was edited by Jean Grave, a shoe maker, who contributed much to the literature of anarchism, notably his book "Moribund Society and Anarchism." After the drowning of the Paris Commune in 1871 in the blood of thirty thousand workers, the

victorious bourgeoisie had made it a crime to belong to the International Workingmen's Association, and of that "crime" convicted Kropotkin in 1883, and sent him to prison for five years, three of which he served. Upon his release he returned to England and settled at Bromley, Kent, where he lived until the outbreak of the Russian Revolution, when he returned to his native land and died there February 8<sup>th</sup> 1921, at the age of seventy-nine.

At the outbreak of the first World War Kropotkin loudly announced his support of the Allies, for which he was roundly condemned by the comrades who took the correct position that it was a capitalistic war and merited universal condemnation. But Kropotkin was intensely motivated by his emotional kinship with the French and his bitter hatred of the rigid authoritarianism of the Germans, who he said if successful, would put all Europe into a strait-jacket. Kropotkin was the first writer to gather and organize into a system all the libertarian ideas prevalent among the watchmakers of the Jura mountains in the seventies, and may thus be regarded as the father of Anarchist Communism. "Anarchist Communism," he said, "is the union of two fundamental tendencies in society --- a tendency towards economic equality and a tendency towards political liberty. He pleaded for free agreements as against centralized (sic) authority; the workers in each locality controlling their output and depositing it at the community centers for distribution. According to Kropotkin, in the sane society there would be inter-commune and national conferences, with the object of regulating the production and distribution of goods, with no central state authority giving commands. Agreements made at such conferences would be brought back by the delegates, not as laws, but as propositions to be accepted or rejected. Common sense would dictate acceptance, as conformity to general agreement

would serve the best interest of the communes. But if any commune desired to go on its own, or accept only in part, that would be its Anarchist right. Since no community could produce all the articles it required, its continuous association with the other communes would be an economic necessity. Thus, says Kropotkin, this law of economic need would be the only law need to keep order and harmony in society once capitalism is abolished.

In his book, "The Conquest of Bread" Kropotkin says, "We foresee millions and millions of groups freely constitution themselves for the satisfaction of all the various needs of human beings --- some of these groups organized in shops, streets and houses; others extending hands across the walls of cities, over frontiers and oceans. All of these will be composed of human beings who will combine freely, and after performing their share of productive labor will meet together, either for the purpose of consumption, or to advance science in a new direction."

"The group will stipulate for its members only the amount of time that must be consumed in the production of necessities. After that they will be free to utilise their spare time as they please. It is during this spare time that all luxuries will be produced. The worker "will discharge first his task in the field, factory and so on, which he owes to society as his contribution to the general production. And he will employ the second half of his day to the satisfaction of his artistic or scientific needs, or his hobbies. Thousands of societies will spring up to gratify every taste and every possible fancy."

In 1901 Kropotkin came to the United States to deliver a course of lectures at an Eastern university. In the meantime we arrange for a mass meeting in Chicago for him at the conclusion of his other engagements. Some middle class liberals organized a

reception for him where he was visibly bored by the petty prattle of the bourgeois ladies who were so happy to be in the presence of a real live prince. They addressed him by that title, to his great annoyance. When I was introduced as a labor official, his face lit up. He took my arm and led me off to (a) quiet corner, where we talked for well over an hour, drinking several cups of tea the while. Of medium stature, with a full beard, tender sparkling eyes and soft, well modulated voice, it was a treat listening to him talk in a foreign language he knew so well. University of Chicago professors had told me, at one of my meetings, how they were charmed by the excellent English of his “Autobiography of a Revolutionist.”

Peter Kropotkin was greatly interested in the trade union movement, and he was much pleased to learn that I, a well known Anarchist could be elected as a union official. It showed, he said, the forward trend of working class thinking. In answer to my question, he thought that the Revolution would break out first in Spain, that had the greatest number of rebels. Developments revealed that, after Russia, Spain was well on the way to liberation but for The invasion of Hitler and Mussolini, and the conniving of England, France and the United States, which refused to take a stand against the ruthless attack of the murderous fascists upon a friendly country. At a large mass meeting Kropotkin drew a vivid picture of the internal contradictions in the European countries and the outlook for the future of the working class. That was his main concern. Clarence Darrow as chairman, opened the meeting with these words: “In Russia they exile their great men; in Chicago we hang them.”

In addition to his “Autobiography,” numerous pamphlets and “The Conquest of

Bread,” Kropotkin wrote a book on Agriculture and books on science, the most important being “Mutual Aid.” The latter was fastidulosuly important first, because it deals with people and not with ananimate things; second, because it supplements Darwin and covers a most important phase of evolution, (hand written, something like) cooperation within the species- which was (end handwritten) barely touched upon by him.

Huxley, Spencer and other writers on evolution misinterpreted certain phrases of Darwin, such as “Survival of the fittest,” “struggle for Existance,” etc. These writers held that the struggle for existance was predominantly an individual fight, that each against all way the law of the jungle. After intensive research Kropotkin proved that with animals, as well as with men, the struggle for existence was a union job, that men always lived in groups and fought the battle of life collectively and not as individuals; that rugged individualism was an impossibility in the jungle days, as it is even today. Thus the Anarchist man of science traced collective life of men from the Neolotic age up to the present. “The Conquest of Bread,” which Kropotkin called his utopia, he painted a word picture of what he hoped to be the collective life of the future.”

*(PAGE 169 MISSING – when it returns, Fox begins by quoting Voltairine de Cleyre)*

“Let me begin my address with a confession. I make it sorrofully and with self-disgust; but in the presence of great sacrifice we learn humility and if my comrades could give their lives for their belief, why, let me give my pride. This is my confession: Fifteen years ago last May, when the echos of the Haymarket bomb reeled through the little Michegan

village where I then lived, I, like the rest of the credulous and brutal, read the lying newspaper headline, "Anarchists threw a bomb in a crowd in the Haymarket in Chicago.", and immediately cried out, "They ought to be hung." This, though I had never believed in capital punishment for ordinary criminals. For that ignorant, outrageous, blood-thirsty sentence I shall never forgive myself, though I know the dead men would have forgiven me, though I know those who loved them forgive me. But my own voice, as it sounded that night, will sound so in my ears till I die, --- a bitter reproach and shame. And what I did that night millions did, and what I said millions said. I have only one word of extenuation for myself and all those people --- ignorance. I did not know what anarchism was, I believed the newspapers.

However, Voltairine was not built of the material that would permit her to believe in the capitalist newspapers for long and remain a sociological ignoramus. Her atheism got her nowhere. It explained nothing earthly. The way of poverty and riches continued a blank until she heard Clarence Darrow deliver a lecture on Socialism, of which she wrote: "It was my first introduction to any plan for bettering the conditions of the working class which furnished some explanation of the course of economic development, and I ran to it as one who had been turned around in the darkness to the light." She took a course of study in sociology, with the result that she became an Anarchist and started to battle with greater vigor than her atheistic struggle had inspired; for now she had something tangible to attack. She had discovered that while religion is a bar to progress the real enemy of advancement is capitalism.

Frail of body, Voltairine was the constant victim of colds and other forms of

ailment, and added to that was the misfortune of receiving bullet wounds inflicted by one of her pupils, a love-crazed youth. She barely escaped death. The youth was arrested and charged with attempted murder. When Voltairine recovered she was forced to appear as a witness against him. She affirmed she would tell the truth, but she didn't. That scrupulously honest and truthful woman lied. She lied in defense of truth. She refused to recognize the youth as her assailant. She did not believe in the savage doctrine of revenge. She had no resentment at the young man who had attempted to kill her. She knew he was moved by forces over which he had no control; and that there was no further danger of the same combination of forces again possessing him. ~~than of any other person in the community.~~

Voltairine abhorred the destruction of life in any form, while yet a champion of the Mexican revolution. Is there contradiction here? No. It is the ardent lover of life who is always the Revolutionist. The knowledge of the suffering and death inflicted upon the masses of humanity under the capitalist system; and the further knowledge that this appalling condition can be changed only by the revolt of the masses and the overthrow of the system that oppresses them; it was that knowledge that made Voltairine a Revolutionist. She was a surgeon of society who, feeling keenly for the patient, yet knew that its life and future happiness depended on the insertion of the scalpel and the removal of the infected parts.

Voltairine wrote and lectured much. It was a great delight to listen to her lectures, prepared carefully, and often committed to memory. She delivered them with the touch of a elocutionist. Packed with vital material, her lectures were really prose poems. For she

was a fine poet. It is not for a mere plebian like myself to analyse poetry, but I can say that Voltairine's verse, having a realistic and purposeful objective effected me deeply.

Strange as it seems, my first meeting with Voltairene took place in England, in 1897, where I was also visiting as a sort of international tramp. Voltairene was there in fulfilment of an invitation to lecture to the English and Scotch workers. Which proved a great success, many thousands of them heard the voices of freedom from her eloquent tongue.

Discussing the trip on our return to Philadelphia, she told me she was highly pleased with her foreign reception, and that the English and Scotch workers were more receptive and asked more intelligent questions than the average American audience.

Voltairene spent the last months of her useful life as an invalid at the home of Anna Livshis, in Chicago, who lovingly nursed her with a motherly care. She died at the age of 49, and was buried in Waltheim (sic) Cemetary, near the tomb of the Chicago Martyrs. Like them, her memory will live on.



## Introduction to “Men, Women and Morals”

*In this undated essay Fox describes both females and people of color as inferior to white men. It is important to include this essay because it begins to shed light on some of the issues with the labor movement and its hesitant relationship to always include people of color. Despite being born in 1870 and undoubtedly experiencing discrimination for his Irish heritage, one could argue that Fox was simply looking for another scapegoat to pin his troubles on. It is worth pointing out that Fox did find the institution of slavery abhorrent and vicious, as indicated in the first essay “tramping on a bicycle” and was not advocating a return to such an era.*

*This essay is also very important to include because, thus far, this project is the first to include it. None of the previously mentioned works includes any discussion of this essay. It is also worth considering how it was that Fox was familiar with Herbert Spencer, Charles Darwin, and Immanuel Kant when he only had a grade school education. In addition to proving additional evidence in my argument about Fox being an organic intellectual, it further shows that he went out and learned this information on his own. He possessed a great library that included many works, including those in Latin and other foreign languages. The Foley Library at Gonzaga University has a sample of books from Fox's private collection.*

*Finally, there was a commonly-held idea in union circles that a breadwinner wage was necessary. Since men had to work, they needed to make more money to support families. One possibility is that this essay evolved from this line of thinking.*

## MEN, WOMEN AND MORALS

That woman is an intelligent, reasoning being, with a finer intuition than that of the average man, I do not believe; for no one but an unintelligent and unreasoning being would claim intuition, since by intuition is meant knowledge independent of experience. Knowledge, like everything else, is a growth, and as the oak is traced to the acorn, so is knowledge to a like genesis in the soil of experience --- not to the experience of the individual alone, but also to that of the race to which he belongs. Racial knowledge is traceable to the experience of the ethnic segment of which the tribe or nation is a part, and at last we find that the knowledge of the individual is a single fruition in the garden of the wide, wide world, which in its turn is to become an experiential seedling and so on forever. This is a truth indisputably established by Kant in his Critique of Pure Reason and by Spencer in his Principles of Psychology, as well as by Darwin and others who have deeply considered the evolution of many physically, morally, and intellectually.<sup>53</sup>

Physically weaker than her Sabine brothers woman has come to protect herself automatically, and her so-called intuition is the evolutionary product of sex-experience, which is to say that she is unconsciously wise in self-protection and thus her intelligence resembles that of ants, bees and other non-natural (*maybe non-natured, it's handwritten and not entirely clear*) creatures --- natural or intuitive mechanics, mathematicians, political economists, et cetera. What is true of woman is also true of man but in a less degree, for endowed with greater intelligence than insects, animals and women, he is necessarily not so much an automaton as they, and hence what they do instinctively he

does intelligently but with more certainty and on a much larger scale.

On account of his physical and intellectual superiority man can and does expose himself more to the dangers of existence, for if betrayed by self-confidence he might fight out of it, but if woman is betrayed she is undone forever; and this happens because the self-fulfilling will alone is respectable while the will of woman depending on the strength of man for its highest satisfaction is essentially degraded.

Women should therefore not be given the ballot, or permitted to come to the discharge of any sociologic functions, either physical or intellectual, for which she is not peculiarly fitted by nature, and all on account of her physical, intellectual and moral inferiority which the maternal function imposes upon her. Admitting the physical inferiority of woman, her intellectual and moral inferiorities inevitably follow, since the intellectual and moral stand in the same relation to the physical as the walls and the roof stand to the foundation of the house, or the stem and petals of a rose to the soil. Strength is the soil, the dirt and dung if you will, intelligence the trunk and ethics the fruit of the tree of civilization, and as the flavor of the fruit and the qualities of the trunk cannot transcend the development potentialities of the soil, the relation of woman to man is that of the vine to the oak, and her achievements may be likened to grapes which unlike acorns are the luxuries and not the necessities of progress.

At once you say; Elephants are stronger and hence intellectually and morally greater than men, which would be true if the elephant were not morphologically hindered in availing himself of his strength to the utmost, a hindrance which he can never overcome as he is without fingers and toes and an upright carriage. But the ape you say

has fingers and toes and an upright carriage and is therefore intellectually and morally greater than man, which would be true if the ape did not like articulate and written speech which prevents him from supplementing his natural strength by the sowing and gathering of crops, the making of firearms and the maintaining of systems of religion and government.

The ape after all lacks strength, for in estimating the strength of Archimedes you must include his lever, an implement of power produced by science which is a systematic use of knowledge of which the ape is wholly incapable because he lacks language to develop what knowledge he has into science. The ape may have a finer “intuition” of the forest than man, and yet he knows infinitely less of the forest, for he knows nothing of botany, agrostology or carpentry and though he may find his way “intuitively” out of the jungle, while man has to rely upon a compass or the stars, no one, not even a woman thinks of accrediting the ape with intelligence comparable even to that of the lower form of the human mind, which is feminine.

But woman you say has fingers and toes, an upright carriage, articulate and written speech which supplements her knowledge with science, and hence intellectually and morally she is at least the equal of man, all of which would be true if she did not lack in philosophy what is the systemic use of the science, and she lacks in philosophy because she lacks in the physical strength to withstand the life-struggle when it rages the fiercest which alone gives rise to philosophy. The physical inferiority of woman is not inherently characteristic of her sex but is resultant of the evolutionary subdivision of the reproductive function without which the human species could not have risen to the

foremost place among primates, a fact which should be easily appreciated if one considers the immense difficulties which hermaphroditic generation would encounter in both the creation and preservation of the race. If mankind are to continue to exist a large number if not the majority of the women must give birth to children and since the more of their energy and intelligence is given to race-culture the less they will have to give to anything else it follows that women cannot excel in those things which the exemption from child-bearing gives man the opportunity and strength to pursue. Hence the struggle for existence which includes the fighting of enemies along with the getting of food was naturally undertaken by primitive man, a condition which by constantly exercising his strength and intelligence constantly developed them until he inevitably evolved into the physically and mentally dominant sex and as a consequence also as the dominant moral sex.

The widely prevalent practice of infanticide among all peoples both savage and civilized of which female babies for the most part were the victims is indisputable recognition by race-experience of woman's inferiority as a physical and therefore intellectual factor in race-preservation and progress, an inferiority which she can never escape on account of the maternal function.

To progress toward the physical level of man woman would have to encounter equally the hardships and perils of life and this could be done only at the expence of her delicacy and beauty and along with the disappearance of feminine refinement there would go all of the ennobling sentiments which distinguish the home of the civilized from the cave of the savage. It cannot be doubted that the best things in civilization are the result

of the monogamic concept of woman's place in society, for without the sanctity of home the preservation of which appeals so powerfully to the vanity and pride of man he would lack his chief stimulus to social endeavor which would mean an arrest of further progress and a return to barbarism. Lucretia and Cornelia we must believe were products of a social environment which tend to the highest human development and their types will be found only when female constancy is held in great esteem, an esteem which cannot exist where woman is not sexually subservient to man. Such subserviency however cannot be sustained except through the exercise of a moral tyranny; for woman is naturally not more chaste and loyal than man, as the history of prostitution of all ages will show and while a nation of Aspatias cannot but sink to the depth degradation and weakness. Thus the emergence of woman from her proper domestic sphere as shown in the history of Greece and Rome is the unfailing symptom of national decadence and dissolution, and as long as men are guided by the experience of the past they will do nothing that encourages the entrance of woman into the sphere of masculine activity.

That women are superior to men in the negative virtues of chastity, sobriety and kindred virtues may be admitted without damage to the general argument, since such admission is more than offset by the fact that they lack in the active virtues of generosity, magnanimity and justice, as shown in their treatment of one another. There is more fellowship among men and their servants than among women and theirs for man will permit a fallen brother to get up again and the brotherhood existing among male criminals finds no parallel in a sisterhood of female criminals, and all of this happens because lacking in physical strength woman also lacks in the courage to meet disaster.

There are of course exceptions, occasional women who are superior in every way to the average man – Hypatias and Zenobias, just as there are occasional negroes who are the intellectual superior of the average white male, but that does not affect the proposition of the general racial inferiority of the negro. The few great women can not become the criterion of sex-quality for there are a few great men, equal of the nobles women in their nobles virtues, Guatama, Christ and Francis Assissi, thus we must measure the masses of men by the masses of women and when we do find that whatever of virtue, virility, strength, humanity has belongs to the male sex.

It is no discredit to woman that this is so, that she is a woman, effeminate, weak and in nearly every way the antithesis of man, for we have need of the positive and negative in sex no less than in electricity, of centripetal as well as centrifugal societal forces. Woman cannot help being what nature has made her and rightly intends her to be and man need not make a boast of something given to him by nature, his own superiority, nor will the right-minded man on account of his manifest and manifold superiority seek to enslave woman in any way. He will remember with Shakespheard that it is excellent to have a giants strength by tyrannous to use it like a giant, that tyranny is the universal curse of mankind and he will simply refrain from helping her to injury himself and the race by entering the sphere of properly masculine endeavor. To rid the world of tyranny the assistance of woman is not needed, indeed it is not desirable, for nothing so appeals to the feminine heart and captivates the feminine fancy as successful strength. They are the natural lovers of athletes and soldiers, devotedly given to the pomp and pageantry of power, however attained, inevitable and incorrigible worshippers of heroes, and thus

their presence in politics as well as art and literature is pernicious and for no other reason than their incurable infatuation with every handsome Caesar and gallant Napoleon.

Such things are characteristic of women because their sentiments never transcend their own sex, a fact which is well attested by their supreme devotion to personal adornment, and in this regard they are not unlike savages, whose ideas of benevolence and justice are confined to the members of their own tribe while they unrestrainedly plunder and kill the members of savage tribes. Women thus naturally on account of their child-bearing helplessness devote the most of their time and intelligence to the getting of desirable husbands and this means the cultivation of their egoism and consequent narrowmindedness to the point where they can see goodness in nothing that does not refer immediately and specifically to the welfare of their own sex. The best interests of civilization however depend upon sentiments of the broadest philanthropy, concepts of race-welfare which not only transcend sex but even tribes and nations themselves, and since the sex-conditions of the man alone permit him to rise to the exalted view of the earth as the home of a common family the direction of civilization, insofar as it can be directed by human agencies, should be undertaken exclusively by man.



## Introduction to “Birth control”

*In this essay, Fox argues passionately in favor of birth control. What makes this essay so radical is not simply the content, but also its date of writing. One version of this essay appears with the year 1904 written on it, which makes the positions contained within seem even more radical for the era. This essay paints a grim picture of life before child labor laws and serve as a visceral reminder of what life was often like in a capitalist system. Like some of the other essays included herein, there are sections that Fox crossed out. Unlike the other essays, however, it includes alternative endings. Rather than try to decide which was better, I opted to include both to let the reader infer on their own the possible intention or message of the essay Fox wished to convey.*

*This essay paints a very stark and grim reality of the life of an American worker. There is some doubt as to whether Fox had a child of his own, named Rebecca, who died at age twelve. There also appears to be some question as to whether his wife Esther's two children were Fox's biological children. Regardless of whether Fox had fathered children himself, this grim essay describes the harsh realities for workers before child labor laws were enacted in 1938. Finally, it is worth pointing out the obvious contradictions between Fox's egalitarian views on women's reproductive rights and his belief in their physical and biological inferiority, as indicated by his essay “Men, Women and Morals.”*

## Birth Control

The question of birth control should interest working men and women – especially the women – more than any other class in society. For the reason that it is they who bear all the burdens of the world. They feed the world and clothe the world and house it. They populate the world and then depopulate it as they are stupidly doing in Europe at the present moment.

Many learned people are writing learned tomes on the cause of the present war. Some are charging it to kings, others say that its the grasping capitalists who are to blame. Again we are told that munition makers worked up to the excitement. And finally the theory is advanced that the military class brought on the catastrophe. I, who am not learned, venture to suggest, timidly, in the presence of the mighty, that perhaps something they all quite overlooked may have contributed its part to the horror.

It will be noticed that the country that was best prepared for the war was the country whose population was pressing hardest against its boundry lines. Germany was well prepared for the war. Germany's population has increased 25 millions in the 44 years since its last war with France, while the population of France has remained practically stationary. How long would it have taken till Germany's population would be crowding upon its means of subsistence? That was a question Germany would have to meet very soon; and isn't it a reasonable presumption that her preparedness had for its object, at least in part, the solution of this pressing problem?

No great upheaval, such as the present war, is due to any one cause. There are always a number of interests involved that complicate social questions; but there are always basic causes in which many superficial ones have their roots, and in my judgment the matter of population is the root problem of the present upheaval in Europe.

But it will be said that whether or not the population question is effecting Europe, surely in this country the matter of overcrowding is very far off, so far off indeed that only dreamers of dreams will pay any attention to it today. In this country with its vast areas of virgin soil, I've heard them say we need to stimulate the growth of population rather than suppress it.

Now, before we go any further, let us inquire into the question of who will be materially benefited by a large population. It is well that we know this as it will throw considerable light on the problem as a whole and enable us to judge the motives behind the well-fed opposition to the birth control movement, and the movement for the restriction of immigration.

In the first place the price of real estate goes up a notch at the birth of every child. You can easily understand this when you observe the high price of land in cities and densely populated parts of the country. It is population that gives value to land. Where there is no population land has practically no money or exchange value. Therefore the owners of land, the real estate sharks, are on the side of large families. It is good for business, and business superseeds sentiment in the real estate world.

The railroad barons are in favor of large families. They get a tripple benefit, many of them. They are large land owners, they have land to sell. They want to "build up the

country” so to increase their carrying business. They are large employers of labor, (*perhaps should be a period*) large families make labor cheap and subservient. The railroad companies unquestionable are on the side of those who favor letting nature take care of the population question, large families stimulate larger dividinds.

The trusts want the working people to have large families because progress of invention and specialization has made it possible for them to use large numbers of children in their business. Today children of ten can do the work that yesterday was done by men.

The cotton mill owners of the South have a delegation in Washington pleading with Congress not to pass a bill the purpose of which is to prevent them from using the labor of children under fourteen in their mills. They plead in behalf of the children. They say: “We keep the children off the streets where there morals are sure to be contaminated. We give them wholesome expertize and useful training. We take good care of them, we teach them the art of industry and make good useful citizens out of them. Employed in our mills they are independent & self-supporting. The passage of this bill will deprive them of the right to make their own living and make of them helpless dependents upon parents, who in most cases have not the means to support them.”

Now, the irony of the situation is that what these grasping (*gasping?*) mill owners say is largely true, made so by an overpopulation of children. The parents of these children have large families that it is difficult for them to support in any sort of a way, and utterly impossible in a manner that would insure them good food & clothing, right education and proper social environment.

Thus we have a situation in this land of much land so deplorable that it is questionable in the taking of children out of factories is to their best interest unless we provide them with other means of sustenance.

Is it any wonder that the mill owners would be in favor of large families? Is it any wonder that they call down the wrath of heaven and the iron hand of the law upon all mollicoddling reformers who strive to disturb a sacred order of nature that provides so plentifully for the mills in their crying need of child labor?

All employers of labor are in favor of large families whether they employ child labor or not. A large family ties a man to his job more securely than a small family does. He is less liable to organize and strike for more pay than the man with a small family, altho he needs the raise worse than the other days – another example of the cruel irony of big families.

As society is organized today it is in the interest of the employing class to have the workers as heavily burdened as possible; and the greatest burden that can be placed upon a working man's shoulders is a large family.

In trade union circles it is well known that the men with large families are the most conservative when it comes to making demands upon the employers and an analysis of the cases of desertion from labor ranks during strikes will show that it is the heavily burdened members who in the vast majority of cases turn their backs upon their comrades and become scabs.

Birth control then is not a subject far off in the realms of dreams; it is not a question that applies only to the congested countries of Europe; it is a question of right

here and now. It is a question of immediate importance, a vital problem of the hour. It is a question that concerns the working class of this country as much as that of any other land.

We have a child labor problem in this country. Millions of children are employed in the factories. Every child employed takes the place of a man or woman. There is an army of unemployed men and women in this country about equal to the number of working children. Every time a child is put to work a grown man or woman is turned out on the street. I need not go into detail; you know what that means. You know that mostly the man thusly displaced is the father and only support of a family, and that the woman is often so, and whether she is or not, she is often confronted with the alternative of being displaced by the employment of a child.

And these millions of children whose employment create the army of unemployed, where do they come from? What class of homes supply them for the feast of manneon? They come from the homes where most children are, of course. They come from the homes that need their support the most; the homes where there are many little mouths to feed.

Some parents are avaricious, they send their children to the factor when not actually compelled to do so; but the great mass of parents would rather send their children to school than to the workshop, and do so only because the few dollars are needed in the home to feed the numerous smaller children.

Families with one or two children generally keep their children at school. These are the worker's children that you will see attending high schools – institutions by (*from here, there are two different endings. First ending*) only a small per cent of the working

class children, for the very good reason that the average family is too large for it to indulge in the luxury of a high school education for any of its members. (*Second ending*) only a small percent of the working class, only becas. Child labor is perhaps the most crying example of social injustice – it is a social evil doubly compounded.

## Introduction to “SEATTLE GENERAL STRIKE”

*In this final essay Fox describes the Seattle General Strike of 1919, held from February 6-15. Here he explains what would come to be the position of the syndicalists. They argue that revolutionary power should come from the labor unions, and their strongest weapon was the general strike. Fox demonstrated that 30,000 meals could be provided every day and milk still delivered to babies, even while every other shop in the city was locked up tight. With over three decades of strike experience by this point, Fox was a seasoned labor agitator and was able to comment first hand on how the operations took place. This essay provides instructive examples of how revolutionary syndicalism and mutual aid can work together, without the need for police or union bosses.*

*This final essay was selected for a reason – it comes the closest of nearly all of the writing of Jay Fox to provide a complete system. A total way for living that manifest itself in a few days. Much of what he wrote was very abstract and talked more about lofty ideals than how to achieve them. This essay offers real, practical elucidation of how the revolution could manifest itself. Unlike other essays on theory or praxis, this piece shows practically how power can shift from city hall to the union hall. In this essay, Fox is in his element, and one can begin to see how he would evolve to join the CP and commit himself to the Bolshevik cause. In all, as it is the last major act of revolutionary activity that Fox participated in, it seems the most fitting way to end this project.*



## SEATTLE GENERAL STRIKE

During my long association with Labor unions I have taken part in many strikes. Now I was to take a part in my largest and last, the Seattle General Strike; the first strike in history to tie up completely the economic activities of a city.

In 1908 I wrote a pamphlet advocating the General strike as the most practical and effective way to overthrow capitalism. The anarchists were the first to advocate the General strike as a revolutionary weapon. In 1908 Seigfried Nacht, a German anarchist writer issued a pamphlet: "Der Generalstreik und die Sociale Revolution," answering the Social democrat appeal for a ballot box revolution, by showing the General strike to be the logical outcome of the general organization of labor. Three years later (*Fox repeats*) Three years later came another pamphlet on the same subject by Arnold Roller. The French anarchists convinced the labor unions that the General strike would be the natural end of bigger and better strikes, and the equally natural end of capitalism. In Belgium in 1902, 350,000 workers downed tools in a demand for universal suffrage. The Italian and Spanish workers were considering the General strike as a means of liberation. From Japan I received a Jajapanese translation of my pamphlet. Thus it will be seen that in those days the anarchist and syndicalist program for a revolutionary General strike was well to the fore. However, the first World war and what followed brought a great change in the social outlook. The Russian Revolution and the coming of the dynamic Communist parties make it most difficult for the old movements to survive.

The Seattle General Strike was not a revolution, altho some of the bosses thought that it was and prepared for the worst. The Seattle General strike was one of sympathy

with 3,500 ship yard workers on strike for an increase in pay. The 21 unions employed in the yards were associated in the Metal Trades Council. The latter made a blanket agreement covering wages, hours and working conditions for all the unions. That progressive move of the council made it for all practical purposes an industrial union. Such an agreement was in force when the United States entered the war.

The rapidly advancing cost of living called for an upward hike in wages. and such a demand was made on the bosses, only to find that the government contracts contained a clause forbidding a rise in wages without consent from Washington. Already Gompers and his Executive Council in cooperation with the government had created a Wage Adjustment Board to control wages in war industries. Gompers went further in betrayal of the workers. He set aside the democratic procedures of home rule in the unions by assuring the government there would be no strikes, and further that no effort would be made to organize the mass industries.

Thus tied hand and foot the ship yard workers laid their demands before the Board. The latter came to Seattle to "adjust" matters. Instead of adding the raise in the cost of living to the present wage the Board took as its base the wage of a year back, at which time many of the union rates were low. That trick resulted in a saving of considerable cash to the bosses and the Government. It also aroused resentment in the ranks of labor. But the top officials had sold us down the river and there was nothing we could do except protest which we did but to no avail. Finally when the war ended we decided to use labors most effective weapon. We stopped work January one 1919, 35,000 strong. Sixteen days later the entire city was tied up tight, 65,000 workers took a

vacation.

When we ship yard workers laid down our tools we appealed to the Central Labor council for a general walkout as a sympathetic gesture. The Council, a delegate body embracing all unions in the city, agreed and submitted the question to the unions for their consideration. The return replies were a unanimous YES. Next the Council asked the locals to each elect three members to act on the General Strike Committee. Thus the committee was composed of 330 members from 110 unions.

News of the coming General strike caused consternation in the ranks of the local capitalists. Were the workers about to emulate the recent action of the Russian toilers who had thrown the capitalist masters off their backs and taken over complete control of their country? Was this the beginning of the Revolution? Many of them thought so and fled the city. The bravest of them stayed home, took out riot insurance and bought revolvers. One hardware man said he had over 300 calls for revolvers and none looked like workers. The real estate shark who was Mayor spent \$50,000 on special police for which there was no use. There was not even one arrest on account of the strike. On the second day of the strike the Mayor ordered the strike off or he would declare martial law. He was told we were not afraid of martial law and would continue the strike as long as was desired. There was no martial law. We were in control and so long as we gave him no excuse to turn the machine guns on us he was powerless. Incidentally a detachment of U.S. troops were encamped near the city.

The General Strike Committee had great power and responsibility and it used that power with wisdom and ability. Not a wheel could turn without its consent, a store

opened, a shoe shined or a face shaven, nor electricity allowed for industrial use. No city government ever had such power as that committee of workers. The loud mouthed Mayor whined that the seat of government had been taken over from the city hall to the Labor Temple. Actually nothing had been stolen from him. He still had the law books, the jail and police to regulate the traffic and the like, only there was no traffic to regulate. What he and his capitalist masters did not realize if (*Fox meant is*) the fact that for the first time it asserted its power with the complete stoppage of production and distribution. The power to start and stop the great economic machine is the supreme power in any city and the Labor Temple is the seat of that power.

In ordinary strikes the committees in charge have little to do in the (*incomprehensible, as the next two sentences are printed somewhat on top of one another*) commission of the task imposed upon the General Strike Committee. This strike effected the life of the people (*end incomprehensible section*) in so many ways that a complete stoppage would be wrong. Exemptions had to be made. Here the Executive Committee of Fifteen had its work. The fire fighters were told to stay on the job, but the janitors of the City Hall were no exempt, nor were those of the Labor Temple. The laundry workers designated one laundry to serve hospitals only. Drug stores bore signs "Orders for prescriptions only will be served." The garbage wagon drivers were told to remove only such matter as might cause disease, no ashes or paper. Their trucks bore signs "Exempt by Strike Committee." Electricity was exempt, except there shall be none for commercial use.

The milk companies refused to serve only dairies in down town. That didn't

satisfy the drivers who thought of the mothers who couldn't come down town to get milk for their babies. So the union established 35 neighborhood milk stations all over the city, got space in stores where milk was sold from nine till two. It was raw pure milk authorised for babies brought in by small dairymen from near the city 3,000 gallons daily. The hospitals got their milk from the down town dairies.

The strikers couldn't live on leasure, they had to eat. So the provision trades had, instead of play, a mighty big job on their hands. The big restaurant owners were good fellows, they offered their to the cooks and waiters, who refused the generous offer but did accept use of the kitchens where the food was cooked and rushed in trucks to halls 21 sections of the city where it was served cafeteria style; all you could eat of beef stew, potatoes, carrots, spaghetti with sauce, bread and coffee. On some days the menu was changed. Steak or pot roast and gravy instead of stew. The price was 25 cents if you had a union card, 35 cents if you didn't. 30,000 meals were eaten each day. What a pile of grub, and all service free.

*(note the following, until indicated, has a problem with the printing, with words running on top of one another. As best I can make it, Fox continues)* The Industrial Workers of the world had a local of transport workers that naturally joined the strike. While no arrests were made on account of the strike during its existence, after it was over the authorities in a spirit of revenge closed the c co-operative print plant, arresting its manager; they also raided the I.W.W. hall and took a several members into custody on the charge of being "ringleaders of anarchy." A committee appointed by the Central Labor Council to investigate the case reported that an invasion of fundamental rights had

taken place through unlawful raids and arrests,” and that “fundamental rights do not go by favor, and when they are denied to one they are denied to all.” By unanimous vote the Council decided to immediately take up the defence of these men, in order that the fundamental rights involved in these cases which are necessary to our own existence, shall be preserved.” When the cases came to court the defence lawyer beat down the phony charges of the police, and the men were discharged.

In a fine expression of worker solidarity the Japanese stores, barber shops and restaurants closed up tight. Being distrust of the manner in which a hostile capitalist Mayor would keep the peace, we decided upon organizing a police guard of our own. We had a number of ex-service men in our ranks wearing their (*unintelligible*) uniforms, who would make an ideal Labor Guard. An ad in our daily paper on record brought 300 of them to the new city hall, (the Labor Temple) where they organized themselves into “Labor's War Veterans Guard,” with two headquarters from which the boys went forth to keep the peace twenty four hours a day in three eight hour shifts, without clubs, gun or pay. The Mayor wanted to deuptize them and furnish all three. Their answer was “No, We think it will reassure the public to know that we have no guns. We can keep order in our own ranks without guns. If there is any shooting done it wont be by us.” Thanks to the fine work of the Labor Guard our men were kept from congregating in crowds or entering into arguments with anybody. A row started by a stoolpigeon would have given the enraged capitalists an excuse to turn their gunmen upon the armless strikers. There was not even one arrest on account of the strike.

Washington, that was having its ships built “cost plus,” threatened the builders

that if they negotiated a wage increase shipments of steel would be stopped. Thus our strike was actually against the Government. Our agents got nowhere in trying to get Washington to take hands off, so we ship yard workers decided to make the return to work unanimous.

As an expression of Labor solidarity the five day Seattle General Strike was a complete success. American Federation of Labor, Industrial Workers of the World and Japanese workers laid down their tools to the last man and woman; and behold we witnessed for the first time in history a closed city, a city without business and without traffic, except such as carried the meaningful sign, "Exempt by order of Strike Committee," the new ruling body now seated in the Labor Temple and elected by the votes of the workers in their union halls.

As a result of their brotherly action the workers learned some important facts. They saw how easily at their command the Labor Temple took over control of the economic affairs of the city. And they saw how a similar committee can take over the industrial management of the city when the time for such an operation is ripe. They saw how efficiently and on short notice the culinary workers arranged to feed the strikers 30,000 meals a day, manifesting their ability to carry on without their bosses. They saw with what forethought the milk wagon drivers got milk for the babies, all of which was an intensive education, an experience not soon to be forgotten, an experience of much more value than a few cents more to the ship yard men who would soon be jobless anyway.

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