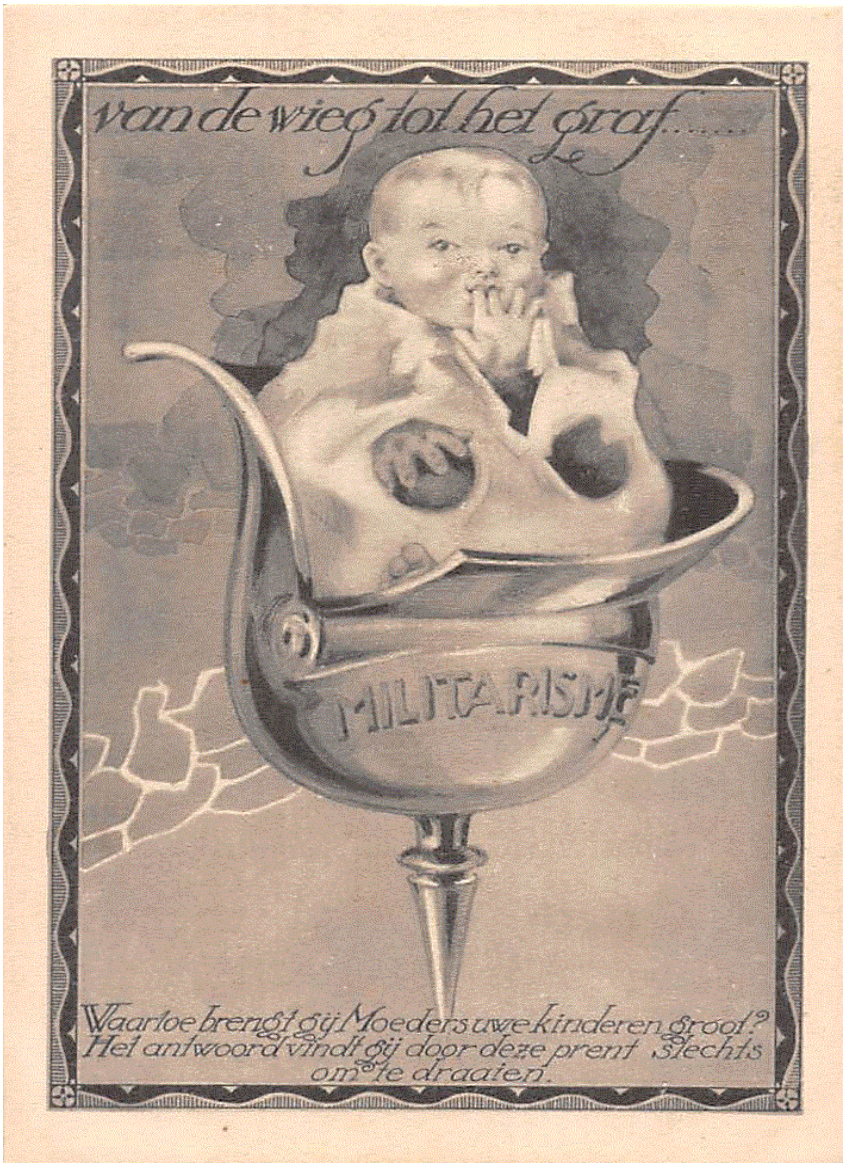
Bart de Ligt - TOWARDS A FREE ORDER

II. THE CONQUEST OF VIOLENCE

- New and Enlarged edition -

with new translations of previously unpublished texts . Bart de Ligt, anarchist, syndicalist, anti-militarist, activist, organizer – and his context.

More relevant than ever in these crucial times.



"From the cradle to the grave... MILITARISM. What for are you mothers raising your children?" (WW1 postcard)

-WAR OR REVOLUTION SERIES VOL 1. A.-

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1. Introduction

This edition of Bart de Ligt's 'The Conquest of Violence' is a more 'theoretical' or analytical annex to the new enlarged edition of 'Battle Plan against War and War Preparation' and is itself in turn accompanied by some other texts.

De Ligt was a Dutch lifelong anti-militarist who evolved from christian over marxist and then syndicalist and anarchist. In these times of growing armed conflict, the anarchist movement can not and should not stand aside. We have a rich tradition of resistance not just against the symptoms but especially against the causes. And we have a long tradition of proposing alternatives going back to Proudhon's 'War and Peace' (which inspired Tolstoy's anarchism and anti-militarism) and even further back.[1]

For this volume we selected a number of texts that contextualize the older editions of 'Conquest', in order to give a better representation of Bart de Ligt, his thought, activism and context.

Bart de Ligt's 'Plans' weren't made up behind a desk by a 'pacifist' liberal intellectual. The 'Plan' presented before the WRI was just one version of a long search for consistent strategies against war and its causes. And Bart de Ligt was not alone in developing these ideas: Clara Wichmann, Proudhon, Pierre Ramus, Tolstoy, Domela Nieuwenhuis, Albert de Jong, Arthur Lehning and so many others contributed to it.

The more 'practical' proposals are gathered in the annex 'Battle Plan'. The broader context of his life, ideas and work are presented in this new edition of 'The Conquest of Violence' it.

The 'Battle' Plan (a closer translation than 'Campaign' Plan) is useful for anyone inside or outside the anarchist movement who wants to reflect on what can be done to prevent war alongside their peers and without waiting for anyone's approval. Today the 'Plan' would probably be called 'Social Defence' as it is now popular in academic circles. It is what the likes of Gene Sharp (his '198 methods' are included here), Brian Martin (absolute reading suggestions like 'Social defence, Social Change'; 'Uprooting War), Véronique Dudouet, George Lakey and many others build upon.

In this new edition of Conquest I have added a collection of texts that will paint a broader picture of Bart's time and thought. Several of his closest comrades are platformed here: either by speaking (his partner Catherina Lydia van Rossem, Albert de Jong, Arthur Lehning and some others) or by being spoken of at length (Clara Wichmann for example) or mentioned.

This edition is not intended as a discussion on 'non/violence'. That would require a treatise on language and concepts (violence, pacifism, direct action, , etc) that mean different things to different people and in different languages and sub/cultures. Bart de Ligt didn't consider himself to be a 'pacifist' (he supported the Spanish Revolution but not the Civil War) and Gandhi supported participation in war and war preparation for an 'independent' India: "*I do believe that, where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence... I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should, in a cowardly manner, become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonor.*
But I believe that nonviolence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment. Forgiveness adorns a soldier...But abstinence is forgiveness only when there is the power to punish; it is meaningless when it pretends to proceed from a helpless creature...."
So even 'pacifists' don't exclude or condemn all violence.

My ambition as translator was first of all to contribute to the war against war. A more nuanced picture appears than may have been the case in recent debates. For now I think all anarchists and

1 We hope to publish an anthology on anarchist anti-militarism in the near future. For now there is a sense of urgency that pushed us to start with a pivotal figure who bridged the era before and after the Spanish Revolution. We hope to return to this pivotal moment in the discussions on non/violence, anti/militarism, 'pacifism', etc within the anarchist movement.

anti-militarists can agree that anarchism excludes militarism - understood as (to quote the IAMV[2]) "*the system of the coercive organisation of all means of violence, both living and non-living, established by a state in order to use it*

1. *to maintain its power if it thinks it is threatened*
    a. *by another state;*
    b. *by a revolutionary movement of its own population;*
2. *to enlarge its power if it sees the chance to do so."*[3],

and "*Understanding as* ***militarism*** *the striving for and practicing of violence and humanicide organized by* ***states and groups organised to strive for state power,*** *we as anti-militarists recognize all those who resist it on the basis of principle and want to impair it as much as possible, individually as well as collectively.*"[4]

Later, according to Albert de Jong, "The IAMV Congress of 1921 also accepted the following resolution on revolutionary violence:
"*The IAMV makes* ***no propaganda for a red army****, declares itself to be* ***against every form of militarism****, i.e. a system of weapons in which participation is directly of economically enforced, but deems the participation in a revolutionary army, inasfar as the members do so individually voluntarily, not to be in violation of the IAMV principles*".
The IAMV as such now no longer had the right to propagate violence as a revolutionary means of struggle.
A new simplification of the declaration of principles in 1925 led to:
"*1. The IAMV understands as militarism* ***every system of monopolized violence.***
It fights against militarism ***in all its forms****.*
(...)
4. The IAMV wants to convince the workers of the fact that the ***destruction of militarism*** *is a main condition for social liberation.*
(...)
7. (...) takes (...) at the same time position against every attempt to reinstate it or to implement a new militarism in the name of socialism, communism, proletarian state, revolution or anything else.""[5]

I think we can also all agree that less violence is better. And that large parts of the anarchist, revolutionary, syndicalist, anti-militarist, feminist, etc liberation struggle is and will always be non-violent. That's what these volumes focus on, but without trying to limit people. There are other times and places to address other choices and tactics.

Gandhi used his reasoning to justify militarization and nationalism, the state and capitalism. We as anarchists do not accept militarism as a 'justified' form of 'violence' as Gandhi did, but Gandhi's quote on nonviolence or cowardess sums up Bart de Ligt's position on (non-militarist) violence rather well.

This book starts with a description of Bart's life and thought by people who knew him. His wife and partner in 'crime' Ina opens with her personal look, clearly with a lot of love and warmth.

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2 I.A.M.V. or 'Internationale AntiMilitarlistische Vereniging in Nederland': Internatioal Anti-Militarist Association in the Netherlands. I use the Dutch acronym for consistency.

3 IAMV Congress Declaration of Principles at the 1919 Congress in Haarlem, as quoted by Bart de Ligt's article 'De toekomst van iamb. en iak.' [The future of IAMB and IAK] in 'De Wapens Neder', May 1937 p 2. Also published in 'Bevrijding', May 1937

4 Verslag van het anti-militaristisch congres 1921, Uitgegeven door het IAMB, Secretariaat Jos Giesen, p 61

5 Source: Albert de Jong, 'Revolutionary anti-militarism in the Netherlands' N.V. Nijgh & Van Ditmar, 's Gravenhage, 1954

His 'pupil' Arthur Lehning gives us some of his memories. Arthur's life spanned the whole of last century and is very much a bridge between the 'old' anarchists and the new ones, much like Bart was, but in a different way.

So does his comrade Albert de Jong with whom he disagreed on a lot of important issues leading to a break in their relationship that symbolizes the disintegration of the Dutch anarchist movement they were both part of. His assessment isn't always nice for Bart, but even that is telling enough to be relevant for this book. But like any assessment it has to be taken with a grain of salt. There is no point in presenting only favorable reviews and applause though.

It's impossible to list all the organisations Bart has been part or member of, all his initiatives, his speeches, his publications, etc. Throughout the book a number of facets of his activism will be clear in the texts or in their sources. A bibliography would be useless to English readers, as most speeches and publications have never been translated. The most complete bibliography can be found in 'Bart de Ligt 1883-1938', N.V. Van Loghum Slaterus' Uitgevers Maatschappij N.V., Arnhem, 1939) along with a number of biographical texts by comrades paying tribute to Bart. Arthur's introduction to this book is also translated in this volume.

In the rest of the book we let Bart do the talking – what he has to say is clear enough.

What its relevance is for today is up to us.

What's clear is that even Bart's theory is intended for practical use. It's not easy to find some spectacular quotes, one-liners, click-bait or slogans in his writing – there are more invigorating propagandists to be found. Bart was an intellectual, spiritually sensitive and born and raised in christianity then influenced by Marxian bourgeois rhetoric – both of which he rejected because of a number of fundamental flaws, but without throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

One can agree or not with how he always tried to foster the broadest possible front and keeping communication lines open. With how much of christianity and Marxianism he kept carrying around. With some of his positions and choices.

But we would be unwise in these times to discard the sources of radical antimilitarism in these times out of hand, without evaluating whether they can be of use to us and how (or not).

Place of 'Conquest' in the life and thinking of BdL

As 'Lina' explains further on, 'Conquest' was written towards the end of Bart's life and is very much a summary of his positions later in life, exhausted and tired, less partisan, less focused on revolution and evolving towards vaguely spiritual/social psychology approach, more focused on current events like Spain, WW2 and broad coalitions, tactics and 'reasonability'.

The tone of 'Conquest' is quiter compared to earlier texts like '[The antimilitarists and their means of struggle] + [New forms of war and how to combat them] and his brochures, speeches, articles, etc. While he had never been one of hyperboles and slogans, the tone seems to have shifted after [Peace as Act] (1933), a 700+ page study of antimilitarist and non-violent struggles throughout history and across cultures that is yet to be translated (Brian Martin has given an overview in 'Uprooting War').
The demise of the anarchist movement of his day, and the conflicts within it must have had a severe impact on this tireless activist. The bridges he had always tried to build across his own movement and with other potential allies had all fallen short and failed. His 'Peace Academy' had failed. His comrades were dead (Clara Wichmann) or alienated from him (Albert de Jong, etc). War had again become inevitable as the working class had failed to prevent it by failing to defend the revolution.
This very clearly defines his mindset for re-working his writings into this summarizing text that was clearly intended for as large an audience as he could manage. There was nothing new there, except the tone of near-defeat and near-exhaustion.
To remedy this we have enlarged this edition with texts that will diversify his one English text

(apart from his letters to and from Gandhi, that are also subject to the same attempt to keep communication lines open by compliments and appeals to the values of his correspondent with that typical bourgeois/Dutch politeness and tact).

Root causes not just MRXian reductionism.

While he never shed all remnants of Marx, it's clear that he rejected Marxian reductionism. Every elite and every war needs justification to mobilize the proletariat. But like all anarchists he never believed that this ideology was enough or that elites could be convinced to choose between war and peace. The systemic logic of capitalism and state lead to war.

So he didn't believe that morals or ethics were enough to 'choose peace'. Like Proudhon, he was convinced that the systemic causes of war need to be conquered. Like Proudhon a purely moral interpretation of history couldn't satisfy him, or they could both have remained within the warm embrace of their respective christian churches.

Unlike Marx, he didn't believe in the teleological outcome of peace 'if only we could have more state and capitalism for the time being' like Marx. According to Bart ends and means must correspond. Bart didn't agree with Marx's hypocrisy, inconsistency and contradictions. He didn't believe that more of the same would 'in the end' wither away and bring peace to the world.

Bart couldn't agree with liberal bourgeois 'pacifism' either. His rejection of simplistic solutions brought him to anarchism and the broader struggles of feminism, anti-fascism, syndicalism, etc.

some of his analysis wrong (Hitler Germany and war) or outdated now (Japanese question) but PARALLELS (Abessinia=Syria, Algeria=Palestine, Rojava/Chiapas=Spain '36, Russia=Germany, Ukraine=Poland, EU&US=EU&US 'democracies' of his day)

Even so, Bart made his own mistakes. What he professed about the second World War, and the plans of Hitler-Germany or Japan, has been disproved by history. He didn't believe that it would come to war, but it clearly did. This new edition doesn't shy away from the subject – this is not an exercise in revisionism. People make mistakes and we need to know about them if we are to learn from them.
While he was mistaken about his predictions, the parallels between now and his own time are clear enough – including the many people who seemingly don't really believe that war is near. Or who believe it is, but are disheartened by the idea. Who think that war is inevitable. Bart overestimated the willingness of the people to prevent war, but he predicted the unbridled cruelty of the next war if it would break out.

Non/violence, Anti/militarism, pacifism

This book is not about 'solving' the non/violence debate. Bart wasn't a (bourgeois) pacifist and neither am I. Bart was very much convinced (like Landauer and many other anarchists) that less violence was better, and that more violence meant more reaction (either from the enemy or from 'allies', or both). But he didn't reject people who saw no non-violent option to liberate themselves. He dedicated his life to finding other options. And he did find other options – that can at least be added to the toolbox.
So while this book can add to the debate in practical and theoretical ways, trying to find direct answers to recent questions and debates would be anachronistic. And anyone who would try to turn the debate into an X versus Y dogmatic adversity would be fighting strawmen, of which there are already plenty.

ABOUT THE CHOICE OF TEXTS:

I have tried to include some close comrades of Bart de Ligt (BdL) over the two volumes. For several reasons not all of them could be included, be it for copyright reasons or simply because his network was so expansive in all different directions – he was on speaking terms with people from many backgrounds, ideas, convictions and walks of life.

I have chosen to separate the more practical texts and the more theoretical texts, although those two elements obviously need eachother. I thought it would nevertheless be more useful to gather the more practical texts separately because a smaller separate booklet is more practical for organizing and not everyone can afford or is interested in a big volume with more philosophical and historical backgrounds. The (many) footnotes are included for the same reason.

The texts are ordered by date to allow an insight in the developments and sequence in the context of de Ligt's life and his context both in the movement and in the world.

Some texts couldn't be included because of the volume of his published works. I hope I have struck the right balance in my choices to paint a picture of the diversity of theoretical and practical dimensions of his work and life. I think that he would be pleased to see his 'Battle Plan' embedded in its context: none of his advice was meant to be a manual that people could simply follow. He needs us to understand what we want, how we got to where we are and how we can get to a better place. He didn't promise an easy ride.

It's important to be aware of some of the strategic, ethical and tactical reasoning, and to understand some basic principles with their possible implications, considerations and dilemma's in order to translate history into our future.

For more on the subject: visit www.antimilitarism.org.

AmoRyRabiA,

J/M – Pépé.

DISCLAIMER: the texts in this brochure are not intended as alpha and omega on any of the subjects that are touched upon. **START TALKING AND START ORGANIZING!**

A. Some of Bart's comrades speaking:

1. Arthur Lehning – By means of introduction (1939)

Source: Bart de Ligt 1883-1938, Van Loghum Slaterus, Arnhem, 1939, pp 9-12

(…)
The life of Bart de Ligt, who suddenly died on September 3 1938 at 55 years old and whose ashes were interred at Westerveld, has been dedicated to cultural and social renewal for more than a quarter of a century. Originally a pastor in the Dutch Reformed Church, he rallied against the official and degenerate christianity and soon participated in the struggle for socialism; and he became one of the most stirring propagandists of revolutionary antimilitarism. He has devoted the biggest part of his labour to the struggle against the war become morally untenable: to the propaganda for direct action, to the organizing of anti-war fighters, to the development of a tactic of supra-violent means of struggle. He has dedicated an important cultural-historic book to this matter. He was -to be sure- not a 'pacifist'. He didn't just fight against the capitalist war, but above all the capitalist peace. He turned against imperialism and advocated the liberation of all oppressed classes and races. With the struggle against war, he struggled the cult of violence. In his agitation for resistance against the state slavery he always emphasized the 'voluntary slavery' and the idea that there are in fact no tyrants but only slaves. For him it was all about the free development of personality, the humanization of society; and socialism was for him above all a cultural problem.
De Ligt has been a major mental agitator, an 'inciter' as well as a great pedagogue. His encyclopedical knowledge and his sharp, penetrating intellect were combined with a great spontaneity and enthousiasm, with an un-Dutch spirit and a revolutionary mentality, that have inspired many and brought great awareness of how one must “be truly human”. He was also stubborn in his convictions and ideas, and at the same time very tolerant – but never a man of compromise. All who have known him will attest that was exceptionally humane and an exceptional friend. Althoudh he was sometimes a sceptic of intellect, he never was a sceptic of the heart. He could be enthousiastic like a child and his strong sense of humour and irony was without doubt one of the charms of his personality. His sarcasm has scorched the counterfeiters and intellectual prostitutes.
Among his core character traits were of course his so-called absolutism and utopism, without being a dogmatic or a fantasist. He surely was neither. Those who read his militant writings can hardly deny that he truly opposed phraseology with facts and impossibilities with options. But absolutism and utopism in this context mean that he lacked the characteristics that make someone an opportunist and a reformist. Big ideals must not be squandered for a bowl of lentil soup, and it's better to loose for the time being than to muddle on through the swamp without any principles. De Ligt has repeatedly pointed to the meaning of utopia as mover of worlds; and he has fulfilled a special cultural function in the defence of remaining oriented purely towards ideals that are recognized to be right. He was just as little a fantasist as Don Quitchote, although he liked to consider life as a cosmic adventure.
Deeply imbued with the realization that all that exists is worth collapsing, and that the meaning of the whole process of global becoming through all evolutions and revolutions is this one great revolution: from nature to spirit. How out of unconscious nature at last rises the clear awareness of personality, how according to Hegel's great vision the worldspirit comes to self-awareness and looks up through man's eyes – that's what he understood and seen through, but it was much more for him than just a mindgame. To understand humankind as a transition and a demise, as a rope between animal and Übermensch -he felt related to this Nietzschean image and I would think that the motoric force of his being must be traced to this. Overseeing the cultural process, he could think in millennia and was at the same time intensely focused on the practice of immediate action. The tensions on which he thrived were sometimes too big, his working power was limitless and proportional to his inexhaustible interest for all areas of life; and he was haunted by the set idea that

he wouldn't be able to fulfill his task, his health was undermined and he burned out. I don't know whether he knew the letter of Nietzsche to Peter Gast, in which he wrote: “[Oh, friend, sometimes I have the idea that I'm actually living a highly dangerous life, because I'm one of those machines that can break!]”[6]. But I'm convinced that he must have thought the same thing word for word.
He had completely broken with christianity, had risen above it; and if he preferred not to call himself atheist it was because he wanted to avoid new misunderstandings; he never kept searching for new wordings to describe his ideas as accurately as possible. He could have said with Flaubert: “[I'm mystical and I don't believe in anything!]”[7] and there is no possible doubt that he will have to be recognized as one of the freest thinkers that this country has ever known. He has constantly acknowledged his own development to himself and others in his writings and by his countless publications from the “Evangelical Joshua” to “Erasmus” which give a reasonably accurate guide for his mental biography: how he has developed and changed, how he has reviewed himself and remained himself – in short: how he became who he was.

Arthur Muller Lehning, June 1939.

6 Ach, Freund, mitunter läuft mir die Ahnung durch den Kopf, dass ich eigentlich ein höchst gefärliches Leben lebe, denn ich gehöre zu den Maschinen, welche *zerspringen* können!
7 Je suis mystique et je ne crois en rien!

2. Albert de Jong – Bart de Ligt and his importance for the IAMV and IAMB (1939)

Source: Bart de Ligt 1883-1938, Van Loghum Slaterus, Arnhem, 1939, pp173-179

In his articles and writings, de Ligt has repeatedly pointed out that dutch antimilitarism has two main roots: the workers' movement and christianity.
The IAMV was born from the anarchist and atheist labour movement. Although there had been christian-anarchists present at the international founding conference in 1904, but the intense opposition against their motion in favour of individual refusal of military service, “no matter the social or religious motive for it”, was reason for them to withdraw from the congress. The congress wasn't so much against refusal of military service as such, but against any christian motivation and against the non-violence, which it considered both to be in opposition to the revolutionary character of the congress and the international that was to be founded. The IAMV, that by the way soon became an exclusively *dutch* organization, was essentially an organization of atheist anarchists for their anti-militarist struggle until the world war.
B. de Ligt on the other hand was christian by birth, a preacher. His antimilitarism was born from his christian background. He was strongly influenced by “the beauty in the sermon on the mount and the prophets”; he felt deeply connected with Ruskin, among other reasons because Ruskin's starting point was “the most humane words in the bible”. He became a member of the [League of Christian-Socialists][8] and collaborated on [Upwards][9], the organisation's mouthpiece. Around that time his thought started to shift; de Ligt evolves into an anarchist and atheist, although without adopting every aspect of the anarchist-atheist ideas as they were accepted in the IAMV.
De Ligt applied for membership, but not without clarifying his point of view in detail before the [National Committee][10] and asking whether there was place for someone with his ideas.
The difference between the ideas of de Ligt and those that were maintained within the IAMV up until that point, was in the first place the issue of violence. De Ligt rejected it while the IAMV accepted it.
De Ligt didn't call himself non-violent; that expression was too negative for him, and passive non-violence didn't fit his combative, warrior nature. He always spoke of "mental resistance'. He recognized the relative right to use violence -for other people- and the positive meaning of violence in the historic development of humankind. But for him *personally* de Ligt was an adversary of the use of violence and he wanted no responsibility for the use of it.
The IAMV fought for the disposal of violence as ultima ratio[11] in the social relationship between people. Convinced that violence is inseparable from the capitalist and statist character of the existing society, it didn'toppose violence as such but capitalism and the state. The struggle against militarism was for the IAMV part of the class struggle in which the working class had no choice but to respond to the violence of the rulers with its own violence. After the revolutionary victory violence would be eradicated by laying the foundations for a just society, that would no longer need violence.
Already on this question of violence it's clear that the emphasis of de Ligt is on the individual, the personal; that of the IAMV on the mass, on society. This essential difference between both starting points is also clearly expressed when it comes to the personal responsibility in the face of militarism and the tactic and method of struggle that is related.
In the old IAMV refusal of service was respected as a brave act of personal conviction that was of propagandistic value, but not propagated as the most important means. There was no consideration of personal refusal of militarism: that was deemed impossible because of the economic dependence and was for that reason not seen as a method of struggle.
But for de Ligt the guideline was rather the spirit of Ruskin as formulated in his frequently quoted

8 'Bond van Christen-Socialisten'
9 'Opwaarts'
10 'Landelijk Comité'
11 'last resort'

statements like “You must simply rather die than to produce any mechanism or concoction of extermination”. “The first and absolute question of all economy is: What do you produce? - Do you produce heavely goods or hellish ones? - Wheat or gunpowder? The question is not whether you have jobs or not. The question is what kind of jobs?” De Ligt's ideas about 'responsible production' originates with Ruskin.
The IAMV as well was always conscient that the military might of the state is formed by the workers themselves, by the 'brothers in arms'. But it didn't hold this against those workers as a moral failing. It took their economic dependence into account, that forced them into war labour and into enlisting in the colonial army. The IAMV struggled for a “*society* in which there is no longer place for violence”, and expressed its conviction that violence isn't a consequence of personal shortcoming of individuals in our society -worker as well as capitalist- but of the capitalist *system* that could only be dismantled by the *common* awakening of the workers. It therefore didn't ask for individual acts that were above the moral strength of most individuals but *class solidarity*, for example strikes in which the soldiers had to choose the side of the workers.
When de Ligt is asked for “a rule” on the subject of violence he answers: “You can do what you must; don't do what you can't do.” And he adds: “There are different consequences for everyone.” The IAMV looked for an immediately applicable tactic for the working class; de Ligt for a pure attitude to life.
The difference was fundamental. Still, de Ligt's application was accepted: the IAMV opened itself up for the 'non-violent' and would from now on offer space for 'violence accepters' and 'violence rejecters'.
The admission of de Ligt to the IAMV, was at the same time a turning point in his life and in the existence of the IAMV, although people shouldn't think that the admission of de Ligt and his comrades was the cause for the change of direction of the IAMV that wouldn't have taken place without them. No, as the anarchist movement lost its following among the masses, and especially after the disappointing attitude of the working masses in 1914, the individualistic tendencies within the IAMV grew as well. On top of that the high tide of the draft refusal movement in the Netherlands had deeply influenced the IAMV during the war years. On the other handde Ligt had become more anarchist and atheist. And so his ideas and those of the IAMV had grown closer to eachother. The membership of de Ligt and his comrades (Jos Giesen, Mrs. Koomans-Timmer, Jo Meyer and later Clara Wichmann) was much more a *symptom* than a *cause* of this development. But still de Ligt, with his strong personality, his great skill, his honest character and his personal courage in the struggle has definitively influenced the IAMV.
As editor of 'De Wapens Neder' he raised the quality of this IAMV moutpiece, without it loosing its popularity. His frequent speeches and writings were at the same time scientific and propagandistic. De Ligt was not only the most able, but also the hardest working among us.
His words had impact -among the workers as well- mostly because of his personal courage in the struggle. In June 1921 he immediately and fully supported the draft dodger-hunger striker Herman Groenendaal. He walked in the front lines of a forbidden march. When the police ordered him to go away from the house of the war minister, he lay down stretched out on the street: they had to drag him to the police cell. He explicitly agitated for the refusal of military service, which landed him in jail for a month. Everyone felt that de Ligt was a revolutionary, even if he refused all violence, and that he was prepared to struggle not just behind his desk but on the streets as well, shoulder to shoulder with the workers; a comrade that wouldn't shy away from the places where the blows fell.
In 1917 the IAMV had ordered a commission to prepare an international anti-militarist congress that had to convene as quickly as possible after the war. In 1917[12] de Ligt joined this committee. Soon enough he was its driving force. With the late Jos Giesen, its secretary, the biggest work load was done by de Ligt. At the March 1921 congress in Den Haag, the IAMB was established. This as well took the position that it had to unite 'violence accepters' as well as 'violence rejecters' in its ranks. Some Tolstoyans refused to become members because the IAMB didn't advocate complete nonviolence. If it had been, 'Paco' (the later War Resisters' International) would not have been

12 Note de Jong: “Although I haven't been able to confirm this date, I believe it's correct.”

established: the organisations that had already prepared its creation would have joined the IAMB. But 'violence rejecters' as well as 'violence accepters' agreed that the IAMB should be the cooperation of *both* tendencies, on the basis that the new international would neither propagate nor refute revolutionary violence. The concrete methods of struggle that the IAMB propagated -strike, personal and collective refusal of service, responsible production (individual and collective), subversion of armies and fleets- were wholeheartedly accepted by *both* tendencies and united them to a fruitful and comradely cooperation towards the common goal to make violence as much as possible and increasingly unnecessary by the application of these methods. In the end *both* tendencies strongly propagated the defence of the social revolution by other-than-violent means, especially for practical reasons.

This concerted collaboration has lasted fifteen years: until the start of the Spanish Revolution in 1936. In line with the position that the IAMV took in 1904, the Spanish anti-militarists opposed violence with violence. There wasn't any action by the international working class to paralyse the fascist militarism with the means that the IAMB propagated. *Personally* the 'violence accepters' within the IAMB wouldn't have objected against supporting the Spanish Revolution with weapons. But they understood very well that this wasn't the task of the IAMV and IAMB. But in both these organizations a majority appeared to have become convinced that any violent struggle that went beyond the spontanteous and individual could only lead to militarism.

This majority declared all “organised violence” to be in contradiction to the anti-militarist principles, and changed the manifesto of both organizations in this spirit. De Ligt stood at its side. In his book 'The Conquest of Violence' he accepts the default position that the militarisation of the anti-fascist armies has directly been a consequence of the acceptance of revolutionary violence, and he ignores the fact that the foundations of militarism -state and capitalism- had not been destroyed, which is the first condition for the abolition of militarism, according to *all* revolutionary anti-militarists. The 'violence accepters' as well see the militarisation as in conflict with the principles of revolutionary anti-militarism, but according to them the cause of it lays in the collaboration of the Spanish labour movement with the government of the bourgeois republic; in the fact that the power over the revolutionary armies has passed from the hands of the milicianos and their committees in those of the government. Unable to accept the new position, they saw no other option than to leave both organisations.

De Ligt has not desired nor foreseen this split; according to him, cooperation was possible under these new principles. That turned out to be wrong. It had been possible for fifteen years to work together completely loyal and comradely, as long as it was about purely idealistic propaganda; it crumbled in the face of the actual struggle, when again for some the question of an applicable tactic of the struggling working class was most important, and for others the principled-pure attitude for individual and idealistic group. This proves how deep and real the split has really remained.

By the way it seems to me that de Ligt, who had by that time joined the WRI as well, had somewhat deviated from the ideas of the IAMB in those last years. At the end of his life he took the position that the IAMB had no real reason to exist any longer. Nevertheless he has always, until his death, supported it financially very loyally.

Whether the current IAMV and IAMB still have a future, doesn't matter here. It is sure that with the split of 1938, so quickly followed by de Ligt's death, a completely specific period -the period of revolutionary anti-militarism in the Netherlands- has ended; a period that De Ligt has largely determined.

Laray, March 1939

3. C.L. Van Rossem – On Bart de Ligt (1951)

Source: Biographical introduction (from 'Naar een vrije orde', anthology of texts by Bart de Ligt, 1951, Van Loghum Slaterus, Arnhem)

Catharina Lydia 'Ina' de Ligt – van Rossem was de Ligt's partner. By all accounts their bond seems to have been strong and one of equals. She was also involved in the antimilitarist movement, although seemingly less radical herself. Like Bart she was also involved in the Montessori shool movement and the feminist movement. Born in 1892 (Bart in 1883), she married Bart when she already had a daughter, Ingrid, with Mari Frederik van Peski who died in 1916. Together they had a son, Joan. She died in 1970.

This anthology of texts by Bart de Ligt is in the first place destined to those people who have not known him but still want to get aquainted with his thought world, expecting to receive insight and firmness of conviction by doing so.
We, who knew him, understand how disadvantagious those people are who can only connect with him through the written word. Because if with anyone, then certainly with Bart de Ligt the ideas were carried by his strong living and animated personality.
In order to accommodate this, what follows is a short description of his person, his work and the conditions in which he tried to fulfill his destination.

He lived in a time of intense change. A new thrust in the creation, that brought a tidal wave of renewal in culture and society, also carried the elements with which Bart de Ligt fed his spirit that would in turn develop into an inspirational force. Even just in the area of technics he lived during a true revolution; the transition from petroleum to gas flame and then onwards to electricity; from the slow horse tram and the little carriage with the coachman with high hat until car and diesel; telephone, telegraph, gramophone, radio, cinema and the start of television. And related to this the enormous development of science. We need only think for example about chemistry with al its good and detrimental discoveries. And with this thrust came the blossoming of capitalism and big industry. As a consequence tensions arose between the modern states (competition and weaponisation), between races (insurrections and suppressions), between the classes of society (rise of socialism, communism, syndicalism, anarchism), and between the individuals (rise of a freer education and of a new science: psychology).
At birth though he found himself in an environment that wasn't open to change and renewal at all yet. He was born in 1883 in Schalkwijk where his father was a calvinist vicar. He raised his children in an atmosphere of hell and damnation (with a few chosen ones) and of authority: fear of the Lord – and of the earthly father. The son was born under a lucky star because the best sides of both parents had a chance within him. His father was a very righteous and helpful man, who stood firm in his conviction. His mother was of a sweet, mild nature with whom he was very deeply connected. She sung for him, songs in which there was talk of approaching happiness and a coming golden city. He used to say sometimes that maybe this had awoken utopism within him -a very important element in his world view- and she told him fascinating stories from the bible, the Sermon on the Mount and about the prophets. She was harmonious and intuitive.
If there were fairies at his cod, they looked down positively on the little boy because they gave him what he found so valuable in life that he tried to arouse it in everyone else: 'a noble passion'. On top of that he brought along a disposition for a big and sharp intellect, and a warm and sensitive heart. From early on books held a mysterious attraction for him. Long before he could read he sat under the writing desk at the feet of his father with a book in his lap. Handling is, turning the pages already had a certain satisfying lure for him. Later at school he proved to be a quick, smart student. He lived in Rhenen by then, where he soaked in the small-town life. He rememberen the red glow

and the thumping in the blacksmith's shop, the carpenter that he visited in his workplace, the tops of the lime trees in which he played with his friends, the side of the river, the ferry, the pastures, the cows. The good, healthy atmosphere of it all permeated him deeply. Later as well, as a gymnasian in Middelburg, he enjoyed nature. He knew the whole island, his beloved Walcheren. With the vaulting poles he and his friends jumped over the small streams and they made long hikes over the pastures or through the small bushes to the dunes and the sea.
Meanwhile the worlds of culture and society opened up for him. He read -or rather he devoured- anything he could find and discovered among others Boutens, Van Deyssel, Perk, a whole constellation of new poets, writers and painters as well, who brought him to ecstasy. What a liberation from the musty atmosphere in which he lived. But the gymnasium didn't want to know yet about all those modernities. This couldn't go on like this! And immediately coming into action he wrote a piece of proze about Van Deyssel for a free essay that came back with a big fail. Lovely, to then say with provocative hubris: 'Sir, with that F you honor Van Deyssel'. In a social respect the cigar makers in Rhenen made a deep impression on him. Fierce people they were, drunks and knife fighters who were judged pejoratively as debauched creatures. But in the little Bart there was no sense of judgement, they rather were a mix of frightend and interesting at the same, and left an indefinable feeling that it shouldn't be this way, and a vague question – Why?
Later when he had devoured Multatuli, he once saw how a young man who sold socialist pamphlets was kicked out by a giant cooper. Immediately he chose the side of the boy with his whole sentiment and he was abhorred by the violent cooper; an insurrectionary sentiment in which the whole inner insurrection against the authoritarian power of his father was woven in? Later he often said that without doubt a lot of his fight against military coercion and state authority was born from the insurrection against his father. His mother probably gave him the instinctive feeling of solidarity with the less fortunate, the oppressed, the humiliated, and the urge to stand up for them. It's not hard to see what it meant for such a boy when he read the communist manifest of Marx and Engels: that 'the free development of each would be the condition for the free development of all'.
He also fed his mind with Van Eeden, Carlyle, Emerson, Tolstoy -who fought for humaneness and peace- and with Ruskin. Especially in Ruskin he must have met a kindred spirit. The thoughts that Ruskin summarizes in one of his letters, could have been written by Bart himself: 'Do your own work well, for life or for death. Help others with their work when you can, and don't seek revenge for an insult. Be sure to obey good laws before you try to change bad ones.' It seems almost sure that Ruskin was one of the founders of Bart's later anarchism. Not just socially and in arts, but religiously as well his horizon started to widen. In his father's bookcase he found some books that deviated a lot from dogmatic faith: e.g. a book about heretics and sects that his father probably only owned in order to combat them better. Something in Bart immediately chose their side. He found a lot of truths and brave in them. He also found two books on Eastern religion: 'Kerns Boeddhisme' and J. Legge's 'Godsdiensten van China', that contributed something important to his inner construction. Filled this way already with new thoughts in respects of society and culture, but still a confident calvinist he arrived in the Hogeschool in Utrecht, where -at the behest of his father, but following his own deeply religious nature- he would study theology. There for the first time life became the adventure that it would be for him until the end.
But the theological studies were incredibly tough and the colleges were chokingly dry except for those of professors Daubanton and Cannegieter; so much so that once during a college he jumped out of a window and wandered through nature for three days. But life as a student was marvelous. Whole worlds opened up to him. First of all he was free from the pressure at home where anything and everything, like visiting a theater, reading Zola, etc was forbidden.'If you don't go to the fair you can smoke a cigar!' Bart often often brought this up as an example of the best education imaginable.[13] Besides the freedom of Utrecht he also enjoyed the contaxt with his fellow students. How much laughter there must have been in his company, and how much reasoning until sparks flew! If he had made a mental discovery he immediately had to share his enthousiasm with someone. He kept this his whole life long. He must have been a radiant center in his circle, the one

13 This is an example of typical cynical or sarcastic humour in the low countries.

who always ignited everything. Never in a coarse or vulgar manner, but by his spirit, by the pulsing life within him, his generosity, his mockery. Woe to those who fell victim of his sarcasm because of hypocrisy or betrayal of their own principles! Later in life he showed some examples of it, that weren't nice to see. But in general he was very helpful, always willing to push his own work aside to help someone in some way.
A highlight in those days were the colleges of Bolland. Because of Bolland he penetrated deeper into the realm of philosophy. The theological study became unimportant, something that he took up a few weeks before the exams and pushed through; phylosophy was now the main thing. And within that domain again the main thing became whatever contributed to the inner liberation of man and society. 'Man must get to recognize himself as eternally progressing, freely creating will of the world' (Fichte). He summarized the morality of Kant in the ground rules: 'There is an everything and all encompassing divine life, manifesting itself through the stellar sky and the conscience within us.In the life of humanity its about a moral world order that it has to establish based on the natural order; behave in such way that the maxim of your action can always be the maxim of a general law as well; never use your peers as just a tool. Honor them in the personality that you try to be.' And in Fichte's 'Vorlesungen über die Bestimmung des Gelehrten', he underlines the following passage: 'Society is *the relation of reasonable beings with eachother. It is the destiny of man to live socially. Only those are free who want to free everything around them. I know little ideas that are more sublime than the idea of this general interaction of the whole human genus with on itself, this eternal life and stife, this diligent dilemma to give and to take the noblest of what man can be part of, this general interlocking of countless cogs, of which the human motivation is freedom, and of the beautiful harmony that results from it.'*
From Hegel too he received som great mental gifts. He always talked about Hegel in a way that awakened a kind of awe in me and I remember exactly the place where he once spoke to me about Hegel; about his idea of thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis and 'to let the thinking in you think and to thinkingly accompany history'; it intrigued me so much that I couldn't forget it, but I didn't yet know what to do with it. He loved Bolland and he was -I believe- some kind of bully too. It must have triggered Bart -precisely in the time when he had amassed so much within himself- to compete with him; a audacious action! He wrote -probably his first booklet- 'Some remarks in answer to Prof. Bolland's 'The Evangelic Josua' in which he attacked some of Bolland's religious ideas that he later adopted himself). He must have worked very very hard on it and he succeeded. The booklet had success and he was seen as a rising force. There is a portrait of Bart from that time in which the genius and hubris jump out and balance eachother but only just. He must have felt like a plant in spring of which juices rise and wants to spread its oppulence in all directions. He must have said to his friends once: 'First there's Bolland, then de Hartog, then me, and then for a whole time there's nothing... and then the rest'. When his friends later reminded him of those words, he was deeply shocked. We can mock him like this now, because all who knew Bart later know how eimple and natural he worked. There was -and it proves that he hadn't repressed this hubris in himself, but had transformed it- never a trace of superiority, although in a group he always automatically became the centre by his intensely living, sparkling mind, because he felt at home in every domain, happy to contribute something. I now understand that this was possible because there was not a shred of doubt when it came to himself. If there is, soon people are soon bluffing in order to uphold a self-created aura. When he thought once that I expected too much of him, he said: 'No, I know exactly what I'm worth, more than this one or this one, but less than that one' – I can't remember the examples.
Meanwhile he had gotten to know de Hartog. The meeting hit like lightning. 'Lighting rules the world' was one of Bart's favorite expressions. Bart strongly came under his influence, remained tied to him for years and I believe he detached himself with difficulty in the end. De Hartog also wrote a preface for the booklet about the 'Evangelical Josua'. Apparantly Bart was innerly ready for a new phase in his life. His great urge to freedom in every sense, so of liberation, of perfection, found fertile ground in the heavy ethics of de Hartog. De Hartog brought him to the philosophy of Schopenhauer and von Hartmann, to the sombre representations of the unattainable endgoal, the

emotions of guilt and penance, and of suffering as condition for redemption. He also studied the mystics in those years: Eckhart, Tauler, Suso, Ruusbroeck and Boehme. This must have been quite an experience for him, because there was a deep unity of soul between the mystics and him. They have the same urge for the absolute, for perfection, for a unification with the more than human, and a need to give themselves away. The absolute holiness was his demand too, but not as a goal in itself, but to 'establish the Kingdom of God on Earth' right here right now. He felt it was the calling of humanity to bless life in every aspect of society by the commitment of the whole personality. At the same time as the happiness of meeting these kindred sould, his own impotence in the face of that absolute holiness must have made him deeply unhappy. Thats where the pessimism of Schopenhauer and von Hartmann resonated greatly in him. This time of pessimism and ethical absolutism must have lasted several years and didn't improve when all external circumstances worked against him. After finishing his studies, he wanted to continue working for his promotion. His father, who had to sustain a big family, thought that was unnecessary. Now that the boy was ready, he should become preacher somewhere as soon as possible. He shouldn't count on more financial support. But because father and sun were equally stubborn, the rebellious son stayed in Utrecht – without money then. It was a time that corresponded with his ascetic tendencies, in fact I'm afraid that the reality exceeded his tendencies because he lived in miserable conditions and when he got very ill with malaria, that exhausted him completely, he had to abandon his studies and he started roaming around to find a position as preacher. In line with the 'Leitmotiv' that would accompany him for the rest of his life, he chose the words 'You are called to freedom' (Letter to the Galatians 5 : 13) for the sermon at the end of his study. Those who have known Bart will know how he will have given it all here. And so the result was good. The professor said: 'I have read this wonderful piece out loud to my wife, something that I have never done before'.
But later when he stood on the pulpit as an emaciated ascetic, with ethics that demanded the absolute good in all its consequences, a sermon in which probably integrated the wisdom of Schopenhauer, von Hartmann and Nietzsche and the mysticism of Eckart and Tauler, the farmers didn't know what he was talking about and wanted nothing to do with him. He didn't get a job anywhere and things started to look bleak until he was called to Nunen for a trial sermon. When he got off the train in the amazing nature of Brabant[14] and stood in front of the beautiful vicarage in which van Gogh had lived -Vincent's father had been a vicar in Nunen- he knew 'this must be it'. Thanks to the abdicating vicar who could convince the church council that de Ligt would be a good one, he really got his first and also his last job. First he had found healing for his debilitating malaria in the Swiss mountains. Refreshed in every way he came to Nunen where he would have five happy years. There he learned to see how the preacher training at university had been completely wrong. Not a trace of psychology, not even a mention of how to interact with people. Nothing but study room ethics. At house calls he soon started to understand that the first interest had to be the ill sow and that repairing the farmer's stable was a first condition for an eventual reparation of his mind and soul. He thought he could make his thought more digestable for the farmers by connecting his ideas to nature and to relate those to their work., but that too prooved not to be the right way. Precisely because it was their daily work, their primitive nature couldn't comprehend the connection with the spirit. They didn't care too much about it anyway and Sunday church was an occasion to hear about something else. In spite of the fact that almost no-one would understand much of them, he put great effort in his sermons. He just had to always give everything that he had. He hadn't nearly achieved the easy speaking that he would have later. Everything had to be written down, even the prayer, even the announcement of the songs, everything. Once in the middel of his sermon he noticed suddenly to his dismay that he had left half of it at home and he was so mortified that he couldn't remember another word of it. The only solution was to end it quickly. 'The sermon was very short this time, vicar', his audience said. 'Yes, people, the rest comes next week'. And away he was.
In one of the beautiful homes of Nunen, with a wonderful garden at the back full of vegetables,

14 Province in The Netherlands, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Brabant just north of Belgium adjacent to the provinces of Antwerpen and Limburg

flowers and fruits, lived the good Miss Sien Begemann, from whom Bart enjoyed great friendship in those years. She didn't understand his enthousiasm for Nunen, thought it was a remote hole far away from anything cultured. 'Far from culture?', said Bart, 'that is nothing. If we can't go to culture, we will bring culture here.' And indeed it didn't take long before the hospitable was filled with painters like Eekman and the Belgian Fons Blomme and others talking about art; in Nunen and Helmond -G. A. van den Bergh van Eysinga was preacher in Helmond then- there was philosophy and music. Bart had once seen a boy during a house call who was making a sort of violin from a clog. Enthousiastic and helpful as he was, he arranged for the boy to have good music lessons. It was Jan Damen, today concert master of the Concertgebouw Orchestra. In the holidays he came to Nunen and then there was a concert in the church -Bart played the organ excellently. But not just like that, there was to be studied first, as if they would perform on a world stage: Bach, Händel, etc. Then afterwards, full of their music, when they asked the public how they had liked it, they were told: 'You had the good end of the stick, you could play while we had to listen to it!'

Meanwhile husband and wife Kruyt-Hogerzeil, whom Bart had befriended in the last year in Utrecht, had moved to Gennep. In his sombre days they had brought him back to practical life from his crusade theology.[15] The social question awoke again for him. It was the beginning of liberation from the suffocating absolutism. They were especially interested in the French and English socialists: Maurice, Ruskin, Morris, Carlyle, Keir Hardy, Emerson. Soon they came into contact with the Bond van Christen-Socialisten[16] where they thought they recognized their principle ideas: Christian – and therefore socialist. With A. R. de Jong, who lived in Veghel, they become members of the Bond and in 1914 they join the editing collective of 'Opwaarts'[17], its moutpiece. They had a wonderful mutual collaboration.
Bart relinquishes his orthodoxy in those years and becomes increasingly secular. At the same time he becomes increasingly involved in the renewal of society that, instead of power, oppression and competition, must be founded on cooperation, mutual exchange and freedom. He wanted to transform the slogan 'every man for himself' into 'each for all'. From his writings of the time it's clear what he was focused on: 'Prophet and the Need of the People', 'The Almighty has touched me', 'A manly prophet', 'You were called to freedom', 'Areth thou Apostles?', 'Prophet and Synod', 'Prophet and Feast of the People'. It's always about the awaking the sense of responsibility of the few for the whole. In those days he wrote for several newspapers and published a lot of pamphlets of which parts are gathered in this book. He started traveling more and more for meetings and speeches, so that in Nunen people started calling him 'the migrating bird'. And then it was August 1914.[18] 'At the time I was in catechism I was just busy with the Sermon on the Mount. What should I do with that? What should I say about the command: Thou shalt not kill?' Bart wasn't a man for compromises, 'Yes but this one time', or 'In this case'. Apparantly that surreptitious inconscious attraction was lacking in him, that drove many people -even if they ware not aware of it- into war with a feeling of liberation. There was the attraction to danger though, but not connected to brute violence: the danger of risking it and knowing that life is about all or nothing. He also sharply felt the danger that threatens humanity increasingly clear and strong, the danger to be swallowed by state and militarism, to be helplessly sucked up by a monster-system that suffocates all sense of personal responsibility by means of fear and vengeance, and pulls humanity down to a lower consciousness, that of mass man and ultimately of the robot. His speech on Pentecost of 1914 in Eindhoven is still of such frightening relevance that I can't resist giving a part of it in this book, in spite of the limited space. 'What the state says must be executed unconditionally. We find it embodied in that cursed militarist system. What kind of system is that? The soldier is under the corporal, the corporal under the sergeant, who is under the officer, who is under the superior officer; eventually comes the general. But that is just a handle for the government that aims him; to the left

15 Literal translation; the author meant a ascetic and gloomy theology, not a literal theology of actual crusades.
16 'League of Christian-Socialists', https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bond_van_Christen-Socialisten
17 'Upwards'
18 The start of World War I in the Netherlands

or to the right. When the government turns the general, they all move along; it's one machine. And when the general says 'Shoot!', they all shoot, at whatever, even at the heart of Jesus Christ, that holy heart of God.' The captain of the state troopers stood up and left the church, followed by part of the -most obedient- soldiers. Two weeks later he was banished from the southern provinces and transported to Utrecht together with a prostitute and a smuggler. It must not have been easy to be forced to leave his beloved Nunen and his vicorage so suddenly. But he had acted deliberately and knew what the consequences would be. Later he used to say that the military commander had done him a great service because the small audience that he had in Brabant was -even when he was later banished from the provinces at the Eastern borders- multiplied by a hundred. It were years of great activity; speaking, writing, meetings. In that time he begins to speak of 'mental resilience', by which he meant that the plane of the struggle had to be raised. 'Human freedom is the result of the heaviest possible struggle. It is a great control, summary and transformation of life outside of oneself and within.' One of the actions of those days was the writing of a manifesto for the refusal of military service[19], with lists in which people announced that they would no longer participate in war. Out of the manifesto a support action for the families of the objectors followed and later an action for the freedom of consciousness. The law on the conscientious objectors resulted from that. Now there is a possibility to do other work based on the consciousness objections. The writers of the manifesto were imprisoned and tried. He was kept in jail for fifteen days. How mild that sentence seems now, after all the horrors that were lived since. Still it was a bad experience for Bart, full of small and big humiliations that impacted his personality. But it didn't keep him from going to prison again later when he advocated for the 'total refuser' of military service[20] and hunger striker Herman Groendendaal. By then he had moved heaven and earth to mount a general strike in protest to liberate Herman Groenendaal and other 'total refusers'. Bart had spoken to the different labour leaders with such passion and force of persuasion that the strike seemed to succeed in the first few days. Long marches with signs 'Groenendaal free!', 'One for all, all for one!' Speeches in public squares. Knowing what awaited him for incitement, he said: 'Comrades! - I have come to incite you. I incite you to refuse all bad work, to refuse to build barracks and prisons; to refuse to manufacture war material; to refuse military service.' The inciter was sentenced to a month in prison. After he died, when I thought back to how he left prison after a month, his nerves shot, shy, wanting to see no-one, speak no-one, I have later often been grateful that his early death has kept him from the concentration camps. He would never have survived them and what suffering would have preceded his death.

Time goes on and we're 1917. That year he wrote a long introduction for the brochure of Mr. Martinus des Amorie van der Hoeven 'Over het wezen der godsdienst en hare betrekking tot het staatsrecht'[21] (1854) Van der Hoeven advocates that religion should be the leading principle of state law. The meeting with van der Hoeven became for Bart a kind of animated recognition. Both were possessed with the same desire: 'to awaken a holy passion in their people'. The pieces of this introduction that are re-published in this book stpeak for themselves. In the same year he is rejoiced with the invitation to give a two week course at the 'Internationale School voor Wijsbegeerte'[22] in Amersfoort on the subject of cultural philosphy. I can imagine how hard he must have worked for that. He would have been focussed day and night on it, and given his knowledge, his engaging manner of speaking and his own passion, it went very well. The attendees said 'prophetic'. Besides this rich and free possibility of expression, that was in itself an awesome experience for him, it also became weeks of happy meetings with far-reaching consequences. First of all on one of the evenings Clara Wichmann (later Clare Meijer-Wichmann) held a speech. She was sat at a small table between two candles in an otherwise dark auditorium and spoke in a deep and mild spirit.

19 I used these words 'refusal of military service' rather than the words 'conscientious objector' because what de Ligt proposes has little to do with some practices today of conscientious objectors – in those days there was no civilian service as alternative that one could choose. Refusing military service was always cause for repression in those days.

20 In Dutch today the word 'Totaalweigeraar' or 'Total refuser' was used for people who refused the civilian service on moral or religious grounds because it was still very much participating the same war machine.

21 Tr. N. 'On the essence of religion and its relation to state law'

22 Tr. N. International School for Philososphy'

Although she had not been present for the first days her speech completely fit in Bart's course. They drank from the same well and their meeting led to an intense friendship. Also there was Mrs. Werker (later Prins-Werker) who told of Mrs. Montessori, with whom Bart immediately feld kinship. The free education that she advocated for the fromation of free spontaneous individuals was in complete accord with his own ideas. This meeting as well was cause for great enthousiasm. And finally, or rather even before the course started, he had yet another meeting. Next to the person he was talking to, he suddenly saw someone and he suddenly knew 'that is my wife standing there' and he got so confused that he couldn't speak another word and suddenly ended the conversation. Yet again lightning had ruled the world. And that at a moment in his life that he walked around with the books of Nietzsche under his arm and with a firm conviction never to marry. Lighting was not mistaken. The following year they married and lived on... if not long enough then very happily, so almost as in the fairy tales.
In the years that followed Bart went through all kinds of inner changes. He knew that not only Christianity had enriched him, but that he owed an awful lot to the prophets of Israel and the Wisdom of the East and the Greeks. He also felt that he had already begun to test the evangelical truth with his own insight, instead of the other way around. But je wasn't completely aware of how different influences within and around him had led him to a more generally-humane religion, until the painter Doesburg, with whom we were very good friends in those days, once said to him: 'Why do you call yourself a Christian?' 'I couldn't give a reasonable answer to his question, to my surprise. My conviction fell of my Christianity, like a fruit from a tree.' He sees that all religions are but roots from the same grand tree of cosmic religion. 'If I don't use the word 'religion' for myself anymore... if I hesitate to call myself 'religious', it's because I distrust all official religion; because true religion is lived only in moments, and it's better to say not enough about this subject than too much. It's not a matter of denial, but of liquidation, not of impoverishment but of awe-inspiring enrichment.' The consequence is that he leaves the 'Bond van Christen-Socialisten' in which he no longer belongs now.
1917-1919, the revolution in Russia has started and for a time it seems like the wave will push on to Germany and even into the Netherlands. In 1919 a 'Bond of Revolutionair Socialistische Intellectuelen'[23] in which anarchists, syndicalists, neo-marxists and christian-socialists collaborate. Bart was convinced that if the revolution would spread here, the false separation between brain work and manual work[24] would be abolished. 'Technicians, chemists, doctors, teachers, artists would have a great task in a potential revolutionary reconstruction.' 'The bigger the number of intellectuals who take the side of the inevitable revolution in time, the softer the transition into a new society can take place' (Foundation Manifesto). One day he sparked indignation in a group of people that were very eminent in other fields by proposing that 'we immediately start to study critically the revolutions in Russian, Hungarian and the whole of Europe, to prevent at least that we repeat errors that have already been made and to be able to implement only that which in recent years -taking in account the domestic reality- would indeed make sense for the Netherlands!' Criticising the Russian revolution? But that's heresy! The '[25]Nieuwe Amsterdammer' edited by Mr. Wiessing, became the unofficial organ of the 'Bond van Revolutionair-Socialistische Intellectuelen'. Clara Wichmann and Bart joined the editorial board, but this didn't last long. Soon the reaction won again, the socialists of opportunity disappeared and the magazine couldn't find any more advertisers. After a trip to Germany and France, Bart soon noticed that the revolution deteriorated into opportunism, corruption, militarism, coercion. Back in the Netherlands he warned: 'The revolution is in danger!' Meanwhile in Germany the masses were irresponsibly agitated and the Third International capered around unpredictably. But criticism was not allowed: first one had to wait until Lenin would say 'I was mistaken', then agree with that too and then wait again until Lenin would repeat it again...
Meanwhile the refusal of military service had continuously increased, not just in the Netherlands

23 Tr. N. 'League of Revolutionary Socialist Intellectuals'
24 Tr. N. See also: https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/petr-kropotkin-fields-factories-and-workshops-or-industry-combined-with-agriculture-and-brain-w Chapter IV: 'Brain work and manual work'
25 Tr. N. 'The New Amsterdammer', later 'de Nieuwe Groene' ('the New Green')

but in many countries. From the 'Internationale Anti-Militaristische Vereniging' (IAMV)[26] -established by Domela Nieuwenhuis[27] under the slogan 'Geen man, Geen cent voor het militarisme'[28]- the IAMBureau[29] was created, in which Bart worked with heart and soul for years alongside Jos Giesen, Albert de Jong, H. Kuysten. It had member organizations in almost all of the countries of Europe and America, and individual members on all continents. The means of struggle against war that the IAMB advocated for, appealed to the most revolutionary among the revolutionaries: sense of responsibility, reasonable judgement, solidarity. 'The more the non-violent methods that they advocated would be implemented, the closer the ultimate goal would be achieved: personal and social renewal.'

Years of nerve-wrecking hard work ensued. When one sees the list of his publications in those years, that is in itself an enormous achievement. But there were travels abroad, an never ending number of speeches, congresses, and a correspondence that was so extensive that it was impossible to completely get through it. On top of that piles of books, papers and letters to be gone through. There was no rest, no relaxing, no time for study, just a constant giving oneself that could only result in complete exhaustion. In 1923 things couldn't continue any longer, he was physically at his last limits and noticed himself: 'I no longer renew myself. I become my own rgramophone. I need a break.' So we took a break, first to Switzerland and Italy. Then we installed ourselves for a few unforgettable months in a small wooden house on Monte Verità, above Ascona. In the peace and quiet of the at the time still rural Monte Verità, the beautiful brochure 'The rebirth of Maria' was created. Because there are still some copies left we decided not to publish anything of it in 'Naar een vrije orde'. In autumn we moved to Geneva, first for a year and a half or two years, but we ended up staying forever. It were thirteen happy years. There were no fundamental inner changes in Bart anymore. He was formed, it were years of developing what he had gathered within himself, of maturing in the sense of reaching increasing inner harmony. Because of the limited space here for a biography, I must refer you to the exellent biography of H. J. Mispelblom Beyer, and specifically for these last years to the article 'Geneva' in the book that his friends have compiled after his death.[30] I can only evoque a few elements of life in those years. The international contact that delighted and enriched him. Our arrival coincided with the bloom of Geneva, the time of the League of Nations. The small lovely city suddenly became a centre of the world with a stream of people from all parts of the earth who briefly joined up and then went their ways again. Bart met Einstein, Nehru, Gandhi, Mrs. Montessori, A. Huxley, Berlage to name just a few. Meanwhile he was hard at work again. Most of his larger works were born there. First Dutch books, a.o. 'Kerk, cultuur en Samenleving', 'Nieuwe vormen van Oorlog en hoe die te bestrijden' and 'Wereldcrisis en Wijsbegeerte'.[31] But then the French and English books came: 'Contre la guerre nouvelle', 'Pour vaincre sans violence', 'The conquest of Violence'[32] and 'La Paix Créatrice'. That is the French reworking of the book that he considered to be his magnum opus, i.e. 'Vrede als Daad'[33] He had maintained the plan for a long time to write the history of the people who were most often neglected and failed by the historians (typically Bart). They were the braves who were ignored or ridiculed in the official history books, all those who remained loyal to the principle of peace that lived deep within them, and who refused to participate in violence in spite of everything, of years in jail, torture, even extermination of whole sects. As eternal seedlings this tradition of non-violent resistance can be traced back twenty centuries and more in history. It turned into a comprehensive

26 Tr. N: 'International Anti-Militarist League'
27 Tr. N: See https://ferdinanddomelanieuwenhuis.nl for the museum about him
28 Tr. N: 'No man, not a penny for militarism' See for example: http://www.dacob.be/ONLINETEKSTEN/Geen%20cent.pdf
29 Tr. N.: Internationale Anti-Militaristisch Bureau' or 'International Anti-Militarist Bureau'
30 Tr. N.: both texts in 'Bart de Ligt, 1883-1938', N.V. Van Loghum Slaterus, Arnhem, 1939. Mispelblom Beyer's biography pp 13-111 and Catherina Lydia's account 'Genève' pp 216-227
31 Tr. N.: 'Church, culture and Society', 'New forms of War and how to fight against them' and 'World crisis and Philosophy'.
32 Tr. N.: https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1972/conquest-violence-essay-war-and-revolution
33 Tr. N: https://anarchief.org/wiki/De_Ligt,_Bart_-_Vrede_als_daad_(I._1931,_II_1933)

work, with overwhelming data, a referential work about the brave who remained true to what was most noble in them. It became a cultural history from which a constructive, unifying tendency appeared that proves to be just as real as the destructive in the world.
Meanwhile in 1930 he entered the editorial board of the monthly magazine 'Bevrijding'[34], the unofficial organ of the Bond van Anarcho-Socialisten.[35] For him it was a means of expression through which he remained in constant contact with the kindred spirits in the Netherlands. Twice a year he interrupted work in Geneva to leave for Holland for a month. There were speeches organized for him, every evening in a different city and on sundays sometimes twice. During the day there were meetings, assemblies, editorial work, etc. Although all of this, on top of the travels, the continuous coming and going in a new surrounding, the never ending adaptation to ever new people, and the speeching in which he always invested completely, was tiring enough, that was never the end of it. After speeching there were debriefings in small circles, often until deep in the night. He always came home dead tired and by then whatever letters, papers, weekly and monthly magazines and books were waiting for him was -in spite of the innocent silence with which all of it lay on his desk- was a new and almost aggressive attack on nerves, soul and mind. Meanwhile he also had to find peace to get back into the material for the book that he had been working on when he left. Lucky enough all this brain work was compensated in Switzerland by the outdoor life, work in the garden, the interruption of friends who came to visit and the walks we made with them in the mountains and at the lake. The talks, stories, memories and jokes that provoked so much and such exuberant laughter, will be unforgettable for many. And still his life has taken a toll in the end. An illness impacted hem dearly in 1935. In those last years he worked -besides an never ending stream of articles and brochures- on a book that absorbed him very much: 'Erasmus, begrepen uit de geest der Renaissance'[36] that was first published in 1936 in Dutch. After that he made a new version in French that was never published because of the war tension that was already prevasive in 1938. In the figure of Erasmus he felt great similarities with himself; a different string on the same sounding board. In those days he sometimes said: 'Erasmus will be the death of me one day'. He must have been very tired by then already, forced himself and couldn't recover from a dangerous angina. After more than a month in a hospital in Brittany, desperate in the end we took a chance traveling home. He didn't make it to Geneva. In Nantes, where we had to change trains, he suddenly collapsed; an emboly and he was gone. It had to be this way. When I was once driving home in the car from Geneva, I suddenly knew very clearly that nothing or nobody could ever separate us except death. A few years later, when the day had come, I noticed that death hadn't succeeded either. He lived on around and through me.
'And Anarchism?', people will ask. Why haven't we heard about anarchism in the biography? I kept it for last because the anarchist ideas that he tried to awaken in others, are the projection of a deep desire within him, and demonstrate a state of mind that was largely realised within him.
Anarchism (= without government) has been the subject of the worst misunderstandings since it is used in history, because like for example the concept of freedom, it has a double meaning. Among the anarchists we find the extreme contradictions: from the most degenerate figures to people with a great inner culture. Anarchism can imply the chaotic, the unordered, lawless, the unrestrained. In the individual anarchism it gets the meaning of: Everything is subject to the I; with the most detrimental consequences of power hunger, violence and ruthless selfishness. In the other case the word anarchism can express the idea: Who carries the law in their own heart doesn't need external law. In this sense there is a personal responsibility for the whole, human became a social being. There has been a unification of I and community. The I and society have fraternized in the Self. There human has self-realised itseld. Bart used to love using words with 'self': self-deployment, self-organization, self-healing, self-expression, self-government, self-communicatien. And he thought it was very important to be aware of one's own errors and flaws and to work on self-reviewing. That the realisation of such culture that is founded on peace and freedom, is not about

34 Tr. N: 'Liberation'
35 Tr. N.: 'League of Anarcho-Socialists'
36 Tr. N.: 'Erasmus, understood in the spirit of the Renaissance'

reform but about a complete inner and external renewal is clear. That is why Bart always spoke about a double revolution: of human and society, in the sense of an ever more encompassing awareness and a liberation from internal and external slavery. The social quest for him was in the first place religious-moral in character. So he constantly appealed to the human personality: 'The true human is a co-creating factor in the developing whole'. He saw humans as mediators: 'The eternal creator wants to continue creation through us, because life is not over, life must really yet begin.' And as end result of creation he saw 'Utopia, a truly humane society, that dream of all ages'.
With Proudhon, Kropotkin, Bakunin, Guyau, Vera Strasser, Nettlau, Malatesta, Rocker, and others he tried to give the old anarchism, that was theoretically and practically outdated, new foundations, and enthousiastic as he was he couldn't not testity of it, following the inner urge for freedom and self-liberation that was as it were imposed on him and that in his turn he tried to awaken in others. He knew that the more freedom one has within themselves the more one will radiate in into the world. The connection between purpose and means was of the utmost importance to him. 'The purer the goal, the holier the means'. He also warned against forcing things. On these points he came into conflict with the communists every time he tried to work with them. The facts proved and continue to prove that where one is aiming at the realisation of a socialist system in which human is used as an object, while the other aims at a society of conscious, internally rich, full-grown personalities, the chasm could only widen.
I have been asked quite a few times: 'How would Bart have developped further?' Will it be held against me if I dare to say something about this? Maybe. But I can't resist, because I think that several of his friends have started to think in this direction too, and because all of the data that point in the direction of this further development were already present in him, so that they only need to be pointed out and summarized. Without doubt he would have been increasingly sparse in his expression. I think he hasn't used expressions like 'cosmic sense of solidarity' at all in the last years of his life. He had come to the conclusion that this was nonsense. And indeed there is a whole lot of solidarity to be shown closer to home before we can begin to speak about a solidarity that contains the stars as well as the lice and the pest rats. It was noticeable in some expressions like 'I'm getting too wise for all that propaganda' and a few books that he was busy with, that there was a shift of emphasis in his struggle for a new society from external to internal. The Peace Academy that Bart tried to establish at the end of his life, where peace would be studied as a science, in other words where the conditions for peace would be studied, and the book that was the trigger for it[37] - peace is considered as a completely internal state- is a clear indication of the direction Bart moved in. He anticipated the new spiritual currents that we see rising as a compensation for the mass formation, with the dangerous consequence of a relapse to a lower level of consciousness. These currents that we now see in diverse cultural domains of psychology, philosophy and literature, have in common that they strongly connect the individual and the collectivity, with the accent on the individual. They demonstrate that the community is much more determined by the mental state of individuals than was formerly recognized. And not just by the consciousness of individuals, but mainly by their subconscious.
On the other hand the new ethic that rises here, strongly accentuates community. It's no longer so much about whether human is good, but more whether and how this presumed 'good' radiates into the community. As one will see in his works, Bart already worked in this direction by constantly pointing to the relation between individual and community. A further development can only be a shift of accent. As is the case in these new upcoming currents, in him the accent would be shifted even more from the events in the outside world towards the state of consciousness of the inner world of individuals. He would have agitated less for actions and movements, for leagues and organizations. He would have 'unmasked' less political and economical facts that threaten our personality and lead us to always new, increasingly brutal wars. More than ever he would have 'unmasked' the psychological causes of which political-economic facts are the consequence.
To prevent misunderstandings I must immediately add here that this shift in accent doesn't mean swimming in vague mysticism. On the contrary, the inner and personal life is completely focused on

37 Note of Catharina Lydia de Ligt – Van Rossem: Bhagavan Das, 'The Science of Peace'

the here and now. There is awareness that one was too ethereal precisely by setting one's ideals as goals. One can formulate peace, freedom, anarchism -in essence all of this is the same problem- as utopia, 'that dream of all ages', but only as a directional dream, not as goal. The danger of such an outward projected longing is, that if this is formulated as a goal external of oneself, it will be pursued by external means, that is to say means that aim directly at the goal. As history clearly demonstrates, it will never be achieved this way, nor by grabbing power, nor by whatever other deed of the will, nor by a party, organization or league, nor by propaganda however enthousiastically expressed. One has the impression of doing something, but in fact one does little else than... floating. All too often that which is neglected this way, is precisely what needs to be done, in other words one flees. As long as the ideals haven't been internalized into the human and processed and transformed there, they will increasingly evade us like a 'fata morgana', whatever the effort one puts in to achieve the formulated goal. The means that are used to achieve the goal could never be effective... because the goal doesn't exist as such. It is an illusion because the new society is not an end but a consequence. A consequence that depends on a state of consciousness, a state of being. 'True freedom', Bart writes, 'is a social, moral state, that can be conquered by...' I think he would have changed his mind about conquering a state of mind. A new state of consciousness isn't conquerable. It is a consequence of a maturing process –or regression process- of the individual. A process that takes place because of the push of circumstances, to which a human lends its cooperation; a cooperation that is mainly subconscious. The different mental currents that arise now as compensation for the threat of loss of consciousness -by the formation of the mass and state-ification- all accentuate the necessity to deliberately and consciously participate in this maturing process.

This is completely along Bart's line, he who always started from the human as personality and responsible creature. He would probably have had less illusions after the second world war – but so doing more real. He would have been aware more than ever that humanity has a long way to go before it truly has a personality and becomes a responsible creature. A personality is a mentaly full-grown human, which he isn't yet. By setting an ideal as goal, there was always an appeal to the consciousness. But we are beginning to realize that we are much less determined by the small conscious part than by the much bigger subconscious part. Bart would most probably also have known now that we can't 'arouse a noble passion in someone', at least not with the conscious will to do so. Not by what one says or wishes, but only by what one is. That is why his personal contact was so valuable.

A state of consciousness, and even a deliberate collaboration as well to the maturing process is not conquerable with means that are aimed directly at the target, but begins indirectly and for the time being very modestly by finding the conditions that this process depends on. So it's all about getting to know the psychological conditions that will develop a human into a full-grown, mature being – will become a unity in itself. The most remote goals of world reform then becomes forgotten for the time being as it were, but the ideal re-absorbed in every individual seperately, to come to harmony there first, which will then subconsciously radiate into the social context and will so doing form a modest beginning of a new process in a positive direction. It speaks for itself that every internal enrichment of a human will inevitably work its way out – in his daily work and especially in the contact with fellow human beings. And in a political respect, people will ask, would Bart not have been active there anymore? I think that he would have tried to force less especially in this respect. Possibly he would have favored direct action in very specific cases, if a situation was ripe and a small push is enough. I also think that the refusal of military service would have remained valuable to him, but only as expression of a personal need -'I cannot do otherwise'- not as an ideal for the community. The time when we hoped that large-scale refusal of military service, sabotage and strike would make war impossible, is gone forever.

If I see his possible development in this line, it is because all of this already lived within him. To a large degree he was already a full-grown person and a unity in himself. Those who lived in his vicinity can't be grateful enough for that. As summary of a possible further development I imagine that his motto would now have been: 'React less, compensate more.' React less against people and

things -don't create resistance- but try to compensate within himself what threatens to get lost elsewhere of consciousness and responsibility, and this too not as an ethical imperative, but because one is driven by an inner force... one can't not do it.
That Bart had this inner drive in himself, shows in a dream that he thought was typical of his life. In fact this event is meaningful not just for him, but for any other as well. Therefore to end this text the dream in which he sits on a bench under the apple tree in the garden in Rhenen as a boy. Suddenly right before him a giant lion appears, that devours him in one bite. A time of frightening darkness follows and great anxiety in which he is almost drowning. But then to his unimaginable joy he sees some light through a small hole and then -as if through a lense- a whole apple tree in bloom and then with a great 'plop'... suddenly he stand liberated before the familiar bench under the blossoms in the garden. After repeatedly experiencing this process of angst and liberating redemptions throughout his life, in the end he became the human af whom one could say:
Kennt ihr Menschen bei denen die Freude eingekehrt ist?
Die durch das dürre Land gehen und machen sich daselbst Brunnen?
Wenn ihr sie kennt, so geht zu ihnen hin, denn es ist gut bei ihnen zu sein.
Sie haben die Bitterkeit und das Alleinsein unden Neid und was der dunklen Geister mehr sind nicht über sich herrschen lassen. Sie haben neue Quellen des Lebens entdeckt und bieten den frischen Trunk den anderen[38] (Anna Schieber).

Catharine Lydia de Ligt – Van Rossem.

38 Do you know people with whom joy has come to?
Who walk through the barren land and make wells there for themselves?
If you know them, go to them, for it is good to be with them.
They have not let bitterness and loneliness and envy and all the other dark spirits rule over them. They have discovered new sources of life and offer the fresh drink to others.
(Anna Schieber)

4.Gé Nabrink - Bart de Ligt about woman and education (1958).

Source: Bart de Ligt 1883-1938, Recht voor Allen/Federatie van Vrije Anarchisten, Groningen, 1958.

It seems to me that writing and speaking about Bart de Ligt is so tricky because one can only illuminate specific aspects of his personality and work, as everyone is limited by their own inclination and interest. De Ligt was in fact an exceptionally versatile man, who has written important books and articles on almost every aspect of mental and social life, and has always succeeded in establishing special relationships between seemingly very separate domains. That is also the reason why every label does injustice to his personality. He wasn't a philosopher, no theologist, no sociologist and no politician in the usual sense of the word, but he unified all these sciences and qualities together within himself.
This is probably also due to the fact that in times like ours, that seems to value compartimentalization so much, de Ligt's prominence is insufficient despite his impact.
While I am aware of these difficulties, I still want to try to shed some light on some aspects of his personality, while I expect that other aspects will be highlighted by others in this compilation[39], and while I admit that disconnecting one aspect from the whole will do him injustice.
De Ligt has spoken a lot on woman, her essence and her role in the social fabric, in a whole series of publications; which I will try to represent here -in his own words, as much as possible- and clarify where necessary. I hope that this will convince people to read his actual works for themselves.
De Ligt repeatedly wrote about the major influence of women on the development of his own personality. For example in his autobiographical notes -published in [Church, Culture and Society – Ten years of struggle. 1914-24][40] where he writes about the decisive influence that his mother had on him, stressing her mild religiousness. His early activities clearly demonstrate a tendency of uprising against his father and loyalty to his mother.
In religion and society, he pushes back against the dominance of a distinctly male character. As a summary of his strife, he concludes: “My whole life I have opposed the unilaterally male religion, the uniltarerally male state, the unilaterally male science and the vulgarly-male business hassle, by seeking contact with women; and I increasingly advocated for the rehabilitation of woman as essential condition for a more humane society”. He had recognized something of this kind in Ruskin's 'Fors Clavigera', just like he had found the concept of 'responsible production' there, that he often advanced.[41]
Around 1919-1924 de Ligt held a large number of classes and speeches, and out of one of these courses -at the [International School for Philosophy] in Amersfoort- the special book about woman, [The rebirth of Mary][42] was conceived. Its style is outdated today, and reminds us of theology and preaching. Despite that, it has a powerfull evocative capacity. The book had as motto a quote from J. M. Guyau, that characterizes de Ligt well:
“So let's broaden ourselves, let's keep our hearts open for every quiver of this wide universe.”
De Ligt describes how in christianity the broken figure of Christ rises up at the side of the large figure of the crucified. This christian tradition can only be understood from much older traditions. He traces back the thread from the New Testament to the Old one and from there to the old western-Asian religions. He paints the myth of Tammuz [or Dumuzi, Dumuzid the Shepard, etc] in whom the origin of life is honoured. Every year Tammuz rises up from the humid earth into the spring green, pulled up by the light, the warmth of the sun. But that same sun, that leads all that young glory towards itself, will soon scorch it with her heat. What had just budded full of promise must

39 Tr. Note: Bart de Ligt 1883-1938, Recht voor Allen/Federatie van Vrije Anarchisten, Groningen, 1958.
40 'Kerk, cultuur en samenleving. Tien jaar strijd (1914-24)' (1925) https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/ligt005kerk01_01/
41 Ruskin, J., Fors Clavigera. 'Letters to the workman and labourers of Great Britain' (1871)'. https://www.gutenberg.org/files/59456/59456-h/59456-h.htm
42 'De wedergeboorte van Maria', Arnhem 1926.

seemingly inevitably perish. In a gripping identification the god that is threatened with death is helped in its symbolic-magical struggle. And if he succumbs here on earth, the struggle isn't abandoned: he is followed deep into the underworld, expecting him to rise again from death. And this way the life of plants and animals was symbolized in the fate of a divine creature that is revered, here as Tammuz, elsewhere as Adonis or Attis (god of pinaple trees) or Osiris (god of grain). Having become big and strong, Tammuz stands in the world as a radiating and strong miracle. But he as well must perish and die. Life is an unstoppable eb and flow, a neverending mixing of devouring waves. This mortality is the endless sorrow of mother nature, the sorrow that grips the heart of the natural mother. Its whole emotion rises up against the reality that Heraclitus, the Dark One of Ephesus, described thus:
“Panta Rhei” [Everything flows, everything goes, nothing stays].
The sun rises and sets. The fate of mankind's children, of the crops and lifestock is one and the same. The one dies, just as the other. After establishing this inevitability, de Ligt points to the fact that there is a difference in the way they live and can die. Because what makes humanity human is that it lives for an idea – let it be a delusion. What makes humanity human is that it puts something above its own life. And if not, they are just animals that walk on their hind legs. What makes humanity human is that it spontaneously, consciously, voluntarily and enthousiastically carries something within itself that transcends it. That it not just lives -so does a fly, an ant, a dromedary- but that people dedicate their lives to something. That they have a reason to live. That they joyfully recognize a supreme value for which they would die if necessary. That they voluntarily try to correlate their own lives to the deepest tendency of the great universe. Human life supercedes complaining, sighing, bowing and resignation. It's more than understanding. It's consciously accepting both joy and pain.
What emerges as the man of will -Jeremiah for jewish people- developed in Socrates for Athens. He prophesized intellectually: by means of irony and dialectics. It resulted in his death, but he chose death freely and, by doing so, unveiled the spirit, that supreme form of life. Even death can be a pinnacle of life. The gospel of John sees the crucifiction of Jezus not as a humiliation but as an elevation. By completely identifying with the supreme, humanity celebrates a personal victory. Opposite of this stands Mary, uncomprehending. She is one-dimensionally romantic and sentimental, and wants to maintain the mother and child original relation for eternity. Mary is afraid to let her child go; the age-old sorrow of all women as those who cried over Tammuz, but even heavier and sharper. Because didn't Jesus appear to promise much more than Tammuz? And Tammuz's death was ultimately just a natural event, a bending before the unfathomable fate. But Jesus didn't have to die. He could have lived and gone far: become king, be global messiah. His death was a consequence of his insurgent persistence, result of willfulness, stubborness, insanity... Jesus is man as spirit, spirit as man, who transforms the immediate into the universal. He wants to be fire, thrown on earth. Mary and Jesus are related like water and fire.
The beauty is that Mary understands her son better and better in christianity, that woman becomes human, and mother becomes personality again. Mary rises above the vulgar-tragical. She has recognized and accepted the act of universal liberation. In the New Testament, woman hardly occurs as an individually distinct creature. In Mary and Mary Magdalen, woman appears as mother and lover; in Mary of Bethany and Martha as the more contemplative and the more extrovert personalities. But woman is and remains mentally subjected: In her presence, Jesus only rests. He himself is a divine man and has twelve disciples, also men. God the father – a man; yes even the holy spirit has become male. The motherly element of which many of the earlier trinities speak, has been eliminated from the christian triple union – by male scholars. The clergy is male and remains male until today[43] even if pastors, bishops, cardinals and popes wear such colourful robes.
During the time of matriarchy, woman was a source of order and morality, the magna mater who guarded the loot and procured food, agriculture, clothing. She stood at the cradle of the first living arts, wicker art, spinning, weaving, pottery. Nobility and clergy promoted a struggle for patriarchy,

43 De Ligt didn't live the struggle in the 'Reformed Church' until the end: it wasn't before 1958 that women as well could become protestant ministers (but against how much resistance?).

which led to a male society. Changes in the productive system forced back woman as productive factor, and suppressed her as a mental power. Through the ages she morphed into a conservative, narrow-minded, twisted, domestic type that reproduced the male capitalist culture. As the unilaterally male brain dominated society more and more, it reinforced the power of the 'master' mentally as well. Man is strong and strict; woman is chaste, lovely and patient. After centuries of slavish isolation without any idea about solidarity, her characterless obedience even strengthened by the ideology of meekness in a cowardly church. Under the influence of the romantics, an idealization of woman began, like they found it in Goethe. But they were looking for the realization of their ideal in the religious past. Their dreams and poems found their center in a newly dressed, but essentially still midieval figure of Mary. In France, where the reformation failed, the tradition of Mary was continued. In the bourgeois revolution the ideal mistress and the worldly divine mother became one in the famous 'déesse de la raison' (goddess of reason). After the bloody days of June 1848 and the slaughter of the Commune, the people honoured the combative, heroic woman in Marianne. In the revolutionary redemption mythology Marianne is simultaneously the true Venus Vulgivaga, Mary, Jeanne d'Arc and the goddess of reason; and she walks in the frontline against the toughest thing to beat: the bastille of ignorance.

Meanwhile, first in England and later in the whole of Europe, big technical changes were pushed. The utilization of the machine, steam and electricity changed the old life even in its foundations. By the hundreds of thousands, women went to work in the factories. Capitalism destroyed family life, devoured men and children, but women too. The structural changes in the capitalist production process changed the family, and slowly but surely liberated women. Through the industrial revolution, born from the mind of the bourgeoisie, the whole of bourgeois life itself was revolutionized and woman broke the old chackles. Despite the stubborn appeals to leave the position of woman unchanged, and to push her back into the family, or at best to allow her as a low-paid worker in schools and hospitals, women increasingly overcame the difficulties. They brought new elements into the bourgeois ideology, undermined the double moral standards and corroded the foundations of the whole patriarchal social system. They infused the urge for something new, something better into the money-obsessed patriarchal society.

Even just for reasons of gender solidarity, every bourgeois woman in whom something human is alive, must want a different society. She knows that her -relative- happiness and prosperity can only exist as flipside of the poverty and misery of multiple other women. She realizes that modern monogamous marriage drags the deep shadow of prostitution behind it; that what the own child receives and needs, is brutally denied to other children. Woman too will have to realize that radical social changes are necessary.

Militarization and State-ification threaten human society most dramatically and de Ligt has never ceased to argue that this threat concerns men, women and children just as well. Against these threats woman too will need to decide on a positive resistance – because of self-preservation and social understanding. As a mother her education will need to aim at this; as producer she too will have to contemplate responsible production and she as well will have to find ways to refuse all acts that threaten society.

In a publication, [My outlook on culture] from 1928[44], de Ligt yet again summarizes his ideas very briefly, in which he starts from the position that what we call history is only pre-history, and that history of the human personality has yet to start. “Since ten thousand years, through all kinds of revolutions and evolutions in all kinds of domains, an awe-inspiring evolution takes place, a global revolution: from unconscious to conscious; from fearfully being controlled to increasing self-control; from being moved by unknown forces to propelling oneself according to known laws. It takes a lot of effort, often clumsily; in a certain sense it only succeeds more or less over here and it fails over there; it pushes through under some circumstances, gets bogged down under other circumstances – but all in all there is progress. Humankind increasingly becomes master of its own conditions for life, and structures itself internally. From collective awareness, self-awareness grew; from individual awareness a striving for universal personality arose in increasingly important and

44 Barchem Bladen, January 1929.

diverse personalities. Through and despite the patriarchal, antique, feudal, bourgeois and imperialistic centuries of struggle increasingly higher life and mental possibilities appeared."
In this small booklet de Ligt gives a comprehensive understanding of his views on past and future; and he presents almost every aspect, sometimes in a single line. "As to sexual life", he writes, "there is a first awareness of responsibility towards the new generation. People neither want nor can continue to blindly reproduce. It's first of all necessary that doctors get a licence to help prevent pregnancy, and that abortion is no longer punishable". As to the positions of Malthus he points out that there is enough food in the world and that the volumes continue to increase. Food supply is a social issue that can be solved. He doesn't exclude the possibility that the development of modern chemistry could make agriculture completely unnecessary in a few centuries – by the way a business that fatally ties the human being to the soil, and prevents its chance for a higher culture.
Together with the introduction of woman in world history and her mental struggle for self-liberation, a new and powerful problem emerges. In 'The Rebirth of Mary' he points out that there is no reason to assume that the current marriage will exist forever. No matter how many problems this may create is as difficult to predict as how many opportunities this may yield. But those who don't want to account for all those shouldn't think about the future of humanity.
One of the first tasks of woman seems to him to no longer be overwhelmed by modern technology, nor to bow before a weary male moral that indoctrinates powerlessness.
De Ligt was a good teacher; he understood the art of presenting difficult subjects very clear and understandable to his public.
A good pedagogue by nature, he had a vivid curiosity for educational questions. He came into contact with the Montessori-movement early on, and found a number of ideas that completely fit his own.
In the Montessori-issue of [The New Amsterdammer] in January 1920 he published an article "On univerities" where he says about the Montessori movement:
"Self-action is the actual motto of the Montessori movement. Dictums like "The children must act instead of listen!" - "Pupils councils are necessary!" etc are increasingly heard. They want to abolish exams in high schools and universities. The [International School for Philosophy] is currently -despite so many shortcomings- an example of higher education innovation. There are no lessons to memorize under the authority of presumed-experts, but free exchanges of ideas under the guidance of someone who lives a subject, which can lead to personal enrichment. Multiple times it has struck me how people who weren't tarnished by existing pedagogic methods could think much more clearly and purely than those who are usually presumed capable of that in society.
Elsewhere he wrote: "The Montessori system proved to be an involuntary confirmation of what we wanted socially: neither rule nor be ruled; but self-government, self-expression, self-development."
In pedagogy he saw one of the levers to bring personalities to development. During a trip in 1927/28 he visited new shools in Hamburg and Vienna with his wife, on which they reported extensively in an article series in the monthly [Questions of today][45].
Of course they were interested in the how much the urge for self-action, inner order, adaptivity of the child's personality, were realized. In these schools true freedom, harmonic cooperation and reasonable self-control proved to lead to great results. Two remarkable quotes illustrate the convergence of the spirit of these schools with the mindset of de Ligt. He quotes from a school in Hamburg: " Ein Schulhaus ohne Spektakel ist nicht ehrlich" ["A school building without spectacle is not honest"] and a saying by one of the organizers: "I don't teach, I wait for the moment when the children discover themselves and everything else comes naturally".
Especially in the light of militarism, de Ligt has always pointed to the necessity of a radical reform of content and technique of pedagogy.
In his 'War against War', where he examines what the task of each could be to prevent war and to promote a more humane society, he summarizes again:
"As a parent: keep the youth as free as possible from nationalist, chauvinist, militarist and imperialist influences (keep an eye on books, education, political parties)."

45 'Vragen van den dag' – appeared in a separate booklet as well, in 1930.

“Refusal as a teacher to educate the youth in a nationalist, imperialist or militarist spirit.”
“Choose existing schools (or found new ones), where schooling is provided in a similar anti-militarist spirit (keeping contact with educators, other parents and the children themselves, seizing the opportunity that parents meetings offer).”
This proves that Bart de Ligt was well ahead of his time and has foreseen important developments about women and education. In fact only after WW2 have important changes been implemented in these domains, and the value of his positions and understandings are accepted in broad circles.
Sadly, everything about a new education in the pacifist sense has yet to start.

5. Arthur Lehning: 'Bart de Ligt'[46] (1980)

Arthur Lehning[47] was introduced to the ideas of Bakunin by Bart de Ligt. Originally, as a German child (while born in Utrecht in Holland, he spent his first 5 years in Elberfeld where his mother Paula Schübler was born and to where she returned after Arthur's father abandoned his family – they returned to Zeist after she remarried to J. F. Müller; and Arthur was naturalized to Dutch in 1921 after requesting it.), he was sympathetic to the German role in the '14-'18 war. The horrors of the war didn't seem to shock him much and he had no objections against the army or militarism. He volunteered for the Dutch army for 9 months of service in 1918-1919 where he rose to the rank of corporal. His time in the army made him change his mind about the military 'craft'. He spent a lot of time in the military hospital, both really sick and faking illness.
Henriëtte Roland Holst and Herman Gorter brought him into contact with Marxism and he supported the bolsheviks, Liebknecht, Luxemburg, etc. But he had also met Bart de Ligt and Clara Wichmann at a conference of christian-socialists who were active in the Social-Democratic Workers Party (SDAP) who influenced them towards anarchism and antimilitarism.
*He was the driving force behind the newspaper '*i20*', was involved in the Spanish Revolution and the IWA-AIT, where he pushed for clear antimilitarist strategies.Born in 1899, he died in 2000.*

Bart de Ligt (1883-1938) was a great intellect and had an encyclopedic knowledge. Raised as a theologian he was infused as a student -thanks to Bolland- with Hegel's philosophy, without which -as Alexander Herzen once wrote- one can't be a modern and complete human, to follow up with the remark that the philosophy of Hegel is also the algebra of revolution.
As a pastor, de Ligt rallied against official christianity in the name of the gospel and he called for the refusal of military service. In 1915 he was banned from his presbytery in Nuenen by the military administration and then first from the southern provinces, later from the eastern provinces; shortly after he was sentenced to prison[48]. In 1915 he helped draft the first 'Manifesto of conscious objecting'. In 1916 he left the Church, three years later he left the 'Bond van Christensocialisten (BvS)'[49] where he had been one of the leading figures. Like Domela Nieuwenhuis he developed from christian to anarchist: he became a free thinker and advocated for free and non-dogmatic thinking.
In 1919 he created the 'Bond van Revolutionair-Socialistische Intellectuelen (BvRSI)'[50] with Clara Meijer-Wichmann and joined the editors of Henri Wiessing's 'Nieuwe Amsterdammer'[51]. The campaign for the draft dodger and hunger striker Herman Groenendaal put him back in jail a second

46 Tr. Note: Source: footnote 44 in 'Ithaka, Essays en Commentaren 2', Wereldvenster, 1980.
Herman Noordegraaf, who studied Bart, and published his thesis ([Not with the weapons of barbarians. The christian-socialism of Bart de Ligt], Ten Have/Baarn, 1994) calls Arthur Lehning '[Bart's] *friend and pupil*. Bart helped Arthur finance his project *i10* ('Internationale Revue i10; 1927-1919; https://www.dbnl.org/titels/tijdschriften/tijdschrift.php?id=_int001inte00 ; an avant-garde periodical for new cultural currents). He was the editor of the 'Achives Bakounine' (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archives_Bakounine ; https://anarchyisorder.org/onewebmedia/bakunin%20-%20archives%20bakounines%20(iisg%20-%20Arthur%20Lehning).iso). See also: https://archive.org/details/bd-arthur-lehning-pn , https://archive.org/details/LaTraverseDuSicleDarthurLehning , https://archive.org/details/ArthurLehning-UneRencontre. In Dutch: https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/_jaa004200201_01/_jaa004200201_01_0010.php , https://www.tijdschrift-de-as.nl/documenten/de_AS_144.pdf (Bert Altena, pp 27 and following), https://www.tijdschrift-de-as.nl/documenten/de_AS_018.pdf and Johnny Lenaerts 'Arthur Lehning, Utopia als inspiratiebron' in 'Kladdaradatsch 6' (http://anarchief.org/w/images/4/47/Kladderadatsch_05_Juli_1979_-_Augustus_1979_%28Johny_Lenaerts_e_a%2C_Genk%29_Nummer_005.pdf). In French: https://maitron.fr/spip.php?article155218
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48 Tr. Note: See 'How and why de Ligt incites' in the new edition of 'Conquest of violence'; his speech was published in 'Tweeërlei Revolutie' ['Two-pronged Revolution'], A. H. Kruyt, Amsterdam, 1917. Kruyt also published 'Opruiers?' [Inciters?, the 'Refusers Manifesto' defended before the court in Utrecht, an only partly made speech].
49 Tr. Note: Union of Christian Socialists
50 Tr. Note: Union of revolutionary-socialist intellectuals
51 Tr. Note: New Amsterdammer

time in 1921.
In 1921 he founded the 'Internationaal Anti-Militaristisch Bureau (IAMB)'[52] -a continuation of Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis' 'Internationale Anti-Militaristische Vereniging (IAMV)'[53], founded in 1904- in which many organisations of anti-militarists, free-thinkers and syndicalists cooperated and where he was the inspiring force until he moved to Switzerland in 1925.
It's easy to take a quote from his extensive oeuvre -some twelve books, dozens of brochures, hundreds of articles- and to generalize it. But a personality like de Ligt must be considered in its entirety. He was interested in all branches of modern human science: philosophy, sociology, psychology, pedagogy; and he has written about all of them, not so much to enrich these branches of science, but to gather building blocks for a view on life, world and society that was based on freedom and humaneness. He investigated all tendencies that he could find in this sense and he probably sometimes drew conclusions from them that were too optimistic. And when he didn't find them in the present, he went back to the past. His big work about Erasmus must be seen in this light, a work that has many autobiographical elements.
He didn't expect all salvation from a social revolution, but neither from 'the transformation of man', of psychological insights or pedagogy, even if he has at times shifted his emphasis. He thought 'dialectical' in this regard; he was a follower of historical materialism or empirical dialectism, and marxistically schooled enough to never forget that the whole cultural pattern is conditioned by the social-economic relations.
De Ligt had a playful mind, a sparkling intellect, a lot of humour, a great spontaneity, much irony, and sarcasm when necessary. He has been a great agitator and also an educator – if he has inspired many people lastingly it's not just for what he has written, but also and especially for what he was: humane, incorruptible, tolerant, but not a man of compromise.
The non-violence that de Ligt stood for has never meant defencelessness for him. He always sought for new words -mental resilience, passive resistance, non-violent coercion, supra-violent methods of struggle- to express the action and not the passivity of his means of struggle. He has dedicated a big portion of his quarter-century activity to the propagating and developing of 'supra-violent' methods of struggle -especially for direct action against the war.
In the 1920s he played a big role in the revolutionary anti-militarist movement in the Netherlands and later he has internationaly validated his personal understanding of this anti-militarism, that was rooted in the Dutch cultural tradition. His major work 'Vrede als Daad'[54] is a summary of the principles, the history and the methods of struggle of direct action against war. It's also a critique of the traditional historiography and partly also a cultural history.
The means of struggle that he propagated - individual and mass refusal of service, strike, non-coöperation, civil disobedience, refusal to pay taxes, boycott,... - can all be summarized in one principle: the withdrawal from the system of violence of the state; instead of responding to violence with violence: non-cooperation with the state and the state's violence by saying *no* at the right moment. De Ligt has often pointed out that this social-revolutionary methods of struggle are not only morally perfectly responsible, but also opportune in light of the goals to be achieved.
In 1934 de Ligt has developed a plan for a mobilization against the war and presented it to a congress of the War Resisters' International (WRI)[55] and in 1937 to the 'Rassemblement International contre la Guerre et le Militarisme (RIGM)'[56] that he founded, in order to start an

52 Tr. Note: International Anti-Militarist Bureau (IAMB)
53 Tr. Note: International Anti-Militarist Association; See https://bianco.ficedl.info/mot130.html; https://bianco.ficedl.info/article1737.html , https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Association_internationale_antimilitariste ;https://wikimili.com/en/Association_internationale_antimilitariste
54 Tr. Note: see https://anarchief.org/wiki/De_Ligt,_Bart_-_Vrede_als_daad_(I._1931,_II_1933)
55 Tr. Note: see https://wri-irg.org/en , https://wri-irg.org/en/search/node?keys=plan+de+ligt
56 Tr. Note: see https://data.bnf.fr/11758472/rassemblement_international_contre_la_guerre_et_le_militarisme_congres/en.pdf , https://archive.org/details/internationale-aaneensluiting-tegen-oorlog-en-militarisme , https://francearchives.gouv.fr/fr/facomponent/1c622023c64507e7d8b51c308ce8b9e000d821bf

effective organisation of the resistance against war and the total preparation for war, even in peacetime.
He has advocated for the creation of an 'academy for peace' to study the science of war. His last work 'De wetenschap van de vrede'[57], that appeared posthumously[58], were two speeches in August 1938 in France for the first conference of the 'Académie de la Paix' that he created.
De Ligt was not a pacifist. He understood war as the inevitable consequence of the capitalist system and of the modern state. He has always fought against the idea that peace is possible under capitalism as a dangerous illusion. He saw one of the most barbaric onslaughts on the personality in the war preparation of the modern states with their conscription and in the *Tötiungs- und Todesbereitschaft*[59] that the state demanded from its citizens. He understood very clearly that the organisation for total war inescapably brings a totalitarian development of society with it, even in democracies.
In 1934 he wrote: “These days almost every modern state prepares for an outrageous global conflict like never before in the name of fatherland, God or humanity. With the help of school teachers and professors, newspapers and preachers, pastors and social-democratic leaders a complete code of honor of the collective murder was written. This contaminated sprit of hundreds of millions with the just as insane as criminal superstition that violence and war are necessary from a practical point of view at a time when the development of war technology, of war's scientific methods of destruction, and war began to make itself impossible.” At an anti-war conference in Frankfurt in 1929, he appealed to all the intellectuals of the world to refuse to cooperate with the scienctific war preparation.
De Ligt's work is a contribution to the philosophy of freedom, and free thinking; a coursein de-programming oneself. His life and work can be summarized in a saying by Fichte: “Everything wants to mechanize, but I want to liberate.”
For de Ligt's ideas and his role in the anti-militarist movement: see Gernot Jochheim, 'Antimilitaristische Aktionstheorie, soziale Revolution und soziale Verteidigung. Zur Entwicklung der Gewaltsfreiheitstheorie in der eurpäischen antimilitaristischen und sozialistischen Bewegung 1890-1940, under besonderer Berücksichtigung der Niederlande', Frankfurt a. M., 1977 that sadly only appeared in German.[60]

57 Tr. Note: 'the science of peace'
58 in 'Naar een vrije orde. Bloemlezing uit de werken van Bart de Ligt, Arnhem 1951, pp 256-280 (Tr. Note: 'Towards a free order. A Bart de Ligt anthology')
59 Tr. Note: willingness to kill and to die
60 Tr. Note: we hope that this anthology of Bart de Ligt can remedy this, even if the setup is completely different than Jochheim's work. A Dutch re-worked version was published in 2 volumes by 'De Haktol', ca 1987: 'De Wapens Neder' 1 ('De ontwikkeling in het denken over sociale actie, geweldloze strijd en antimilitarisme in Nederland, 383p) & 2 ('Mobilisation against war' by Bart de Ligt + 'Pacifist popular defence' by 'Jongeren Vredes Actie; 2 important examples of anti-militarist propaganda)

6. Arthur Lehning – Peace as Act. On the relevance of Bart de Ligt. An interview by Toke van Helmond (1983).

Source: Arthur Lehning, 'Prometheus en het recht van opstand', Ambo, Baarn, 1987 (copyright Arthur Lehning), pages 38-53. Interview in NRC-Handelsblad/Cultureel Supplement, December 10, 1983

Bart de Ligt died on September 3, 1938 in the railway station of Nantes. He was travelling to the first summer course of the Académie de la Paix that he helped establish. He was cremated in Paris, and a week later his ashes were interred in Westerveld, the Netherlands, where Arthur Lehning paid him tribute.
Bart de Ligt was born on July 17, 1883 in Schalkwijk near Utrect as son of a reformed pastor. He studied theology in Utrecht. In 1910 he was sent to Nuenen, where he lived in the same pastory where Van Gogh's father had once lived, and where the painter that de Ligt admired so had had his studio. He became a member of the [League of Christian Socialists] that same year and became editor of 'Opwaarts', the mouthpiece of the [League]. When the war broke out on August 3, 1914 he co-autored the manifesto [The guilt of churches][61]. After an antimilitarist sermon in 1915 in Eindhoven, he was banished from the southern provinces, and a year later from Gelderland and Overijsel as well. After signing the 1915 [Draft Refusers' Manifesto][62] he served a two weeks prison sentence. His banishment, emprisonment and new contacts he established led to him leaving the [League] in 1920, leaving the church and co-found the [League of Revolutionary Socialist Intellectuals][63].
In 1921, he is one of the main initiators of the 'International Antimilitarist Bureau against war and reaction'. In 1924 he becomes editor of 'De Wapens Neder'. That same year he compiled his most important writings in [Church, culture and society][64] for which he writes an autobiographical introduction titled [Ten years of struggle']. From 1925 on he works on his most important study [Peace as Act] that appears in 2 volumes, in 1931 and 1935, and on his book about Erasmus that he completes in 1938. He re-works [Peace as Act] in French: *La Paix Créatrice (1934)*, English: *The Conquest of Violence (1937)*, introduced by Aldous Huxley, Spanish: *La Religión de la Violencia (1939).* His brochure [Mobilization against War], the so-called 'Plan de Ligt' (1934) appears in many languages as well
His last activity is centered on establishing the Rassemblement International contra la Guerre et le Militarisme (RIGM) and the Académie de la Paix.
For a complete biography of Bart de Ligt's oeuvre, that contains hundreds of articles and reviews, dozens of brochures and a number of major works, see 'Bart de Ligt: 1883-1938' (Arnhem, 1939), a commemorative book under collective authorship with an introduction of Arthur (Müller) Lehning.
A recommendable explanation of Bart de Ligt's ideas and work can be found in 'Gernot Hochheim – Antimilitaristische Aktrionstheorie, Soziale Revolution und Soziale Verteidigung. Zur Entwicklung der Gewaltsfreiheitstheorie in der europäischer antimilitaristischen und sozialistischen Bewegung 1890-1940, under besonderer Berücksichtigung der Niederlande; Assen/Frankfürt a. M., 1977.

You have been, to use Marsman's terms, a 'friend and kindred spirit of Bart de Ligt'. Who was Bart de Ligt?
Speaking about the importance of Bart de Ligt's ideas: the Dutch government has honored him with banning all of his writings, without exceptions, for all personnel of the army, marine and air force. I think it's sad that his work is almost forgotten and that there isn't a single publisher who is willing to

61 'De schuld der kerken'
62 'Dienstweigeringsmanifest'
63 'Bond van Revolutionair Socialistische Intellectuelen'
64 'Kerk, cultuur en samenleving'

reprint his most important work, '*Peace as Act'.*
Even during his theological studies de Ligt was influenced by the ideas of Hegel; and once appointed as pastor he went into battle against official christianity in the name of the gospel, and he called for refusal of service.
He still called himself christian-socialist at the time, but like Domela Nieuwenhuis he developed 'from christian to anarchist'. After World War 1 until his death in 1938 he has tirelesly propagandized antimilitarism in speeches and in writing, especially pointing at everyone's personal responsibility for the war.
He was a revolutionary-antimilitarist, but nót a 'pacifist' because he was convinced that war was the consequence of social conditions; more specifically of capitalism and imperialism in the modern era. Without changing society, but also without changing the mentality of people, no peace would ever be possible.
By the way peace has never meant 'not war' to him, that is to say the condition between the last war and the coming one, but the realization of a society that is based on socialism and humanity.

In 1919 you wrote to Marsman: "That de Ligt doesn't suit me". That changed after you had met him personally?
I had read one of his earlier wrtings, from when he was still a christian-socialist, and that hadn't appealed to me. But when I first heard him speak in 1920 at a meeting of the Woodbrokers, in Barchem, he made a great impression on me. As secretary of the debating club of the Rotterdam Student Corps 'De Blaauwe Acoleyen' I've invited him for a speech shortly after. He spoke about 'The antimilitarists and their means of struggle' and I have published a report on it in the *Rotterdamsch Studentenblad*. We became friends and have remained friends until his death.

Bart de Ligt has also played a major role in the 'Groenendaal'-case.
In those days draft refusers were systematically convicted to long prison sentences. Herman Groenendaal was one of them; he was arrested in June 1921 and went on hunger strike. The messages about his treatment in prison have lead to an important revolutionary movement. In Den Haag as well as in Amsterdam there were large demonstrations under the slogan 'Free Groenendaal and all draft refusers'.[65]
At a public protest meeting for the liberation of Groenendaal, de Ligt has said: "Comrades! - I have come here to incite you. In the name of Jesus Christ, in the name of Marx, in the name of Bakunin, in the name of Kropotkin, in the name of Tolstoy and in the name of Groenendaal I incite you to abandon all evil labour; to refuse to build barracks and prisons; to refuse to produce war materiel; to refuse to be drafted". He was arrested immediately after the meeting, and was sentenced to a month in prison. The quotes and his defence before court attest to his mindset, not just at the time but he has maintained and propagated throughout his whole life, although words and contexts changed.

In the sense that he didn't believe in pacifism but exclusively in active resistance against war and war preparation.
His struggle against war and militarism was integrated in his political and philosophical ideas. Socialism for him was before all else a cultural problem; ha has never believed in a capitalist peace, and was convinced that peace would be impossible without a changing the system. The Dutch word pacifism has the connotation of pacifiction, tied to a peace movement that is -consciously or not- convinced that war would be avoidable under the current system.
De Ligt has also always advocated a form of nonviolence, but nonviolence for him never implied defenselessness. He always looked for new words to describe his ideas: he spoke of 'mental resilience', of 'passive resistance', 'non-violent force', 'supra-violent means of struggle' in order to express the *activity* and not the *passivity* of his methods. He has dedicated a large part of his life to the development and propagation of these 'supra-violent methods'.
The means of struggle that he propagated were: individual and mass refusal of service, strike, non-

65 Because of these actions the law on refusal of service on moral grounds was adopted in 1922.

cooperation, refusing to obey laws, refuse to pay taxes. All those activities can be categorized as the individual and collective withdrawal from the system of violence of the state and -instead of answering violence with violence- to refuse to cooperate with the state and to say *no* to state violence at the right moment.
In this context it's important to mention his magnum opus, the title of which-*Peace as Act*-summarizes his ideas well. It's a historic overview of the principles and methods of struggle by direct action against war, with special attention for the history of religions and sects; it's a piece of cultural history as well as a critique of traditional history writing.
De Ligt dedicated the last years of his life on concrete methods to fight against war and war preparation. He was co-founder of an International Academy of Peace, where the problems that are related to war and peace would be studied. Now, the science of war and peace has become a branch of the social sciences at an academic level, like at the post-war Institute for Polemology that professor B. Röling has established. It's an act of simple justice to remind people that Bart de Ligt was one of the first to understand the importance.

With the spectre of unemployment in the background, there is a discussion about the participation in the construction of war ships and bases for atomic weapons. What would de Ligt's position have been?
De Ligt has always highlighted 'responsible production', inspired by the words of John Ruskin: “What matters is not whether you have a job, but what kind of job. Do you produce wheat or gunpowder?” “The situation of the workers in the current world is such”, de Jong wrote in 1938, “that they have no voice in production. Threatened by unemployment and misery, they are forced to rent out their labour to employers, who decide on the nature of that labour without them.
The popular masses wouldn't have submitted blindly into serving death and destruction if their mental leaders -the roman-catholic church, the protestant pastors, the socialist and syndicalist leaders, etc- hadn't encouraged them to act that way, be it in the name of god, the fatherland or socialism. Often the syndicalist leaders have even praised the governments when they placed great orders of murder machines: the syndicalist leaders have even gone so far as to approve of the production of weaponry as a means to reduce unemployment.

From his writings, you get the impression that he has always retained some of that dogmatic and preachy. That must have been different when he spoke or he wouldn't have made such an impression in his day.
Originally he was a laborious speaker. He told me himself that at the time of his first sermon in Nuenen, he discovered half-way that he had forgotten to bring the rest of his text. He saved himself by saying from his pulpit: “Brothers and sisters, the rest is for next time.” But later he was a spirited speaker. He has lastingly inspired many, not just by what he has written and said but especially by his personality. He was tolerant, took different opinions seriously without deviating from his own fundamental convictions. He was a fighter in reasonability. He was very spontaneous, had great sense of humour and irony – and could be very sarcastic when he had to as well. Like in his infamous article in *i10* against the 'Leisdche cocktailmixer', professor Casimir, that inspired the poet Roland Holst's [Limerick about a smartass] ('Limerick op een slimmerick') that appeared in one of the later issues of *i10*:

> [“Do you know a Professor Casimir?
> In virtue's Ant Hill he's a quasi-Ant;
> Because a hypocrite like that
> Didn't exist yet,
> And, heaven help us!, how that gland rants!”]

“I'm becoming my own grammophone”, he said at a certain moment. He decided to move abroad. Afterwards he wrote his most important publications and he has also cooperated in your periodical i10.

De Ligt moved to Geneva in order to decicate himself to study, and besides 'Peace as Act' he has also published his book on Erasmus, that has many autobiographical traits. His interest was drawn to cultural and historical subjects, and he researched broad areas of science, not with the intention to contribute but in order to gather building blocks for a new philosphy of the world and life.
He was also interested in modern art, something that is less well-known. He was friends with Theo van Doesburg since 1918, when Theo had followed his course on the development of religious life.[66]
In 1919, Van Doesburg has decorated one room in de Ligt's home in Katwijk in neo-plastic style, and furnished it with chairs by Rietveld. Van Doesburg probably soon brought de Ligt in contact with Mondriaan, of whom de Ligt owned a painting, as well as one by Lissitzky. When I moved to Paris in 1925 de Ligt pushed me to make sure to visit Mondriaan. He has played a large role both in the preparation and in the evolution of *i10*, not just with his financial support, but also with his own philosophical contributions.

Does de Ligt has anything to say to the modern peace movement?
The pre-war revolutionary anti-war actions were constantly reasoned, for example by people like de Ligt. The current peace movements are according to me much rather emotionally motivated, caused by fear. By the way de Ligt considered such fear to be very dangerous beause it can always be transformed into agression against a potential enemy. He would undoubtedly have been pleased by the demonstrations of an unprecedented scale, and also by the fact that hundreds, not to say thousands of scolars, natural scientists and technicians point out the dangers of the modern scientific war.
But de Ligt would no doubt have said that if those hundreds of thousands of women, workers, intellectuals would draw the conclusion of their war-aversion and would refuse to participate in the war and war preparation, peace would be a fact.

De Ligt also points to the responsibility of journalists.
What is true for scientists and intellectuals in general is true for the press; de Ligt talked about 'prostituting science'. Modern war would only be possible if the population is dragged into a kind of 'religious enthousiasm'. War is not only prepared technically, but morally as well. A whole system has been developed in whick the press as well as the intellectuals have their role, aimed at the 'nationalization of tempers'. He was convinced that the 'total war' could not have been waged if not for the masses' belief in the 'national myth' that always defends the own civilization and cultural values like a messiah. And since every christ must have an antichrist, every 'deified fatherland' is an absolute enemy of every other deified fatherland. And who the antichrist, the satan is, depends on the *renversement des alliances*, i.e. the power politics of the state.

On one hand the 'de Ligt Battle Plan' offers people an option to actually act against war, and to break through their fear and passivity doing so; on the other hand it gives me the impression of being too good to be true. Isn't it just too simple?
Bart de Ligt was Marxian-educated enough[67] to know that war is the consequence of the social system; of the state, capitalism and imperialism. He was convinced that the attitude of the white proletariat towards colonialism and the oppressed races would largely determine the future. A unity of the proletariat, the women and the oppressed races would be a condition for doing away with war. The abolition of war implied the abolition of the 'capitalist peace', in his eyes.

66 For the contact between Bart de Ligt and Theo van Doesburg, see: Yve-Alain Bois, 'Arthur Lehning en Mondriaan, hun vriendschap en correspondentie', Amsterdam, 1984, p.97/98.

67 Tr. Note: as we will see, Bart had a passing Marxian phase, he always remained open for discussion which sometimes led him to revisionism, but he rejected Marx in all fundamental ways. In fact Marx was by no means to be the first or only (Proudhon for example) to analyse the causes of war as a consequence of capitalism; but he underestimated the role of the state, ideology and material interests of the proletariat in the process. In fact Marx was a staunch war enthousiast on many occasions – against the anarchist majority of the 1864 'First' International.

His plans are simple in that they are in theory very effective; they are complicated because they rely on a changed mindset of the people, who are completely conditioned by the whole social and cultural pattern. That will not change of course by exclusively theoretical propaganda. But it may change by the development of events, so that people may come to the conviction that there is nó other way to realize peace than to realize it themselves through their own actions.

So we've circled back to 'peace as act', but how is that feasible in times of nuclear war? In other words: how would Bart de Ligt have reacted to the events in our own time?
It's of course always speculative to philosphize about what someone would have said or done, half a century after their death. But we may well conclude from his last writings that he would react to current events like he has reacted in his day. He would propably have less illusions, and would have been astonished by the orgies of violence and terror during these last four decades. He would have seen his ideas confirmed about the modern 'total' war results in the development of a totalitarian state and society.
The fact that two world wars hasn't brought humanity to reason means that the fear of a third world war is no guarantee for peace. He would conclude that war is still prepared to defend peace. “One learns of the goals by understanding the means”, he wrote in 1923[68], and ten years later: “War has become practical insanity based on moral madness.”
But with his indistructible optimism he would have found hope in for example the attitude of the Danish during the nazi occupation. He would also have been encouraged by the resistance in America itself and the worldwide protest that have contributed to the ending of the barbaric war in Vietnam. Even more than before, he would have propably directed his actions to the hundreds of thousands 'scientific weaponers' who have put themselves in the service of a murder industry that benefits the statesmen who hold the peoples hostage in mutual fear under the threat of a million Hiroshima's.

68 [Revolution, anarchism and antimilitarism], 'Revolutie, anarchisme en antimilitarisme', 'Der Syndikalist' VI no 1; 'B.I.A.', Ed. Du Bureau International Antimilitarisme, 1924, etc. In: [Church, Culture and Society], 1925, pp 368-378

B. Albert de Jong - Revolutionary anti-militarism in the Netherlands (1954)

Originally published in 'Handbook for the Peace Movement', The radical-pacifist tendencies'[69]. N.V. Nijgh & Van Ditmar, 's Gravenhage, 1954
This translation with kind permission of Rudolf de Jong.
Albert de Jong was a lifelong comrade of Bart de Ligt and they often worked together in numerous organisations. I've chosen to let some of Bart's comrades speak in these pages. Albert disagreed with BdL on some important issues but they found ways to collaborate until very late in Bart's life. In this text from 1954 he paints a clear picture of the context in which Bart functiones and that he resonated with. His version of events remains to be checked against Bart's though.

1. Revolutionary anti-militarism in the Netherlands

Revolutionary anti-militarism in the Netherlands was born from the free socialist or anarchist workers movement that has been of great importance in our country under leadership of Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis.

1.1 Anarchism and anti-militarism

We could summarize the anarchist principle in a few words, as: 'Neither master nor slave.' In other words: 'neither rule nor obey'. It's clear that anarchism fundamentally opposes militarism by principle as militarism is characterized by discipline and subordination. But anarchism is not non-violent (except for 'christian anarchism'). On the contrary: anarchism fundamentally recognizes the right of the oppressed to violently resist domination and to use violence to liberate themselves from all authority by violent means. The revolutionary anti-militarist position was clearly expressed in the attitude of a number of Swedish anarchists who had traveled to Russia after 1917 to join the armed defense of the revolution against the counter-revolutionary armies, but who returned to Sweden when the bolshevik government imposed compulsory military service. Back in Sweden, they refused military service for the capitalist state. The not-nonviolent revolutionary anti-militarist position was also demonstrated in the following conversation of a Dutch conscript with the doctors who had to do his military medical assessment. Asked whether he opposed killing his fellow human under any circumstance, he replied: *"Not at all. If I can't defend my life by any other means, I will fight; and I'm prepared to fight as well for the defense of justice and freedom"*. He was asked what his objection against military service was, to which he replied: *"If I fight I want to determine myself what for and what I fight against, with whom and against whom"*. They thought he was a bit young and that he could probably leave all that to the government to decide. And his answer was clear: *"In Germany all the youngsters left it to Hitler to decide and you blame them for that!*" The anarchist is prepared to fight. For his conviction, but not on command; as a free man, not as a slave.

1.2 Anarchists and soldiers

The struggle against militarism has always been a very important part of the propaganda and the struggle of the anarchist workers movement, especially in the Netherlands. This propaganda was partly rooted in a sincere horror about the atrocities and crimes of war. But the emphasis was nevertheless elsewhere. The anarchist movement was not pacifist, but revolutionary and anti-

69 'Handboek voor de Vredesbeweging, The radical-pacifist tendencies"

capitalist. It advocated direct action by the workers who should improve their fate by means of strikes, sabotage, passive resistance and the occupation of workplaces. Those actions had to result in the general strike and in a social revolution that would topple state and capitalism and would place the economic power in the hands of the workers and their organisations. The anarchist movement expects that the struggle between workers and bourgeoisie, between the revolutionary people and the state will not go down without violence. In every strike of any importance, the workers found their 'brothers in uniform' against them. The great general strike of April 1903 for example gave rise to a violent military display from the side of the government. Amsterdam alone was confronted with an extra occupation of 35,000 soldiers. The anarchists have always understood that militarism was the mighty weapon of the state and the property class for the continued oppression of the workers and the workers movement. They understood that military power is mainly formed by workers in uniform. They did not blame those workers, but attributed their actions as soldiers to their ignorance and lack of class awareness. Therefore the anarchists considered it their very honorable task to make the workers and soldiers aware of the character, purpose and essence of militarism, even more when it participated in labor conflicts than in war. After the 1903 strike Domela Nieuwenhuis wrote in a brochure[70] about this struggle, that activity among the soldiers was necessary as well. *"After all it is them who are used whenever necessary in order to suppress the strike and to protect the capitalists and the interests of their safe deposit boxes. It would be best to have a military strike as well and we must work for that as well. The soldiers are workers as well, even if they are dressed up in uniforms; and if they understand that they must continue to be workers in spite of their uniforms, we have won an important battle in the struggle."* In order to make the soldiers understand this, the old anarchists were always present and... not without succes! In their manifestos, they agitated the soldiers for solidartiy with the struggling workers at every strike. Their writings were spread amongst the soldiers *by soldiers*, in spite of reprisals. Soldiers openly called for solidarity with the workers in periodicals. Repeatedly soldiers -especially 'marines'- were fired because of anti-militarist inclinations. There were special meetings for conscripts, sometimes even near the venues *"during the tea-time of the draft officials[71]"*. Anarchists were persecuted for spreading seditious publications among the soldiers. Soldiers and marines protested in 'De Vrije Socialist'[72], Domela Nieuwenhuis' periodical; they advised their peers not to shoot workers in struggle. Branches of the 'Bond van Miliciens en Oud-Miliciens'[73] organized meetings where anarchists were invited to speech, in order to protest against the conscription of soldiers, and they drew up a resolution to follow the example of the soldiers in Italy and to give their wages to the strike fund. In Amsterdam the 'lower marine personnel' adopted a resolution in which they declared that they considered themselves to be workers and that they would take that into account in case of a violent confrontation.

1.3 Founding the IAMV

'De Vrije Socialist' of November 26, 1902 published an appeal of the French anarchists Tailhade, Lhermitte, Janvion and Vallier to organize an international anti-militarist congress in London. This turned out to be impossible, so the Conference of Free Socialists on May 31 and June 1st 1903 in

70 Tr. Note: https://anarchief.org/wiki/Nieuwenhuis,_Ferdinand_Domela_-_De_werkstaking_van_1903_%E2%80%93_wat_zij_was_en_wat_zij_ons_leert

71 Tr. Note: in the text AdJ uses the word 'lotingsbazen', literally 'lottery bosses'. Conscripts were chosen amongst the poor by lottery. See https://www.uitdeoudekoektrommel.com/loting-nationale-militie/ . In English the word 'draft' has the same source. When the Netherlands was conquered by France, from 1810 on every man over 20 years old had to enlist. A system of 'loting' (lottery or drafting). Those selected by 'loting' were called 'Loteling'. Hendrik Conscience wrote a well-known novel about 'De Loteling' (1850). Alexandre Dumas' 'The conscript' is another novel on the subject.

72 'The Free Socialist'

73 'League of Conscripts and Veterans'

Arnhem entrusted the 'Vrije-Socialistenvereniging'[74] in Amsterdam with the preparation of the international congress. The organisation appointed M. de Boer and F. Domela Nieuwenhuis as secretaries. After a number of appeals that were not only signed by revolutionary anarchists but by christian-anarchists Drs. Louis A. Bähler and the author Frederik van Eeden as well, convened in the Amsterdam congress on 26, 27 and 28th of June 1904. Some 70 delegates were present, among whom representatives from England, France, Swiss, Belgium, Spain and Austria. A great number of organisations, among which 150 Dutch ones, had sent greetings. The French representatives among whom Yvetot and Delalé, two functionaries of the French syndicalist movement, were present in a personal capacity and not as representatives of their organisations. An official representation seems to have been out of question for the French labor movement. The degree to which the two Spanish delegates -exiles who lived in Paris- had a mandate from their organisations and to which the Czech Vohryzeck represented the organisation of a few tens of thousands miners in Bohemia, is uncertain. The English delegates represented more than a hundred thousand miners of Durham and Northumberland, but they left the congress before it ended, probably because of the revolutionary character of the organisation that was being founded. A heated discussion erupted about point 4 on the agenda: anti-militarism and individual refusal of military service. A number of delegates, amongst whom the French individualist anarchist Émile Armand, the christian-anarchist professor van Rees, Drs. Schermerhorn, the Swiss draft dodger Naine, Edo Fimmen (who participated under the pseudonym Nel Jacquard), the anarchist Nacht from Bohemia, the christian-anarchist Drs Bähler and the Belgian Thonar, proposed a resolution to support all actions of individual refusal of military service “whatever the social or religious motive” for those actions. There was fierce protest. Not so much against the refusal of service itself but against the clause of the 'religious motive'. Especially the French turned against the resolution because it accepted the notion of non-violence. They thought that any christian motivation as well as non-violence were at odds with the revolutionary character of the congress and the international that was to be founded. The resolution was withdrawn and with 31 votes a resolution of the French was adopted, while a resolution by Samson in which refusers of military service were praised while also stating that “none of us can personally advise refusal of service” got six votes. The Christian-Anarchist Bähler then left the congress, Naine and Thonar withdrew from the international committee. The congress where anarchists, christian-anarchists, English radicals and a socialist met, was originally convened under the slogan *“No person and not a cent for militarism”*. The result of the congress was that only anarchists and libertairian syndicalists could take part in the new international that carried the name 'International Anti-Militarist Organisation'[75]. Outside of the Netherlands chapters were set up in Belgium, France and Italy but they were short-lived. The IAMV never was a real international. It would officially be established at a congress that was held in Oxford in 1905, but the congress never took place. When in 1907 an International Congress of Anarchists convened in Amsterdam, a number of delegates of the congress also joined an anti-militarist congress. At that congress representatives of a dozen countries were present, but it proved that there was no anti-militarist international. Marmande, the French delegate expressed the general idea outside of the Netherlands that anti-militarism was part of, and result of, anarchism and socialism, so that there is no need for a separate anti-militarist organisations. The 'congress' of 1907 was the last international gathering of the IAMV for the time being.

1.4 The IAMV in the Netherlands

Things were completely different in the Netherlands. Here as well not all anarchists defended a separate anti-militarist movement. But a very special circumstance was that Domela Nieuwenhuis, who had a very big, yes almost magical infuence on the movement, had already positioned himself against any organisation of anarchists. Only the “free groups” of comrades who collaborated for the

74 'Organisation of Free Socialists'
75 IAMV or 'Internationale Anti-Militaristische Vereniging'

purpose of anarchist propaganda could find mercy in his eyes. In the big cities there were several of such groups loosely parallel to eachother without any local, let alone nation-wide organisational relation. But Domela Nieuwenhuis didn't oppose an anti-militarist organisation, although it mainly held anarchist members. So many anarchists who felt drawn to organisational work dedicated their energies to the anti-militarist movement. The propaganda against war and militarism found fertile ground in the Netherlands. Every war reinforces the nationalist and militarist spirit, but the Netherlands had not seen war since 1839. The anti-militarist propaganda also resonated in large parts of the population that -around 1900 more than today- was characterized by a spirit of individualism and independence. That is why the IAMV -that should have been called 'Nederlandse Anti-Militaristische Vereniging' ['Dutch Anti-Militarist League'] instead- could gain a wide popularity in the Netherlands, especially in the countryside of Friesland, Noordholland, Groningen and Zuidholland.

1.5 The activity of the Dutch IAMV section

On October 9, 1904 the Dutch section of the IAMV -that we will simply call the IAMV from here on- was founded on a congress in Zwolle with 375 members in ten local chapters. A few months later, 8 new chapters were created and membership had grown to 700. In 1906 there were 28 chapters with ca 900 members that grew to 1,000 in 1908. At the outbreak of WW1, numbers had dropped dramatically, but the -as such very small- organisation developed an admirable activity. Part of its action was aimed at undermining army and fleet with the purpose of making them useless for the ruling class as instruments in the class war. As a protest against the recruitment for army and marine 20,000 copies of the brochure 'De Nederlandsche regeering als zielkoopster' ['The Dutch government as soul merchant', literally: 'soul buyer'] were spread. In 1905 it was decided to publish an annual almanac especially aimed at the military. It was published for 17 consecutive years on 5 to 10,000 copies. As medium of the organisation, the monthly 'De Wapens Neder'[76] was taken over, that had already been published by a few kindred spirits for a few years. This monthly as well talked to the soldiers directly again and again. In one of the issues an image was published in which a worker shakes the hand of parting recruits while saying: *"So, that's agreed then – you will never shoot your brothers!"*. In 1909 it was decided to dedicate 4 of the 12 monthly issues especially to conscripts and soldiers who came home on leave. That year no less than 81,000 copies of 'De Wapens Neder' were spread, that is to say 6 to 7,000 a month for an organisation with less than a 1,000 members. The paper took a high flight under N. J. C. Schermerhorn as editor (preacher in Nieuwe Niedorp at the time) between 1910 and 1922. This tireless and gifted orator has spoken at hundreds of meetings in the countryside and won new subscriptions for the paper at every meeting. During the 51 months of the first world war the average print run was 18,000 copies and the highest was 33,000 copies per month. In 1928, when the membership of the IAMV had dropped to a mere 600, 9,500 copies of 'De Wapens Neder' were sold every month and the separate important enlarged Christmas issue even 15,000 copies were sold (or 25 copies per member). And countless pamphlets and manifestos were spread as well as written propaganda. In 1906, 100,000 copies of a manifesto about the political situation in Europe were spread; a publication on anti-militarism and labor movement reached a 26,000 copies run. A brochure against the organisation 'Onze Vloot' ['Our Fleet'] reached 25,000 copies and one against militarist children's toys reached 20,000. Dozens of speakers speeched at anti-militarist village meetings where sometimes even mayors attended. Large public meetings were organised in the cities. On January 15, 1905 protest meetings were organised in multiple places in connection to the Russian-Japanese war. On June 16, 1907 in Den Haag, 4,000 people attended a meeting with 6 speakers "to expose the hypocrisy of the second peace conference". On August 31, 1913 to mark the opening of the Vredespaleis ['Peace Palace'] in Den

76 'Down the Weapons' https://www.delpher.nl/nl/tijdschriften/results?query=&page=1&maxperpage=50&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=(alternative+all+%22De+Wapens+Neder%22)&coll=dts

Haag 5,000 people attended a meeting where speakers from France, Belgium and Germany spoke as well and where Domela Nieuwenhuis made the memorable statement *"The Peace Palace is open, now the war can begin."*

1.6 Legal Persecutions

The propagandists of the IAMV have faced judicial persecution countless times. In 1908 Wurpel and Pieters were persecuted for spreading a manifesto among conscripts. These persecutions caused a storm of protest, even more so because there was an attempt to outlaw the IAMV. No less than 23 organisations collaborated with the IAMV in a committee of agitation that organised a big protest meeting in the 'Paleis voor Volksvlijt' ['Palace for Popular Zeal]' and spread tens of thousands of copies of a 16 pages long pamphlet ' Tot aanval en verweer' ['To attack and defend']. According to this writing both propagandists were convicted on June 4th, 1908 for their membership of the IAMV, "which made the organisation a forbidden organisation". The persecution was alledgedly instigated by the Prussian government because of the fact that Dutch anti-militarists had attempted to smuggle an anti-militarist document – the "Soldaten-Brevier"- into Germany. It was a small booklet, camouflaged in the German national colors with the Prussian coat of arms and motto " Mit Gott für Konig und Vaterland". The 'Handelsblad' of the time wrote "that we are not happy with Prussian pepper in our justice system". 'De Telegraaf' as well insisted that the correct information should be spread on the topic. On appeal Wurpel and Pieters were acquitted. In 1909 J. W. Smit was convicted[77] [in appeal] to three months of prison for an article in the "Soldatenalmanak"[78] ['Soldier's Almanac'] about the "Blood night of Kattenburg"[79], a strike during which some workers were shot to death and others seriously wounded, the administrator of the 'Brochuredepot der IAMV' (the publishing department of the IAMV), C. Berkhout was convicted to a month in prison. The article in question was reprinted and republished but now signed by 800 persons without new prosecutions. In 1917 M. v. Gelder was convicted to three months for spreading an IAMV manifesto about the shooting of some men and women during a hunger march.

77 Tr. Note: see article 'Pardon requested' that appeared in 'De Locomotief' (https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=J.+W.+Smit+Soldatenalmanak&coll=ddd&identifier=MMKB23:001659013:mpeg21:a00015&resultsidentifier=MMKB23:001659013:mpeg21:a00015&rowid=1) but also in 'De Amstelbode', 'Haagse Courant'. The process was reported on in 'Het volk' (social-democratic daily paper; https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=J.+W.+Smit+Soldatenalmanak&coll=ddd&identifier=ddd:011081647:mpeg21:a0031&resultsidentifier=ddd:011081647:mpeg21:a0031&rowid=5) and others (De Courant, Het vaderland, etc) over the months.

78 Tr. Note: https://www.delpher.nl/nl/boeken/results?query=Soldatenalmanak&page=1&sortfield=title&coll=boeken

79 'Bloednacht van Kattenburg' (www.nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bloednacht_van_Kattenburg, www.onsamsterdam.nl/artikelen/hier-gebeurde-het-kattenburg-6-juli-1911), a confrontation between strikers and riot police on July 5 and 6, 1911 during the international seaman's strike that begun on June 14th and was organised by the British unionman Havelock Wilson. Sailors from Rotterdam and Amsterdam joined the struggle and demanded higher wages, better food and accident insurance. After some ruckus in which a scab was pelted with some rocks, the military confronted the 'Kattenburgers' (a district of Amsterdam). Many dozens were injured of whom 4 heavily wounded. The sailors ended the strike on August 9 without result and the striking 'Kattenburgers' went back to work as well.



Cover of the 'Soldaten Brevier', Source: https://nosbuesch-stucke.berlin/lots/auktion-25/lot-1127-nacht-siegfried-spaeter-stephen-naft/ *, Patriotische Verlagsanstalt, 1907. First Edition. Attributed to German anarchist Arnold Roller (pseud.of Siegfried Nacht, later pseudonym: Stephen Naft), brother of Max Nomad. Decoy wrappers give the pamphlet the appearance of being a soldier's handbook ("Fünfte Auflage) adorned with a quote from Kaiser Wilhelm II dated 1892: "Now you belong to me with body and soul. Now you have only one enemy and that is mine" (our translation). Interior text anti-militarist propaganda, including contributions by the Polish Jewish poet Ludwig Palagyi, French novelists Guy de Maupassant and Anatole France (translated into German), and German poet and Social Democrat Max Kegel. Examples of content: texts 'Oath of Allegiance', 'The Blood Tax', Slaughterhouse of the Fatherland', 'Anti-Patriotism', 'The fate of the soldiers', etc*
The book was printed in miltiple thousands of copies and smuggled over multiple stations over the Dutch-German border into Germany and then spread amongst recruits around draft offices.

1.7 The principles of the IAMV.

The IAMV didn't really have a declaration of principles until Christmas 1919. It did have the brochure 'What the Red International wants'[80], that it published in 1914 and that could be used as such. Its position was clearly expressed in the three clear-cut slogans that have become classics since it formulated them in the first days of its existence: "*No man and no cent for militarism*.", "*India free from Holland*" ('Indonesia' wasn't used in 1904) and "*We fight for a society in which brute violence no longer has a place*." The first slogan is clear and satisfactory. The IAMV propagated international mass refusal of service against the war and the general strike, a position that the modern labor movement briefly accepted after world war 1, but that was abandoned after the rise of national-socialism. The bolsheviks undertook one serious attempt to make the IAMV betray their principled position "N*o man, no cent*". At the Christmas Congress the communist Joh. Brommert, former objector and board member of the IAMV proposed that only the militarism of the capitalist state should be opposed. With 33 against 3 votes and 1 abstention the IAMV maintained its position to fight every form of militarism of any state.

1.8 Indonesia free from Holland

The slogan "India free from Holland" that was later copied by the communists, was first chanted by the anti-militarists. Domela Nieuwenhuis had already called for a public meeting in 1871 as a protest against the French-German war and for the creation of a peace league. In the 'Gids' of August that year, professor Buijs had declared himself an opponent of the peace movement. In a reply to Buijs' article Domela Nieuwenhuis, not a socialist yet at the time, wrote: "And lastly the colonies must be declared independent. Because having colonies is a continual threat of war. They were injustly gained and so one injustice is compounded with the other. In order to make the theft possible, murder was necessary. We have gained treasures at the expense of the blood and the sweat of the natives[81], and we are nothing but thieves in a country where we have no business being." The spirit of these words has always animated the IAMV and it acted according to them. It has always fought hard against the recruitment for the colonial army. The brochure "De Nederlandse regeering als zielkoopster" ['The Dutch government as soul merchant'] and the one against the organisation 'Our Fleet' have already been mentioned above. The advertising boards for the Indian army showing the head of a soldier riding between palm trees, was covered with a skull, and the word 'handgeld' ('cash money') was covered with 'bloedgeld' ['blood money']. The IAMV took position against the plans in 1916 to create a militia in Indonesia by putting up 10,000 posters across the Netherlands (among other actions). In 'De Wapens Neder' as well as in public meetings, manifestos and brochures there was a neverending protest against the colonial oppression and exploitation.

1.9 The IAMV and violence.

Its position on the subject of violence was expressed clearly in the declaration that it struggled "f*or a society in which brute violence has no place any more*". Undoubtedly the IAMV was created out of resistance against and horror of the brute violence of states, used to maintain the exploitation and oppression of the working class as well as to butcher thousands of proletarians in bloody wars. It considered the abandoning of violence as founding principle of society as its main goal. But it didn't consider violence to be a consequence of the personal sin of the worker or the capitalist, rather as a

80 Tr. Note: 'Wat de Roode Internationale wil. Beginselverklaring (doel en middelen) van de IAMV) See the next chapter of this book for a translation.

81 Tr. Note: in the Dutch text: 'inlander', literally 'from the land person'. 'Indigenous person' would probably be a more modern translation, but I chose to use a more archaic word to reflect the word in the original, even if 'native' has a more pejorative connotation than the Dutch word (and the author certainly didn't give the word a negative charge).

consequence of the economic and political organisation of our society. The IAMV never accepted the position that violence -in the form of the resistance by the oppressed as well- had to be rejected because of an imperative to 'love thyne enemy'. In 'What the Red International wants" it is written that non-violence is not accepted as principle by the organisation, but that does not mean that it had no respect for those who refuse to serve because they judge ALL violence to be wrong. But it didn't adopt the Tolstoyan position and accepted the possibility that "*violence is not always avoidable in the class struggle, nor always to be rejected*". For the IAMV, the struggle against militarism was part of the class struggle, and as this battle was being waged with the purpose of abolishing the classes, it accepted violence in order to undo violence as founding principle of society. Meanwhile this doesn't mean that the IAMV has at any time sought it strength in violence. On the contrary! Again and again it propagated before anything else, the fraternisation of the workers by the refusal of soldiers to allow themselves to be used as scabs or by shooting on the people, and advocated mass strike and refusal to serve in order to prevent the war against the "workers on the other side of the fronteer". Its ideal has always been -short and clear-: "*Down the weapons*".

1.10 Non-violent people become members of the IAMV

The first world war has been of profound, even decisive importance for the IAMV. We can summarize this in three points that are closely related. The attention of the IAMV was more than ever focussed on the struggle against war and slowly the the link to the class struggle of the workers weakened. The refusal to serve became more important than before. In the first world war, young men above 19 y.o. were mobilized as well, and the willingness to refuse military service was significantly bigger among them in comparison. In September 1915 an "Objectors Manifesto" was published, signed by 178 people. As soon as 12 and 22 October, a second and third edition was distributed with respectively 326 and 529 signatories, among whom many members of the IAMV. The number of imprisoned objectors after September 1915 rose from 108 in June 1917 to 425 in June 1918. And in the end a number of more or less religious and nonviolent anti-militarists entered the IAMV. They didn't come from a background in the revolutionary labor movement, but from christian-anarchist and christian-socialist circles. They represented a tendency that had been clearly excluded at the international congress of 1904. While the anti-militarism of the old IAMV grew out of the free-socialist class struggle, their anti-militarism was mainly founded in christianity. For some of them, the individual objection took an all-dominating position. They strongly accentuated the ethical and individual aspects. They mainly cared about a pure way of life for the individual. The old IAMV, on the other hand, had always looked for an immediately practicable tactic for the labor movement; it had longed for class solidarity among workers, but not for individual actions that were above the moral strength of the average human being. The focus of the movement increasingly shifted towards the individual refusal to serve and on 'producing responsibly'. The contact with the soldiers was completely lost and the contact with the labor movement decreased ever more. In later years, the decline of the free-socialist labor movement has undoubtedly also played a role in that process; the syndicalist organisation N.A.S. ('Nederlandsch Syndicalistisch Vakverbond' or 'Dutch Syndicalist Union') was largely taken over by the bolsheviks. At the same time the trust in the salvation by violence for the liberation declined among the old guard of the IAMV. They analysed that the dramatic rise of the technology of war and destruction had made violence into a threat in itself, no matter its purpose. They became aware that having -and using- modern means of violence is increasingly impossible for an oppressed class. They also understood that these means may well lend themselves to be used AGAINST a mass, but not so much to be used BY that mass against the actual oppressors. For these practical and tactical reasons they sought for better, more effective means to beat the enemies of the working class and to defend the social revolution. They accentuated the economic weapons of strike, boycott, non-cooperation but without rejecting violence in principle. Nevertheless both tendencies in the IAMV grew closer to eachother this way. They agreed that -by promoting the economic means of struggle (responsible production,

refusal of labor, refusal of military service and boycott)- violence should be made as redundant as possible. And on this foundation they have collaborated comradely and fruitfully for more than 15 years without confronting eachother as factions. There was another point on which both tendencies agreed: that the IAMV should have a place for ALL anti-militarists, the 'violence accepters' as well as the 'violence rejecters'. This was clearly demonstrated in 1921 when the IAMV took the initiative for a new international: the International Anti-Militarist Bureau against war and reaction' or 'IAMB'. Simultaneously an international gathering of non-violent people outside of the IAMV took place in Bilthoven. This gathering sent a delegation to the IAMB congress in Den Haag, with the announcement that all preparations had been made in Bilthoven for the foundation on an anti-war international of non-violent principles, but that they would not do so if the IAMB would accept non-violence as exclusive principle. The IAMB refused to do so; the non-violent tendency in the IAMV took the position that the IAMB should be open for not-nonviolent people as well.

1.11 Activity during and after the first World War

While in 1914, the IAMV had strongly declined in membership and number of chapters, it grew strongly during the first world war. At the end of 1918 it had more than 80 chapters and 3,200 members. But after the war, membership dropped again steadily to 1,250 in 1922 and to 630 (over 36 chapters) in 1928. Nevertheless the IAMV continued a strong oral and written propaganda. 40,000 copies of a pamphlet “Aan de Moeders” (“To the Mothers”) were distributed, just in 1921 59,000 copies of 11 brochures were sold. An anti-militarist yearbook was published in a print run of 6,000 copies, and a brochure for teachers (“School en Oorlog” or “School and War”) on 6,000 copies as well. At strikes, threat of war and other relevant events, manifestos were spread among the population in great numbers. In countless villages where the political parties organised a meeting once every four years at most, the IAMV organised multiple public meetings a year. Its list of speakers in 1923 had no less than 41 names to choose from.

1.12 The 'Groenendaal' action

The year 1921 was a culmination of activity in response to the fact that the Harlem objector Herman Groenendaal refused all food after his arrest on June 6th as a protest against his imprisonment and as an appeal to the consciousness of the working class. When the National Committee (the board) of the IAMV was first informed about this on Sunday June 19th, it immediately informed the whole of the Dutch national press. On June 20 it visited the warden and the attending physician of the military hospital in Den Haag where Groenendaal was violently force-fed for the first time that day. The National Committee unsuccesfully appealed to the doctors not to allow themselves to be instrumentalized by militarism and again sent a comprehensive communiqué to the press. From Wednesday June 22nd on, members of the Den Haag chapter of the IAMV handed out 50,000 flyers and comrades walked around with signs saying “Herman Groenendaal must be released” -unemployed comrades did so during the day as well. The police illegally prevented this propaganda for a public meeting that was to be held in the garden of the 'Volksgebouw' ('People's Building') on Sunday June 26th. But instead, its actions contributed to turning Den Haag into one big platform for the Groenendaal action. It grew into a true popular movement. The protest meeting on June 26 succeeded magnificently. Fearing a violent break-out the authorities had tranfered Herman Groenendaal from the military hospital to the special penal prison in Scheveningen. But the thousands of protesters marched to the house of the minister of war (Mr. Por) after the meeting, where they were beaten apart by the police. But now it became clear how deeply the IAMV propaganda had permeated the hearts of the working class. Every evening the garden of the Volksgebouw filled up, irrespective of a meeting being announced or not. Everywhere in the country, heavily attended protest meetings were organised and on Tuesday June 28, thousands of

workers in Amsterdam spontaneously downed their tools “to strike Groenendaal free”. But the great mass of workers didn't follow and so the syndicalist organisations decided not to call for a general strike on Sunday July 3rd. And so the campaign was lost, even though the anti-militarist agitation had reached a new level. Bart de Ligt and Albert de Jong were arrested for sedition and sentenced to respectively 27 and 29 days of prison (the duration of their remand). Countless comrades were persecuted for spreading propaganda, walking around with signs, etc. The IAMV published a paper, “De Dienstweigeraar”, joining forces with the syndicalist N.A.S. on 50,000 copies. The objectors van der Putten, Krook and Cammelot had gone on hunger strike as well. The bad treatment of Cammelot and Groenendaal gave the IAMV reason to spread a manifesto on 200,000 copies. Herman Groenendaal kept up his hunger strike for five months and was artificially fed all this time. After the collapse of the popular movement two left-communists and an anarchist placed a bomb in front of the house of one of the members of the court martial in 's-Gravenhage, hoping to trigger a new agitation. But that didn't succeed; they were arrested and sentenced to multiple years in jail. In reaction to their action Herman Groenendaal followed the advise of his lawyer and abandoned his hunger strike. He had to serve his ten months of prison in full.

1.13 The IAMB and the IAK

The IAMV has displayed important international activity. Even during the world war it took on the foundation of a new international. It decided to create a new international secretariat, in which 'not-exlusively anti-militarist' organisations would be welcome. A wonderfully succesful international congress was organised between 26 and 31 March 1921 in Den Haag and the 'IAMB against war and reaction' was founded [see above]. At the congress anti-militarists, anarchists and syndicalists were represented from the Netherlands, Belgium, France, England, Germany, Sweden, Austria, Switzerland and the United States. Approximately 25 representatives were absent because of problems with their visa, 6 had come without a visum, so that the actual meetings had to take place at night in secret. A declaration of principles was adopted where we find the following: *“The IAMB tries to strengthen the awareness amongst the workers that their economic power is decisive.” “It propagates the general strike and mass refusal to serve as means for the prevention of war.” “It propagates the immediate strike of all war production.” “It promotes the disorganizing of armies and fleets, and hails the individual refusal of military service.” “It rejects any attempt to suppress a proletariat that has overturned the yoke of capitalism again by intervention.” “It rejects all military oppression and economic exploitation of the colored races.”* In 1923, 34 Dutch organisations adhered to the IAMB, ranging from anti-militarists, anarchists, syndicalists to free-thinkers. There were also 20 member organisations from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, England, France, Norway, Austria, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. From the start the IAMB raised its voice against the persecution of revolutionaries in all countries, it participated in countless international congresses and its representatives have speeched at public meetings in many countries. But it was almost exclusively financed by the Dutch organisations and comrades. That changed for the better when the IAMB and the syndicalist international AIT created the 'International Anti-militarist Commission' ("Internationale Antimilitaristische Kommissie' or 'IAK'), a working committee for anti-militarist propaganda whose publications were financed by both internationals together. This IAK has published a very much valued press service for approximately 10 years in Dutch, French, German and English; a few times editions in Spanish, Norse and Esperanto. 750 copies of this press service were sent to periodicals and persons in the five continents. In one year (as far as the secretariat was able to verify) articles of the press service were printed 750 times in the press. Considering that the total revenue of IAMB and IAK together never surpassed 4 to 5,000 guilders, this is no small feat. Because the work for the international movement was almost exclusively done by Dutch anti-militarists, this deserved mentioning in this article.

2. The Spanish revolution and violence

The differences of opinion about violence have led to a decisive conflict in the IAMV and IAMB in 1936 because of the Spanish Revolution. At the start of the revolution -as a reaction to the military coup of Franco-, the Spanish anarcho-syndicalists countered violence with violence –completely in agreement with the position that the IAMV had taken in 1904. They took the initiative ro resist and organised revolutionary people's armies[82] in collaboration with all the other anti-fascist groups in the population; in the beginning separately from the government and entirely on a voluntary and spontaneous basis. The 'milicianos', as the particpants were called, chose their own leaders and could depose them. The 'violence-accepters' in the IAMV and the IAMB were completely in solidarity with the Spanish people, even if they themselves would theoretically have prefered supra-violent methods of struggle. Every action of the international working class to paralyse the militarism of Franco with the means that the IAMB propagated, remained hypothetical and acoording to them the Spanish people had every right to choose its own means of struggle, even more so since the chosen means were not in conflict with the principles of the old IAMV. If it had been possible to procure the milicianos with weapons, they would not have objected, even if they understood that this could not be the task of either of the two organisations that had non-violent members as well. The 'non-violents' in the IAMV and the IAMB, and in the larger anarchist movement took a very different position from the start. Their attitude was hesitant at first, but in some cases they criticised the anti-fascist violence and some even wanted to refuse all material support to the Spanish people because it used violence in its struggle. Meanwhile the Spanish people's armies were increasingly militarized, which was of course clearly at odds with every anti-militarist principle, even for the not-nonviolent tendencies. In both organisations a third current arose, that accepted individual and spontaneous violence but rejected every form of 'organized' violence. It concluded that every organized warfare would inevitably lead to militarization because the efficient application of modern war technology requires militarization. The 'violence accepters' couldn't share this position. They deemed organisation of any violent popular resistence as completely natural.. They considered the free self-organisation of the people as a consequence of the social fabric of humankind; - and the foundation of the construction of a free society- in the light of that principle. They deemed any voluntary organisation to be more efficient than organisation based on discipline, and rejected militarization on that basis. They saw the cause of this phenomenon of militarisation in Spain in the political development in the country. The power had more and more shifted from the spontaneously formed popular committees towards the government. The social revolution was not consistently implemented, the state -and to some degree capitalism as well- were maintained. The Spanish anarchists collaborated with socialist and bourgeois parties who accepted the principles of state and militarism. They have even participated in government -'under pressure of the circumstances'-, a tactic that was in conflict with their principles and that they have largely abandoned again today[83]. But -as anti-militarists- they have resisted militarization as long as possible. Often it was enforced by the -mostly foreign- bolsheviks though, who disposed of Russian planes in Spain and refused to deploy them as long as the troops hadn't accepted militarization. A majority in the IAMV and IAMB declared every 'organized violence' to be at odds with the anti-militarist principles, and changed the declaration of principles of both organisations in this spirit. The not-nonviolents then left the IAMV and the IAMB as they considered further collaboration on the basis of the new declaration of principles to be impossible. That collaboration had been possible

82 Tr. Note: in the Dutch original the phrase 'revolutionaire volkslegers'. Given the context 'Columns' or 'Brigades' would probably reflect better what the anarchists had intended, but all 'voluntary' and 'spontaneous' aspects were soon lost. So I have chosen to reflect this by respecting the phrase that Albert used.
I hope to publish an anthology on the matter of the militarisation of the Spanish anarchists and the discussions and tensions on the subject within the anarchist movement and the IWA-AIT that the CNT-FAI was a member of. Those discussions were never really addressed afterwards and it is my understanding that the tendencies of the time of the Spanish Revolution -not having learnt lessons and not having drawn common conclusions- resulted in the split of the IWA-AIT under pressure of the Spanish CNT (at least a part of it).

83 Tr. Note: we could say that part of the movement has swung back to the tactic yet again in recent times.

for fifteen years, completely loyal and comradely as long as it was about a purely theoretical propaganda; but it succumbed in the face of actual struggle when for some a practical tactic for the struggling working class prevailed, and for others the principled pure attitude for the individual and the theoretical group. It proves how deep and material the rift had in reality remained. The schism of 1938 meant the end of the IAMB and the IAK. Neither the syndicalist international nor the organisations abroad could identity with the new position. The IAMV held strong until the outbreak of the second world war, but has not revived in 1945.

3. Conclusion

At the end of this article we could ask the question to what extent the goals of the IAMV have been reached. We could say that one of its goals has been reached - *"India free from Holland"*- but nothing of *"No man No cent"* materialized. The national liberation of Indonesia was not the work of the IAMV though, even if it has contributed a lot. And the fact that more money than ever is spent at this moment for the preparation for war, does not mean, on the other hand, that the actions of the IAMV have been meaningless. We want to look at the question from a different perspective. Overcoming war has slowly become a problem for humanity and is increasingly problematic. In all parts of the world, the awareness is growing that war and militarism must be overcome and that human personality must be defended. The IAMV as well has been a symptom of that awareness and that spirit, a manifestation in a certain popular movement in a certain country. Against the billions for the armies it has only been able to gather a few thousands for their meager publications and pamphlets. Against the two world wars that have militarized the peoples, it has only posed the power of its conviction. Nevertheless it contributed to thousands of individual examples of maintaining and triumphing of human personality versus militarism. That will never be lost. The IAMV has not been victorious. Pioneers seldom are. But as the IAMB member Mrs. Dr. Hélène Stöcker once said: *"Die zweitkommenden werden die Sieger sein"* ["Those who come second will be victorious"].

C. What the red international wants (second edition, 1917?)

IAMV Declaration of Principles

The I.A.M.V.

A word in advance.

The letters I.A.M.V. Abbreviate the name of the International Anti-Militarist Association.
Now that everyone bears witness to the consequences of militarism and is abhorred by them, the IAMV received great interest and we are always asked what this association is and what position it takes.
For this reason we try to clarify this in a brochure, and we hope that many men and wome -as long as they are at least 18 years of age- will organize within the IAMV after having informed themselves through this brochure.

The Creation.

On June 27, 1904, in a three days Congress (26-28 June) in Amsterdam, the IAMV was established under the motto “No man, not a penny”.
DOMELA Nieuwenhuis wrote about the event in the monthly 'Ontwaking' ['Awakening'] N° 7 and 8 of the same year:
“From several countries people gathered in Amsterdam in order to try to start a joint crusade against the all-devouring monster: militarism. They had responded to a call from a number of persons who were so bold to call for an international congress without having a strong organisation behind them”.
And, a little further:
“All must recognize that the Congress was succesful; it has even superceded the expectations of those who had organised it, even when some would have wished so dearly for it to fail.”
Indeed there were delegates from the English mining regions of Durham and Northumberland that represented 116,000 workers. There were delegates from the Federation of Spanish Labor Unions, representing 100,000 workers. There was a delegation from Bohemia who came on behalf of 35 miners from Northern Bohemia.
That were just delegates on behalf of one quarter million workers”.

The Founding.

A *Manifesto* preceeded the creation of the International. We can read there:
“The Congress of Amsterdam has founded the IAMV of workers. Against the black[84] International of churches and the golden International of financiers, it proposes the Anti-Militarist International of labor – labor, that possesses nothing and produces everything for the profit of capital, that produces nothing and possesses everything. In spite of meetings of pacifists (friends of peace), theatrical gestures of reformists, the people are crushed under the weight of military burden.
Since governments speak of peace, wars succeed each other and the cannon replaces arbitrage.
The Anti-Militarist International unravels the web of murder and lies that is forced upon the peoples by a gang of knaves and tolerated by the ignorance of the mass.
The International does not even recognize the pretense of the 'popular' national troops like in

84 Tr. Note: 'black' as pejorative for 'international of authorianism, capitalism, state-capitalism, fascism, etc', not as in 'people of color', 'black people' or as in 'anarchist international' – after all the anarchist flag is black as well.

Switzerland.
The Congress in Amsterdam has irrevocably decided on the organisation of this International that will be the necessary war machine against the hypocritical and deceitful war."

"The IAMV was created to wage a bitter war against militarism and all institutions that make its existence inescapable. It offers a mighty instrument of action to the workers in the labor organisations who can't express their Anti-Militarist sentiments enough in the unions, and to the workers as well who will not or can not participate in the unions – white color workers as well as those who the current system reduces to pack animals.
We have had more than enough patience. Action is required. Men and women of heart, you who are outraged by the lie, the cruelty and the injustice; the IAMV appeals to you. To work! Forwards! Away with militarism!"

This Manifesto was signed: For the Netherlands: F. DOMELA NIEUWENHUIS and N. J. C. SCHERMERHORN; France: GEORGE YVETOT and MlGUEL ALMEREYDA; Austria and Bohemia: KARL VOHRYZECK and MAX NACHT; England: FREDERIC CHARLES and GEORGE DARIEN; Spain and Portugal: S. NACHT and P. VALLINA; Italy: DESSANO.

Hearing this Manifesto it will soon become clear that the IAMV should be considered to be a revolutionary association, that is to say it holds an *anti-capitalist* position.

The draft of the Manifesto by the *French* delegation happened a bit hasty and bears the traces of this fact.
If some time had been taken to overthink what needed to be in the Manifesto, it would surely have pointed to the relation between capitalism and militarism.
But by and large, it sufficiently indicates that the founders of the IAMV were aware that they were taking an *anti-capitalist* position.
And it has been in this direction that the association has propelled itself since.
There has never been any rapprochement to pacifism, i.e. the peace movement that wants to conserve the current foundation of society: *private property.*
And the attitude of the authorities towards its activity may be the best proof for its revolutionary character. Indeed: where the bourgeois peace movement may relish in the favours of Government, like in the summer of 1913 in Den Haag, when the Knight Hall was opened for the Congress meetings and where the Government was officially represented – the anti-militarists are met with nothing of the kind. The big meeting of the anti-militarists the same year in Den Haag was not attended by the authorities except for their representation by a large number of policemen.
This is why every anti-militarist must become well-aware: *the consistent struggle against militarism leads to the struggle against capitalism*. Because militarism ultimately only serves to protect and maintain the capitalist system, the system of plunder and exploitation. And those who want to preserve this system may moan and groan about the horrible costs of militarism, but they shouldn't go all sentimental at the talk of war; they should simply accept militarism as a necessity.

Neither a people's army[...]

is what the IAMV wants. It is convinced that a people's army is just as much in the service of those who possess power in the State as in the army that we currently have. We could give the example of Switzerland's existing people's army that is used against the workers on strike just as well.
And also: would the popular army *truly* be different from the militia army? Would the alpha and omega not remain: *discipline, subjugation, punishment, destruction of individuality*?
Does it not serve those in power just as well?

Yes, the social-democrats are in favour of the popular army, but that is understandable. They strive for power, so they must have means of power at their disposal. Once they have conquered the State and when their flag floats above the Government castle, they wouldn't be able to act against the revolutionary turmoil of the not-social democrats if they didn't have an army. And whether this is a popular army or a militia army makes no significant difference.

[...nor] any army at all

is what the IAMV works towards. And even if there are hundreds -entrenched in the old mindsets or having interests in the persistence of the current social order- who deem this abmition impossible, the anti-militarists steadily continue and carry on their propaganda in the firm conviction that their ideas will find acceptance *because they are reasonable*. Or is it unreasonable to suppose that armies will be superfluous in a well-ordered society, i.e. a society without classes and therefore without class war, a society in which the stupid race for money no longer exists?
Can we not see with great clarity that the wars are waged for financial interests and are therefore caused by financiers?
Was this not made abundantly clear in the current war?

We will try to demonstrate it with a few examples.
According to a message from Berlin, dated April 9, the dividend this year of the “Glück-auf” factory in Hamburg, that produces explosives, is 40 pCt. Before the current year there had never been a dividend.
The 'Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant' recently wrote in its 'Economic Notices'[85]:
“The 'Fabrique [N]ationale d’armes de guerre' [FN] in Herstal, near Liège [Belgium], made a net profit of fr. 3.694.845 for the fiscal year 1913-1914 that ended on June 30, 1914.”
And the paper adds the 'peculiarity' *that German capital as well is interested in this Belgian factory*!

And for those who love numbers, we copy the following from the 'Haagsche Post' about the American war supplies. And even if the paper says that their account is not completely reliable because its calculation was contested because many factories try to obscure the fact that they produce war materials, we can safely accept that the numbers will likely be bigger rather than smaller:
“Shrapnel shells[86] were made at many factories in Pittsburg; the entrances were strictly guarded, making it difficult to obtain further information about the amount. The Bessemer Auto Co. in Grove City, Penn., makes fifty war cars for France. Seven large woolen mills at Lowell, Mass., are working day and night, making uniform cloth, blankets, etc. The New York Airbroke Company at Watertown has received an order from Russia for 30,000,000 shrapnels. The old steamer "Gascogne", that sailed between New York and French ports until a few years ago, recently left with 1480 horses for France. From Boston the 'Cambria' left for England with 650 horses. England established a separate steam line for the transport of war supplies from Canada. A comparison of these export figures also shows how significant America's war supplies must be. The total amount of war material exports last January was 20,163,660 dollars, against 2,300,145 in January 1914. Horses increased by 7,625,000 dollars, firearms by 1,946,114 dollars, cartridges 1,207,950, automobiles by 2,471,056, explosives by 995,769 dollars, woolen articles with 2,570,661. Regarding the place of destination, the following appears: 8,883 horses, worth $2,054,225, went to England; the previous year the number was ... 9. The value of motor cars exported was $1,770,966,

85 Tr. Note: 'Ekonomische Mededeelingen'
86 Tr. Note: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shrapnel_shell. Lieutenant-General Henry Scrope Shrapnel (3 June 1761 – 13 March 1842) was a British Army officer whose name has entered the English language as the inventor of the shrapnel shell. Shrapnels are anti-personnel artillery munitions which carry many individual bullets close to a target area and then ejected them to allow them to continue along the shell's trajectory and strike targets individually. Now 'shrapnel' is used as a generic term for fragmentation projectiles and devices in general.

against $855,973 in the previous year. America delivered 293 cars to Asia and Oceania, worth $808,793 compared to 193, worth $163,641, in January of the previous year. Total copper exports showed a reduction, but deliveries to England, France and Italy increased considerably. 24,411,814 pounds were shipped to France, and 18,722,529 pounds to England, and to Italy 8,137,249. For 1914 these figures were: 10,914,972, 17,015,588, and 6,467,707 pounds."
So is all that educational enough?
Have we said too much when we claimed that wars are waged for financial interests, and do we say too much when we claim that armies are used in economic conflicts of interest?
It is the conflict of interests between the capitalists of different countries and the class-struggle within the borders in which the armies must serve.
So would the terminating of that conflict not terminate the '*raisons d'être'* for the armies?
And the other way around: the weakening of militarism will *have* to result in the weakening of the capitalist system.

Non-violence

is not accepted as a principle by the association. That does not mean that it would not respect those who refuse military service because they refuse all violence because they deem all violence wrong. On the contrary: *it considers the act of refusing service as an act of great courage and gladly recognizes that such act has great propagandistic value*. But it does not take the position that is represented by Tolstoy and that he especially defends in the well-known book 'The Kingdom of God is Within You', and so the association does not accept the theory of passive resistance.
While fighting against the organized violence of the Governments in the form of militarism, the association accepts at the same time the possibility that the violent act is not always avoidable or rejectable in the class struggle.

About the labor movement

the founding Congress has reached the following conclusion:

"*The labor movement is a movement with a double goal:*
a. direct improvement of the living conditions of the members:
b. preparing the way for a healthy society."

The aim of militarism is to maintain the capitalist society, domestically as well as abroad, against which the labor movement fights against.
In large strikes soldiers are used as scabs and are armed with live ammunition against striking workers like in the Netherlands in 1903 during the Railroad Strike en during the Seamen's Strike in 1911 with its infamous Blood Night on Kattenburg. In Hungary in 1904 the strikers were conscripted in the army and as such forced to serve as scabs.

For all those reasons militarism obstructs the labor movement. And if the labor movement wants to avoid dooming itself to powerlessness, it is forced to oppose militarism by the principled fight against the system, as well as by connecting to the soldiers and creating a friendly relation wherever possible by all useful means, but mainly by continuously keeping in contact with the union members that have been conscripted.

Quite rightly the Congress conclusion pointed out how important the struggle against militarism is for the labor movement. And in the propaganda that the IAMV has spread since it was established this importance was always kept in mind.
Therefore we can say, without fearing being contradicted, that the anti-militarist movement is a *proletarian* movement. For all of its sentimental aversion to the war and its horrors, the bourgeoisie does not dare to take an anti-militarist position. It can not rise higher than the level of pacifism.

Instinctively, and to a large degree perfectly consciously, it realizes that its power and rule is in grave danger if it can no longer rely on the army. Therefore it cannot be anti-militarist. We can't expect of the bourgeoisie that it will suicide itself as class! Completely in accordance with this, is the attitude of Government towards anti-militarism. Where pacifism is favoured, *we see that anti-militarism is obstructed as powerfully as possible*.

The attitude of the anti-militarists in case of war

has been a point of debate on the Congress. And it was pointed out that a general strike as response was to be desired in case of a declaration of war of the Governments. And the IAMV accepted the idea. And with reason! If the workers -especially the workers in the transport branches and those in the factories and workshops who produce military necessities- down their tools, waging war will be impossible.
Therefore the idea of a work strike is propagated. The workers must learn to be aware of how they have it in their hands to make war impossible. And truly: if there is one beautiful task that the workers must and can fulfill, it is this. And they will fulfill it even sooner, the better they understand that war can never mean anything to *them* but *misery* in every respect. Whatever can be gained by war ends up in the pockets of the capitalists!

And -with an eye on the current war- even when we are shouted at: “Now where are you with your general strike?” and immediately after that: “Now you see it doesn't help!”
We reply to this: Don't say that the general strike is not an effective instrument because... *where it has not been applied, its effectiveness cannot be judged.*
That it was not applied can only sadden us, but that will not keep us from continuing the propagation of the idea of 'general strike in case of war'. And it delights us that this idea is accepted in the minds of many, as we can see these days.

And even if it is truly sad that the idea of the “general strike” hadn't permeated well enough yet to prevent this war, we need not despair.
When we see the urgency and care taken in the mobilization, we wonder whether the leaders might have been conscious of the great means of power: *the general strike*.
So we must continue the propagation of the idea of the “general strike” and we will hope that next time, the workers will be smarter and act more decisively than this time around.

Yet another matter that we want to draw attention to is what was adopted at the latest IAMV Congress: *the organisation of an international boycott* of the countries that get involved in war.

An objection

against our anti-militarist propaganda is for many: the idea that it weakens the resistance of our country so that we might easily fall prey to a more powerful neighbour. But we draw their attention on our internationalism.
We don't fight militarism in one country, but in the whole civilized (?) world. Militarism is an international evil, it is a disaster for *all* peoples and must be fought *internationally.*
And in this context it is without doubt welcome that in every country of Europe and America, this struggle is engaged in, and refusal of military service happens outside of the Netherlands as well , and more often than is reported in the periodicals.

Increasingly, the workers will realize that it is foolish to fight for the fatherland, i.e. the country where they are bound to lead their life of hardship and worries; to fight for the honour of a national flag; to combat people who they are expected to consider as enemies. Their enemies don't live beyond the borders. They are not the workers in soldiers-costumes of a different country. Their

enemies are the defenders of capitalism; their enemies are those who resist the growth of a new spirit, of new life that comes with the preaching of justice and brotherhood.
And **those** are the enemies they should fight, without worrying about nationality. And therefore they should to promote internationalism as much as possible and wipe away the borders that diplomats have drawn up.

In light of all that, the foundation Congress also spoke out for the idea to create an international spirit by the exchange of children.

No patriotism.

It hardly needs explanation that the IAMV resists traditional patriotism. The preaching of patriotism, that is especially dangerous at school with receptive children, must be balanced with the propaganda of the anti-militarists, those without fatherland whose highest ambition is the fraternization of the peoples that are currently artificially and deliberately kept apart by those who only feel love for the fatherland -as long as they can make a profit out of it, but who *throw their whole patriotism overboard* the moment their financial interests dictate it.

In this context we want to point to the large scale export of goods and foodstuffs to warring nations while they make their own compatriots pay dearly, and let those who can't pay starve.
And if one thinks this fake patriotism only exists amongst the bourgeoisie, one is dearly mistaken because even the gentlemen in the most splendid uniforms as well -who especially excel in public displays of patriotism- display a very suspicious love for their fatherland; and for those who think that we're just selling hot air we point to what Mr. De Jong, Representative (U. L.) wrote in “De Vaderlander” [“The Fatherlander”]:
“Since the days of August, multiple retired officers have reported to the army to re-enlist in active duty. One could admire the patriotism of these men who have surely reached a certain age. We leave aside whether the high bonus that the army paid didn't play a big role in many's decision.
But what is happening now is simply irritating. More than once the “Staatscourant” [Acts of Parliament] accounts that one of the newly re-activated retirees was sacked from service, and turned back to retirement but this time around with a pension of a few hundred guilders more. The re-retirees now retired under the new Pension law this time. So it comes down to these retired officers receiving a few months of high bonusses, see their patriotism rewarded with a raised pension of *ƒ*200 to *ƒ*500 per year.”

So we can see that the patriotism of these gentlemen can't be valued as highly as they seem to suggest.

Conclusion.

The IAMV appeals to *all who desire a society of brotherhood and justice, who feel repulsed by capitalism that destroys everything of beauty* **to unite under its flag.** It calls them for battle, a battle not with cannons and guns *but with the sharp sword of reason*.

APPENDIX for the second edition[87]

RESOLUTION (Congress May 25, 1917)

The Congress, having heard the discussions on what our position should be regarding the manufacture of ammunition and other war material;
** declares that each anti-militarist is free to determine their own work;*
** expresses the desire, however, that all anti-militarists should above all strive for the consistency of the anti-militarist principle;*
** and resolves to promote by all means the propaganda for general refusal of ammunition production.*

RESOLUTION (Congress December 26, 1917)

The I.A.M.V. meeting in Congress, etc;
discussing the bill pending before the Dutch government to introduce compulsory civilian service;
declares to regard this as an attempt at the most complete militarisation of the entire Dutch nation and resolves to protest vigorously against it and, if he law is implemented without knowing the will of the people and in spite of the protest and agitation of the I.A.M.V. and other organisations that equate civilian service to military service, and therefore promotes general refusal of civilian service and regards individual refusal as being integral to the refusal of military service.

STATUTES OF THE IAMV

Revised by Congress decision of 25 and 26 December 1917

ARTICLE 1. — The association's objective is to combat militarism in all its forms, in order to contribute in this way to the construction of a society in which there will no longer be any room for rough violence.

ART. 2 — It seeks to achieve this goal by:
1st holding meetings;
2nd publishing periodicals and writings in the spirit of the association;
3rd publishing articles in daily and weekly newspapers on subjects that fall within the propagandistic domaine area of the association:
4th setting up local branches in places where such is possible.

ART. 3. — The association consists of chapters and general members. General members are persons who live in places where no section of the association is established. If six or more general members live in one place, they form a chapter of the association.

ART. 4. — Anyone who enters service voluntarily cannot be a member of the I. A. M. V. Anyone who accepts a rank during his membership will be expelled.

ART. 5. — The departments regulate the activities, subject to the provisions of these Articles of

87 This appendix paints a picture of the organisation culture in radical sulture in the Netherlands at the time, in which BdL, AdJ and their comrades functioned.

Association, as they see fit.

ART. 6. — A General Meeting is held once a year. A congress determines where and when this General Assembly will take place. Only delegates from departments can participate in the discussions and vote at this Meeting. General members have an advisory vote. If three departments submit a reasoned proposal and the wish to do so, the National Committee is obliged to convene a General Meeting on this subject.

ART. 7. — The costs associated with the General Meeting are paid for on a pound-for-pound basis by all members: each section has the right to be represented by one delegate in return.

ART. 8. — At the General Meeting, three divisions are appointed to compose the National Committee, which must implement the decisions taken and ratified by a written referendum, until the next General Meeting.

ART. 9. - The National Committee consists of 9 people (members of the departments, four of whom, i.e. Chairman, Secretary, 2nd Secretary and Treasurer, form the executive board, which is located in one place. If the same department is appointed to compose the Executive Board in successive years, the members will resign each year by rotation, but are immediately eligible for re-election. Schedule: In the first year: the Chairman and the 2nd Secretary resign and then the Secretary and the Treasurer, etc.

ART. 10. - Every year, the General Meeting appoints the Administrator of 'De Wapens Neder' and the Administrator for the 'Brochurehandel' of the I. A. M V. who will also members of the National Committee.

ART. 11. — The income of the association consists of:
lst. Contributions from the departments;
2nd. general members;
3rd. other benefits.

ART. 12. — The departments pay 5 cents per member and per month to the general fund. General members pay *f*2 per year.

ART. 13. — The chapters must send their due contributions to the Treasurer of the National Committee before the 10th of each month. General members pay semi-annually in advance.

ART. 14. — Departments that are more than three months' contribution behind to the National Committee are not entitled to vote at the General Meeting or to place points on the agenda letter. Departments that do not pay contributions for 6 months without thorough justification are considered to be no longer affiliated. Once a new chapter has paid contributions, it can participate.

ART. 15. — The secretaries of the departments will send a report on the activities of the past year to the Secretary of the National Committee, three months before the General Meeting is held. They are also required to update every month on membership: members' names, who left and who are new members, etc
The addresses of the chairman, secretary and treasurer of the departments are always clearly communicated to the National Committee [L.C.][88], and address changes are immediately communicated. Likewise, if some regional or provincial departments collaborate for a shorter or longer period of time, the National Committee will be kept informed, regardless of the purpose for which this collaboration takes place.

88 Tr. Note: 'Landelijke Commissie' or 'L.C.'

ART. 16. — Three months before the General Meeting, the departments and general members are requested to submit proposals for discussion at this Meeting.
Four weeks before the General Meeting, the letter with the agenda, the secretary's and treasurer's reports on the National Committee and the financial report of the administrator of 'De Wapens Neder', official organ of the I. A. M. V., will be published.
Before every Congress and in very special cases, as an opportunity to exchange views on important matters, the National Committee publishes a periodically published magazine, exclusively for the members of I.A.M.V.; for which the congress appoints a special editor who is added to the 'L.C.'.

Art. 17. — For the control of the financial management of 'De Wapens Neder', the 'Brochure depot' and the 'L.C.', the Congress designates the chapters that appoint control committees, which must submit written reports of their findings every three months. on 'De Wapens Neder' and the 'L.C.', and every 6 months regarding the brochure petition.
The monthly magazine 'De Wapens Neder' and the 'Brochure depot' are managed by the 'L.C.', but the finances remain separate and are intended only for 'De Wapens Neder' and the 'Brochure depot'.

Art. 18. — As an association, the I.A.M.V. cannot participate in parliamentary work. Not even the divisions.

2. ConTEXTS

A) How and why de Ligt incites. (1921)

Exerpt from the defense statement of Bart de Ligt on June 26, 1921

Drukkerij 'Libertas', v. Ostadestraat 1, Amsterdam

Convicted by the bourgeois legal system in 1916 with several comrades based on article 131 of the Criminal codex, I have not hesitated to accept the label '**seditionist**"[89] ever since, just like the kindred spirits of Fox[90] have accepted the label 'quakers' and like your forefathers have accepted the label 'Geus'[91] Originally used as a slur, they have taken the label **in pride**. Like Marx and his followers think proletarian; like Jesus and his original worshipers have been criminals -hasn't Saint Maximillian refused to serve the Roman Empire, and wasn't he killed by the government for that reason?-; like Socrates and his kindred spirits corrupted the Athenian youth, I corrupted the youth as well -with anti-militarism- by raising its sense of responsibility in relation to imperialism and war; I act criminally by placing god, spirit and consciousness above church, government and state; I appeal to the despised masses and say that they have nothing to expect or hope from the ruling class, but that it should liberate **itself** with new, non-bourgeois, non-feudal or -pre-feudal, with above-human-animalistic, humane means. My whole work is -seen in that light- from day to day, hour to hour, nothing but one 'sedition', at times systematic, at other times spontaneous. This is how it was, how it is and will probably remain.
When I said last sunday June 26 in Den Haag: “I have come here to incite you!” - I felt the tension of the gathered people very well, understanding very well that I was thoroughly understood. That it was understood that it wasn't a matter of irresponsibility. I felt -because one senses these things when one is used to speaking in public- that the word 'incite' was understood in the way that I meant it; that people realised that I would now speak in ways that are probably considered the worst in other places, but are considered the best among us. And precisely to prevent a vulgar misunderstanding -because this concerns a holy matter- I followed up by saying:
“**In the name of Jesus Christ** – the honorable public prosecutor declared to honor His name; so me too, I have appealed to what is left of deeply christian awareness: to the spirit of sacrifice and the determination to communism that the old christianity exudes and that radiates through heretics, sects, saints and revolutionaries into the contemporary era-,
In the name of Marx – who brought us the socialist science and has spoken the words 'proletarians of the world, unite!”-,
In the name of Bakunin – that hero, poet of freedom; passionate fighter against all official authority-,
In the name of Kropotkin – who opposed the bourgeois distortion of Darwinism with his socialist science of mutual aid-,
In the name of Tolstoy – because he appealed to reasonable living, and declared that doing truth as the one infallible means of revolution-,
And in the name of Groenendaal – while he has absorbed the quintessens of all this in himself,

89 Tr. Note: literal translation. In Dutch: 'opruier'; article 131 outlaws 'opruiing' which translates to 'agitation', sedition, etc. In Dutch the word 'opruiing' is used for both the legal term of sedition and the more general concept of incitement or agitation.

90 Tr. Note: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Fox was the founder of the Religious Society of Friends, commonly known as the Quakers or Friends.

91 Tr. Note: originally a pejorative for a protestant in the Netherlands and Flanders; Plural 'Geuzen', litterally in French ('Les Gueux'): 'The Beggars"; name assumed by the confederacy of Calvinist Dutch nobles who opposed Spanish rule in the Netherlands from 1566 onwards. Word used to label rebels and resistance fighters negatively, but taken in pride by large parts of the proletariat even if the 'Geuzen' were originally Dutch noblemen who fought against the Spanish king Philips II.

and defends it at the expense of his young and noble life:
-**I incite you**.
To what? To act not destroying but creating; to produce nothing that is an attack on body, soul or spirit; and therefore **to refuse war service, directly and indirectly**. Because war is an evil, unreasonable, immoral, ineffective means to resolve conflicts; while on top of that, the conflicts in question are just matters of business interests of a small ruling class or group, not matters of spirit.
And why? Because **a new world war is looming**. Because the Netherlands is already de facto involved in the war because of the Djambi concessions. Because a Japanese youngster went across Western Europe; was festively accepted in the Netherlands, with behind him cunning diplomats who came for oil concessions, that is to say: war concessions.
Therefore I incite in general, and therefore I incited at the time in my own way: **so that we don't come too late like in 1914**. I had the privilege to get the original French edition of Tolstoy's 'The Christian spirit and nationalism' from the prison library -that was no doubt under supervision of a dignified college of trustees-; a book where the great Russian wrote in 1904 with holy fire against the so-called fraternisation festivities of France and Russia. His clear argument as well as the different proverbs on the tear-off calendar that decorated my cell, convinced me that in these perilous days a restless flaming battle against militarism and war is more necessary than ever, and that I have acted correctly last June 26th around 1 o'clock in the afternoon.

B) Anarchism and revolution, Reflections in light of the anarchist congres in Berlin December 25 to 31, 1921

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"The realm of freedom indeed starts where labor ends, that is determined by need and external purposes; it's inherently above the sphere of actual material production. As the wild person struggles with nature to satisfy his needs, to prolong his life and to multiply, so the civilized must also struggle; as they all must, in all social systems and under every production mode. With his development his dependence on nature broadens because the needs of people broaden; at the same time the productive forces broaden to satisfy the needs. This freedom can only exist in the fact that the socialised humans, the associated producers, regulate the interaction with nature reasonably, bring it under their joint control instead of being controlled by it like a blind power; in the fact that they accomplish this with the least possible energy in a way that corresponds with their human nature. But still it is a realm of necessity. Additionally the deployment of human power, that has as its mission the realm of real freedom, that can only blossom from the realm of necessity." – MARX

"Solidarity is not the product, but the mother of individuality; and the human personality can be born only from a human society to thrive there". – BAKUNIN

Introduction.

It is a somewhat risky undertaking to write about 'anarchism' and 'revolution'. Both concepts have a bad reputation en are shunned by public opinion. NIETZSCHE says somewhere -I think- that the more more important someone is, the more masks they wear because of the wrong picture that others have of them, even their friends and worshippers, have of them. This seems to be the case for great ideas too. Surely those who want to learn about anarchism, can learn a lot from its adversaries.[93]
Anarchism is unloved in Rome and Dordrecht, Paris and Moscow.
-But what does the word mean?
'A(n)' means absence of, and 'archy' means government. 'Anarchism' then is the theory and practice of people who refuse to rule an to be ruled; who want to be themselves amongst others; who therefore challenge every state and every authority and want nothing to do with the conquest of political power or the command of a dictatorship.
– So what DO they want?
They want people to organise culturally and socially in free alliances.
There are two main groups among them. The first kind declare the human as singularity to be the social principle (individual anarchists), the others see humans as social beings (social anarchists, anarcho-communists). The latter thus are socialists. But while the large majority of socialists and communists try to realise the principle of the 'socius' (comrade) socially by means of some kind of

92 Tr. Note: Baarn Hollandia-Drukkerij, Levensvragen X 7, 1922
http://anarchief.org/w/images/1/10/Bart_de_Ligt_-_Anarchisme_en_Revolutie_Beschouwingen_na_anarchistencongres_1921_-_1922_Baarn.pdf
This translation based on: Re-edited May 1978 by Het Noordelijk Gewest van Vrije Socialisten (Appelscha). http://anarchief.org/w/images/0/0a/De_Ligt%2C_Bart_-_Anarchisme_en_revolutie001.pdf as there seems to be at least one page missing in the original. (p 32)

93 Dr. Paul Eltzbacher, Anarchisme. Transl. L. Cornelissen-Rupertus, Amersfoort 1903; Hector Zoccolie, **Die Anarchie, ihre Verkünder, ihre Ideen, ihre Taten** (translated from the Italian edition by the anarchist Siegfried Nacht), Maas en Van Suchtelen, Leipzig-Amsterdam, 1909.

state, the anarchists refuse to do so. They argue that the state, force, authority, etc are bourgeois means of struggle, fit for maintaining the monopoly of property and authority of the capitalist class, but completely unfit -yes even detrimental for the working class, whose historic calling it is to liberate itself and the whole of humanity. They combat the ideas of BABEUF, BARBÈS, BLANQUI, copied and elaborated by MARX and the marxists, put into practice by LENIN and TROTSKI when the bolsheviks used jacobin means to push a socialist revolution as aberrations.
So one can differentiate:

Social principle		Political method
social-	|	democrats
social-	|	anarchists
individual-	|	anarchists

The contrast between social-democrats and social-anarchists is classically personified in MARX and BAKUNIN. The contrast between individual-anarchists and social-anarchists in TUCKER and MOST; in MACKAY and ROCKER.
By the way the individual anarchists too usually come to socialist conclusions in their social views. With STIRNER they say 'Nothing is above me!' and strive for a 'harmony of egoists', that can only become a reality in a socialist or communist world.
What further hampers the clear understanding of anarchism, is the different use of words by different tendencies. While some see 'egoism' everywhere, they understand it in such way that it coincides with the 'altruism' that obsesses the others; while some call 'I' their principle, others say 'individual', or 'self' or 'personality'.
At closer look those different core beliefs are often social-philisophical reactions to certain life experiences or theories they concluded to be lies. Those who want to understand anarchism will need to see through the smokescreen of words. And they should never forget that -like the theoretical 'materialists' can turn out to be idealists- the self-defined 'egoists' can be generous and the 'egos' can forget sacrifice themselves. Just like the orthodox christians can turn out to be barbarians, and the so-called social-anarchists can in their personal lives be hyenas.
Nobody except for some fools would consider themselves the perfect image of their theory. But everyone is convinced that their theory is the most beneficial for the generation of reasonable insight and human disposition. That is equally true for me.
I am a social anarchist. I want to label himself simply 'free communist' – after KROPOTKIN's proposal to the Saint-Imier Congress. I use the word 'anarchism' in the titel of this writing very broadly. What I mean by 'anarchist' and 'anarchism' in the rest of this text will become clear in the context. The reason why I use the label anarchist rather than communist is the conviction that the different currents in anarchism have much more in common than many care to acknowledge; and an attempt to help the diversity of these currents to become one strong movement.
Regardless of all the differences, all the anarchists agree that they believe in autonomy, self-development, self-education, self-liberation, self-government of individual and mass, and the ambition to rouse the multitude to personality. They do not try to achieve this by forcing their ideas upon others by gunpoint, nor by forcing the mass into their own prefered practice. They are adversaries of de 'pedagogy by violence'. Education is cultivating freedom. Education means convincing![94]
'Anarchist' turns out to mean other things than just 'bomb thrower'. Throwing bombs happens in the best families... of nationalists. Once in a while some stateless lad -an anarchist- throws a bomb. But such act of violence is not typical for anarchism or the bourgeoisie -especially since 1914- would be hardcore anarchists (and social-democracy with them). In the anarchist struggle, throwing bombs is the exception. In the bourgeois war it is rule. The anarchists who use this tactic have copied them from the bourgeoisie by the way. They utilise the means of reaction for revolutionary goals.
-But the anarchists are terrorists, no?!
Only a minimal fraction of them. The 'black terror' is always a defensive measure against white

94 Rudolf Rocker, 'De beginselverklaring van het Syndicalisme', transl. C(lara) W(ichmann). N.A.S. Nassaukade 101 Amsterdam 1920 p 29.

terror. All the anarchist terror is in the end just an expression of despair or self-defence.
By the way there is such a thing as 'nonviolent anarchism'. The so-called 'Tolstoyans', Christian anarchism and religious anarchist-communism are the personifications of it. It's not that they are 'passive' – one could say they are 'mentally resilient'.
"Anarchism is the summary of a certain world view; of a certain social philosophy."[95] If its adherents think they need to use individual or collective violence, they are convinced that they do so out of social force majeure or justified self-defence -even if they should attack. And never will they force others to kill fellow human beings -as those who use the state as a means do. They act on their own responsibility. They force no-one. They refuse any and all militarism. When the Russian revolution started the Petrograd anarchists voluntarily formed 'red guards'. But when the bolsheviks had conquered power and chose to militarise the Russian people; when the red army was no longer a voluntary community of struggle; the anarchists renamed their troops 'black guards' instead.
But surely the revolution is violent? And are revolutions not always bloodbaths?
Again: if violence was the trademark of a revolution, then the bourgeoisie would be the big revolutionary actor since 1914. After all it is commonly known -Bakunin has written about it- that the cruelty and murderousness of the counter-revolutionaries always surpasses that of the revolutionaries.
Considering the 'revolution', violence is a secondary matter anyway. The important issue is something entirely different: the attempt to overturn a social system and to upgrade it to a higher level. This can be accompanied by violence. But violence is not necessary. One can even say: the more violence a so-called revolution needs, the smaller its actual value; the smaller her chance to push on; the less the people involved is ready for it.[96] What turns a revolution into a revolution is a new, more encompassing social spirit to which all that went before is made subordinate. The scientific meaning of the word 'revolution' -LASALLE wrote- is rotation; a revolution is therefore started when -with or without violence- a new principle takes the place of the existing situation. Reform takes place when the principle of what exists stays in place, and is further developed in its consequences. A reform -still according to LASALLE- can persevere through uprising and bloodshed, while a revolution is perfectly possible in perfect peace.
-But is there no better road: evolution?
One can say that world history is one giant evolution: from unconscious to conscious; from 'nature' to 'spirit'. The inclination of this evolution is thus revolution: the complete rotation from blind instinct to deliberate social order. This evolutionary revolution unfolds by the endless amount of evolutions and revolutions. Each historic revolution is a crisis in the great evolution; each historic evolution builds on a previous revolution, and prepares the next: it reveals the revolutionary tendency of the greater whole.[97]
The anarchists measure every current evolution of revolution by their idea of the perfect revolution. When they're convinced that they contribute to the general evolution, they take part with all their heart and all their soul. "The results of the (coming) revolution will be the product of all the ideas, all the movements that the individuals and the masses set in motion in the previous evolutionary period. Because the anarchists have no fixed end goals, they don't speak of 'their' revolution. That is unthinkable. They take part in the revolution to show individuals the direction towards more well-being, freedom, justice, beauty and goodness. Their place in the communist councils will be the same as it is today in the syndicalist organisations. Communism is not a monastery, not military barracks, and it will be the task of anarchists to make sure that the individuality does not disappear... Evolution and revolution are inseparable movements... Denying the one means denying the other,

95 John Most, **Für die Einsheits front des revolutionären Proletariats. Mit Geleitworten von Rudolf Rocker und Franz Pfemfert. "Die Aktion"** Berlin p 9.
96 Compare Henriette Roland Holst, 'De strijdmiddelen der Sociale Revolutie'. Bos, Amsterdam; Revolutionaire Massa-Aktie. Brussel, Rotterdam.
97 Elisée Reclus, 'Evolutie, Revolutie en het anarchistisch Ideaal.' [Evolution, Revolution and the anarchist Ideal], free translation by F. Domela Nieuwenhuis. Sligting en Rob, Amsterdam 1905. Dr. H. W. Ph. E. van den Bergh van Eysinga, 'Revolutionaire Cultuur'. Sijthof, Leiden.

and that would be un-anarchist."[98]
This is what the anarchists respect in the original syndicalism. It was born at the turn of the century in France as a protest against the bourgeois influence and the degeneration of parliamentarian socialism. It wanted to be a rebirth of it. If anarchism used to be mainly theoretical -a typical product of intellectuals-, syndicalism was practical through and through, and grew out of the labor movement. Its starting point is voiced by the words of MARX[99] that the liberation of the working class must be the work of the working class itself. It turned against all the systems of representation and substitution; and propagated in word and deed the direct action of the people itself.
Modern social-democracy turned out to be nothing but the lousy consequence, the universalisation and shallowing of bourgeois civilisation. Precisely because it was an evolutionary symptom of capitalism, it could not dispense of that typically bourgeois tool -the state-, and it acts through parliament. And yet a political workers' party commands not a single instrument that a revolutionary economic organisations cannot use better. Apart from parliament that is – but that is precisely why the bourgeois rule the socialists! The unions and trade organisations must be the big struggle methods of the laboring people. Syndicalists want nothing to do with the idea of political dictatorship – that 'bourgeois pathogen'. The artificial state by which the propertied class dictates its will upon the poor, must be abolished. And the agents of the natural and necessary economical production organisations should organise production and distribution themselves. Even today, unions and trade organisations should be organised as embryos for the coming free society. To this revolutionising end, everything must be made subservient: syndicalism is spontaneous organisational action, revolutionary practice. "It doesn't wait for history, but wants to make it!" – that is its philosophy.[100]
Syndicalism was mainly developed by the 'roman' peoples. It expanded to the Netherlands and to some modest extent to Germany. But not just here -[in the Netherlands] N.A.S.[101] –, in France as well, syndicalism degenerated. Those who wanted to stick to the original revolutionary tradition became a minority. The struggle for private and collective interests became more important than the general interest. The C.G.T. bureacratised into the organisation of social-democrats. August 1914 was the day of judgement.
Since the last days of 1921, the revolutionary adversaries in France are organised seperately. But there too, degeneration and confusion sneaked their way in. One can distinguish four main groups among the international syndicalists: anarchists (in the spirit of LOCQUIER, who -by principle- accept the syndicalist tactic as much as they can); anarchosyndicalists or pure syndicalists (people of action and organisation in the original spirit); syndicalist communists (who have accepted the idea of dictatorship and of whome a part made themselves completely subservient to the leaders of the 3rd International); syndicalists in name only (who organise for petty interests).

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98 V. Locquier in 'Le Libertaire' April 4, 1920.

99 Tr. Note: this seems to be a common mistake made by people who have been educated in Marxian circles: Marx was ANTI-syndicalist (the whole reason for the conflict in the 1964 International, founded mainly by anarchists of the 'Proudhonian' tradition, was Marx's opposition to the syndicalist strategy; a position that Lenin and many other Marxists have repeated and defended). The basic ideas and practice of syndicalism were based on the old guild systems of mutual aid within the existing workers' movement, and were theorized by Flora Tristan and P-J Proudhon who turned the 'mutuelles' into structures of struggle that went above and beyond mere practical mutual aid. See Flora Tristan 'https://files.libcom.org/files/2023-02/Tristan,%20Flora%20-%20Workers%27%20Union.pdf' and her 'Tour de France'. See Proudhon's work on federalism, mutuellism (Banque du Peuple, etc) that connects syndicalism with the cooperative world and the 'mutuelles' (federations of mutual aid, often linked to unions, that still organize social security in European countries like Belgium, France, Switzerland, etc even if Marxists have tried to hand over control of them to the State).

100 Compare Mrs. Clara Wichmann, 'De theorie van het Syndicalisme' [The theory of syndicalism], Bond van Rev. Soc. Intellectuelen, Amsterdam 1920 and the further reading that is listed there; Rudolf Rocker a.w.; V Griffelhes, B. Kritchewsky, A. Labriola, Hubert Lagardelle, Robert Michels, '**Syndicalisme et Socialisme**', Rivière, Paris 1908; Werner Sombart, '**Sozialismus und soziale Bewegung**'. Fischer, Jena 1919 p 109-142; B. de Ligt, '**De Antimilitaristen en hun Strijdwijzen**' p 51-54

101 Tr. Note: Nationaal Arbeids-Secretariaat, see https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nationaal_Arbeids-Secretariaat

Among part of the anarchists there is a tendency to consider syndicalism to still be the true practical anarchism. Indeed this is the case in some of the revolutionary syndicalist organisations. But syndicalism -even though it can have still be of great importance for some countries; even though it carries within itself the fertilising seeds of the social future-, syndicalism as what it historically became in reality, cannot be advocated as the great social cure, I believe. The principle that it builds upon can, though: self-organisation of the people.
Those who consider one or other form of historic anarchism as 'the' true anarchism, as those who insist that a specific attempt for economic self-organisation by the people should be mechanistically and universally copied as the only correct one, are the subjects of the words of HUMBERT DROZ:"Trying to revive a revolutionary past in new historic circumstances, is not always proof of a true revolutionary spirit". True words, that could inspire the adherents of political dictatorship too.
What follows here -an essay that I wrote for some foreign periodicals- is considered by some to be a sharp criticism. One should consider that it is not written out of hostility towards anarchism, but out of love for it and trust in it, that I speak here as I do. By the way, these are 'considerations' that I give here for sake of the dialogue. This is what I mean in short:
Since BAKUNIN, the anarchists have sometimes compared themselves with Satan. In many ways this is a beautiful paradox. If 'God' wants society as it is, then his enemy, 'Satan', must be the great liberator.
Identifying with the principle of denial brings grave dangers with it, though. Satan once symbolised the worldly powers and glory of the formerly ruling classes, that could only emerge because some individuals broke out of the primitive society. Individually this implies a rise while socially it means a fall. Satan has become the symbol of cerebral -not per sé reasonable- denial of petit- and grand-bourgeois individualism and debauchery. Being heartless, he suffers not, but makes others suffer.
For BAKUNIN himself then the basis of all things is solidarity. The freedom of the individual is possible only through the freedom of all. For him, anything worth something is born from community.
But the destructive, unilateral and easy-denying, pale-individualistic character, that Satan has in the traditional imagery, led various people away from the constructive, from the 'denial of denial', from the idea of personality. Necessarily, the satanic -understood in the poor sense of the word- has a certain pull to some without self-restraint and mentally ill. Because those often speak the loudest, many mistake them for 'the anarchists'. Still they are the brainchild of the current society – and degenerated children at that.
Myself, I choose Prometheus as a symbol. The gods lived in the sky under the sun and the glory, down here the humans crawled, impotently. Prometheus had a heart: he climbed into the class heaven, stole the fire and brought it to the people. They rose and founded their society and culture. The Supreme God understood that the heavenly priviliges would soon end, locked the revolutionary in diamond chains to a rock, where he was tortured.
This is how BAKUNIN struggled, and this is how all true revolutionaries struggle. It is how we have to struggle.
Any brat can pose as Satan. Prometheus' endeavour demands the strength, the dedication and the self-control of a human.

RIJSWIJK-Z.- H., February 28, 1922

1. Marxism and Anarchism

Not only social-democracy and bolshevism are in crisis, but so is anarchism. It has always fought an uphill battle: compared to the swifly swelling tide of official socialism and communism, it seemed to have withered away. Many cheered, conviced that anarchism would soon disappear completely from the face of the earth. And yet it is alive – everywhere. In the face of social-democracy and bolshevism, it even has new chances.
The historic evolution of the last decades has first of all confirmed the anarchist thesis that the

external -social- revolution is not the mechanistic result of the development of mechanics and technology, nor of changes in the political structure, but much rather born from within the humans, in response to political and economic circumstances that surround the human being; but this being -as human personality- stands amidst those circumstances; tries to control them and make work for them; the human reveals itself as spirit in this struggle with nature.
One should know that MARX too was an enemy of industrial fatalism and political-mechanistic views of history[102]. Unfortunately the large majority of self-proclaimed marxists have soon forgotten this. The official social-democracy has insisted too much on the technical-economical political process as the sole factor in the development of the human mind throughout history. In its methods for struggle it has focussed almost exclusively on the political, and has exchanged socialism for democracy, the decisive role of social struggle for parliamentarism. It wanted to conquer the state -a bourgeois means of power- through parliament -a bourgeois means of struggle- for socialist aims. It has brought into the world a party life that repeats all the mistakes of the status quo: career leadership, bureaucracy, etc – in short, a kind of hierarchy over the worshipping masses. By its trust in the technical-economical development -as main condition!-, as if it were the real cause of social revolution, it has completely lost any ability for revolutionary action. It became a reformer, an opportunistic hunter. It has adapted so well to capitalism that it has become an essential part of the existing order itself since many years: side by side with State, Church, School and Parliament came the Party. These days, capitalism internationally uses the petit-bourgeois ambition and naivety of its leaders and misleaders for its own great-imperialistic purposes.
And yet, for the history of human development is and remains of extra-ordinary importance, that the social-democrats have focussed on the objective and mechanical factors in human development for years. It cannot imagine world socialism or communism without the technical-economic assumptions of modern industry.
In contrast the anarchism have mainly underlined the importance of subjective factors. In classical words: 'The history of the spirit is his action'. The technical-economical is itself a creation of the human spirit -even if it is a 'necessary' creation; but in origin still an almost completely subconscious, blind, uncontrolled, chaotic creation. MARX and ENGELS are right when they say that history has not even started: we have never had control over circumstances; we are still controlled by the social relationships in which we live. TOLSTOY and BAKUNIN in turn have said that we live in the pre-history.
SCHELLING summarized the sense of history as a development from object to subject -from thing to personality; from nature to spirit; in the course of history then, the subject will be of growing importance for the general development of life. If the historic process aims at a world of reasonably coexisting personalities that organise their 'metabolism with nature' ever more orderly, and build a cultural cosmos based on the management of the technical-economical civilisation process, then the carrier of this process -the human personality-, becomes ever more important. Not just an ever renewing insight is necessary, but also an ever deepening persuasion, an ever hardening willing, a tireless urge for action. That is why anarchism always appeals to the deepest spontaneity, and promotes the tireless human ability for self-development. That is why it never loses sight of the end goal of all revolutionary struggle -conscious self- and world control. 'The world issues become a matter of character'[103]: anarchism struggles for a new personality in a new culture.
But this anarchism too -and even more so here in the west- has its downsides. Many of its adherents confuse individual and personality, instinct and intuition, reason and senselesness, superhuman and inferior-animalistic – both practically and theoretically. Too often arbitrariness and freedom were lumped together and such alloy was called golden freedom; forgotten that each (random) individual

102Again, this is an assertion of many who were educated in Marxian circles. BdL has a very double attitude that -to me- seems like he wants to hold Marx and the Marxians true to their words (for tactical reasons: he very much had a dialogue with all kinds of people from all kinds of backgrounds; and thought it to be beneficial to try to find common ground -often by highlighting the positive elements- in order to advance his own point of view). After all he had only recently distanced himself from the Marxian movement, and that movement remained a dominant factor in his world. On the other hand there seems to be some genuine 'double-think' going on.

103J. Matthieu, '**Der Anarchismus**' in 'Neue Wege', Zbinden, Basel 1914, p210

is not yet a (free) subject; every human (because of the simple fact of existence) not yet an individual (come to reason). Even more in the 'Germanic' countries one finds a certain bourgeois individualism, that all too easily sells itself as anarchism or even social-anarchism.[104]
While on top of that MARX, the positivist, calculates with the human being as it is -and in regards to the revolutionary struggle mainly its lower human properties-, the psychological views of many anarchists -KROPOTKIN, RECLUS, for example- is one-sidedly optimistical-idealistic and therefore they are inevitably superficial. This does not contradict the fact that their ideals and visions, as well as their personal lives, have inspired the revolutionary masses, and brought thousands upon thousands of them to action this way.
Because anarchists have again and again refocussed their attention on direct action, and because many of them are interested in them mainly for cultural quests because of the force of their disposition -even more so because they combatted bourgeois and social-democracy mainly negatively-, they lost ground in political and economic affairs. They too were on occasion unable to harmonise their revolutionary thinking with modern scientific, biological, pedagogical, psychological and philosophical opinion, like BAKUNIN tried to do in his days. Much of what today goes for anarchist wisdom is nothing more that a fading excho of bourgeois science from the middle of last century that one happens to be aware of because BAKUNIN and others have used it a a means for struggle in the past, and that was included into the anarchist canon only becaus of that. The danger of an anarchist dogmatism is sadly not completely unthinkable, as is the case for anarchist fanaticism. May we never forget that anarchism is a conclusion drawn from life, of which the main body may be correct and practically acceptable, but a conclusion that in all regards -even in its main spirit- must forever be questioned and corrected.
In this regard the neo-marxists gave a very good example: ROSA LUXEMBURG, LENIN, TROTSKY, HENRIËTTE ROLAND HOLST, HERMAN GORTER, ANTON PANNEKOEK have tried to instrumentalise the more recent scientific and cultural accomplishments of the bourgeoisie.[105] THIS is why they had a very good analysis of imperialism long before the world war. They continually allowed themselves to be instructed by history. They also absorbed some elements of anarchism: after all they understood 'democracy' and propagated not just new knowledge, but also new persuasion everywhere. Too bad they could not free themselves of the bourgeois belief in the state and the political dictatorship. In this regard, they remained jacobins. But they recognised more and more the necessity of direct action, and stood their ground bravely in the face of imperialism.
Meanwhile the naive KROPOTKIN and many famous French anarchists struggled morally or with weapons, in the defence of 'democracy' and 'civil freedom' against 'the militaristic Germans', but at the same time in favor of the English, French and Russian imperialism.[106]
Those who want to struggle against the current social structures, and want to understand the imperialist enemy, needs to study bourgeois, social-democratic and communist writings. An anarchist political economy that keeps up with the times, does not exist at the moment. Only recently some attempts were made to analyse and summarise the political-economic system. But no one can deny that we fell behind in this regard.
In my view, marxism needs to review itself through anarchism, and anarchism needs to review itself through marxism. Not in the way that part of the Dutch anarchists have done, who adopt almost Communist Workers Party (K.A.P.) views, and almost advocate bourgeois-jacobin methods under the rallying cry of 'proletarian dictatorship'. But in the way that BAKUNIN has already done it: that we recognise the essential importance of the historical materialistic method for analysing and summarising history, and that we don't start from a faded idealism or phantastical-individualism but

104NIETZSCHE's individualist ideal of the 'Übermensch'is formalistic and hollow, but he himself was an abundant personality. Alas there are people who call themselves anarchists whose ideal of the future would probably be abundantly substantive and full of meaning if they themselves weren't so empty of character.

105Compare from this point of view: Eden and Cedar Paul, '**Proletcult**'. Parsons London. They also wrote '**Creative Revolution**'. Allen and Unwin, London.

106Compare B. de Ligt, '**De antimilitaristen en hun Strijdwijzen**'. Brochuren Depot I.A.M.V. Fisherstraat 206 Den Haag 1921 p 52-53

from consistently insisting on what we experience externally as well as internally, and that we can use that as efficiently as we can, as a source for building our future. We should point to SOREL in this respect.

2. Anarchism since 1914

The strength as well as the weakness of the anarchist movement became clearly visible since 1914. Where anarchism had united with syndicalism, and was more or less rooted in the workers movement -France, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands- a strong, spontaneous opposition against the world war came to life.
Not all of the great representatives of anarchism succumbed. In Italy MALATESTA stood his ground, in France SÉBASTIEN FAURE, in the Netherlands DOMELA NIEUWENHUIS. The clearest expression of this spirit of resistance against capitalism and militarism, the courage to attack, the will to break the class domination, could be found in the anarchists around 1917 in Russia, Siberia, Italy and Spain. The comrades fought bravely in the US of America, Mexico, Brasil, and in Hungary against the white terror. The anarchists deliberately stood and still stand in every frontline of every revolutionary struggle. The awareness grows about how much the Russian revolution owes to the anarchists of Petersburg and Moscow, of Ukraine and Siberia. The more the future will bring the historical facts to light, the clearer it will become that the anarchists were instrumental in the destruction of the tsarist regime, and how they stopped one attack by international capital after the other. Eyewitnesses assure us that the spontaneity and sacrifice of tens of thousands of our comrades was great.
No matter how heroic the anarchists behaved in the destructive work of the revolution, they fell short in the constructive work -the revolutionary construction. None of the anarchist tendencies was capable of breaking through as revolutionary-creative force. The control over the revolution fell into the hands of the bolsheviks, who -with their bourgeois dictatorship methods- were only capable of a bourgeois revolution, even if there were some proletarian-revolutionary strains. Because the bolsheviks were forced -both by history and by their own mistakes- to found a new autoritarian political-economical order, they exploited the divisions and the lack of theoretical and practical preparation of the anarchists in order to suppress the anti-authoritarian revolutionary movements as much as possible, even with violence and murder.[107]
It's good that anarchists everywhere now begin to examine their own weaknesses, recognise their mistakes and to debate them freely. It's proof of the indestructable life-force of anarchy. In Italy, they tried out new methods of struggle during the revolutionary movements. In Austria, PIERRE RAMUS wrote 'The Re-creation of Society by Anarcho-Communism'[108]. In France the anarchists had a congress in Lyon[109] where they revised their views in a number of ways. This congress is one of the most beautiful ones that anarchists have ever convened. It demonstrated the clear will to summarise and unite as many tendencies as possible. They decided on a free organisation in which the different groups could organise more tightly or more loosely -according to their own convictions. All decisions allowed for reducing the risk of bureaucracy, of centralism, carreerism, of authority as much as possible. MAURICIUS[110] instigated the French anarchists to develop an

107Compare '**Die russische Revolution und die K.P.**'. Verlag 'Der Syndikalist' Berlin 1921; Rudolf Rocker, '**Die Bankerott des russischen Staatskommunismus**' in the same book; the appeal by Berkman, Emma Goldman and Schapiro in '**Der Syndikalist**' 1922 n°3, Schapiro in n°4, articles in '**De vrije Socialist**' Febr 9, April 9 and 27, May 18, July 16, Nov 23, 1921; Febr 8 and 25, 1922; articles by A. Berkman and G. Leval in '**Le Libertaire**', Febr 17 and 24, March 3, 1922.

108Tr. Note: Pierre Ramus, '**Die Neuschöpfung der Gesellschaft durch den kommunistischen Anarchismus**'. Verlag Erkenntnis und Befreiung, Wien-Klosterneuburg, 1921 or second, enlarged edition of 1923, Verlag Rudolf Cerny, Wien.

109Tr. Note: It is unclear which congress BdL refers to here.

110Tr. Note: Maurice Vandamme (1886-1974) See https://maitron.fr/spip.php?article154636, https://ephemera.ficedl.info/article530.html?lang=fr,

agricultural and industrial programme; so that the coming revolutionary crises don't find the anti-authoritarians as unprepared as the Russian revolution had found them. In an important resolution they recognised the necessity to study the political, agrarian and industrial questions; to spread propaganda, especially directed at the women and the youth, and to establish schools for propagandists.

3. The anarchists at the Berlin congress.

The International Congress of Anarchists -from 25 to 31 December 1921 in Berlin- gave more proof of self-renewal. The international interest was big: reports were sent on the current situation of the movement in Bulgaria, Canada, China, Germany, England, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Ukraine, Russia, Scandinavia, Siberia, Spain, the US of America and Sweden. Too bad some important mouthpieces of anarchism like MALATESTA (Italy), FAURE (France), EMMA GOLDMAN (Russia), PIERRE RAMUS (Austria) could not be present for different reasons. The Austrian FREUND was arrested crossing the border. Some 40 international delegates met.
Especially the secret sessions were of great theoretical and practical importance, with the debates about revolutionary tactics between GEIZMAN, former commissioner for foreign affairs in a Siberian sovjet republic, and VOLIN from the petrograder 'Golos Truda' who later fought in Ukraine and remained in a Moscow prison for a long time.
In the bad preparation and the more or less chaotic course of the congress, an old deficiency of anarchism became clear. Especially during the first few days, the quarrels between the different German tendencies and currents made a steady progression impossible. The congress was convened by the German Federation of Communist Anarchists[111], but the main personality in the German movement was the gifted syndicalist RUDOLF ROCKER. Contrary to the French comrades at the Lyon congress, the Germans were unable to unite the more closely tied and the more loosely organised groups in one national league. The Hamburger and Berliner comrades behaved completely intolerant towards eachother. It seemed like the Berliners pushed their views of anarcho-syndicalism and anarchist organisation as the only correct one. This impression was even reinforced because of the fact that ROCKER is a remarkable personality not just physically but also morally and intellectually, and that there was no-one present of the other German tendency that could stand next to him in every respect.
The French,Italian and Dutch anarchists immediately opposed this situation. In the end, the Berlin congress was increasingly animated by the same freedom loving spirit that had characterised the Lyon congress.
Unfavourable for the course and character of the congress was the fact that generally speaking the introductions were improvised and that the participants were unable to prepare in advance for the questions that were raised. One essay -about anarchism and the agrarian question- was well-prepared by an Italian. But the person was not present. How necessary thorough study of the subject is necessary, was demonstrated by a Frenchman who treated the subject with statistics of before 1914, as well as the remarks of one German that we live under 'abnormal' circumstances now but that the situation will soon return to 'normal'. The congress declared itself incapable of formulating an opinion and decided to treat the subject on a following congress.

4. Anarchism and Organisation.

In a speech about anarchism and organisation, ROCKER rightfully turned against the oversensitive individualism, against the inclination to deny all and every organisation, against the mental atomism

111Tr. Note: Föderation Kommunistischer Anarchisten Deutschlands or 'FKAD'. See for example https://libcom.org/article/German-anarchist-communism-1890s-1930s-afd-and-fkad

and similar offshoots of bourgeois individualism that so often seem to parade around with anarchist labels. All these phenomena are indeed nothing but a deductio ad absurdum of the principle of capitalist society. ROCKER emphasised the historic fact that the biggest representatives of anarchism -PROUDHON, BAKUNIN, KROPOTKIN- were always advocates of organisation, and that councilism as well is from anarchist origin. He reminded of the kinship of anarchism and syndicalism; he especially spoke of the classical period of French syndicalism, and pointed to the fact that MALATESTA, DOMELA NIEUWENHUIS and those who attended the 1907 anarchist congress in Amsterdam had given to their comrades a special task when it came to the labor movement. He also reminded of the unity of anarchist and syndicalist action in Italy and Spain and said that in Germany 'Der Syndikalist' is a platform for propaganda for the purest anarchism. He highlighted the importance of syndicalism for the anarchist movement and showed a tendency to think that syndicalism could be 'enough to itself'.
The Dutch and the French noted though, that syndicalism has degenerated in several countries, partly into an instrument of bourgois- and social-democracy, partly into an instrument of the 3rd International. The degeneration of Dutch and French syndicalism these days is such, that one cannot expect a fundamental renewal of society from syndicalism alone. There never was an important syndicalist movement in England. ROCKER himself had already talked about the councils, the soviets. New revolutionary labor organisations and economic means of struggle are born constantly: the movement of shop stewards, factory councils, unionism, etc. All of those have their history, and with their history not just their strengths but also their weaknesses. So let's not shackle anarchism to one of these forms dogmatically, but let the anarchists work in all of these forms as far as they can be made useful for the revolutionary goal! Let's study -and ROCKER failed to do so- how we can explain that many, who are through and through revolutionary socialists and are among the bravest of our comrades became enemies of all organisation, and seem to adopt an almost individualist position. For me, they are mostly right in their denial of the historical established workers' organisations: the current organisations are almost all mechanisations: power machines of rulers; the current party- and union body is a democratic-bureaucratic-parliamentarian institution in its core structure. The biggest, 'best functioning' workers' organisations always prove to be power instruments of the bourgeoisie over the workers in critical moments. That's why we should teach the workers not just to make organisations but also to break them -when necessary- precisely out of a will to make new self-organisations.
There was too little consideration of the outdated traditional anarchist contradiction between federalism and centralism at the congress. The development of industry demands new things of the organisation of social life. In essence, the contradiction federalism-centralism is an organisational contraction between a petit-bourgeois spirit with romantic-feudalist nature and an industrial-mechanistic spirit of the big bourgeoisie. A global society of free people is only imaginable on the basis of a hypermodern technology and industry. BAKUNIN as well as MARX have always understood that cultural and personal freedom are possible only as a mirror image of natural and economic interconnection. Well, then the technical-industrial process that the human spirit uses to control the forces of nature, and that is the necessary condition of the coming global cohesion, demands the relative acceptance of mechanic, business, technical, etc centralisation. The flipside of this for society, is a free concentration of associates who consciously acknowledge their natural and technological correlation, and derive the possibility of cultural freedom from it. At this summit -of free culture-, federalism reaches its full potential -even though its principle works in every domain- and works so well as the industrial-mechanic-technical foundation of social life is confirmed at this summit of its sublimation. We don't want to return to the time before or inferior to capitalism – we want to rise above capitalism.
In a resolution on 'the organisation and the anarchists', the congress expressed its conviction that the beaming greatness of the anarchist ideal and the powerful work of its carriers must give the anarchist movement a strong influence on the process of revolution and the shape of the future society. The congress was convinced that all of the anarchist tendencies needed to unite as much as possible in the face of the powerfully organised political parties with their big and toxic influence

on the proletariat. The struggle for the anarchist ideal demands a free organisation. An international organisation is to be organised federally from national, regional federations, etc. The autonomy of each group and every person is fundamentally acknowledged. In this context it was decided that an International Anarchist Bureau was to be installed in Stockholm.

5. The task of anarchists in the economic struggle organisations of the workers.

As to 'anarchism and the labor movement' the congress came to the following resolution:

> *"The International Congress of Anarchists concludes that the soil and the earth, with all that exists on it, belong to the working people as means of production; and that the organisation of production must be completely separate of all political organisation.*
> *Every social organisation must consider the individual, the producer as basis, to freely unite with others; who remains completely independent in the multitude of unions that spring from a spirit of federalism.*
> *The social organisation finds its economic expression in the fabric of trade associations.*
> *The congress determines that the trade associations that are associated with the amsterdam International[112] are, like the American Federation of Labor (AFL) deeply infused with a spririt of reformism and collaboration with the ruling classes.*
> *The Moscow Red Labor Unions International (RLI)[113] is under the direct influence of the 3rd International, which seeks the RLI's support for the conquest of political power and the foundation of new states, which of course prevents the complete liberation of the peoples.*
> *The Congress expresses its opinion that the syndicalist labor organisations receive orders from Moscow nor Amsterdam, let alone follow those orders. They should only express the will of the laboring people, completely independent and autonomous.*
> *It is necessary that the revolutionary workers' associations organise internationally. The congress incites the anarchists that are active in the labor organisations to support the foundation and development of a Revolutionary Syndicalist International that is independent from any external influence.*
> *The Congress also declares that the bureaucracy is an evil that -according to Engels' words- has as a result that the officers in the organs and the servants of society are turned into its masters. We should strive for all the administrative tasks in every labor organisation to be executed by paid workers, accountants, etc that are not leaders but simply persons who receive wages for certain technical labor in the organisations.*
> *The trade union in workshops and industries, organised on the federalist principle is crucial for the realisation of anarchism because it is the basis of the new free society. The activity of anarchists can not be limited to this though -it should expand into every battlefield of the revolutionary struggle that we can find in the social and mental life of humans.*
> *The anarchists participate vigorously in all the economic organisations that contribute to the realisation of their ideal and struggle there to spread their ideas: guild socialism, shop steward movement, free councils, etc.*
> *All that said, we should not forget that those organisations and movements are not anarchist, and that free communism is in fact the economic goal of anarchism. Everywhere, in every organisation, the anarchists should work for the federalist spirit and anti-bureaucratic ideas.*
> *We are convinced that -in a revolutionary period- not one economic movement alone is capable of eradicating every social evil, but that different movements will emerge along the economic, geographic and social structure, and different methods of struggle will be used.*
> *The Congress then calls upon the workers to use every resource that is capable of*

112Tr. Note: International Federation of Trade Unions (1919-1945), one of many social-democratic union internationals. See for example: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Federation_of_Trade_Unions

113Tr. Note: bolshevik union international (1921-1937), See for example: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Profintern

contributing to the development of the revolution in the direction of freedom and autonomy."

This resolution is a summary of what mainly French, Dutch and Swedish proposed. Myself, I'd have liked the original Dutch proposal to be adopted without changes. To save some time and place here, I will not further comment on the resolution -in any case unnecessary for people who have read what precedes it here above- but because I consider it of the highest importance, I present the original Dutch proposal without comments because it represents my own thoughts well enough[114]:

"The Congress states that the big reformist unions (I.L.O., AFL-CIO) have in the current phase of social development become a necessary component of the capitalist power system;
that the so-called Red International of Labor Unions [Profintern] is a tool in the hands of a political party;
that the development of the syndicalist movement in general -contrary to its fundamentally anarchist principles and contrary to the revolutionary praxis of many of its participants- is determined by its own social functions (wage war, etc), and so it proves to be impossible for anarchism to be equated with syndicalism;
that in different emerging economic struggle organisations (guild socialism, shop steward movement, free councils, A.A.U.[115], productive associations, etc) anarchist tendencies are present, but neither can they be equated with anarchist communism;
that it is historically unlikely that just one of these currents alone will fulfil the economic functions of the revolution, and that the economic self-liberation of the workers will develop in even newer ways in coming revolutionary times.
The Congress calls upon all the workers to use every available means that serve the self-development and self-organisation of the people, and continuously ensure that the form as well as the content of the new struggle organisations are defined by the workers themselves, and that they are always made to serve the big social and cultural goal that anarchism sets for every revolutionary movement."

6. Anarchism and Anti-militarism.

The original modern socialism recognised immediately, at the start of its struggle, that militarism -as one of the most important symptoms of capitalism, must be vigorously countered. Already in 1868 the socialists decided at their Brussels congress[116], to propagate the method of direct action -general strike!- in general, to counter the oppression of bourgeois wars. The more social-democracy adapted to capitalist social life though, and is sidetracked from the economical into the political – i.e. the more it was internationally bewitched and imprisoned by nationalist democracy- the more its resistance against the militarist spirit dwindled and the more it was infected with patriotism. When DOMELA NIEUWENHUIS -at the international congresses of 1891 in Brussels and 1893 in Zürich- wanted to incite all the socialists to fight the ever growing threat of world war by propagating the general strike and the refusal to serve in the military, he was met with hostility by the German social-democrats. The resolution that he proposed was rejected by a majority.
The anarchists have carried the legacy of the old antimilitarist heritage into todays modern socialism. It was mainly the anarchists who have emphasised again and again, and ever stronger, that militarism is not only a symptom of war, but also of so-called peace: modern industry is militarised production, as much as modern war is mechanical destruction. A perfectly similar spirit

114 If desired my ideas can be verified in the Declaration before the Anarchist Congress in Berlin that was published in '**De Vrije Socialist**', Febr 1st 1922.

115 Tr. Note: not entirely clear what BdL refers to here, but possibly: Allgemeine Arbeiter-Union [Union Ouvrière Générale]

116 Tr. Note: See for example https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brussels_Congress_(1868) https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/08854300.2014.913836 , https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/robert-graham-anarchism-and-the-first-international, https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/robert-graham-we-do-not-fear-anarchy-we-invoke-it, https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/wolfgang-eckhardt-the-first-socialist-schism

animates the workplace and the barracks: the spirit of mechanical subservience. And as the killing purpose threatens at the front, behind the lines the forced labor in town and countryside threatens with murderous hunger. Everywhere we find the same mechanistic centralisation that is not under our control, but that controls us.
This is why anarchists of several countries organised international antimilitarist congresses in 1904 and 1907. This is why DOMELA NIEUWENHUIS instigated the founding of the 'Internationale Anti-Militaristen Vereeniging' [IAMV[117]] in 1904. And this is why unyielding anarchists and syndicalists in different countries -because they remained true to their historic principles- fought against patriotism, nationalism, militarism, for general strike, individual and collective refusal of military service and for the absolute refusal to manufacture military equipment. That is why, in 1914 -despite the fact that in France, England, Italy, Russia, Amerika and in some neutral countries people were lagging behind in political and economical understanding- hundreds of anarchists fought against imperialist militarism in the name of personality, and many paid for their principles with their lives.
There are two kinds of militarism:
one above: active, dominating, ruling, commanding without consideration –in the ruling class;
one at the bottom: passive, submissive, complying, executing without consideration -in the people.
Both have developed throughout a horrific world war: the ruling class is more dominating and imperative than ever, the controlled masses morally incredibly degenerated under passive militarism. Militarism is in the end -like capitalism and imperialism- a state of mind: it is the typical mindset of rulers and peoples that live and think capitalistic and imperialistic. Not just because of bureaucracy, parliamentarism, democracy, party structures, church religion and alcoholism, but mainly by passive militarism, the spirit of the international proletarian mass has degenerated.
Already in 1917, many anarchists decided to convene as soon as possible at a new international antimilitarist congress. It was held in 1921 in The Hague and again called the proletariat of every country to the old revolutionary antimilitarist stuggle. Delegates from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, England, France, the Netherlands, Austria, Sweden, Switzerland -mainly anarchists- founded the International Anti-Militarist Bureau (I.A.M.B.), aimed against:

1. the looming war,
2. the white terror,
3. the intervention of countries where the people rose up in revolutionary movement,
4. the exploitation and suppression of so-called colored races.

The course of the European revolution since 1917 has also proven that not only the active, but the passive militarism too, is one of the biggest threats to the social revolution. One wonders why the German social-democratic revolution brought so little results and why the German bolshevik revolution brought us so little, and the answer is: by a lack of personality among the people. The Russian revolution has developed a new kind of militarism through the use of the bourgeois methods, an (active and passive) red militarism. The so-called 'proletarian militarism' of which BUCHARIN speaks with such passion, and that is inevitably tied together with the enlightened despotism of the dictatorship by party leadership, is the clearest proof that the proletarian revolution has been aborted. Internationally in recent days, this new type of militarism proves to be one of the biggest dangers for the possiblity of any further self-liberation of the people. It is clear that the anarchists, with the strength of their struggle for personal and social freedom, must counter this degeneration wherever and however they can.
All this was expressed in the Berlin congress in the following resolution that was presented by the Dutch and that was adopted immediately with general consensus:

> *"The International Congress of Anarchists in Berlin, Christmas 1921, draws the attention of the workers on the desperate attempts of the bourgeois governments to create a semblance of disarmament and reasonable arrangement of international and political relations in the world.*

117Tr. Note: or 'AIA' (Association Internationale Antimilitarisme, International Anti-militarist Association) See f.e.: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Association_internationale_antimilitariste

While the representatives of capitalist states talk of world disarmament in Washington, the scientists, chemists, etc are doctoring new, horrible means of destruction in their laboratories.
Not just the relations of big political powers are cause for concern – the opposition between the colored races and their white exploiters increases daily. Additionally, the bourgeoisie of every country is always busy taking the necessary measures to suppress any revolutionary movement domestically, and to support the bourgeoisie of any country where the power of that bourgeoisie feels threatened.
All this proves that we are living in a most reactionary era.
The dangers that threaten the world are not only the result of the active militarism of the leaders of civil society, but also from the passivity of the great mass of the people.
Therefore the Congress calls on all comrades to propagate anti-militarism by all means possible in every country and in accordance with the resolution that was adopted at the International Anti-Militarist Congress. As anti-militarist means of struggle we mention: the refusal of military service, the immediate stop of all production of the means of war, general strike at the start of a war, etc.
The Congress expresses its greatest possible sympathy for all those who refused military service and all those who undermined military discipline in some way.
As a result of the world war, and of the essentially bourgeois dictatorial methods that were used since in 1917 in the revolution, the proletarian masses are permeated by a militarist spirit. In accordance with the words of MARX, that a revolution of the minds must precede the revolution in society, the Congress calls upon the workers to struggle not just for external revolution but for an internal revolution as well."

7. Anarchism and dictatorship.

On the relation between anarchism and proletarian dictatorship, the following conclusion was drawn in Berlin:

"The International Anarchist Congress gladly concludes that the anarchists of every country are adversaries of every dictatorship.
The events in Russia have demonstrated these conclusions about dictatorship.
Leaning on this experience the anarchists declare that they are more than ever enemies of dictatorship, no matter whether it is of the right or of the left, of the bourgeoisie or of the proletariat.
The Congress declares with one voice that the anarchists of every country are united against the question that is central in the current revolutionary events."

Generally under 'dictatorship' was understoodas a certain form of state violence; in ROCKER's words: "Dictatorship is the state where a martial law is declared. … Like all the supporters of the state idea, the supporters of dictatorship start from the assumption that what they consider to be good and at necessary a certain point, can be dictated of enforced upon the people from the top."
From the exchange one got the impression that several participants brushed the question of the transition of capitalism to anarchism off lightly. It's not difficult to theoretically reject state dictatorship and red militarism; it's a delusion though to think that -even just for the reason of its existence- the development of free and spontaneous self-organisation of the proletariat can be realised without much trouble. What is often forgotten in this debate is the fact that revolutionary upheavel and social revolution always breaks out, not only long before every proletarian has become an anarchist, but even before the anarchist propaganda has permeated the conscousness of the proletarian mass[118]. It was mentioned at the congress that it is possible that a revolutionary

118 One finds bourgeois and pre-bourgeois symptoms even in comrades who are amongst the bravest political-economical revolutionaries. The international revolutionary literature is still heavily influenced by the Babylonian and pre-Babylonian concepts of revenge. More than once "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" is used as an

proletariat in Sweden could stop the whole production of ammunition in times of war, and break the power of the whole army. The situation is not as simple in Germany or in the US of America for starters. In most countries, great revolutionary crises will arise in which a strong revolutionary minority -at best a small revolutionary minority- is in charge. The big mass of adversaries consists not only of members of the bourgeois class, –in that case the struggle for social renewal would not be that difficult!-; the reactionaries control not just soil, factories, products, financial wealth, but the press, school, church, justice, prisons, the army, party structures, etc as well: they run a mental dictatorship too through these means, and so doing they control such a large part of the proletariat, that it not only thinks like a bourgeois -that is not the worst thing!- but even feels like a bourgeois, and sacrifices itself almost with joy for bourgeois plans and ends, as if they were human ideals. There was a German at the congress who didn't stop interrupting almost every time an overly idealistic anarchist spoke: “But what about the transition time!” And he was right of course. So doing, he stressed one of the most difficult historic and moral questions that anarchists need to address.

The anarchists should be immersed with this truth, that humanity in its self-development needs to go through a multitude of revolutions before not just the technical, but the psychological, the moral and spiritual conditions as well are fulfilled that make an anarchist society of all people on earth possible. At least we have to recognise that the great day of anarchism will not come in our lifetimes, ruined as we are by bourgeois socialisation and militaristic habits. Not even here in the west. So how could it come elsewhere? This is no reason for us not to struggle towards this moment though! As long as there is a passive militarist mindset in the world, there will be an active militarist mindset too; as long as there are herd animals, there will be shepherds; as long as there are submissives, there will be dictators. But precisely this passive and active militarism, precisely these herds with their shepherds, precisely these subjects and their commanders are the biggest threat to the progress of the revolution. That is why it is the duty of everyone who has liberated themselves of all of this and to struggle tirelessly for the development of a free spirit in a free society.

All that doesn't lead us to conclude that the anarchist should stand aside in the current revolutionary struggles, and should tie ourselves blindly and without judgement to the different forces and movements on the economical, political and cultural battlefields. In every aspect of human life there are seeds of freedom, anarchist possiblities from which to start and to develop. Especially in the economic aspects of life, we find many existing anti-militarist, anti-state, anti-dictatorial currents that demonstrate the strife for self-organisation in the masses. The anarchist takes active part in

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argument. Times and again the propaganda uses heathen-religious ideas of “guilt”. The obsolete practice and morality of vengeance is still in our blood. In this fashion French comrades recently applied retaliatory action on official representatives of boshevism to liberate the anarchist prisoners in Russia: a form of revenge that has already been rejected by the best bourgeois thinkers, by the clearest minds of former times. When I protested against such methods of struggle at the congress, there was a clear urge in the meeting to continue to push through with this un-anarchist practice in spite of better insight and humane spirit. Isn't it clear how the application of such pre-bourgeois methods of struggle seems like a step on the road to dictatorship?

There are better means imaginable for the liberation of the Russian anarchists, who are also in line with the revolutionary goal. As I have already pointed out in Berlin, for example urging to refuse labor for the Russian government as such (not the Russian people); systematic propaganda among the public opinion of the international proletariat by the press; discussing the issue everywhere -in every meeting of the IIIrd International; to refuse to collaborate with any chapter of the IIIrd International that falls in line with the Russian government; and especially: relentlessly arousing the Russian proletariat to demand the liberation of the revolutionary prisoners not just in platonic protests, but to liberate them by direct action.

It is no doubt possible that in extreme cases self-defense is invoked in the defense of the revolution and means are adopted that do not correspond with its principle. But those should never be propagated as if “The end justifies the means!”. We must try as long and as hard as possible to push through that the means must be in harmony with the goals. The use of unsuited, alien, essentially hostile means alienates the fighter from his goal: there is such a thing as the dictatorship of means! The means -so even Romain Rolland writes- are even more important for progress than the goal... de means form the spirit of man. Either to the mold of justice. Or to the mold of violence... Therefore I consider it of highest importance to defend the moral values, maybe even more during a revolution than during usual times, because revolutions are sensitive transition periods in which the spirit of peoples are best suited to change.

every revolutionary struggle and inspires continuously, and tries to raise the self-activity of the people.
The collaboration with revolutionaries that try to capture the results of a revolution in a dictatorship, can therefore at best be conditional. We struggle alongside everyone, alongside every group that tries to undermine and break the internal and external reign of people over people. We will use any organisation as much as possible if it can be used for our aim for freedom in any way. We try to destroy any institution that makes the struggle for freedom impossible, and attack -as much as we can- any power that -in contradiction with the dynamic principle of anarchism- tries to capture temporary results and provisional victories of this or other revolution into static, rigid, perpetual reaction.

8. Anarchism and Revolution.

Many anarchists are disappointed to the point of illness by the historic development of the European revolution since 1917. Amidst need and misery they have created a great and wonderous image of the new world that they fought for -whenever conditions allowed, they threw themselves into the struggle without reservations, and suffered horrible worries, fears and need- and now in a moment of rest, they look around: what became of their ideal?
It were harrowing hours when the Siberian comrade described to the congress how he was born and raised under pogroms; how he had witnessed as a child the how fanatical murderers created bloodbaths among the jews and cut off women's breasts, arms and hands because the tsarist rule had deciced to drown the coming revolution in Jewish blood. Amidst the horrors he had found the anarchist ideal; he had struggled and suffered for this ideal since he was young; since 1917 he had fought for the revolution alongside millions of Siberian farmers and had used means that he loved but also means that he hated. The anarchist spirited people had heroically fought back in violent self-defence everywhere, but it turned out to be incapable to construct a higher form of society. In jeremian sadness he replied to BAKUNINS words 'The passion for destruction is also a creative passion' with the words: 'The passion of destruction has come; the creative passion didn't come.' -He himself had experienced -as a commissar of foreign affairs of a Siberian sovjet republic of 20 million people- in his deepest core how a people that was originally anarchist in spirit was in the end subjected to the dictatorship of the bolshevik party dictatorship by the impotence to create a free social order by their own strength -a result of a lack of realism and organizing.
He was broken. He didn't know what to think of the future of anarchism. The anarchists, he said, cannot advance if they are unable to organise the masses. The optimistic VOLIN, filled with hope, rightly warned against what can be called 'the anarchist opportunism' that spoke from these words: we shouldn't try to organise the masses: that inevitabley leads to one kind of dictatorship or another; but we should propagate the anarchist idea among the people, and show the proletariat the way as well as possible. He was right of course, but the other person was also right when he said that the marxists recognise one all encompassing principle that they always use; that they and their following know clearly what they want, while among anarchists all kinds of principles and opinions whirl around chaotically: “There is poly-anarchism, but where can I find mono-anarchism?”
Mono-anarchism -the word resembles 'monarchism' dangerously. VOLIN was right in warning the comrades for the dangers of these kind of ideas. But VOLIN himself resembled one of those people some participant yelled 'But the transition!' at.
It is not new that revoluionaries will be disappointed. Not just the big naive fools like JESAJA or JEZUS -if they have actually lived-, the medieval fanatic and later utopians, but also conscious scientific frontrunners of modern socialism like MARX, ENGELS, BAKUNIN, KROPOTKIN went through similar events. And now many of us go through it again because of the development of the Russian revolution.
This has to end now! The revolutionary subject has to free itself from this kind of subjectivist anticipations and shortcuts through historic perspectives. In May 1904, KROPOTKIN (in the

introduction to the Italian edition of 'Words of a Rebel') asked the question why the social revolution in the 19th century has not come. He recognised that the great revolutionaries of the 19th century 'have not fully understood the full extent of the reaction' in which the European people had sunk. I wrote enough about this, and will only add the following.
GEIZMAN is right when he says that the bolsheviks have an advantage over the anarchists with their unity of principle and their generally accepted methods of struggle. The revolutionary marxists share one common ethic. In many ways it's a jezuitic ethic, but they elaborated it systematically and implemented it with zeal. Their discipline is mainly an external discipline, but it is still a discipline that they -like the ecclesiastical jezuits- can not implement without the greatest possible effort and exercise in self-discipline. It's easy to label oneself anarchist and look down on such external discipline. But to what extent do we, anarchists, have a higher, inner discipline: a free, spontaneous self-control; -to what extent are we able to despise our little particularities, and focus on the struggle for the free personality; the strength to give more than we demand; the drive to sacrifice our human selves in solidarity with essentially like-minded comrades in the creative idea? A barbarian, a mallard, a jitterbug can deny today's social life, and so can a madman. But how do we rise above all this? DOMELA NIEUWENHUIS declared once, towards the end of his life, that he had noticed that a large percentage of the best revolutionary comrades went through some kind of religious education at some point in their lives. Small wonder! Every later moral and cultural ethics grow on earlier ones. That is why only those denials have social and cultural importance, that are not only rational, but also reasonable in character; that not only [morally, theoretically] reject, but are also capable of 'undoing'. There are downward refusals and upward refusals. When someone says 'I am not jewish, buddhist or christian' it is possible that judaism, buddhism or christianity are not yet within their reach; or they can have risen above them. In the latter case they have absorbed the core value of what is refused. The origin of christianity is unthinkable without the religious history of judaism, the morality of the Stoa, the wisdom of PLATO and HERAKLITUS, the worldly experience and the phantasy of the PARTHs, etc. It was mainly BAKUNIN who understood the historic correlation of all the social and cultural phenomena. The greatest revolutionaries have acknowledged again and again that a general priciple, a larger-than-human passion for human and cosmic solidarity has always been the deepest source of all anarchism and socialism. In this sense -and only in this sense- DIETZGEN too wanted to conserve religion for the people, and BAKUNIN spoke of the religion of freedom, equality and brotherhood. In this sense we can also speak of mono-anarchism: an almost mystical-technical praxis. Insofar as such a real feeling of unity and the ensuing will for common action lives, the anarchists determination internationally be capable of elaborating an encompassing science as well as a practical method for struggle that can be generally recognised in its main principles.
All this is only possible in the relatively small circles of those who have deliberately broken with the old forms and ideas; who -in free-revolutionary fashion- have risen above the spirit of authoritiy and militarism. That is why it is unthinkable that even all the anarchists of the world together -assuming every one of them is imbued with the purest spirit, the deepest conviction and the highest hunger for action- could today found a free social order. Surely: in a certain context, under good conditions, groups of like-minded people are capable in some respects to bring into praxis their principle in admirable ways. But even given that -here and there- say some millions of comrades could reasonably organise in society and come to a certain unity of civilisation and culture as a productive union, as a social unity, they would inevitably not only interact with not just the immediately surrounding world, but with the whole of humanity; and would just as surely be influenced today as primitive-bolshevik Russia is influenced as well by the patriarchal-feudal-nationalist East as by the capitalist-imperialist West. Even MARX and the marxists say that their revolution is a long-winded thing; so we -the anarchists- must acknowledge that our revolution will take even longer to succeed.
And still -that is precisely why we want to struggle! In the negative -against the imperialist regime- we work together with all the revolutionaries and opponents as much as we can. When we can no longer go with them, or they can't go with us any longer, when several groups advance separately,

then still we consider the fact that -seen on a deeper level, against the enemy- the other attackers are also our allies. If some revolutionary current, whose historic moment appears to have come, prevails, we will tend to work with it unconditionally -especially if things look dubious for that current. Insofar as they resist our ideas though, and obstruct our actions or make them impossible, we will oppose them in a principled way and -if necessary- also in praxis.
Even under imperialism, when one or the other wants to terminate history, we break their moulds, and open up new horizons. So we collaborate with the founders of dictatorships of the 3rd, 4th or 5th International against the bourgeois- and social-democracy, just like the revolutionary socialists of former times worked together with petit-bourgeois and liberals against clergy and nobility.
Our time has not come yet. But it comes closer. We don't struggle just for the revolution, but for the revolution of the revolution.

C) Direct Action! The anti-militarists of the deed at the IFTU peace congress 10 – 15 December 1922, A voice in the desert.(1922)[119]

"I am convinced that the question of disarmament can be very easily resolved: the soldiers of all armies of the world throw away their guns and tell their commanders: We no longer want to serve the cause of mutual destruction and plunder."

- M. Gorki to the IFTU[120] *Secretariat*

"When one works for world peace, one can't count on the governments."

- G. Duhamel to the IFTU Secretariat

"The daring people alone can bring liberation from the grasp of modern barbarism."

- N. J. C. Schemerhorn in "De Wapens Neder"

It **seemed** important enough. The secretariat of the IFTU, an organisation of over 20,000,000 members called for participation to a world congress for peace, where the following subjects would be discussed:

1. the necessity of collaboration of all anti-war forces;
2. the task of the labor organisations;
3. the task of governments and political bodies;
4. the task of teachers and educators;
5. the task of civil society.

In each case it was advisable for revolutionary anti-militarists to be present, even if it was just to discuss the importance of the individual action which -just as well as the mass one- is systematically neglected in these circles. But as a condition for participation to the congress the 'resolution of Rome' had to be endorsed. In the resolution it is -amongst other things- declared that the organized workers are obliged to counter any future looming war, and to prevent its outbreak by the international general strike; every member organisation must be prepared to stop work immediately when the IFTU calls for it.

In response to this and other elements, the Exexutive Committee of the IAMB wrote the following to the IFTU Secretariat:

"The Exexutive Committee of the IAMB acknowledges with interest the reception of the invitation to participate in the International Congress for peace and general disarmament in Den Haag 10-15 December 1922.

We would appreciate the IAMB being able to take part in this Congress. In this light we have carefully examined the resolution on war and militarism that was adopted at the IFTU Congress in Rome in April 1922 that must be accepted as general basis for the coming Congress.

Before we can take a decision, we feel forced to ask you whether it is the expectation that the participants to the congress only have to accept the general ***gist*** *of the resolution in question – namely general strike in case of war and control over the fabrication of weapons and all kinds of war instruments – or whether one is obliged to accept the* ***ltteral content*** *of the resolution.*

From our side, there is objection against agitating the workers of the world to prevent the looming war by means of strikes ***only when the leadership of your organisation would call***

119Tr. Note: Published by Brochurendepot der IAMB – K. Kaastra – Andijk (W.) 1923

120Tr. Note: International Federation of Trade Unions or 'Amsterdam International' (1919-1945), one of many social-democratic union internationals. See for example: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Federation_of_Trade_Unions

for it.

First of all, we are of the opinion that this decision must be taken as much as possible by the workers themselves. We don't object to official representatives of organisations deeming themselves to be obliged to call for the international proletariat to strike in critical times; but we do object to making the mass actions of war resisters dependent on the decisions of some executives. As socialists and revolutionaries our main goal is the self-action of the proletariat.

Secondly, we think that the a strike -as a means to prevent war- starting or not, can't be left to some individuals, among other reasons because there is a possibility that these persons can be mistaken, come too late with their appeal because any number of reasons or -let's assume with the best intentions- to make a political-economic judgement that makes them unable to speak the necessary words at the critical moment.

Thirdly, we think that an anti-capitalist, anti-militarist congress shouldn't just talk to the organized: for us all war resisters, organized or not, who prove they are serious about their principles, are welcome. For us it is the task of every principled war resister to constantly appeal to all individuals that consciously fight against militarism, capitalism and imperialism and in favour of a rational, humane society.

Precisely in critical moments the sudden rise of spontaneous actions can set big masses of people in motion; precisely in critical moments the danger is biggest, that large organisations that were built in calmer times become a hindrance for the set goals. What is important, according to us, is to nurture a spirit that enables as many groups and individuals in crucial moments to spontaneously act in the sense of what both you and us want.

All that is no reason for us not to take part in your congress as long as we maintain the right to agree only with the maingist of your resolution of Rome, and when our delegates are offered full opportunity to explain our ideas – that are in line with the resolution of the 1868 congress of the First International in Brussels, and with the gist of the proposals of Domela Nieuwenhuis at the 1891 and 1893 congresses of the Second International in Brussels and Zurich, and with the proposal of our comrade Keir Hardie in Copenhagen in 1910.

And finally we propose to add as a sixth point on the agenda of your December congress:

6. What is the role of the individual act – refusal of military service, immediate stop of production – in the struggle against war and militarism?

Awaiting your prompt answer,
with international greetings,
for the IAMB,
Jos GIESEN."

It took a long time before we received an answer. At long last we heard that only the main gist of the resolution of Rome needed to be accepted. We were also promised that the role of the individual action could be addressed under several points of the agenda. So we decided to accept the invitation and sent the following proposals for the congress agenda:

"*Resolutions proposed by the ['Executive Comittee'] U.C.*[121] *of the IAMB to the World Congress for Peace in Den Haag, 10 – 15 - December 1922.*

I. ***On the necessity of a single goal.***

The World Congress for Peace, convened by the IFTU in Den Haag, 10 – 15 December 1922 concludes that the wars of capitalist states serve:

1. *as tools in the economic competition;*
2. *as tools of oppression and exploitation of the so-called colored peoples;*
3. *as tools to prevent and suppress revolution.*

121Tr. Note: 'Uitvoerend Comité'

The congress points to the essential compatibility of militarism and imperialism, both systems in which small groups of powerful and interested parties randomly control individuals and peoples who are mercilessly used -as if they were mere objects- by their rulers.

The congress determines that every war goes against the interest of the proletariat, even in the militarily victorious countries, and reminds all those -wherever they are on earth- who are oppressed and exploited, that peace and freedom are in their own interest as well as in the interest of the rest of the world, but that they can only be won together, by a struggle that strikes the heart of the system of war and slavery that is called capitalism.

Therefore the congress warns against all so-called liberation movements whose representatives are intent on maintaining the capitalist society, or at least refrain from hurting it while still thinking they can struggle for general disarmament and the undoing of war without hurting the causes of war.

The congress decides that it is the duty of all resisters of war and capitalism to break with the current governments because they are called by the force of their function to violently defend the capitalist system, as well as to break with that "trust of victors" that is wrongly called the League of Nations.

In accordance with the resolution adopted at the congress of the 1st International in 1868, in accordance with the proposals of Domela Nieuwenhuis in 1891 and 1893 and of Keir Hardie in Copenhagen in 1910, the congress calls on the working class to make war impossible by breaking the solidarity with the ruling class, and to prevent a looming war by means of the general strike and mass refusal of military service.

The congress declares it to be the task of all who accept this point of view as their own, to unleash the unconditional strike and refusal of service against any mobilisation in the countries involved, independent of the odds to win or lose the fight – with or without the consent of the leaders of their organisations.

The congress calls on all organisations of socialist workers to prepare morally, technically and organisationally and to keep ready for the general strike and mass refusal of service, and to intend to transform any war that should break out into a social revolution.

II. ***On the tasks of workers organisations.***

The World Congress for peace, convened by the IFTU in Den Haag, 10 – 15 December 1922 declares it to be the task of all workers organisations –inasfar as it corresponds to the nature of said organisations– to take care of:

1. *the spreading of insight in the relation between capitalism, militarism, navalism and war;*
2. *the spreading of insight in imperialism, in which system a small group of money men, large-entrepreneurs, secret diplomats and high officers decide the fate and misery of nations;*
3. *the awakening of a spirit of anti-capitalist anti-militarism;*
4. *an anti-militarist education of youth:*
5. *specific anti-war propaganda amongst women;*
6. *an action that aims at the immediate liberation of all draft refusers and the abolition of military slavery;*
7. *tireless propaganda for individual refusal of all direct and indirect work for war (military service, so-called alternatives of civil service, production of war equipment, fabrication of murdering chemical products, etc etc);*
8. *intense anti-war propaganda within the army, amongst the personnel of sea and air fleet, against forced and voluntary service, against civil guard, voluntary Landsturm, colonial armies, etc;*
9. *measures by which every organisation involved is immediately capable of countering any government that starts to mobilize with active general strike in line with its own character and function;*
10. *measures by which any rising resistance against the looming war can be supported by effective sabotage.*

The congress incites the workers of all countries to implement the words of Ruskin, Nettlau, Libertad, etc and to follow the example that French, Italian, Spanish and German workers have given, again and again, and to refuse to make war instruments.

The congress draws the attention of the international workers to the decision of the German syndicalist metal workers to exclude workers who produce murder tools from their revolutionary organisation.

III. ***On the role of governments and political organs.***

The World Congress for peace, convened by the IFTU in Den Haag, 10 – 15 December 1922, declares that the governments -as leaders of capitalist states- and the political organs -functioning within the capitalist state complex- are mainly in the service of powers that increasingly lead the world on the path to war and that it is therefore the task of the revolutionary proletariat to fundamentally oppose them.

The congress draws the attention of the whole world on the fact that is even recognized by bourgeois experts: that the true governments are hidden behind the official ones, and that modern democracy is at best a camouflage for the disastrous work of the war breeders.

The congress points to the generally recognized interdependence between bankers, large-entrepreneurs (especially those who control oil), the war industry, government personnel, party leaders and the press, and incites the workers to eradicate this monstrous political-social process by effectively withdrawing their economic power from it.

The congress establishes that the present governments and political organs may be able to instantly delay or prevent some war, but that they -whether they want it or not- prepare even more gruesome outbursts because they can't abolish the fundamental social conflicts.

Therefore the congress incites the workers to take their fate into their own hands to create a truly humane society.

IV. ***On education and schooling***

The World Congress for peace, convened by the IFTU in Den Haag, 10 – 15 December 1922, concludes that the current education and schooling are controlled by the ruling class, and have as main goal the formation of persons who are suitable, ready and willing to maintain and continue the current social system, be it as exploiter or as exploited.

Education and schooling are therefore -humanly spoken- falsified.

Change is only possible inasfar as parents, students and teachers understand this corruption and tie themselves together with the workers movement to resist it in word and deed.

Therefore the congress pays homage to the English comrades who refused teaching as an alternative service during the world war; to the Dutch teachers who were fired because they signed the manifesto for the refusal of service in 1916; and to the teacher Savigny, killed by the French government because he wrote on the blackboard: "War is a wild animal that devours civilization".

The congress incites all teachers who are aware of their noble task, to constantly undermine the official schooling; reveal to the children the nationalist, capitalist and imperialist spirit of history books, novels, maths and songs; to expose the racism of the inhabitants of capitalist states; to demonstratively refuse to work in the chauvinist spirit in critical moments; and -linked to the revolutionary labor movement- to prepare mass direct action for the humanization and moralization of education and schooling.

V. ***On civil society and religious organisations.***

The World Congress for peace, convened by the IFTU in Den Haag, 10 – 15 December 1922, declares that it is the task of all civil organisations whose members recognize the necessity of effective struggle against war, to participate -in accordance with the nature of their organisation- in any action for individual and common refusal of service as well as strikes, inasfar as they are directly or indirectly aimed at preventing war.

The congress appeals to everyone who calls themselves catholic or christian, to analyse whether the current practices of statecraft, warfare, exploitation of the proletariat and of the so-called colored peoples correspond with the principles of their churches. If the answer is yes, then the congress incites anyone who comes to this conclusion to reject those perfidious principles. And if the answer is no, then the principles should be upheld and applied, and they should turn their backs on the leadership of the official churches that is so much one and the same with the leadership of the chauvinists and imperialists these days."

The Executive Committee (E.C.) also appealed to the different representatives of the IAMB member organisations to form a strong international delegation. It especially appealed to the German syndicalists, the French syndicalist youth and the British No-More-War Movement[122] while the presence was also expected of Olga Misar (Bund herrschaftsloser Sozialisten[123], Austria), Dr. Helene Stöcker (Bund der Kriegsdienstgegner[124], Germany), Madeleine Vernet (Ligue des Femmes contre la Guerre[125], France), Adamas[126] (IAMV, Belgium) and Björklund (Ungsocialisterna[127], Sweden). Three members of the E.C. would also be present.
Sadly enough, Olga Misar was prevented; Pierre Ramus couldn't come in her place, Adamas was suddenly prevented by serious family circumstances; the British war resisters-of-the-deed preferred an independent delegation of their own while the German syndicalists declared that they wouldn't send a representative of their own. Especially that last decision seemed to be a big mistake to us. We had all hoped for Rocker, especially because he, Souchy and Schuster are the regular connection of the German syndicalist organisation with the IAMB. Rocker has long lived in England and America; has moral impact; lives in the libertarian socialist movement since dozens of years; has a deep knowledge of the history of modern socialism; represents both anarchism and syndicalism, and is a brilliant speaker. But all our insistence didn't change anything. There seemed to be a blindness for the fact that there was an extremely rare opportunity here for representatives of the anti-autoritarian groups to speak on a world stage in the circles of the 2nd International and the modern labor movement which are usually hermetically closed off. Instead of all anarchist and syndicalist groups everywhere in the world strongly taking the opportunity that had not presented itself for years, and for dozens of revolutionary anti-militarists to form a strong left wing on the congress, the opportunity was lost: there wasn't even a Dutch anarchist or syndicalist at all. Only the IAMB delegation represented them, but even then only relatively of course, more or less reinforced with the Dutch, British and German absolutists. The German syndicalists did charge Giesen and De Jong to defend the position of their organisation at the congress. But practically, the congress leadership would not think all this relevant. And we simply didn't have enough power to change that even one bit. How different would it have been if we had been present with many dozens of brave comrades. Björklund on the other hand fulfilled his duty. Again he couldn't get a visa from the Dutch government though. But like last year at the anti-militarist congress, this didn't stop him to be present at the IFTU congress from the start.
The IAMB delegation in the end was C. J. Björklund, J. Giesen, A. de Jong, B de Ligt, Dr. Helene Stöcker and Madeleine Vernet.
The plan was that the first IAMB resolution would be presented and defended by De Ligt, the second by Björklund, the third by De Jong, the fourth by Madeleine Vernet, the fifth by Mrs. Stöcker. Giesen would then, as a test, immediately raise the question of the *total refusers*[128] of

122Tr. N.: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No_More_War_Movement , founded in 1921 as successor to the No-Consription Fellowship, later the British section of the War Resisters International (W.R.I.)
123Tr. N. https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bund_herrschaftsloser_Sozialisten
124Tr. N. https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bund_der_Kriegsdienstgegner
125Tr. N. https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ligue_internationale_des_femmes_pour_la_paix_et_la_libert%C3%A9 Non-mixed organisation, men could support the organisation, but only women could be members.
126Tr. N. https://maitron.fr/spip.php?article155250
127Tr. N. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Young_Socialists_(Sweden)
128Tr. N.: in Dutch: 'totaalweigeraar', literally 'total refusers', i.e. people who refuse not just military service, but civil alternatives as well.

service. And we also hoped that de Jong especially would be able to speak to the German syndicalists. Even if we represented only some 100,000 people and if the six of us were among 600 delegates of the IFTU, social-democratic parties, pacifist organisations, etc, etc who together officially represented 40,000,000 people, - we were still representatives of the anti-militarism of the deed: exceptions to the rule here; we had proposed a resolution for every one of the issues on the agenda and we were explicitly assured that the different currents would be considered first of all when the speeches were planned. So we had the not unfounded expectation that every one of us would be able to speak at least once.

But even at the opening session it became clear that things would go differently. After some beautiful singing and official greetings, Giesen proposed at the end of the meeting:

1. "that the congress would protest against the fact that participants of this peace congress were refused visa by the Dutch government;
2. that a telegram of sympathy would be sent to the draft dodgers that were kept in Dutch prisons."

But the answer that came was that the congress leadership had something better than to protest against the refusal of visa: they would attempt to make sure that the visa were yet given. (They wanted, in other words, no difficulties with the government.) And also that the telegram could be spoken about the next morning.

But the next morning at the opening, Jouheaux announced the discussion of the first topic on the agenda. Then Henderson followed with point 3. Then Prof. Buisson point 4. Then not Prof. Quidde as was announced –he was meanwhile chatting away with the German delegation- but Von Gerlach for point 5. And with that the whole day was complete. The two last speakers casually declared to be opposed to individual refusal of service. To no avail Giesen tried to take over speaking. Eventually he was promised he would be able to speak "after the speech by Fimmen".

The next morning, Fimmen immediately started with point 2. All the introductions were delivered one by one like this, damaging the reasonable development of the congress. It was said that this weird approach was intended to save time: to prevent repeating in the discussion. As if it had not been better that this congress had first determined its principles and the headlines of a truly anti-militarist struggle for all the peoples, rather than throwing everything together so chaotically!

The neverending reformist and opportunistic talking – each time translated twice – was unbearable at last the second day. The quality of the speeches kept decreasing. Several foreigners found the whole thing "deplorable". One even spoke to me of an "international scandal". But fortunately Fimmen brought a little quality back into it. He had the courage to openly admit old mistakes, and advocated conscious self-renewal. But no matter how good – edifying even – he personally meant it all, in this atmosphere everything he said turned into empty phrases as soon as he said it.

When Giesen turned to the president after Fimmen's speech in order to speak about the refusers of service, this friend of England's king told him: "I said 'after Fimmen', but I haven't said 'immediately after Fimmen'."

The remarkable coincidence wanted that a clever German woman, who was apparently unknown, had seen an opportunity to be the first speaker after Fimmen, and to the astonishment of the public, the principle of individual refusal of service was loudly thrown into the meeting hall. She was not met with much wisdom or sympathy. Probably this suprise that was the reason why the president told Mrs. Stöcker "One woman a day is enough" when she asked to speak to defend a proposal by 15 German organisations.

Meanhwile it became increasingly clear that we had ended up in the company of people who were for the most part not present to break with their old sins, but rather to persist in new ways. Instead of consciously abandoning national defense; instead of deciding to break with the bourgeoisie, and to choose a different path of their own before anything else, the intention was to seek collaboration with the bourgeois pacifist organisations without worrying too much whether these institutions were reliable from a revolutionary and anti-militarist point of view. It was clear that the old methods of coalition would again be applied; that parliamentarian and other legal ways would be explored to the end; that there would be an attempt to establish contact with the bourgeois governments and – as

the proletariat was once misled by parliament, now this same proletariat would be internationally misled by the League of Nations.
For our kind of people it was indeed torture to go through such a congress. Up there, on stage -because what a show it was!- Thomas, Jouheaux, etc; symbols of the corruption of the labor movement. The venue was filled with petite- and haute-bourgoisie for whom the awareness of struggle for a new society was largely alien; bureaucrats and men of power, parliamentarians and organisation officials, without even the slightest revolutionary spirit or movement. And even on the first day, Troelstra declared a petty policy of angst...
Lucky enough that the Russians had come: they had at least lived through a revolution. And their politics – no matter how degenerated from a revolutionary point of view – permitted them to be razor sharp in this environment. Rightly so, they demanded of this congress not phraseology but actions. By their presence there, something came to life. Something opened a little wider. And it felt good that they immediately talked about the peoples of color. There was more than enough – from a revolutionary anti-militarist point of view – to criticize them for, but for the time being that was none of the business of the bourgeois and social-democrats present!
The tragic thing, no the sad thing about this congress? This: that among the people theire is hatred against war and militarism, a longing for freedom and reason; that internationally a new spirit has awoken, but that it seems incapable – not just inasfar it feels and thinks ecclesiastical, but also inasfar as it is organized in the modern labor movement and in the -officially socialist- parties – of liberating itself from its old leaders and mis-leaders. The whole world was looking at this congress: now something would happen!... And what happened? By adopting a few new slogans, the old demagogues and officials adapted to the new public opinion in order to win over the masses yet again for their obsolete fake democratic methods. The peace congress in Den Haag proved to be a congress of officials who had clearly already decided amongst themselves in advance how they thought the absent plebeians had to be led. For the bourgeoisie, a feast: because it was here that it was decided how the revived anti-war mentality that had sprung up after the war could be deflected and redirected in favor of the bourgeois state, the parliament and the League of Nations; and away from the need for the masses to struggle for true revolutionary goals more or less at last.
While the official congress was held, all kinds of things took place behind the scenes. For example we suddenly learned that the 2nd and the 2½nd Internationals had decided to merge. Had the 2nd International perhaps become the 2½nd International? No! just the opposite: the ever wavering 2½nd International had already lost so much of its ½ revolutionary character that it sunk back in the old swamp of opportunism and reformism. But officially this fact was announced like a big event. The suggestion was clear: the biggest socialist party is restored internationally and will form the political head of the even bigger modern labor movement from now on.
Meanwhile the Russians fought as hard as they could for their “united front”. Which was a fundamental relapse into the old socialdemocratic position in turn anyway.
Harsh insults were exchanged but the 2nd International still declared that –if only the people of the 3rd International would have spent “even a year in quarantine”- they would have a right to speak... Apparantly the leaders of the 2nd International and of the IFTU counted on the Moscovites to capitulate soon. To speed the arrival of this moment up efficiently, they tried to humble the Russians as much as they could and drowned them in accusations. The whole scene reminded of the “hazing” that is even frowned upon in bourgeois circles. And it became the pot calling the kettle black. With this difference: the Russians played with their cards on the table this time; the others camouflaged their cards behind beautiful phrases.
The whole congress seemd one big, raw, open wound. It made it clear how divided the modern labor movement is, even to the point of impotence. The tactic of planning a fierce opponent after every Russian speaker, was revolting. And then if for example a French syndicalist intellectually beat up the last –Russian– speaker, and spoke against government and oppression from a syndicalist point of view, the social-democratic ministers, aldermen, parliamentarians and Noske-ites[129] cheered.

129Tr. N. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustav_Noske

It all was too much for me when Vandervelde approached the pulpit, loudly cheered on as if he was a champion of peace and freedom. As we didn't succeed to have our turn to speech, I had decided to express our ideas in a different way if necessary. So I booed over the cheers. An outburst of rage followed. Another ex-minister came at me screaming as if he wanted to attack me. If chance hadn't intervened by putting a table between him and me, he would have expressed his love for peace and Vandervelde[130] very in a very special way... The infernal cabal soon changed into new hails for His Excellency Vandervelde again. He spoke and at least he was clear. He openly defended military national defense. His speech was loudly acclaimed. Whether it was good that I had booed him or not: at least things were moving now; now it at least it was clear how little actual volition there truly was for the war against war in that giant hall.
The same day I was given 10 minutes to speak:

"Congress!

Because I won't have time to defend the five resolutions that the IAMB has proposed, I will focus on explaining the meaning of the first resolution that we proposed, as it expresses all the essentials. I ask that you consider our other resolutions from the same point of view.

Everyone who collaborates in this congress must accept the resolution of Rome in which it is stated that the struggle against war is a very important task of that labor movement that wants to ***abolish the capitalist system****.*

Agreed!

The resolution of Rome confirms the resolution of London, which calls on the workers to rise up ***against reaction, capitalism and imperialism****.*

Again: agreed!

That is why we have stated in our resolution that the capitalist wars are means first of all for economic competition; second for the oppression and exploitation of the peoples of color; and third in the prevention of revolution. That is why we have said that peace and freedom can only be conquered at the same time – by a struggle that grabs the system of war and slavery -that is called capitalism- by the heart.

That is why we warn against any pacifist movement whose representatives are aiming to maintain capitalism while they think they fight for the abolishing of war at the same time: they try to fight the consequences without touching the causes.

What we say is in accordance with the positions of the first Congress of Veterans in Geneva. We appreciate the pure intentions of many pacifist civilians. But when they don't attack the main cause of war, their action must fail. Because they are morally – and often practically as well – one with the governments and the rulers of economic life, their ***willing naivety with a beautiful mask*** *is used to favor the intentions of the imperialists.*

Like everyone knows, the governments are the eager servants of the economic rulers. Whenever war is on the agenda, they ignore parliament. The current so-called modern democracy is merely used as camouflage, or it is ignored! On top of that there are the secret agreements: no-one of us knows at this moment, which power is working to prepare the coming war e are at the mercy of. Us as well always find the governments against the comrades – the unresigned, the refusers of service – who fight the war against war not with phraseology but with actions. ***The governments are our enemy****. And therefore it is impossible for anti-capitalist anti-militarists to collaborate with them.*

And it is triple impossible to collaborate with the League of Nations that carries such a noble name

130Tr. N.: Belgian, nicknamed 'The Boss' (1866-1938), Vandervelde started his political career more or less as an anarchist, authored https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charter_of_Quaregnon in 1893 and 'Socialism versus the state' (https://archive.org/details/socialismversuss00vand, etc) Comparable position with César de Paepe (Discours de Patignies (https://anarchief.org/wiki/De_Paepe,_Cesar_-_Discours_prononc%C3%A9_%C3%A0_Patignies_(Namur)_en_1863) he tried to bridge the gap between anarchism and Marxianism, but drifted away into parliamentarian politics and even became Belgian Minister of Justice. He was Belgian delegate tat the Treaty of Versailles and was involved in the League of Nations. He advocated for intervention against the fascist coup d'état in Spain, but was challenged by Hendrik De Man who ended up collaborating with the nazi's in WW2.

and is yet such a mean thing. It has been remarked that neither Germany, nor the United States nor Russia are members of the League of Nations. But even if they were represented there, would it ever be a real league of all the peoples themselves?... By drawing attention to ***a possible democratization of the League of Nations****, the revolutionary awareness, that has been awakened in the proletariat by the experiences of the world war, is clouded.*

There is only one power that can establish world peace: the proletariat. That is why we have said during the Conference of Washington: "Workers! don't pay attention to the capitalist Conference of Washington in 1921 but to the socialist congress of Brussels in 1868!"

It is the First International that has understood the real forces to establish peace. We, from the IAMB have continued its tradition that the 2nd International has betrayed even during the war, and we still continue it today – the tradition of Domela Nieuwenhuis, Keir Hardie[131] and the revolutionary syndicalists.

If you really want to fight against war, comrades, ***trust the proletariat itself****. It's true: the proletariat is still weak. It is morally malnourished. But do you think that the proletariat would become strong if it united with the bourgeoisie and its institutions in this difficult and dangerous struggle: the war -by the deed- against war?*

Why is the proletariat so weak internationally? Because the proletariat is subjected not just to the violent, but to the moral dictatorship of the ruling class as well: because it believes in the god of the church, the right of the state and the authority of the leaders.

That is why we say: if the proletariat decides the general strike, let it do so ***itself****. It shouldn't wait for the leaders to give the sign in case war looms. If they give the sign in time, - so much the better. But let the workers control their official leaders! History teaches us how much the dignitaries should be distrusted.*

There is much bravery in the talk against war here. But where are the leaders of the proletariat who have indeed given a shining example? Many of the so-called leaders just followed the blind masses. And they still do! Meanwhile it seems as if most of them choose the minister chair above the prisoners' stool.

We, revolutionary anti-militarists who work together in the IAMB, recognize no official leaders. We don't want to depend on the modern leadership as new priests. The principle of our revolution is: the government of the people ***by the people themselves****; the liberation of the people by the people themselves.*

We want this congress to recognize the creative and regenerative ability ***of the people themselves****.*

We want the resolutions of this congress to well up from the noblest urges, the deepest intuition of the people themselves that are revealed in the action of the refuser of service.

The main conditions to succeed are:

1st: that the people itself ***acts****;*

2nd: that the proletariat strengthens itself ***in the revolutionary economic struggle****, where it can develop the biggest strength by itself.*

We want the people to clearly determine its own fate. It is the duty of the socialist proletariat -before anything else– to design its own plans without bothering with the so-called democratic, internationalist or pacifist organisations of the bourgeoisie. If you start to collaborate with the bourgeois organisations against war –even now, before the plan of the proletariat is set up and worked out– the danger is big and –so I fear– inevitable that the so-called socialist people will ***again be misled*** *after unifying with the bourgeois organisations!*

Only the day ***after*** *the socialist proletariat has elaborated and determined its own battle plan against war, has the moment arrived for the bourgeois pacifists to unite with the proletariat. And if they refuse, let them perish.*

What Fimmen means is nothing more than a defensive war against war. We from our side mean an offensive war against war: against war as well as against the state, the oppressive institution of the rulers.

131Tr. N.: Hardie (1856-1915) was a Scottish trade unionist and politician for the Labour Party. He died in 1915 while attempting to organise a pacifist general strike.

We demand of this congress that it chooses the side of all those who gave their lives for world peace before, during and after the world war.

Damned by those who calculate whether their parochial party will win or not while the supreme – the rebirth of the world– is at stake!

Damned by those who call themselves socialists but who are ready to die for capitalism and to desert their socialism at the moment when the salvation of mankind is at stake!

That is why our resolution ends like this:

"In accordance with the resolution adopted at the congress of the 1st International in 1868, in accordance with the proposals of Domela Nieuwenhuis in 1891 and 1893 and of Keir Hardie in Copenhagen in 1910, the congress calls the working class to make war impossible by ***breaking the solidarity with the ruling class****, and to prevent a looming war by means of the general strike and mass refusal of military service.*

*The congress declares it to be the task of all who accept this point of view as their own to –****with or without the consent of the leaders of their organisations****– to unleash the unconditional strike and refusal of service against any mobilisation in the countries involved, independent of the odds to win or lose the fight.*

The congress calls all organisations of socialist workers to prepare morally, technically and organisationally and to keep ready for the general strike and mass refusal of service, and to intend ***to turn any war that should break out into a social revolution****."*

When these words were spoken, there was a moment of silence. Dead or alive? There wasn't a sign of agreement or disagreement. Even the Belgians, who were so much against, were silent. Even when the speech was given in French. Had the expression of these so simple principles awakened the consciousness of the opportunists? Or did the attendees just let it all go over their heads – did they ignore it – because it was aimed against the official leaders, over the heads of the dignitaries, at the absent proletariat; because there was an appeal to the best in the people itself?

Apparantly the press too understood the thrust of my speech very well: little of it was published by the bourgeois papers, by "Het Volk" even less, nothing at all in "De Tribune"[132]."Het Vaderland"[133] did the best job: it summarized "only the proletariat". Indeed: only the proletariat, conscious of its task and willing to give all in a struggle for peace and freedom. And all those who want to unite with this proletariat into one powerful war against war.

There wasn't a chance that the other delegates of the IAMB would be able to speak about our proposals after that. In vain Björklund repeated that he didn't just represent the IAMB but the Swedish Young Socialists as well, and that he hadn't come to the congress for the niceties. In vain de Jong as well demanced the right for himself to speak in the name of the German syndicalists and to represent a different voice than was heard from Amsterdam and Moscow. Both were fobbed off with vague promisses and couldn't speak at all.

Mrs. Dr. Stöcker had a chance -after a lot of trouble– to defend the resolution that 15 German organisations had proposed – as if that should not have been given a lot of attention! This calm and brave woman could state that Vandervelde had turned back the clock to before 1914 and that the social-democrats – just as covertly violent and in the end one with the bourgeoisie- were much more dangerous than the openly violent and clearly opportunistic bolsheviks, but the meaning of such a remark didn't even register with this crowd.

Meanwhile Giesen stubbornly kept the president to his word, and was able to get 5 minutes speaking time in the end.

Understanding that 300 seconds were insufficient for a more or less reasonable support for the principle of direct action and the meaning of the individual action –even less as the hall was filled with backwardds elements– Giesen limited himself to draw the attention of the congress to one

132Tr. N. both 'Het Volk' and 'De Tribune' were social-democratic periodicals, respectively in Belgium and in the Netherlands

133Tr. N. "Het Vaderland" or "The Fatherland", progressive-liberal newspaper, precursor of "De Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant" that BdL often quotes later.

main point, by means of test. He suggested to send a telegram of sympathy to service refusers who were locked up in the nearby prison. That would be proof of the insight of the meeting **that the massive strength of the labor movement can only increase with the ever increasing individual strength of its constituent elements**. He pointed out that in England, and even in Amercia the conscientious objectors had since long been set free; but that in France an extremely large number of "unsubjugated" still awaited the amnesty of the so-called sovereign people; that in Bulgaria, Spain, etc, the government Bastilles were still filled with political prisoners. He wanted the Congress to accept or reject the following telegram -a representative telegram that was in theory aimed at all the emprisoned and tortured revolutionaries anywhere in the world-:

*"**To the principled Refusers of service, Pompstationsweg, Den Haag.***
The World Congress for Peace expresses it sympathy for the principled refusers of service who fight for us and for the coming world peace in a prison in this very city.
The Congress sends you this telegram as a token of its sympathy for the refusers who are imprisoned in every corner of the world, and as proof of its honest wish to give all principled refusers their freedom by means of relentless individual and common action."

It was all just screaming in the desert. Here and there some British, Canadian or American comrade sympathized with Giesen. But that was it. Full of disdain, the weighty '***politrickians'*** smiled.
What did it mean when -after a debate that seemed more political than anti-militarist– commissions were assembled to write resolutions? Nothing really. After so much confusion and narrow-mindedness one could hardly expect grand conclusions. It was even to be dreaded that some principled fighter in one of the five commisions would win, fighting for radical-anti-militaristic and clear revolutionary wordings...! What would a truly good resolution be but a lie when it was adopted by this bad congress? Lucky enough the last morning the general character of the official resolutions proved to correspond to the character of the congress in general.
Now it all came down to adopting or rejecting. To no avail, the representatives of the IAMB demanded to openly defend their position on each of the presented resolution. In vain they hoped to have even one single opportunity –as had already been vaguely promissed – to be able to speak even for a few minutes about the most important subject– the task of the labor movement. The only thing that they achieved was that the secretariat [of the IAMB] was promised that the declaration that follows would be included in the official minutes of the congress.
Only the Russians, who represented a formidable political power -only these competitors in international politics and the labor movement, who were essentially the flesh of the flesh and blood of the blood of the social-democrats- were given the opportunity to present their rejection. With reason they ridiculed the hollow phrases that the congress concluded with and asked "Where are your actions?"
The only congress leader that had spoken reasonably from a revolutionary anti-militarist point of view, had been Fimmen, whose personal enthousiasm charmed the noble Fritz Adler so much that he believed for one moment in the general rebirth of the modern labor movement and the 2nd International again. But Fimmen himself realized that his principled stance would be mercilessly detached from the meaningless congress decisions. He already admitted that he himself would like to go even further, but that the mass didn't follow. Will he too now follow that mass? Or does he dare to awaken a new mass by his words... and his actions?

"***Declaration of the IAMB, addressed to the Secretariat of the World Congress for Peace in Den Haag, 10 – 15 December 1922***.
The IAMB understands the words of Fimmen as proof that –thanks to the work of the persistent anti-militarists– the will to counter any war with a general strike continues to grow in a part of the labor movement and of humanity in general.
But we regret that the resolution in question does not testify to the same strength.
In the first of the five resolutions that the IAMB proposed, we have declared that a general strike

cannot be made conditional on the decision of official leaders.

Because the resolution that pertains to the general strike puts all the executive power in the hands of the board of executives of the IFTU without ever appealing to the spontaneous forces of the people, we are unable to adopt this resolution.

We call for the workers themselves to prepare federatively for war against war, with or without permission of their leaders.

As exemplary act, an act where the energy of the people unites, we welcome the action of the refuser of service, that demonstrates a way to create that massive force that we all desire in the end.

One of the weakest symptoms of the present resolution is the appeal for parliamentarian action, even in this resolution that addresses the task of the labor organisations.

In 1914 the mistake was made nationally to expect salvation from the parliaments; beware to make the same mistake internationally by expecting salvation from a league of governments.

Even worse yet –in order to go from theory to practice– is that, while we were discussing the task of the labor organisations here, a British labor leader has expressed his contentment on the announcement that the English government ordered the construction of two enormous war ships... because this would combat employment...

As long as the labor leaders don't understand that such labor is more destructive for the proletariat and for humanity than it is constructive, they are pointing in the wrong direction.

As long as those in this hall, who keep defending national defense, are accepted as decent anti-militarists; and as long as outside of this hall workers organized in labor organisations continue to manufacture ammunition and all kinds of war instruments instead of immediately starting to strike; it is the task of the revolutionary anti-militarists who want immediate action, to concentrate in specific organisations, appealing to the masses themselves to resist the governments as well as the dictatorship of the leaders of all parties and organisations, and to agitate without end for direct action."

This declaration was signed by C. J. Björklund, J. Giesen, Alb. de Jong, B. de Ligt, Dr. Helene Stöcker and Madeleine Vernet, sent to the IFTU secretariat with the request to add it to the official minutes of the congress.

Those who are interested in the judgement of the revolutionary anti-militarists on the IFTU resolutions can read the article of Alb. De Jong in "De Wapens Neder" of January 1923[134]. He explains that the congress has at no moment tried to connect with the actions that are already underway: neither to the refusal of military service, nor the individual resistance against the production of murder tools; that all direct action – in favour of the liberation of emprisoned refusers, of the international abolition of military service, of prevention of an occupation of the Ruhr, etc- all of that has been systematically ignored. The decisions of the Den Haag peace congress are, compared to the resolution of Rome, a step back to... party politics. Instead of calling the workers to stop the war industry itself for example, they were promised 'public control over the weapons industry by the League of Nations', alledgedly in collaboration with the labor organisations. In other words: the workers didn't have to do a thing! And yet one learns to do by doing.

The peace congress of Den Haag hasn't rejected national defense. In that case, Vandervelde and his allies wouldn't have voted in favour of the resolutions. They would have left the congress while protesting loudly and wouldn't have sung the 'International' together.

In circles of the IFTU there is a lot of talk about an *international* strike to *prevent* war. Anyone who thinks about this for a minute understands why increasing numbers of pacifists agree passionately with this slogan: because it allows each people that is 'attacked' to 'defend'.

134Tr. N.: https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMVRED01:003047040:pdf

D) Revolution, anarchism and antimilitarism (1924)

Source: „Der Syndikalist" VI no. 1; „B. I. A." Ed. du Bureau International Antimilitariste 1924, etc.[135]

"Unless socialism can destroy war, war will destroy socialism."
– Gordon Hosking

We have now blamed the bourgeoisie long enough, holding the ruling class responsible for the character of modern society. Sure, it wasn't a worthy social subject. Rather, she was an unworthy 'vile scoundrel', living dissolute, enraged, randomly that mercilessly oppressed and exploited the great mass as an object, pushing it to war for profit and more profit.[136]

Finally it was no longer bearable. The people in Central and Eastern Europe became rebellious. They rose up, and in the East the ruling class was driven out.
Now, however, in the Ukraine, Russia, Siberia, old capitalism is returning in a new guise. And the state is powerful again. And the army is growing enormously.
Why? Because the **proletariat is not able** to fulfill its task: to become a real social subject: to manage and reasonably order nature, society, itself.
In Germany, where in 1918 thrones faltered, and the ruling class trembled for a moment, social-democrats and bourgeois-democrats are constantly working together, and are maintain the old system in new forms. Why? Because the proletariat was not able to create a new society for itself. "A people has the government it deserves." And that is why the yolk must now be held responsible: because it endures all this!
A free people has no government. When will the modern proletariat, this beast of burden, draught, labour and war throw off its rider, raise its head, stand, no longer allow itself to be forced and governed - become human?
This is the great question of the revolution. For revolution is not only — negatively — upheaval, destruction, but — positively — upheaval, renewal. The revolution in society — Marx also recognized this — is preceded by a revolution in the people themselves. New insight, new understanding, a new will, firm, deep, truly human attitude are the **subjective factors** through which a new social order becomes possible. **Objective factors** — the old soil and the new means of production — are there in abundance. Even before the world war, capitalist society was ready to be transformed into a socialist society technically matured enough. But the subjective factor was not sufficiently present: Man. The moral and technical incompetence of the proletariat wastes the old ruling class again to rule. And it rules and governs now without any responsibility.

I do not accuse. I state. I want much more than to observe: I want to awaken in the proletariat a new respect for itself, a new power for action.
Precisely for that reason it must be held **responsible**. This time calls upon the best in the proletariat, like never before. If it does not rise up, if the people do not succeed in decisively freeing themselves from the madness of bourgeois rule, — it will degenerate and perish with the big bourgeoisie.

135 Tr. Note: In [Church, Culture and Society], 1925, pp 368-378; https://www.dbnl.org/arch/ligt005kerk01_01/pag/ligt005kerk01_01.pdf

136 In the most surprising way, the above argument is confirmed by ... "De Standaard" of August 23, 1924. We read there in a review in response to the Dawes report: "The French will remain at the Ruhr for a year at most. The chance that Herriot will be replaced by a more nationalistic statesman like Poincare or Briand is certainly not excluded, but we still do not believe in a questionable turnaround in the policy of rapprochement and forgetting that is currently being followed. France depends too much on its Anglo-Saxon friends and **now realizes, partly due to the failure of its Ruhr adventure, that it will not get there with a policy of violence on its own**. It needs its friends and also its former enemies, if it does not want to hopelessly disrupt its own finances and make itself economically and politically impossible."

The power of the ruling class over the proletariat is not external, but internal. It rests on "respect", "faith", "subordination", "subservience". The power of the ruling class is the impotence to which the bourgeoisie has reduced the proletariat: it is the passive militarism with which it has succeeded in inspiring the masses. For militarism is two-sided: on the one hand active, commanding, ruthlessly ruling - above; on the other hand passive, ruthlessly obedient - below. The people are inspired by a spirit of blind, slavish service.
This is due to system: the church, the factory, the barracks, the school, the office, the prison, the press, the cinema, the party. Certainly there are a hundred thousand excuses. But the people are not liberated with excuses. The people can only be liberated by self-liberation. The proletariat has to be its own messiah.

That does not only entail "occupation" of the enterprises. It means, **occupying and controlling the enterprises**. Socialism is first and foremost a question of free, reasonable control of the production process. It is about efficient, comradely cooperation for the satisfaction of the needs of a humanized society. It is a matter of establishing a new, internal and external order. It signifies a symphony of free solidarity.
That is precisely why socialism can only be **anarchist**. Where there is control, there is no room for comradeship. There new forms of oppression and exploitation always arise. There the tyrant grows, rooted in the slave. Where priests, leaders, dictators still speak "pro vobis omnibus (for you all)" — where ministers, bureaucrats and officers decide over you, without you, — there socialism does not live; its germ dies there. Where group interest is served instead of the common interest, — where humanity and humankind are neglected, — where one only takes into account one's own nation, and the interests of all others are subordinated to one's own without any regard, — no International will arise that can free the world from racial, class and state misunderstandings.

One learns to know the end from the means. Whatever end one claims to be pursuing, the nature of the means inexorably determines the real end.
The political means of the bourgeoisie are those of Machiavelli and Loyola.
The political means of Social Democracy are those of Machiavelli and Loyola.
The political means of Bolshevism are those of Machiavelli and Loyola.
The means of Social Democracy are bourgeois.
The means of Bolshevism are bourgeois and pre-bourgeois.
The state of the bourgeois and Social Democrats is bourgeois.
The state of the Bolsheviks is a bourgeois, pre-bourgeois institution, which asserts itself by bourgeois, pre-bourgeois, feudal and pre-feudal means – but disguised as revolution.
The army of the Bolsheviks is bourgeois. It was revolutionary at first, when the Russian revolution began under free, socialist, anarchist, syndicalist slogans. But — as Alexandra Kollontay (CLVII 12) tells us — it became increasingly militarized: military ranks, those relics of the past, inseparably bound up by their very nature with the old, tsarist system, penetrated the Red Army, and introduced there blind subordination, distinctions, ranks, slavish obedience, arbitrariness of superiors. And from the army, all this poured over again into social life, which had already been mentally prepared by dictatorship and by party leadership tyranny.
Mechanical conscription, both in the army and in the factory, was bourgeois and pre-bourgeois in nature. It was forced upon the people by threats and punishment externally, and demanded of them the disposition of a "good", or at least of a "non-evil-intentioned" slave.
The old discipline is external. The **new discipline is internal**: self-discipline: voluntarily subjecting oneself to the common, reasonably chosen goal, while everyone works as they can according to their disposition and ability. It is not discipline without leaders. But these "leaders" are not authorities who must be obeyed as such. They are leaders only insofar as they are exceptionally gifted or knowledgeable in certain respects, and are voluntarily recognized as such by the comrades. Such a free discipline becomes possible only in a revolutionary struggle against the state, bureaucracy and conscription; against employers, officers and clergy; against an "International of

Ministers" or a different one, represented by Machiavelli, Radek, Napoleon and Trotsky. In this respect Pierre Ramus rightly speaks of the social, emancipatory character[137] of revolutionary antimilitarism. (CLVIII 24)

The proletarian revolution in Russia has morally and practically come to its end. From the bourgeois point of view the **Russian revolution** is of great value. From the proletarian point of view it has significance only as a failure, an occasion for self-reflection, self-examination and an opportunity to continue fighting. The Russian leaders have become vulgar politicians, opportunists, very skilled in their profession, but for that very reason all the more dangerous. They are now giving in more and more to Russian **nationalism**, which is growing strongly (CLIX) and are using the entire 3rd International in its service.
Trotsky, once an internationalist and anti-militarist, is now fervently propagating a new provincialism: the USA of Europe, with a joint recovery and war budget; i.e. a confederation of states - under Bolshevik-social-democratic leadership; a gigantic state capitalism, dominated by Moscow. (CLX) **Radek** speculates on a union with Turkey and Japan. He glorifies the German nationalist Schlageter, and flatters the wildest chauvinism of the right to win over its supporters to his left-wing politics (CLXI, CLXII, CLXIII)
In an insane impatience they frown upon stirring up the revolution any longer, but hope to force it upon the peoples of Europe. They forget that this method kills the very revolution that they want to bring to life. **Vaillant Couturier** curses desertion and refusal to serve, and glorifies — like all the leaders of the French C.P. — everyone who serves in the army since, according to him, military discipline is the best preparation for revolutionary discipline. They focus mainly on the external: discipline and violence. (CLXIV) **Bukharin**, who has long spoken with great predilection of "proletarian militarism," now tells us that if, by chance, Russia, allied with a bourgeois power, were to enter into war against a foreign enemy, it would be the duty of all revolutionaries in the world to support the Bolshevik-bourgeois coalition.[138] In Russia, as in France before, a three-year conscription has already been introduced; there is a -mechanized!- army, organized in a bourgeois, pre-bourgeois manner; and people are working diligently on naval and air fleets... Formerly in opposition to the nationalism of the Second International, the Bolsheviks themselves now appear to be social-democratic nationalists and old-fashioned politicians, and have become more or less ripe for the League of Nations.
Again the old dictum is confirmed: **whoever says state, says war,** says division of people into rulers and ruled, into patriots and enemies. Bolshevism finally comes to the same conclusion as the 2nd International that it so often condemned and persecuted.
While Bukharin establishes that the orthodox Marxism of Kautsky has capitulated to the revisionism of Bernstein on the most important theoretical questions, we must establish that the revolutionary Marxism of Lenin and Trotsky has capitulated to the orthodox Marxism of Kautsky on the most important practical questions. And what Bukharin says of Kautsky and his followers, we must say again of Bukharin and his followers: “In their shamelessness they think they do not even need masks any more.”

In essence, the capitulation of Bolshevism to nationalism means the same thing as the capitulation of **Brailsford** and other members of the English Independent Labour Party to the war. (CLXVI 2)
At the last congress of the English Labour Party, Henderson declared that the party would lose all chance of winning the majority of the country behind it and of governing the country if, under the present circumstances, it failed to provide for the possibility of a good defence of the country. Fenner Brockway, Wellock and other English comrades oppose this view and stand up for international antimilitarism. But they are also vigorously opposed, especially by Brailsford, who explained that the "socialist defense” should be as efficient as possible. Morally, Fenner Brockway

137 A character that stimulates social self-liberation.
138 The revolutionaries in the country whose government is allied with Russia would then even have to make peace with their natural opponents. (CLXV)

and Wellock are right. Politically, however, Brailsford, as well as Trotsky and Radek. **Whoever wants to give up the war, must give up the state**. Therefore, the anti-militarist internationalists of the Independent Labour Party of must go further and recognize that "anti-militarism is naturally opposed to capitalism and the state, and goes straight to communist anarchy" (CLVIII 8), or they must, like the former internationalist anti-militarists Brailsford and Trotsky, give up the war against the war and become nationalists.
That is precisely why the Dutch social-democrats, who are preparing to govern the country together with the Roman Catholics, can't be real anti-militarists, and they continually sabotage a consistent anti-militarist struggle.
That is precisely why the great majority of the Canadian workers' congress in Vancouver rejected the proposal of the radical war fighters to make war impossible by means of a general strike, etc.

Napoleon Trotsky and Machiavelli Radek are filled with the same delusions as all civil militarists, as all believers in violence. They speak of a recovery or construction budget and at the same time of a war or destruction budget. However, they forget that the destruction budget **destroys their entire construction budget**. They want to compete with the U.S. of America on the matter of army and navy. Now the U.S. of America will spend 547,946,364 dollars on military purposes in 1923-1924. However, if soon all of Europe together with Japan were to arm itself against America, the Americans would have to increase their armaments even more. In competition with this, the U.S. of Europe would have to devote almost its entire life to the "labor of death" (CLXVII). What would then be left for restoration, for construction, what would be left of the labor of peace, what of culture, what of happiness and freedom? The working people, internationally, are on the wrong path. If they continue like this, they will suffocate in the swamp. Their path is a path of death.

The international proletariat must understand this. There is a need for a tireless propaganda, broad and deep, national and international, to open its eyes. There is only one way out: that of **socialism without masters**. And this demands not only the revolution of capitalist society, but first of all the moral revolution of the workers themselves. Bitter experience has shown that in the battle of ideas between Marx and Bakunin, Bakunin was right in principle. The views of the revolutionary syndicalists and social anarchists are the only to provide reliable guidelines for a new social practice.
The struggle for anti-militarism and freedom must be continued as vigorously as possible. Not only is theoretical and practical propaganda necessary for refusal of military service, desertion, personal and mass, for a general strike to prevent war, in the spirit of the decisions of the First International in 1868, etc. But there must also be — as Libertad (CLXVII) in France, Nettlau (CLXVIII) in England and Austria, Rocker (CLXIX) in Germany, and us in the Netherlands have propagated — a great propaganda for **responsible production**. Absolute strike of all work of death. The worker may only produce what can make life worth living.
Modern military technique and military chemistry have made war primarily a matter of factories and laboratories. That is where we want to fight it! The example of those German, Italian, Dutch and Spanish workers, who directly and indirectly refused military service, must not remain a small exception, but become the great rule!
The proletariat itself has this in its power. It can thus prevent war, even during peace. It is the task of the **syndicalist International** to work out a tactic which will make the revolutionary struggle effective in this respect.
Such a struggle will not be easy. But it will awaken the self-respect of the workers, strengthen their personal energy, and accelerate the social process of man and revolution. It will sharpen the human conscience, ennoble life, and harmonize the means with the end.
This is how we want a truly **united front**: of comrades who fight single-minded for free socialism. Our struggle against militarism is nothing but the flip-side of the struggle for the conscious control of the entire production process, for the free development of life and culture.
Workers, up! to the struggle against the great prostitution of brain and hand.

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E) Tolstoy and Gandhi (1930)[139]

Marx didn't want to be a marxist. Nietzsche despised followers. Tolstoy resented Tolstoyans. Gandhi highlights his own weaknesses and flaws and insist on being considered as a simple human who has an understanding of a long known truth.
But messianism is powerful. It seems that there aren't enough saviours yet! The newest is that people have declared Tolstoy to be the latest John the Baptist; Gandhi in turn his Christ.
Sadly enough, a more or less free thinking man like Romain Rolland participates in this. He makes Mahatma Gandi appear to be the true Star from the East. In his need to demonstrate an Embodiment of Truth, the noble Frenchman slides over unwelcome truths if necessary: even more than in his booklet about Gandhi, he hides the irresponsibly, almost reckless war propaganda that his revered Indian made in 1918[140]. He describes how Tolstoy's thinking had taken root around and in Gandhi like nowhere else, and reminds of his struggle in Africa. In stark contrast with that, Europe soon ripped itself apart in the most barbaric way. But once the storm of violence had died down, one could hear the 'pure and strong voice' of Gandhi again, that repeated Tolstoy's words 'in a clear and melodic way'. - Who would suspect even for a moment how murky and impure the Indian leader has acted, especially near the end of the world war?
And why is all that? We don't need another infallible messiah! After Loa-tze, Kong-tse, Buddha, Krisjna, Christ, the meaning of life has been revealed in its essence. The new thinking has fundamentally cleansed their old gospels of all magical and mythological ornamentation. That life is about personality that can only blossom in solidarity – about solidarity that can only realize itself in a free community of mutually respecting personalities, - that doesn't require yet another saviour with more exceptional authority. In order to recognize this simple truth we have no need for deluding ourselves with the idea that it has completely 'embodied' itself in some divine human!
One of the reasons that I have written my Open Letter to Gandhi[141] was precisely this: to break this tendency for a new messianic cult. And it is hard to believe how this was met with resistance in several countries. 'Why advance right now', people wrote to me, 'when the great leader has failed in the past? This is even less necessary because many don't even know!' While the catholic church at

139 Tr. Note: Source: 'Een wereldomvattend vraagstuk', 1930. Cit in 'Naar een vrije orde' pp 144-152

140 Tr. Note: Gandhi, who was raising an Ambulance Corps in London in 1914, threw himself whole-heartedly into the recruitment drive on his return to India in 1915. He argued that “we should send our men to France and Mesopotamia. We are not entitled to demand *Swaraj* [self-rule] till we come forward to enlist in the army” and “Here we have an invaluable opportunity for getting back the capacity to fight which we have lost and we should not miss the supreme opportunity which India has of supplying half a million men.” because “I thought that England’s need should not be turned into our opportunity, and that it was more becoming and far-sighted not to press our demands while the war lasted.”, although he would later change his mind and condemn the “black” (i.e. the Rowlatt Act of 1919) act, passed by a “satanic” government, that carried wartime ordinances into peacetime legislation, allowing the British to imprison Indians without trial for example.
In 1918 he participated in the Delhi War Conference, where he spoke on April 29 and supported the resolution on recruitment. One day later he offered his services to the British Empire in a letter to Maffey, Private Secretary to Viceroy. He repeated his appeal for people to enlist in the army in a speech in Ahmedabad, etc.
He wasn't alone in this position. Even Rabindranath Tragore, Nobel Peace Prize winner supported the war as well, like an important part of the Indian bourgeoisie.

141 Tr. Note: see for example https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/bart-de-ligt-my-correspondence-with-gandhi, https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/bart-de-ligt-mahatma-gandhi-s-attitude-towards-war , https://www.satyagrahafoundation.org/the-mahatma-gandhi-bart-de-ligt-public-correspondence-on-peace-and-war/ , https://www.satyagrahafoundation.org/gandhi-and-war-the-mahatma-gandhi-bart-de-ligt-correspondence/ , https://archive.org/details/gandhi-over-oorlog-ontwapening-en-volkenbond
BdL's position on Gandhi is often misunderstood or misrepresented, as is his alledged 'pacifism' (he said himself that he was not a 'pacifist', and that seems an honest analysis). See for more on anarchists in India for example: https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/ole-birk-laursen-m-p-t-acharya-international-anarchism-and-indian-independence. It is true that BdL seems to have little contact with anarchists in the region.
I have chosen not to re-publish texts that are already more or less accessible but to focus on a text that hasn't been translated to English before as far as I could see.

least waits a reasonable while before it canonizes someone -as if it allows the essence of their personality to sink in-, at this moment all kinds of already more or less free thinking people want to force the hard, golden halo on the skull of Gandhi, although he is himself aware of his own fallibility. It must encumber him more than a crown of thorns would.
Indeed it is easier to have a messiah: the more infallible the messiah seems to be, the more fallible one is allowed to be himself. Thát is why I have accentuated the failure of Gandhi, so that we wouldn't put our trust even on this prince in the realm of spirits, and so that we wouldn't ascribe the highest and best not first of all to someone else, but demand it of ourselves. But I was even more motivated by this idea: whomever already surrenders themselves blindly to the authority of Gandhi, could well be disappointed just as much as the socialist masses that believed in their leaders in 1914. The main reason was of course: to agitate Gandhi and his Indian comrades to break with all nationalist opportunism and opportunistic militarism once and for all.
The John the Baptist/Jesus Christ-syndrome is even less relevant for Tolstoy and Gandhi, because the Russian and the Indian were born in such different parts of the world and reacted to such different circumstances. All those kinds of parallels -Mozart-Beethoven or Rafaël-Michelangelo, for example- are, at best, of some relevance as very prelimenary start of a a more nuanced exposé. If such dichotomies are dogmatized, views on history are forced and one is alienated from historic and psychological reality. If we want to approach such reality we must liberate ourselves from those kinds of views completely. In the case of Tolstoy and Gandhi we must first of all make it clear that -even with so much 'Eastern' in Tolstoy and so much 'Western' in Gandhi- Tolstoy must first of all be understood as part of Russia and Western Europe, and Gandhi must be understood in the context of India and Asia; and that apart from differences in natural surroundings, cultural traditions and races, we must also take differences in individual leanings and personal nature into account.
What a differentiation for starters between the constitution of the magnificent Russian and the physically almost too weak Gandhi. Tolstoy was also an artist and was characterized not just by an over-sensitive nervous system but by a high sensuousness as well. Egocentric by nature he burned with sehnsucht in the style of the 'Preacher' even in his youth, in the spirit of Schopenhauer, both of whom he feels connected with and that he quotes at his pivotal moments. Different than the immediately dedicated precurser John, Tolstoy didn't know how to handle himself and he was swept along dangerously by worldly life from his youth. Later he sought redemption for himself first of all. His conscience didn't leave him alone. But it took half a century before this passionate man succeeded in -even in making a start with- liberating 'the beast' within himself. In a wrestling for his own salvation, he wanted to get rid of his social 'sin', his 'guilt' in the social imbalance. To redeem himself, he had to redeem the people, and to free the people he had to free himself. The struggle of this Russian giant is enormous. He almost forces himself to universal love, and thereby reduces the free spirit of the original gospel into a new 'law'. Struggling for self-perfection, he raises his goal higher and higher, and he broadens the scope of his task wider and wider. He spiritualizes his own need to lose himself in trance into a pan-entheism. His conscience, that tortures him, is transformed into the global conscience. In order to save himself, he wrestles himself out of all boundaries; and afterwards he will only recognize his boundaries more or less reasonably and relatively.
In this wrestling for self-liberation and world-renewal, Leo Tolstoy owes a lot to the Eastern spirit. Especially Lao-Tse spoke deeply to his most inner being. Even as a young man, Paul Birukof recounts, he was touched by the mental strength of a 'defenceless'[142] Indian in a hospital, he recognized a power there that superceded the barbarian violence of the Russian state, a spirit that rose above the analysing brain of the Western sciences. Such soul strength, such goodness, born out of supra-human solidarity, had to be the cure for the disease of still almost medieval Russia and of the over-civilized Western Europe...
Like a typical prophet, he fought even harder and raged even more passionately against the sins of the world precisely because he suffered so deeply from them himself. He was himself still large landowner who lived off naked exploitation by volition and whim. He had been an officer and had

142Tr. Note: 'weerloze' was literally translated here; quotation marks by BdL to suggest that he wasn't happy with the description as 'defenceless' but that he used a common term for lack of a better one.

murdered during war. He loved hunting and games, smoking, drinking and extreme fornication. He knew no sin that he hadn't committed. This big prodigal son had such fiercely sensual ideas about music that later, when people played some Chopin for him, he ran out of the room and cursed: 'Dirty animal'[143]. He had abused sexuality so much since his youth, that he has never been able to purely experience the erotic.
The most beautiful thing in this hard-living, restless, truth-willing human is that he recongizes again and again that 'the beast' is still powerful within him, that he himself is not what he preaches, and that at the same time he tries to increasingly become just that, even if he dearly hopes that others will surpass him, but in their own way.
This is very substantial in the older Tolstoy: that he wants everyone to assert themselves according to their nature and inclination. He increasingly recognizes that every human being has their own special road to travel, although he is sure that all roads will follow the same general direction in the end. This is where his connection to India and Gandhi is very strong.
The West was already addicted to violence for a fatally long time. All of its institutions were soaked through and through with it. Even its religion was falsified by it. But in the East there were still all kinds of possibilities. If only the people there wanted to stay true to their nature and tradition! Tolstoy implored the Chinese and Indians not to allow themselves to be poisoned by the modern West, but to stay faithful to the wisdom and goodness of the greatest Asians, those moral leaders of humankind. The East had a special task to fulfill, not just for itself but for humanity as a whole.
This touched Gandhi. A completely different kind of man, raised differently from a young age, deeply-moral in nature and familiar from the start with the best examples of Indian holy scriptures and the bible. What Tolstoy had to conquer against the odds, Gandhi found without effort, ready for him. Familiar with Western civilization -he studied in England-, he was above all else a lover of his own Eastern tradition and his own people that was so tired of being tortured. It was much easier and more natural for Gandhi to arrive at his non-violent method of struggle: it flowed naturally from his religious tradition, corresponded with his education and – it had to be applied by a people that was só oppressed that it simply couldn't free itself violently. These means of struggle also fit in well with the nature of the naturally soft, pliable Gandhi, who had more of an aptitude for holiness than for being a prophet or messiah. Being more altruistic than egocentric, his deepest need soon wasn't to liberate himself, but others. He was simpler, less multifaceted, less ingenious, but much more controlled, infinitely purer and more amiable than Tolstoy. He had, so to speak, his nature working in favor just as like Tolstoy's worked against him. His inner peace was só big that he wanted to use it to cure the 'un-peace' of others. From the affluence of goodness he wanted others to share in the forces that he already knew himself. He 'sanctified himself for his people' in order to awaken forces in it that would enable it to liberate itself. Without a doubt there is something of Christ in this. But his goal is much more limited, and what he preaches is not a new tiding. His importance is also much more tactical and political than religious. His first question is always: how do I help my oppressed people, how can my race liberate itself most effectively. And the answer is: by struggling in the spirit of the purest Asian traditions, yhat Tolstoy revived especially in the modern consciousness; by turning necessity into virtue and our defencelesness into our greatest weapon; by increasingly giving up external violence because we discover sources of inner strength that not even army of millions can touch.
If one is looking for parallels, Tolstoy and Gandhi could sooner be compared to Elia and Elisa[144]. Tolstoy's prophet's cloak then falls on Gandhi's shoulders. And Gandhi tries to continue the religious-moral tradition that Tolstoy represented, onto the field of practical politics.
But that is why a chasm opens up between Tolstoy and Gandhi. Tolstoy is profoundly revolutionary in the face of the state and he even philosophizes 'with the hammer' on the subject. Gandhi is more of an opportunist. Tolstoy wants nothing to do with any organized violence in the service of a truly

143By the way for Tolstoy the expression 'animal' is never without a certain immediate sympathy, a so to say deeply-instinctive appreciation that is born in his general sense of nature.
144Tr. Note: the Jewish prophet https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elijah and his devoted disciple https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elisha

humane society. Gandhi appreciates the British Empire as -in theory- one of the most free in the world. He calls himself an anarchist and he means it, but he idealizes the future community of peoples of the British Empire so much that he thinks that there will be a place as equals for India in the united states. Tolstoy wants to abolish class antagonisms above all else. Gandhi is primarily concerned with national liberation. His special goal -that the colored people will be the equals of the white people- makes him forget more than once about the dubious nature of the political system as such. We could almost say that Gandhi's person, but Tolstoy's preaching are more reliable. Tolstoy always kept an eye open for the oppressive nature that is the core of all states. He was concerned with the free self-organisation of the whole of humanity.

For Gandhi, the heroic love is first of all a practical means to liberate his race. He bravely fights his fight in South-Africa. But there already, it's clear that the humanitarian for him is first of all a means in the service of the national. During the Boer War[145], Gandhi takes the side of the British Empire. By cooperating loyally with the mighty oppressor, he hopes to be given some favors for his people. He deliberately strengthens the British army by doing quasi-humane work in the Red Cross[146]. Later in Natal, the same thing. He wanted to make himself so useful to the British that it recognized him and his race as fellow humans, and if that didn't work, to simply force them to do so with supra-violent, moral methods of struggle. This is all very important and has great value as a try-out for new tactics. But it isn't in the spirit of Tolstoy. Even less in the spirit of the original gospel. The humane remains subordinated to the Indian.

Tolstoy himself didn't understand this. In 1909 he writes[147] to Gandhi that his conduct in Transvaal is among the most important events in world history, and says that in Russia, similar spiritual methods of struggle are being used by christian sects. But these sects were profoundly anti-state, and revolutionary christianity has always chosen the universal idea above the own people, race and fatherland. The Russian sects, despite their relative primitivism, celebrated a deeper and broader understanding than the finely cultivated, intellectually formed Gandhi. We could even say that Gandhi is, from a political-tactical point of view, all too... Westernized.

That became clear during the world war. Immediately in 1914 Gandhi chose the side of the British Empire. Why? Just like later in Italy, because of 'sacred egoism', esteemed holy national self-interest. He didn't naively side with England because he thought that it was right to do so. He wanted -again- that India would make itself so useful in the war against the Central Powers, that England and the allies would reward it with equal rights. He consciously took part in the murder of millions of Germans, Austrians and Turks who had never harmed the Indians; he even supported the gruesome hunger blockade so that the Realm, that had tortured and insulted his own people for centuries, would finally grant it political freedom – but political freedom is something entirely different from, and inferior to, social freedom. One-sided hope for political rights made him break solidarity with all those in the jails of the allies and anywhere else, who continued -in the spirit of Christ and Tolstoy- to fight against methods of violence, while he continued to take part in the self-disintegration of humanity. The (very surreal) goal -political equal treatment for India- justified the (very inhumane) means for Gandhi: participation in the war. According to him, India had to sacrifice not just its spirit and its gold, but its blood and life as well for the national defense of the mighty British Empire and conquer its own national independence by doing so. It even had to seize the opportunity to practice in the arms trade in such a way that it would be capable to defend itself militarily later on! In short -like mental resilience had seemed India's big means of liberation to Gandhi-, now... military resilience was.

How fortunate that Tolstoy was no longer alive. How the tortured soul of the old Russian would have been torn apart if he had witnessed such waste of ideas from such human, such people. Who

145Tr. Note: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Boer_War

146Tr. Note: BdL and almost all his comrades rejected working in the Red Cross as a form of collaboration and delusion. The first role of the Red Cross was to limit soldiers dying in order to send as many as possible back to the front as soon as possible, and to keep up moral of the soldiers at the front by giving them some hope to be saved if they got wounded.

147Tr. Note: see https://www.mkgandhi.org/Selected%20Letters/Leo-Tolstoy-and-Mahatma-Gandhi-correspondence.pdf

could imagine -even for a moment- that Leo Tolstoy would have supported whatever state even in exchange for a moment for the freedom of the Russian farmers, and would have practically supported its success in war? Tolstoy was too fundamentally revolutionary to ever walk in such a political trap!
So Gandhi is not an Indian Christ who follows some Russian John the Baptist. Tolstoy is Tolstoy and Gandhi is Gandhi, each with their own history and nature, with their own strenghts, weaknesses and flaws. Purely individually-ethically Gandhi is probably superior. But as a revolutionary, Tolstoy transcends Gandhi by a lot. Even if the mass movements that he lead remain of great tactical and moral importance to us.
Indeed we owe Gandhi a great deal for a whole lot of things. He has taught us the practical importance of the non-violent struggle if it is systematically applied by masses united in solidarity. He has truly humanely served his country and his people multiple times. This agitates us to try his methods for more universal goals as well.
And I want to add: the means themselves determine not just the nature of the struggle, but they also permanently impact the nature, maybe not of the immediate desired outcome, but surely of the unintended objective-historical result. The means have, so to say, always their own immanent goals. Those who fight violently for humanity will obtain something less humane than what they started out for. Insofar Ganhdi remains true to his humane methods of struggle for India's liberation, he works for the moral liberation of the whole world as well. His humane means of struggle will lead him to abandon his more limited goals and to harmonze his goals with his means.
It remains an open question whether Gandhi would choose the side of the British Empire again in a new world war and if he would use military resilience for a second time for the liberation of India[148]. Even from a strictly practical point of view this strategy has failed. And it's morally indefensible. Gandhi is now busy with the most heroic act thinkable: general self-revision. He approaches the period of 1914-1918 in the evaluation of his history. Indian friends of his have reasured me that he is more than ever convinced of the necessity of a rigourously non-violent tactic in the favor of India; that his attention shifts more and more to the class conflicts and the economic causes of modern war. Nothing would make me happier than if the Open Letter that I addressed to him recently[149] would help Gandhi to break with the method of all too far-reaching political adaptation that he has used until now, and to help him decide that in the future the humane should no longer be subordinated to the tactically-political. We very much hope that this will happen soon. It is even more pressing because in India itself the drive towards national defense slowly increases – a drive that can only be fought by those who resist it absolutely, internationally increasingly connected to all who resist war and racial- and class exploitation. The more the Western proletariat it makes it impossible for its own white rulers to continue the exploitation and oppression in Asia, the easier the Indian anti-militarism will find it to push through with their heavy struggle and to ignore the very tempting slogan: “Against the barbarians with barbarian means!”
So if Gandhi truly wants to honour Tolstoy, he should shed his partisan opportunism – the sooner the better.

Ascona, August 12, 1928

148Tr. Note: Gandhi remained loyal to the British Empire and declared his support for Britain and its allies. He also wrote letters to Hitler on July 23, 1939 (https://www.mkgandhi.org/letters/hitler_ltr.php) and on December 24, 1940 (https://www.mkgandhi.org/letters/hitler_ltr1.php)

149Tr. Note: See https://www.satyagrahafoundation.org/the-mahatma-gandhi-bart-de-ligt-public-correspondence-on-peace-and-war/ and https://www.satyagrahafoundation.org/gandhi-and-war-the-mahatma-gandhi-bart-de-ligt-correspondence/

F) Clara-Meijer-Wichmann as defender of humanity (1931)[150]

To react violently to violence, is animalistic: 'If you are a wolf, then bite back when your are bitten', Epictetus wrote. Rewarding crime with crime is barbaric: 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot, a burn for a burn, a cut for a cut, a lash for a lash' and in the end 'a life for a life' was already condemned as inhumane by Lao Tse, Buddha, the stoa and original christianity. And by the way it doesn't add up: eye, tooth, hand, foot, cut, burn, lash or life mean different things to different people. Those things can never be measured and weighed. That said, there is a lot of talk of retaliation recently, mainly in so-called christian circles, yes even of deifying it, and glorifying the death penalty just like war is glorified. And how inhumane, barbaric, sub-animalistic this is even from the point of view of the modern state; and how far social life lags behind our personal morality! For the state it's normal to counter violence with violence, crime with crime. No wonder that Luther, who -although deeply touched by the higher morality of original christianity- increasingly evolved towards accepting the state, government and violence openly declared: 'A king can be a christian, but he can't govern as a christian'. A merchant once told me: 'I like coming in a church. But when I open my business, I close my Bible'; and an officer once told me: 'There is no use for the gospel in the army'. During the world war a lot of theologists deemed a moratorium on christian morality to be necessary. Robert Falke[151] wrote in his 'Soldatenbühlein': *"As long as the battle rages, Jesus' command to love is entirely suspended. It doesn't apply for the hours of the fight"*. Where does it all end? Christian -or rather: human- morality -because as Erasmus understood long ago, christian morality has nothing exceptional; it coincides with the best of the moral understanding of the whole of humanity, from which it has arisen by the way- is suspended at the exchange market as well as on the battlefield, in the halls of justice and in the prisons. In 'Prisons and their influence on prisoners', Kropotkin points out that even if a Pestalozzi[152] became a warden, he would be lost as a pedagogue. For him, the main condition for educating humanity and humaneness were: freedom, trust, respect for eachother and oneself – and what is left of all that in prison? Everything there is coercion, distrust and disgrace. And it is asked: could a father be the warden of his son? Indeed everything resists such supposition. What father could be the jailer of his son that is convicted to life, what son his father's jailer, what daughter her mother's? All that is human that one tries to apply to prisoners is deformed to a grimace like in a carnival mirror through the system of violence that it has to pass through. What can a humane prison guard do but give the prisoners a chance to escape, or at least to subvert the law in all kinds of ways, and

150Tr. Note: Source: 'Bevrijding', N 2, June 1931. Cit in 'Naar een vrije orde'
Clara was one of the most important anti-militarist comrades of Bart de Ligt. They worked together very closely in several organisations and their minds traveled along the same paths. Clara was also a very important and influential figure in the Dutch feminist movement and the prison reform/abolish movement. Although her more radical, anarchist aspects have been ignored and obscured, there are still justice reform organisations, streets and university chairs named after her.
I found it important to name at least some of his closest allies, Clara Meijer-Wichmann had to be one of them. For BdL, Wichmann and the other anarchists the military is just one department of the State, one with the same essential role as the 'justice' system and the police. The same logic applies. And war and crime are intimately linked in all kinds of ways.

151Tr. Note: Robert Falke (1864-1948), German evangelical priest, preacher at the Royal Court, superintendent and journalist

152Tr. Note: https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/prisons-and-their-moral-influence-on-prisoners, "I might propose that a Pestalozzi be placed at the head of each prison. I refer to the great Swiss pedagogue who used to take in abandoned children and make good citizens of them. I might also propose that in the place of the present guards, ex-soldiers and expolicemen, sixty Pestalozzis be substituted. But, you will ask, 'Where are we to find them?'--a pertinent question. The great Swiss teacher would certainly refuse to be a prison guard, for, basically, the principle of all prisons is wrong because it deprives man of liberty. So long as you deprive a man of his liberty, you will not make him better. You will cultivate habitual criminals: that is what I shall now prove." and "To the league of prisoners there is opposed the league of jailers. It is the institution which makes them what they are--petty, mean persecutors. Put a Pestalozzi in their place and he will soon become a prison guard."

to help them do so as well?
It is said that modern methods of punishment have been humanized, that the torturing rack and the death penalty are no longer in use. But people forget that according to experts like Mr. A. de Graaf, former secretary of the Dutch Association for the Improvement of Prisoners[153], the “appalling cruelty of imprisonment [is] worse than that of the racks of former times”. And is life in prison not worse than death for many? And then in many modern prisons there is solitary confinement, yes the dark cell. Some time ago I have made the existence of dark cells in the Special Prison for Punishment[154] in Scheveningen -in a sense the Dutch model prison- public via the media; officially it didn't exist, but the warden had it made without the College of Supervisors knowing about it because he couldn't do without this system that is based on violence. Van de Es and myself have in the end visited this dark cell in the presence of Mr. De Jong van Beek en Donk. One goes through an iron door in a high, square room split in the middle from bottom to top by a heavy lattice with a heavy lattice door, like for wild animals in a zoo.[155] The only light comes from above. Behind the bars nothing but a concrete floor, a wooden bunk and a bucket as toilet. That is where the rogue prisoner, who is often in an agitated state, is locked up more or less violently. After which a rope near the deur is pulled that closes off all light, the door is closed – and the night inside begins. There are other questionable means of punishment by the way. It is impossible for the prison system nót to corrupt, not just the prisoners, but the guards and higher officials as well. Domela Nieuwenhuis has noted that being a prison guard is one of the most disturbing jobs, and tells the story of when a guard admitted to him (when Domela was a political prisoner himself): “Oh sir, you get out again when your time has come, but us guards are here for life”. Domela continued: “All of them grow rigid, suspicious, as all blows come down on their backs. Chief warden, deputy director, warden, superintendents of the prison and the gentlemen of the 'moral improvement service'[156] – those should all be sheltered from the blows. And on the other hand they often have a lot to suffer from the inmates, for whose neglect or neglicence they are held responsible. They look around in fear and if they are in a cell for a moment they are very alert for any suspicious sound” that comes in from the slightly ajar door. The distrust has become a system. The prison guard who spies on the inmates is spied on in turn from all sides.
I had similar experiences during some weeks in 1916 in the Utrecht prison and in Den Haag in 1921. The best guards suffered the most under the untennability of the system. None of the ones that I could speak to believed in the effectivity of their own job. Soon they told me horrific stories, not in the least about the degeneration of the youngsters in the prison, especially sexually; about the inescapable recidivism; and they complained that there were so many more or less mentally ill people[157]. “We are all half nervously ill”. Some almost begged me to help them find 'another job'. But there were those as well, who loved to insult and bully the inmates all too much -as I have experienced myself- and who made the inevitable insult of the sentence even more insulting by redirecting their rage for their superiors towards the inmates. And the prison chaplain did his rounds like a roaring lion, looking for someone to convert.

Indeed prisoners more than any other people have to be converted and -especially- 'improved'. There even is a special association for the improvement of this sort of people. But wouldn't it be preferable to start by improving and converting people befóre they become prisoners? For example, I had some 'officials' visit me, who could do with quite some improvement. Of course they spoke

153Tr. Note: 'Nederlands Genootschap tot Verbetering van Gevangenen'
154Tr. Note: 'Bijzondere Strafgevangenis' in Scheveningen
155Tr. Note: BdL uses the word 'Artis', as specific zoo in the Amsterdam that still exists: https://www.artis.nl/en/
156Tr. Note: literal translation of the contemporary language; we would probably say 'social service' now, but this would not reflect the original meaning. The service at the time was more authoritarian and harsher as it included what a disciplinary board, board of parole and board of corrections more than any actual social service like we would understand today.
157Tr. Note: BdL literally writes: 'zwakzinnige, minderwaardige typen'; a literal translation would be 'retarded, inferior types' but that would not represent the actual meaning and weight in the Dutch language or in the world-view of BdL himself or that of Clara Wichmann.

from on high, or at least more or less patronizing. In short, they were at best philantropists, and not always of the nicest kind. They turned up in your cell unanounced -that is to say after reading your list of sins outside the door, having peered inside through the hatch in the door and being briefed by the guard and the warden. The rules said that an inmate had to stand up for everyone who entered the cell. So you stood up. Without introducing themselves, they immediately started asking questions with an air of superior: “Have you something to complain about too?” As if one had not in fact everything to complain about! But no, that's not what they meant...
I had a visit from a prison preacher. Opposite my tripod stool that was chained to the wall, a guard had first put a most comfortable chair down. On which the Servant of The Word sat down and the conversation started. I was immediately targeted from his chair because I seemed to be a special kind of sinner. Without any knowledge of my personal story, he even asked me: “What would your mother say if she saw you sitting here?” and he looked around with pity. Shouldn't such a human be converted himself before they let him loose on inmates? Even so, he had his seniority party coming up. His sermons were one big attempt to convince those listening that they had fallen deep, but that there just might be some salvation possible for them; his prayer an attempt to favor the god for such sinners. Hadn't he ever read: *“If I travel along some road and meet a stranger, and I go to them and I look at them and say 'I know the one big crime of your life, that you keep hidden from everyone', he will turn away his gaze in fear, yes probably cover his face?”* This is probably exagerated. But if not everyone commits crime, not even hidden crime -that is not always listed in the codex by the way-, everyone has without a doubt often come close, even if it's just in their minds. And wasn't it often just cowardice and fear that kept them from acting? Prisoners are generally not more evil, but more unlucky than others – in Russia for example the people has always been deeply aware of this-. They know very well how things really stand:
“SMALL THIEVES STEAL
BIG THIEVES DON'T?
CHRISTIANS STEAL MOST”
is what I read, scratched in my cell walls in Den Haag. And on the calendar under a date:
“birthday of my son
I AM INNOCENT”
Was he really innocent? Had he only played to be innocent, probably fooled himself as well? In any case everyone knows, to speak with E. H. Schmitt, that in this society 'scum floats to the top': the crimes of knighted petrol kings and ammunition merchants, pious generals, bribed journalists and powerful bankers are enormous, compared to the often modest robberies for which one is imprisoned again and again, or the single murder that one often pays for with the loss of one's whole life or at least a very large part of it. And yet the former walk free, and humanity falls victim to their mercy.
There is no real relation between crime and punishment, and such relation is impossible. There is no way to establish what is 'right'. Generally, official law causes an imbalance at the expense of those who are labeled as criminals, whose lives are uprooted, often destroyed, and whose family is also punished in the most cruel way.
No wonder that in Europe the most humanely feeling and purest willing people have condemned the courts and punishment and have rejected retribution for 20 centuries. The first christians for example didn't just refuse to serve in the military, but all official positions, especially that of judge, because they would be forced to condemn people to death. They didn't drag eachother before the courts either. When the Church had tied itself to the State, the most faithful heretics continued this tradition. Most of them wanted nothing to do with positions of authority. Moses' law of retribution was obsolete according to them; the 'one command' of Christ was the only valid command. As the Reformation grounded to a halt and coalesced with state, violence and capitalism, resistance survived in all kinds of sects that served as the conscience of western humanity.
For example there was a group of noble men and women in 17th century Holland who were described as 'reformers' and are today considered to be forerunners of conscious objecting and humanity, and as exemplary fighters against war, and precursors of free thinking. Many did not only

reject military service, but courts and prison systems as well, while most of them leaned towards communism. Hylkema has compared them to modern Tolstoyans and radical christian-socialists. Daniël Zwicker for example declared himself to be completely against 'the worldly way of sentencing'. He deemed *"the hangmen, gallows, breaking wheel, scaffolds, heretic forks, burning, swords, rods, scourgings, brandings, racks, prisons, chackles, work houses, townhalls and courts of justice"*[158] to be incompatible with true christianity.

In the 20th century this tradition was continued -amongs others- by one of the most gifted women of our times, Dr. Clara Wichmann, whose short life was one big struggle for truth and freedom. Building on natural and spiritual solidarity that unites people, and deliberately connecting with the purest tendencies in morals, religion and philosophy, she stood up against the fact **that in cultural history, punitive law lags centuries behind**, and while in all other respects higher principles are recongized and their implementation attempted, in this context ideas persist of retribution, deterrence, rendering harmless and in the end with reformation. She established that the phenomenon of so-called mass criminality only arises in abnormal times like ours: for the largest part of history of humanity this was unknown. The level of crime was never stable: it fell and rose according to society being relatively in order or in disorder. Much of what used to be considered to be an 'eternal category', proves to be nothing more than a 'historic category': a temporary phenomenon that can be explained by certain circumstances. In certain social contexts, increasingly large masses are driven to crime; they seem to fly towards it like mosquitos in the light. In certain other contexts even mentally ill people[159] seem to be kept away from crime. A large part of the mentally ill that populate the prisons come from a certain unfavorable environment where especially alcoholism, scrofula and syphilis rage. But –Clara Wichmann continues in 'Crime, Punishment and Society'[160]- even if one tries to counter this kind of situation by the fight against bad habitation, child neglect, alcoholism, veneral disease, etc; if that is where it ends, the capitalist system is still maintained, that produces ever new kinds of misery -and must continue to do so- like war and unemployment.

Whomever tries to combat these situations without changing society, doesn't understand *"that the capitalist system is a source from which these situations continue to spring, even if there is a chance to fight them here or there,*

that it is impossible to ensure an equally good education for everyone in a class society and with a profit-based production;

that as long as the proletariat falls short on the one hand, and a completely or partially parasitic class exists on the other, the causes for mass criminality will remain active;

that the ever returning crises and wars bring ever returning periods of raised crime with them;

that not just malnourishment, neglect, bad housing and alcoholism are at play, but the whole spirit of the capitalist morality -as it is expressed in all human relations-, exercises its demoralizing influence in the sense that ruthlesness, selfishness and elbowing are accepted as a general norm;

that in the imperialist phase softer, communal feelings are repressed and atrophy;

in other words that the neglect of children, bad housing and alcohol abuse are not stand-alone ailments, but symptoms of a completely ill organism."

In other words, the struggle against war or bad education demands the struggle against the ruling system of punishment and imprisonment and for a healthy human society, and can only be won effectively in that context.

Exceptional cases of heavy crime will probably not disappear completely in a more humane society,

158Tr. Note: some of the medieval words are difficult to translate, as local customs may differ and many names and variations were used. Literally the text says: "de beulen, galgen, raders, schavotten, prangers, vyeren, swaerden, roeden, geselen, branden, pijnbanken, gevanckenissen, boeyen, rasphuysen, spinhuysen, stadthuysen en rechthuysen"

159Tr. Note: again, I chose to translate according to the spirit, and not literally ('minderwaardige typen': inferior types and 'gedegenereerden': degenerates becomes 'mentally ill'

160Tr. Note: 'Misdaad, Straf en Maatschappij', https://anarchief.org/wiki/Wichmann,_Clara_-_Misdaad,_Straf_en_Maatschappij

according to Clara Wichmann, especially among more or less mentally ill individuals[161] -whose number will decline under better circumstances. But the mass of professional and habitual crime is a typical part of today's society and will disappear as society heals. Crimes of opportunity and crimes because of guilt, negligence and carelessness will more or less remain. But all of those will need to be treated differently and without methods of retalliation.
Clara Wichmann also strongly refutes the idea that both feudal-ecclesiastic and liberal-bourgeois criminal law maintain, as if all those who are not completely insane can be held 'responsible' for their actions. This is contrary to modern psychology as well as modern sociology.
“This equal but abstract responsibility does not exist, every human being differs from others in this respect an every human being differs from themselves in different phases of their life, different degrees of fatigue and excitement. The differentiation between accountable and mentally incompetent is unsustainable, there are only gradual differences; almost no-one is completely unaccountable, almost none are completely responsible.”
To really be able to judge someone, we would need to know them completely, their entire history, their subconscious soul processes, and on top be ourselves perfectly free from all subjective bias, partisan sympathy or antipathy. “From which follows that no human can be judge over another.”
The French free-thinker Guyau stated: “True justice is all-encompassing, compassionate love”. According to Clara Wichmann, love transcends all law. Those who understand this want nothing to do with retribution anymore. To understand all is to forgive all: those who truly act wrong, are already miserable, and must be freed from their misery. Practice proves by the way that deterrence and elimination[162] have no effect. With almost mechanical routine, mass criminality resurfaces in socially challenging times, and the jails -those 'incubators of criminality' as the expert Enrico Ferrie called them[163]- 'welcome' back 40 or 50% of their population as recidivists.
Criminals are mostly materially and mentally underprivileged: people whose inclination and circumstances were already unfavorable or -which is often forgotten!- whose inclination and circumstances didn't fit together very well. This is what always happens in capitalist society. Nobody is 100% the product of their inclinations. Nobody is 100% the product of circumstances, no matter how big the impact of the first, no matter how little the impact of the latter. The most noble inclination can be perverted by unfavorable circumstances. Favorable circumstances can often impact a dubious inclination very positively. There is no reason for fatalism, neither seen from the idea of inclination nor seen from the idea of circumstances: a highly praised professor in psychology used to demonstrate to his college how his own head showed the signs of criminality according to Lombroso, and yet he held an academic chair, and hadn't ended up in jail. Education and society ought to work together in a certain way to give every individual their chances. How were most criminals raised? By what parents were they been conceived? All these kind of questions that immediately come to mind point out that especially social factors determine criminality and so responsibility falls on the human community in which they were born.
It is no coincidence that Clara Wichmann authored the 'Manifesto against the current views on crime and punishment'[164]'. Not only were law and judicial statistics her job, and was she marked with a deep and pure sense of solidarity for all who suffered, but -first as an extreme left christian socialist, later as a free-thinking anarcho-communist- she was also born and bred in an environment where prison was an institution that was well known from experience.

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161 Tr. Note: 'min of meer zielszieke individuen', literally: 'more or less soulsick individuals'

162 Tr. Note: BdL uses the word 'onschadelijkmaking', literally 'rendering harmless' but the meaning in Dutch would be misrepresentation. The original meaning is closer to 'prevention', but in this context 'prevention' by repressively eliminating people from society, not in the way that we would at present understand the word 'prevention', quite the opposite.

163 Tr. Note: and all anarchists before him, mentioning just Proudhon, Kropotkin, Emma Goldman, Errico Malatesta here. See also: Sullivan & Tifft, 'The struggle to be human, Crime, criminology and anarchism'.

164 https://peacenews.info/node/3661/against-current-views-crime-and-punishment, https://archive.org/details/misdaad_en_straf/mode/1up or https://anarchief.org/wiki/Wichmann,_Clara_-_Tegen_de_bestaande_opvattingen_omtrent_misdaad_en_straf for Dutch. I have not found free online sources in English.

Twelve hundred men had been imprisoned for at least ten months for refusing military service, and a lot of them were part of the revolutionary movement. Jo Meijer, who she married, was among them and had 'served' ten months. I myself spent just over six weeks of confinement in a prison. When I think of the unforgettable impression this awful time made on me and how I haven't forgotten prison life even for a day ever since, it's clear to me that they who had spent ten months in an even more severe penal prison -these days the conscious objectors go through somewhat less harsh treatment- are almost haunted by the memory of prison life, and are unable to nót fight for their fellow prisoners in all kinds of ways. Meijer and Clara Wichmann worked together very closely even before all that. Like in England, in the Netherlands as well the experiences of the anti-militarists lead to a renewed struggle against the existing system of punishment and imprisonment. The first 'Executive Committee of Action against the existing ideas about Crime and Punishment'[165] was made up by Kees Boeke, who knew prison life only too well as a revolutionary; J. Brommert Jr., a social-democrat who had refused military service; Kaspers, the anarchist who also ran into trouble with 'justice'; K. W. Kruyt, former president of the Bond van Christen-Socialisten[166], an organisation whose members were persecuted again and again since 1914; Lodewijk van Mierop, who was thrown in prison as one of the authors of the manifesto for the refusal of military service[167]; and Jo Meijer and Clara Wichmann. All the others were lucky to have the two last in their midst, even more because she was regarded like an authority in judicial circles because of her expertise – so much so that she had been offered a position as professor at the University of Amsterdam at a very young age. She had very deliberately chosen to risk her social opportunities and had joined the revolutionaries. In her presentations and writings she dedicated herself especially to the struggle against the existing ideas about crime and punishment at that time, and also restlessly advocated for the humanization of the revolutionary struggle itself, that was in danger of degrading and brutalizing under the influence of bourgeois and tsarist traditions. For all the good she saw in the Russian Revolution that she appreciated very much, she also resisted the spirit of violence and mechanistic utilitarianism that poisened the revolution more and more. She suffered bitterly under the cruel way in which dissenters, even revolutionary ones, were tortured and often killed. She died all too suddenly. But not before she left us just enough to make her philosophy and morality affect history. She was one of those exceptional creatures in whom a more humane future announces itself with such beauty. All revolutionaries are therefore obliged to study the work she left behind. They will find new, surprising finds in there, time and time again.
In this very inhumane time, Clara Meijer-Wichmann has defended humaneness in her work and life; something that risks disappearing even among revolutionaries that should defend her.
Her voice will resonate through the ages.

165Tr. Note: Uitvoerend Comité van Actie tegen de bestaande Opvattingen omtrent Misdaad en Straf or 'C. M. S.'
166Tr. Note: literally 'Union of Christian Socialists'
167Tr. Note: 'dienstweigeringsmanifest', https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dienstweigeringsmanifest_1915

G) Proudhon Revives (1932)[168]

Great minds can wait. Among them is Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865). In the middle of last century he deeply influenced the rising modern socialism, not just in France, but allover Europe. His influence on the '1st international' was so great that Marx was constantly anxious about it and in the end hoped that a military victory of Germany over France would mean the defeat of Proudhon's freedom loving socialism in the International – and the victorious parade of his own state 'socialism'! Indeed the 1st International was animated mainly by Proudhon and Bakunin. Marx tried to break the influence of 'the French petit bourgeois' by any means possible, often by unchivalrous means – to favour his own 'scientific socialism' that had rid itself for ever –according to himself- of any bourgeois and petit-bourgeois influences. Marx had 'succes': a few years after the death of Proudhon, he was able to get rid of the 1st International only to erect a 2nd one that would fit his taste more closely.

After Germany had indeed conquered France in the 1870-'71 war –and after the Paris Commune was crushed- Marx's 'scientific socialism' introduced itself in many places, even in the land of Proudhon himself. Consequences: 1914, Treaty of Versailles, Dawes-plan, Young-plan, etc. According to the bourgeois press, the social-democrats are the best pillars of capitalism everywhere: one has only the German Republic to think of as an example.

When –as a pushback against the degeneration of socialism- even in social-democrat circles, a strong so-called 'neo-marxist' protest movement was born that warned against the lies of modern democracy, the dangers of opportunism, reformism and ministerialism, and that recognized the necessity of **direct action** for the socialist movement, it was largely under the critique and action of the anarchists and revolutionary syndicalists, who reasoned more along the lines of Proudhon and Bakunin than those of Marx and Engels. Even then this fundamental adaptation of the Marxian canon –that gave a lot of weight to the transition of bourgeois-commercial capitalism into imperialist-militarist capitalism- didn't succeed in getting rid of the materialist tendencies of Marxism nor of his fanatical belief in **state, violence and dictatorship.** Consequences: 1917-'18, the 3rd International, the deterioration of the social revolution into authoritarian communist bureaucracy en forced production, Bolshevik imperialism en Moscow dictatorship.

The two tendencies prove more clearly every day that neither the cooperation with political (fake-)democracy, nor with the foundation of a state(capitalist) regime can bring actual socialism to the masses because the methods of the 2nd and 3rd International –each in their own way- keep the socialist movement away from the goal it longs for so urgently.

That is the everlasting proof that the anarchists and syndicalists were right all along; even if they in turn made their own mistakes and bad choices, they always pointed out the necessity of **new means of struggle for the new goal** and especially of the **moral factor** in the socialist movement.

As we know Marx fought Proudhon even with poisonous means. And one cannot say that Proudhon was right in everything. But there is one main principle in which Proudhon has always been right and his rightness becomes ever more clear: his assertion that socialism is first of all a struggle for **social justice** and not for class interest (unless in a sense in which interests those coincide with

168 Tr. Note: Source: Introduction to the pamphlet by Jeanne Duprat: 'About war and peace in the spirit of Proudhon' (1932), originally 'La conception proudhonnienne des facteurs économiques de la guerre et de la paix', Ed. Marcel Giard, Paris, 1929, reprinted from International review of Sociology n°37, 1929; not translated here because of copyright issues. See her 'Proudhon. Sociologue et moraliste. Librairie Félix Arcan, 1929. Duprat was Doctor in Sociology at the Geneva University.

universal human rights) and that firstly relates to maintaining in others and oneself the **human dignity**. Said in a different way: that in socialism, the human dignity of the goal as well as the means become ever more clear. Marx thought –under the influence of ecominic determinism, utilitarian morality and philosophic materialism of the up-and-coming high-bourgeoisie- that he imposed an amazing revolutionary act by turning his 'scientific socialist' back to all the 'utopists and petit-bourgeois'. Insofar as the latter floated around in idealistic isolation, he was right. But he forgot that under all their fantastic theories, there was a foundation of **moral reality** that could not be ignored without serious consequences.

Even more than Marx himself, his followers made the mistake of throwing away the child with the bathwater and they limited themselves to exclusively take a technical-economical fatalism in account that was built on such a inferior materialism that a dialectic like Marx would have shied away from it.

That last conclusion is shared more and more widely these days, ranging from Otto Rühle, Henriette Roland Holst, Henrik De Man, Ragaz, etc. But they usually forget or ignore that Proudhon had seen the biggest fundamental issue when Marx and the Marxists hadn't even started to consider it; and he had done so without falling into the trap of that one-sided Christian worship of that Ragaz has not been able to shed and that seems to attract Roland Holst sometimes. It was the great achievement of Frederik van Eeden[169] -in his too often overlooked ['The Happy World: Speeches On Humanity and Society']' at the beginning of the centure ago- to point to the significance of Proudhon and anarchism in this regard (page 259 of his book in Dutch).

As with people who have often opposed eachother, Marx and Proudhon had a lot in common. First of all both had an excellent, beautiful intellectual passion and both had a strong, volcanic temperament. Secondly Proudhon –who is a reputed founding father of modern sociology and social psychology[170]- recognized the great importance of **economic factors** in the whole of the historic process; he even analysed those factors much deeper, psychologically, profoundly and back into the **psychological reality**. Marx was after all –Clara Meijer Wichmann pointed this out- an accidental great psychic [psychological?] analist of society. But his mind was primarily occupied with the search for the objective, technical-economical elements that influence human development. Proudhon, who recognized the great importance of these things, deliberately searched for the subjective reality from which they emanate and that were in their turn altered by them.

By the way, Proudhon attempted to explain all wars from an economic imperative. Marx and Proudhon both understood **that economic fatalism must be conquered** by the will and consciousness of humankind in development. Marx from his side was so obsessed with his theoretical research of technical-economical causes of capitalism that, in the end, he never got around to adequately consider the ethical reality as a factor.
Proudhon from his side, who permanently took part in the revolutionary struggle, increasingly discovered that the realisation of socialism would mainly suffer under a **moral insufficiency** among the workers, which would be worsened by economic factors. In other words, Marx mainly highlighted the economic factors that would make socialism possible, while Proudhon focussed on the subjective factors that would make socialism an actual fact. Only the latter sufficiently took the defining factor in the historic process into account: not the economic or any other circumstances

169 Tr. Note: 'De blijde wereld: Reden over Mensch en Maatschappij', Amsterdam, 1903 Frederik Willem van Eeden (1860-1932), Dutch writer, anti-militarist and psychiatrist. Signed a call for an international anti-militarist congress between 1902 and 1904. The congress convened in Amsterdam between 26 and 28th of June, 1904.

170 Tr. Note: and a crucial Bible exegete, See https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k86032p.texteImage , https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/pierre-joseph-proudhon-god-is-evil-man-is-free , Jésus et les origines du christianisme: https://archive.org/details/jsusetlesorigin00rochgoog. Also interesting, although clearly from a conservative and pro-Church position: Henri de Lubac, 'Proudhon et le christianisme', 1945 – Translated as 'The Un-Marxian Socialist', Sheed & Ward, London, 1948

that -as I wrote long ago- only surround us; but humankind itself who -living amidst those circumstances- can interact with those cirumstances and can increasingly purposefully create their own social circumstances. Not without reason the subtitel of Dr. Jeanne Duprat's main work on Proudhon as '**sociologist and moralist**'. For all the similarities between Marx and Proudhon, there were very real differences between them:

MARX	**PROUDHON**
historic materialist	social psychologist
sociologist amoralist	sociologist moralist
statist	anarchist
centralist	federalist
advocate of hate	admiror of solidarity
believer in violence	despiser of violence
war enthousiast	adversary of war
authoritarian	lover of freedom

Dr. Ludwig Oppenheimer has noted that Proudhon's federalist anarchism is not the enemy of the state order because it is an enemy of order, but instead because it aims to build a more reasonable, effective, more human order. Proudhon also had an open eye for the damning consequenses of a mechanistic, external, enforced, uniform communism. He understood that the whole of the history of human development aims at the **free development** of the most diverse personalities and groups, and that **own initiative** and **individual combat instinct** don't have to be subdued but instead lifted above the sphere of direct competition into a sphere of inspired cooperation. And lastly Proudhon did not put all of his hopes on 'the day after the revolution', but he wanted to begin here and now -just like Landauer and others- with practical measures towards a new society, especially in a technical-organisational sense. The important thing is not -as people often think- that his practical attempts failed, but the fact that they took place. Because of that fact, the focus shifts from politics to society; from the state to the workers themselves.
Much of what Marx despised in Proudhon was not the petit-bourgeois in the pejorative sense, but in the positive, human and generous sense of the word. He maintained traditions that relate to the best medieval notions of autonomy and catholicism, directly opposed to the tyranny of the roman church and the increasingly militarist state. The developing modern capitalism cleaned up much of the destitute and derilict, but never bothered with what had been achieved and discoverd by earlier societies in regards to morality and mentality. On the other hand, much of what Marx considered to be 'scientific socialist' was through and through 19th century bourgeois: one-sided belief in progress, worshiping of the material-technical, etc. This would poison socialism in the longer run while the bourgeoisie was busy finding a remedy against socialism.
No small wonder that these days the interest in Proudhon is growing, now that people turn away from the political (fake)democracy. Even within fascist circles he is sometimes appreciated, even if they misinterpret his anarchism. By the way, Proudhon invites differing interpretations: there are contradicting ideas that can be discounted or deleted in different ways –as in many of the great writers who have gone through a development. One cannot deny though that **anarchist-socialism** and **self-organisation** are always clear themes in his works.
Dr. Oppenheimer writes: *"Anarchism is in its origin and substance an idea of justice, a consequence of principles of justic. Proudhon – who as one knows coined the word 'anarchy'- started out with the Kantean idea that the judicial ordonances must be critically cleaned up and made acceptable to the reasonable consciousness: 'Anarchy (absence of government) means denial of sovereignty (i.e. governal arbitrariness) by pure reason, in one word this writer believes in science and recognizes nobody above them'. 'When man[kind] no longer obeys because the king commands but because the king demonstrates, we can say that he [they] no longer recognizes authority and crowns himself [itself] king.' It is a grave misrepresentation when one -as so often- says that he started out a radical to gradually come to recognize state and justice. When he formulated the **principle** of anarchy as the law of reason, he was a moderate state socialist*

democrat -positioned in today's political landscape. He spoke of turning over government to the Academy of Sciences! He came to ***true*** *anarchism -the idea of local self-government and based on the law on freedom- only later -when he had drawn the logical conclusions from his judicial-philosophical principles under influence of his experiences and impressions."*
"The idea of justice brought him to the critical analysis of the centralist state. Elaborating on the classical political state organisation, he came to the conclusion that an economic justice that worked 'from the inside', where the economic forces were distributed and controlled organically, was the only effective organisation; and that the chaos that the state claims to resolve, is created precisely by the lack of such a social justice. The history of ancient societies made him recognize the deadly impact of centralism and the necessity of a federalist political organisation. The German philosophy reinforced his conviction that neither clear knowledge nor deep fundamental realisation of justice is possible without reviving the free moral forces. The political experience of 1848 confirmed his belief that the centralist state cannot be defended with either normative nor practical arguments. Because the more power and violence is concentrated in it, the more the fate of the land depends on injust meddling by ruling groups, and the less the demand of self-government and free recognition of justice can be fulfilled. And the more different functions are concentrated, the less understanding the governed show for the practical needs of the social construction."
We can't delve deeper into this debate here. The main thing is to establish that Proudhon gets new meaning for the socialist movement of today as a scourge for the bourgeois state, and as a social moralist and social psychologist.

One more thing though in relation to what follows. Proudhon has been celebrated as a believer in violence. That is because Proudhon has been misunderstood. According to him **war** is not something that happens at random, something that can be accepted or rejected, but something that follows from the psychological structure of mankind. Along the way though, an ever growing opposition grows between the social principle that brings war to fruition -the war for justice, that initially coincides with the war for power- and the violence -increasingly rejectable and more brutal- that is revealed in war only clouds the original meaning of it. In one of his most brilliant works -and we can't recommend its study more- *'La guerre et la paix. Recherches sur le principe et la constituion du droit des gens'* (1861)[171], he explains this in an unforgettable way. This work is not an ethical approval or dismissal, nor a differentiation of wars in permissible or non-permissible, but an attempt to understand the social psychology of violent struggle and to rise above it in theory and in practice by recognizing its relative right absolutely, even as a matter of worship. Only those who remained stuck here, can see Proudhon as a worshipper of violence and war! Those who read on know that, according to Proudhon, the forms of war conflict more and more with its original principle; that war -especially since Napoleon- is ever more controlled by a 'beastly element' that is beneath mankind and that ever more clearly springs **from an imbalance of economic equilibrium** that can be remedied by violence less and less. That is why Proudhon is as concerned with **mental resilience** as much as we are. Like Thoreau and Gandhi, he doesn't aim at subduing the war spirit but he aims at subliminating it; like Albert de Jong and Müller Lehning he wants to bring harmony into the methods of the social struggle with the revolutionary aim, and rejects the modern war as it is doomed -even in the hands of revolutionaries- to work against the revolution because it is in its core destructive without limit. Based on bitter experiences, he warns against the romantics of violence in the famous half-intellectuals who love to play a role in revolutionary movements so much.
According to Proudhon, human society is all about *pauvreté,* poverty in the sense of healthy sobriety. Society as it is suffers under *paupérisme* though, poverty in the sense first of all of abnormal poverty, need, misery but always accompanied by abundance and affluence that go along with unbridled desire, greed, lust for power. It is clear that an economic law of moral principles is

171 See the English edition of Proudhon's 'La Guerre et la Paix', 1861 byAK Press https://www.akpress.org/war-and-peace.html and for further research and comments by Shawn Wilbur: https://www.libertarian-labyrinth.org for example.

violated and that 'this violation is a through and through psychological fact'. The other side of misery is not just wealth, but first of all *parasitisme*, that in turn brings other unproductive enterprise with it, demands complex governing constructions, subjugates social life to the power of financial capital, etc. Creeping hunger for the mass; physical and mental gluttony for the ruling class, restlessly searching for markets, colonies, etc in a race to maximize profit. The state is the authoritarian expression of all these economic and moral imbalance, and therefore confronts its own people as well as all the other states with violence whenever need or class interests demand it. While the peoples themselves become ever more industrious, and engage ever more intensely in the labor process, war becomes a permanent privilige of governments that engage in it, in the service of the ruling classes, and push the economic life of the world even more out of balance! Because the causes of war are mainly economic in nature, they can be abolished by economic measures.

The importance of Proudhon for our times was recognized in the interesting analysis of Dr. Ludwig Oppenheimer, titled 'The mental principles of Anarchism' (in part III of *Die Dioskuren. Jahrbuch für Geisteswissenschaften*[172], München, Meyer & Jessen, 1924). That Proudhon raises interest elsewhere is clear in the fact that Rivière in Paris re-publishes his *Oeuvres Complètes* since a few years, with 7 thick parts including introductions and annotations already published. Not long ago, Professor C. Bouglé published a selection of his writings in the *Réformateurs sociaux* series. Daniel Halévy and Louis Guilloux made a selection of his comprehensive correspondance: '*Lettres de Pierre Joseph Proudhon*' about which Fernand-Demeure said (in *Le Monde nouveau* of August-September 1929) that it is impossible to understand Proudhon without it – Proudhon, who he calls one of the most noble, most misunderstood and most slandered persons in world history, who was injustly considered a bogeyman long after his death.[173] In the same year Dr. Jeanne Duprat -private lecturer in sociology at the university of Geneva- published the forementioned summary of Proudhon's ideas '*Proudhon, sociologue et moraliste*', which demonstrates clearly that the time of greatness has yet to come for this Frenchman. The same author gave us the brochure '*La Conception proudhonienne des Facteurs économiques de la Guerre et de la Paix*' (...)[174].
That Proudhon's clear-sightedness can still inspire is clearly demonstrated in the text that follows, written in 1928 at a time when few suspected the fatal world crisis that came near. In Europe, the belief grew that Uncle Sam (or at least Henry Ford) had discovered the capitalist gospel of everlasting bonanza. Other than that there was a lot of hope in the League of Nations -that Oudegeest and Albarda 'couldn't do without' to envision social measures.
To fight an enemy, one has to know the enemy. With Proudhonian disdain for trifles, Ms. Duprat passed through the Geneva institute in her research on 'war and peace' without allowing herself to be deceived by shams or slogans; she focussed her attention on the **social-economic and collective-psychological reality**. After a critical analysis of Proudhon's own theory (Ch. I-III) she demonstrates how the deepest causes of war lay in **economic imbalance** that cannot be resolved by political measures; where precisely those political institutions have desastrous functions so that the people does **not rule** even in so-called democratic states.[175] In fact -and alongside Domela Nieuwenhuis- Ms. Duprat is convinced that, by using the word state -including the bolshevik state-, we say 'war'.
Everything that has been uncovered in recent years about modern politics, the world of banking, the bloody International of War Industry -Lehmann Russbüldt![176]- and the background of the Japanese-

172 Tr. Note: www.archive.org/details/diedioskurenjahr3192unse/mode/1up , pp253 and following
173 See also: Guy Grand, Harmel, a.o. In *Proudhon et notre Temps*, Chiron, Paris, 1920 and P. Armand, *P.J. Proudhon et le Fourièrisme*, Rivière, Paris, 1929.
174 Tr. Note: as introduction to the Dutch edition of the text, BdL continues: "that we give you here in translation (originally published in Dutch in 'Bevrijding', translation by H.J. Mispelblom Beijer)" but for copyright reasons the translation could not be included here.
175 About the 'fiction of people's government' Hendrik de Man, 'Massa en Leiders', Van Loghuim Slaterus, Arnhem, 1932, pp 6-7.
176 Otto Lehman-Russbüldt, 1873-1964), German pacifist activist and writer. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Otto_Lehmann-Russbüldt

Chinese conflict[177] has confirmed the correctness of the writer.
So what's on the opposite side? Not much yet. The economic interest groups of the great workers' mass, in which Ms. Duprat sees some factor of peace, to keep the more 'aware' proletariat as prisoner in the capitalist-imperialist system, rather than to liberate it. Still, they are already inspired by a new spirit to some extent, that finds its way even into the social-democrat party from below. The distrust in the methods of political democracy grows daily, particularly since 1914-'18, while one experiences first had how very little the methods of the unions can bring in terms of even immediate advantages. The idea of **Do It Yourself** grows among the workers and farmers. The anti-war resolutions of large union congresses may point to anything but revolution for the moment, the good **direct action** -ridiculed or ignored until 1918- becomes a principle now amongst the tens of millions, at least in principle. In 1920 the English Triple Alliance (miners, railroad workers, dockers) were capable of preventing the British government of going to war against Russia. Indeed **the workers are already capable of preventing war, awaiting the moment to create a new society**.[178]
These actions bring with them revolutionary self-confidence and a sense of responsibility towards the work at hand. This way, the idea of **responsible production** is born -both individually and collectively refusing to do bad work; to quote Jos Giesen: the creation of an International of Good Production that is the Labor pendant to the **refusal of military service** in the army and the fleet while the thought of a general strike changes more and more into the **occupation and control of production**.
Only insofar the international workers prove capable of laying the foundations of an actual League of Peoples this way, can the threat of war ever be countered.

Onex, Geneva, March 12 1932

B. DE LIGT

177 See also my 'De oorlog die komt' [The war that looms], Beentjes, Zuiderparklaan 111, Den Haag.
178 The main thing is to prepare for this not only morally but also practically. See also: J. Verlinde,'Oorlogsbestrijding in de Bedrijven' and K. Han, 'How to resist war' in 'Dooft de Vuren!' with a preface of Dirk Boer, Ed. Nederl. Bureau J.V.A. Groningen, Hermanstraat 9, originally in the 'Bevrijding' series.

H) Societal democracy (1933)[179]

Democracy is in the first place not politics, but a social-cultural concept whose essence is found in the not very precise, but classic and -in the end well understood- formula 'Freedom, Equality, Fraternity'. 'Equality' shouldn't be understood here as uniformity -of soldiers, prisoners or internees- but as opportunities for each to develop in relation to others in harmony with their nature and inclination, and to affirm themselves as specific individuals, - and in which each has the same right to be mistaken, and the essence of which is pluriformity, diversity: the higher the culture, the more diverse individuals and types that complement and enrich eachother. Only in this sense, each has equal rights based on general solidarity and fraternity.
Because everyone is different, each has in fact rights to different things; no matter the countless needs he has in common with everyone else – the first conditions for life and spirit are more or less the same: a minimum of food, clothing, housing, hygiene, basic education, play, sports, etc. In that respect all people are in fact as 'equals born with the same rights', to quote another classic slogan of the French revolution. The true meaning of the democratic idea in the end turns out to be – anarchism: a social system in which all external coercion and government is abolished because the people governs itself, that is to say it organises itself in free economic, social and cultural associations, and unions of self-regulating personalities, who form communities in deliberate, controlled self-expression.
The tendency towards societal democracy was always active in humanity, as is demonstrated by the so-called 'cooperative community of natural peoples' that Alfred Vierkandt and others wrote about. The more normal individuals and groups developed, the clearer the tendency became. In the highest cultures, self-government was increasingly recognised as typically human, and already realised in many personal, social and cultural respects. All authority over and coercion of fellow humans was increasingly considered to be sinful, injust, abnormal by the purest consciences and minds; free collaboration and free co-existence to be truly human. Centuries before Christ, people in China learned that the history of all races and peoples and races must result in the free self-organisation of humanity, and the whole process of civilisation and culture should be aimed towards that. In India, Buddha had already preached in favor of the abolishing of all hierarchic relations between the free self-realised personalities. The 'pre-christian christianity' in the Greek-Roman world glorified forms of free thinking and free living that the naive, not to say primitive-religious messianism of the developing christian community cared for less and less, even more so because it was soon adopted by countless socially and spiritually backwards people, and was increasingly brutally subordinated by all kinds of political and class interests that clashed with its inextinguishable originally-anarchist tendency. And even those who tried to maintain class and caste relations, and even slavery on earth in the name of god, recognized not just that all this was at odds with the original natural justice -which, again, was essentially anarchist or completely democratic- but that those weren't valid 'in god': 'for God' nor in 'the future world' there is relevant differentiation between lord and slave, man and woman, Greek or Barbarian, but all were 'kings, priests and prophets' alike, i.e. royal equals.

This pre- and post-eradicated general human right -that is in fact not of christian, but of heathen (hellenic) origin- permeated deeply in the social-political earthly reality over time, from the fictitious past and the fantastic utopia: time and again heretics and sects returned to the 'original natural justice' and based their social behaviour and their apocalyptic expectations on it. Until, de-mythologized by renaissance thinking, it was undone during the era of enlightenment and modern philosophy, and turned into cristal clear social understanding by which then all human relations

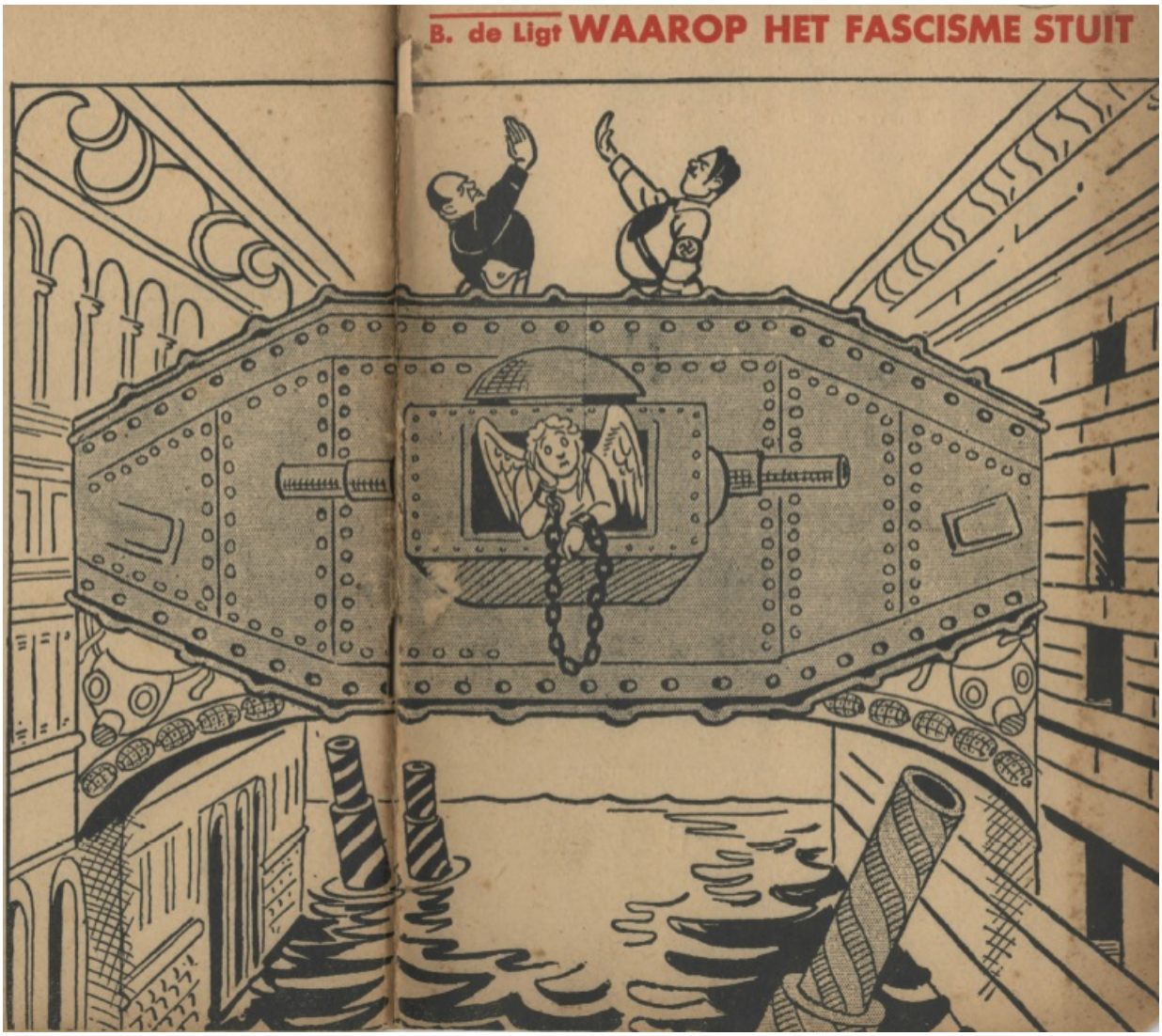
179 Tr. N.: Source: Bevrijding, May 1933, this translation from 'Naar een Vrije Orde', pp 196-202; I chose to translate 'Maatschappelijke Democratie' literally as 'societal democracy' instead of 'social democracy' which could easily be mistaken for the Marxian 'social-democracy' (sic), even if it might have sounded better in translation.

were scrutinized ever more sharply: the revolution in the minds, that preceded the revolution in society and -among others- resulted in the French revolution and the principles that we have just started out with.
Of course bourgeois liberalism originally recongized that what matters in the history of the individual and society is self-organisation and self-government. MacCulloch or example demanded f that the state wouldn't govern too much in social life, while Jules Simon said that the state should always try to make itself redundant and prepare its own abolishing[180]. Political authority intervening in economic life was considered to be illicit. Freedom of enterprise was advocated, freedom of trade, freedom of press, freedom of thought, general tolerance based on mutual respect for personal convictions; and inquisition and censorhip were condemned as demeaning. In abstracto, the original liberals were close to the truth. In concreto, they were unable to fully implement their most beautiful principles, especially -and would do so ever less- because for the large majority of people the economic, social and cultural conditions lacked in order to develop as free individuals because of the capitalist class-character of bourgois society. This is what the English and French socialists, from the beginning of the XIXth century on, constantly demonstrated: no formal political equality was able to make the material inequality disappear in social life. No matter how the bourgeois society implemented formal equality before the law in a political respect, any effect was always immediately undone by the injustice that the social reality was based on: only the property class owned the land and the means of production -and so all the richess of the whole society- at the expense of millions who owned nothing, or too little to live as human beings. It only allowed freedom of thinking and acting insofar as it served its own interests, or at least didn't impede on those interests too much.
Because this was rather strongly the case at the start, in several countries a reasonably strong social tradition of democracy was born, as became clear the ever increasing freedom of organisation, freedom of assembly, freedom of movement, freedom of press that the bourgeoisie was still often forced to amplify because of the growing power of the revolting masses. These freedoms did not only correspond to the needs of the evolving bourgeois society in a certain period of the history of mankind, but to those of the human personality as such that, as history teaches us, cannot thrive without freedom. Not just the free socialists, but social-democrats as well recongized this in the 19th century: according to Marx and Engels the line of humanity's development should be continued in an anarchist direction, as Lenin as well confirmed in his treatise on the state[181], that Herman Gorter translated. Their whole understanding of life and society fits in with the idea of personality and community as Fichte (among others) developed in response to the French revolution, and with the 'real humanism' of Feuerbach: it resists the dehumanisation of mankind by capitalist society. Instead of 'the old bourgeois society with its class conflicts, an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all' -as the second chapter of the 'Communist Manifesto' concludes in 1847. This can only mean that Marx and Engels wanted to continue the essentially liberal social tradition that ran aground within capitalism, and deemed a social revolution to be necessary to that end, that should first and foremost turn itself against the state as an instrument of power of the property class.
The question that set anarchists apart from social-democrats was how to reach that goal. The marxists, who soon increasingly drifted away from the original Marx, thought -increasingly superficially- that the means of **political** democracy should first and foremost be used to 'conquer state power', by participating in the parliamentarian-ministerial system, which according to the anarchists could only lead to the conquering of the socialists themselves. We have explained this position multiple times; history has always confirmed it mercilessly. The bolsheviks, who saw this danger as well, thought they could avoid it by replacing the political democracy with a minority dictatorship in which the power of the state was made absolute at the expense of all personal and social freedom. So doing, socialism was alienated from its age-old tendency, the **societal** democracy, no matter how strongly it had asserted itself in the council system at the start of the

180 Tr. Note: compare the Marxian 'withering away' of the State with its bourgeois origins.
181 Tr. Note: Lenin, 'State and Revolution'

Russian revolution. Essentially therefore, the bolshevik understanding means a betrayal of Marx and of the deepest tendency of neo-marxism as it was for example explained in the Spartakus programme.
On the other hand, the fascists applied more or less similar methods of dictatorship to maintain the capitalist class system that had less and less use for the societal democracy since the advent of modern imperialism and its most typical symptom: the world war. It was right -as was bolshevism- in this respect inasfar as it claimed that the so-called political democracy was essentially a lie, and practically powerless. Where bolshevism has no chance, fascism pushes forward, even more now the unsustainability of official political democracy becomes clearer every day. But even if we recongise the relative correctness of its merciless critique in this regard, that doesn't stop us from assuming it as our duty to maintain as much societal democracy as we can. In the highest developed bourgeois-democratic countries there simply are several individual and social values that have been uncovered that have no temporary class character but a generally human character that history should increasingly be steered towards and that even are -as we saw- the most essential message of original marxism and bolshevism. May 1st, 1920 one could read in an essay about 'The moral Calling of the Communist Party', published in the Austrian periodical 'Kommunismus': 'Therefore freedom can not just be a fruit, a result of evolutionary development, but there must come a moment in her that she becomes one of the driving forces; its meaning as propelling force must constantly increase until the moment arrives in which she is fully in charge of the society that has become humane, at which time the 'prehistory of humanity' ends, and its true history can begin'.
Our contempt for the political democracy that turned out to be fiction may at no moment lead us to neglecting the true, societal democracy: that human freedom and free humanity that has already more or less materialized in the world. The right of asylum for foreign revolutionaries, that existed for a long time in the bourgeois world, but that is increasingly threatened, must for example be considered to be something good, and should be fiercely defended -by the revolutionary proletariat in the first place- more than ever, especially for insurrectionary people of color. That Kropotkin and Malatesta, ejected by their fatherlands, could live and speak freely in England recently -and in the Netherlands as well, fortunately- is something that cannot be applauded enough. That in the Netherlands public congresses of draft dodgers are possible, is a reason for pride for our people. But wherever such traditions are under threat, we must realize that not just ourselves, but our cause as well -human freedom, the sense of history- are violated. What we want is ever increasing social and personal freedom, truly conquered and confirmed, based on increasingly lived individual and social responsibility. That is the basis for our appreciation for modern schooling and the new ways of education of youth that, based on the results of modern psychology, practically apply the old 'Freedom, Equality and Fraternity' and so doing tries to prepare a more humane society.
We must mercilessly maintain and defend all that already exists in society in this sense, and work together to that end. We should tirelessly strive for principles like freedom of speech and writing, freedom of organisation and assembly, freedom of thought, freedom of education and schooling, etc to permeate society. Rather than bending under the heel of fascism, we must, when it comes down to it, maximally defend the existing situation in the Netherlands, England, France and the Scandinavian countries, if necessary with allies whose political and social ideas we sharply combat, but who are willing and capable of loyal cooperation. Minimum programme: here's the line, no further! But it goes without saying that we -as we have already said- we must also powerfully try to realize personal and social freedom in our country. As a first example we point to our struggle against military service that is essentially a form of slavery.
Compared to Germany, a whole lot of societal democracy has been realized in the Netherlands that we have to defend. It is even the question who is truly more faithfully inspired by the purest Dutch tradition: those who are inspired by Mussolini and Hitler under all kinds of nationalist and orangist slogans, or us, who advocate personal and social freedom by humane means. It is not a question! It's perfectly clear.
The more faithful we are to the best Dutch traditions, the better we fulfill our task in the face of the whole of humanity, and first of all the peoples of color and the international proletariat.

I) What stops fascism (1934)[182]



Cover image, taken from the 'Daily Express'.

Comrades,
When we're speaking about 'fascism' it would be good to clarify again first of all what the word in fact means. When we use that word this evening, we will mean

different forms

of certain social phenomena that arise internationally in response to certain other phenomena, and that demonstrate a similar main tendency: that 'fascism' will mechanically share the same character in all countries and regions when it comes to the concrete form it takes; it means that in different

182 Speech by Bart de Ligt March 5th, 1934 in Handwerkers Vriendenkring in Amsterdam, at a meeting organized by the Vrije Socialisten Vereeniging. Anarchistische Uitgeverij der S.A.A. “De Boemerang” (Vereeniging voor Sociaal-Anarchistische Actie in Nederland), 1934
The account of the speech was first published in the social-anarchist weekly “De Arbeider”. This brochure is a reprint of this account.
After a stenograph by Jeanne De Jong, reviewed by the speaker.

countries, and in correlation to different circumstances and different traditions, it will take different forms each time. And it is so necessary to pay attention to this, because we may be sitting around waiting in the Netherlands for the same fascist events that have produced elsewhere, while it already unmistakably shows itself in different forms.
We can immediately distinguish Italian fascism from the German, the 'national-socialism'. This evening, we use the word 'fascism' in general and the word 'national-socialism' when it is useful to clarify, even though it will be possible to gather both (and yet other phenomena as well) under the same common denominator. For the time being it all sounds very abstract, but slowly we will come to the practical realities.
For example, we can say that very obviously fascist phenomena can be seen in Italy, Germany, Austria, but as well -and there is too little attention paid to this– in Poland, Hungary, Japan and other places, as we shall see. But as we said, fascism manifests itself very differently in different countries. If we compare those phenomena that we see in Italy with those in Germany, it soon becomes apparent: in Italy we're dealing with a domestic question more than anything else although there is a foreign policy aspect that is closely connected to it; in Germany we're dealing first of all with a foreign policy aspect, an international question although there is a clear domestic aspect that is related to it. Certain conditions and the consideration of certain phenomena show that fascism in Germany has a different character than it has in Italy.

In Italy

we're dealing with a backward country from a capitalist point of view; a country that isn't up with the times yet industrially in many respects, even if there is a very important industry in the north for a long time, and even if the labor movement and the workers there are very well developed level. Italy had no -and still doesn't have– a national unity like France and England have so clearly, and the Netherlands has more or less. In Italy at the moment 27% of the people is illiterate, - they can neither read or write, - and the country is more or less dominated by the Church. Its influence is of course strongest precisely where people are illiterate. On top of that, those people are much less influenced by the press, the favorite bourgeois means to cultivate a popular opinion in which nationalism increasingly dominates. Italy as a national union was still held together loosely. In respect of social security as well, things were far from as developed as in Germany, and it was necessary to take all kinds of hygienic and technical measures, implement the modern tempo and discipline that simply fits this phase of capitalism and imperialism. Also, the Italian people was traditionally strongly anti-militaristic even in the upper class. The Italians have been bad warriors, at least in wars –not in the revolutionary struggle, strikes, etc. They have never known the big military tradition of France. Professor Ferrero has written a whole study in which he compared French and Italian militarism, and demonstrated that the Italians struggle greatly to realise the modern state and to absorb militarism. In the world war, the Italian generals and soldiers were useless, and were only able to maintain themselves with the help of allied experts; the Italian army as such wasn't all that good. The whole ruling class therefore had sort of an inferiority complex in this regard, comparing themselves with other countries. And to top it off, the country's agrarian and industrial complex bordered on 'communism'! There were yet other, more or less well-known, domestic reasons that made way for a coming 'Big Man' who would strengthen the Italian 'national unity': an Italian Bismarck! Especially the birth of a new kind of middle class that was in fact proletarianised and that couldn't find its place any longer; the birth of an ever growing part of the proletariat that was deeply disappointed by the experiences of the latest revolution: groups who couldn't see a way forward; who litterally didn't know where to look and who therefore slowly evolved into a state of

messianinsm.

This is something that we need to pay special attention to. Messianism presents itself in all kinds of areas, not just religiously, although it can't hurt to look there first, to see how it usually comes to be. A Polish expert on religious studies has established that the true ruling and property classes

generally don't have much need for a messiah; they feel socially and mentally relatively satisfied and are intellectually too critical about fantastic promissses. The greatest messianic movements that we find –be it in India, Palestine, the Roman Empire or elswhere–, the biggest movements of people expecting salvation from a god-man, a miracle – can be found mostly where masses of tortured, paupers and dissatisfied people who no longer know where to look and -as a matter of speech- are jumping at the sky like frogs. Messianism refers back to a desperate state in society. It expressed itself early on in religious forms in which people hoped that a heavenly Savior would come after a devastating world crisis to show people the way to a long awaited, ideal world. A similar state of desperation of not-knowing-where-to-look started growing after the world war in multiple circles in Italy, especially in those circles that were socially disintegrating; especially among those who couldn't climb up and didn't want to fall down, whose whole existence floated on thin air and for whom the purpose of life itself seems to be lost. Precisely those people can be pushed into anything at all, even political and social messianism, like a desperate ill person will believe any eloquent charlatan in the end. These days, we see the same phenomenon when it comes to religion as well by the way; the idea that soon the Christ will come has spread from America and Europe as far as Australia and South-America among the countles petit-bourgeois and proletarians. There is a general sense –and rightly so– that a time of global crisis has come and that there is no way out for 'this world' anymore; tired of the battle, a Saviour is hoped for, Another is awaited for salvation. And in such a state was most of the Italian people, and Mussolini instrumentalized this brutally and cunningly in order to appease the mass by messianic means and with great and grand political and social promisses. That went so far that – if you want to consult the original programme of the fascists[183], it can no longer be found because it can't be published anymore! Nothing came of it. But meanwhile the mass was already running along: it was hooked...

The ruling class –with individual exceptions– was no true believer. It didn't need the new faith of the mass for itself, but for others. That too is something that we can find in the realm of religion. When a ruling class discovers that a messiah is succesful, it tries to exploit his succes for its own purposes, and that messiah is made useful. That is the way we still have a christian Messiah that serves nearly every imperialism. This had already started 300 years after Christ when State and Church became one. In the Roman Empire there was an ever growing mass of miserables who expected everything from the eloquent promisses of christianity, and when it became clear that the Christian faith would sweep this mass up, a pact was made between the rulers and the priests. The Christ became the great Seducer that would have to turn the mass into slaves of the ruling class.

In a different way this is what we see today in Italy. A social and political messiah is given a tortured mass and all kinds of unsatisfied and fantasming youngsters, and is used by a class that rather despises him, that doesn't actually believes in him, *but that has little choice but to use him*. And so Mussolini serves the rulers like a modern Saviour. A new apocalyptic faith is nurtured, soon with the help of a large part of the christian priests with the know-how, so that it often happens in small towns of Italy to come across a statue of Christ or Mary on one side of the altar and one of Mussolini on the other[184]. No matter how appalling all this is, we must understand well which immeasurable suffering these fallacies are born from. We must understand that the mass would not come to such things if it wasn't extremely tortured by all kinds of social circumstances that it can't control nor foresee. Especially this is important: that the mass can't oversee those conditions and can't control it. That is exactly why it surrenders itself to 'the Leader' so easily.

At the same time Mussolini was the man that had to solve all kinds of issues in the face of foreign countries. Italian imperialism had fallen short after the world war; it had not achieved enough results. That too was a task for the Leader: the Italian ruling class made him the man that had to

183 Tr. Note: 'Manifesto of the Italian Fasces of Combat' or 'San Sepolcro Programme' (Milan, 1919), developed from statements during the founding congress of the 'Fasci Italiani di Combattimento'. See for text and comparison with reality: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fascist_Manifesto

184 For Germany see the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung" of June 4th, 1934 (n° 1001) that reports that several lutherian churches have images of Hitler on the altar. Even Hitler seems to think this is unwanted because it has been cause for harsh conflict between the most fanatical worshippers of this new Saviour and those who think this is a blasphemy for the old christian Saviour.

unite Italy into a union and into power, and therefore had to spread fear into the world. Because imperialism doesn't just mean domestic terror, but abroad as well. In the negotiations between big states, a country is only worth as much as its military and strategic power; a hand is only worth the fingers it has to make a fist. All international negotiations always have a background of military and naval power of the states involved; inasfar as a state doesn't have this kind of power, it effectively hardly counts. After the world war, Mussolini mainly had this function to fulfill vis à vis the foreign countries: to strengthen the national power in such way that Italy could no longer be seen as second-class, but had to be considered a first-class power. That is the reason for the immense armament; the competition of the army, fleet and air force; the modern war technology, etc.

In Germany

it was different. There too, there was a domestic and an external problem, but the domestic problem was relatively secondary. Germany as an empire was literally beaten up, and that had happened precisely after there was so much hope just four years earlier, that Paris could be occupied; that had happened after a national ideology had been cultivated some consequtive generations, that lead to the expectation that the German Reich would control a realm from the North Sea to Bagdad; after Germany was militarized from within Prussia.
This was the conception of German imperialism, that the whole of Europe and maybe even the whole world would be ruled under. Carried by such beliefs were not just a large part of the German bourgeois, but even of the German socialists, who had supported the war. But nothing had come of all those expectations. Germany was literally broken, the colonies taken away, the fatherland ripped to pieces; the people tortured beyond limit, physically and mentally, and scandalously offended. The peace of Versailles was of such nature that it meant that the Germans indeed had to suffer without end, psychologically and physically.
At the same time, there were all kinds of social phenomena, especially of capital expropriation, that helped create a new kind of petit-bourgeoisie that no longer controled its own means of labor, but was completely dependent of the capital of the ruling classes, both domestic and foreign; a middle class was born that proletarianised and didn't want to proletarianise while at the same time a frighteningly large part of the proletariat sunk into a state of unspeakable misery. The Russian revolution was a disappointment, the second International was a disappointment, and in the end all of it gave birth to a state of desperation that made people hope for a messiah. In almost every circle there was a cry for 'a big man'. All kinds of other matters added to the situation, relatively less important, and so Hitler has been able to bewitch the German people with a new messianism, helped by countless brutal lies mixed in with some very crafty truths.
Most of you with friends in any circles in Germany know that the Germans of any tendency and of any party have since long been very nationalistic. Those who carefully study German politics for years know that nationalism has not just permeated the Second International but the Third International as well, and that around 1925 the Second and Third Internationals were competing in nationalism to seduce the big mass and came up with ideas of a national liberation war, a war against the Treaty of Versailles, and so doing promoted a socialism that was in the first place nationalist, and otherwise just more or less socialist. One thing is sure: it was nationalist before anything else.
So Hitler had been paved the way by German socialism and communism. And so we saw a competition in nationalism between the different socialist currents in Germany just after the world war. But in fact German 'national-socialism' was born much earlier! When in 1914 German social-democracy offered its hand to the Emperor, and the Emperor offered his hand to the social-democracy, when a Truce of God was made, what else do we have but 'nationalism times socialism equals national-socialism'? By the way what else but national-socialism was it, when in the Netherlands Troelstra called out in 1914 that the national interests trumped the national conflicts. Because that was the exact moment when the class struggle was abandoned; that was the exact moment when internationalism was canceled; the very moment that socialism was just secondary to the capitalist nation, the national capital, Dutch imperialism. What else was it than national-

socialism when the social-democrats in Germany expected more and more of Hindenburg, the national war hero who would in the end bring salvation from the fascist threath? What else was it than national-socialism when the German socialists turned against the Russian revolution in 1918 although it still represented a true global movement at the time, and when they united with the bourgois-national republic of Ebert? Ebert and Noske – who treated the revolution just like Hitler and Goering do today! What else is all that but a more or less socialistic nationalism that increasingly makes socialism a side issue and nationalism more and more the main issue?
That is why the German mass could evolve like this so easily, even apart from the more pernicious influence of lutheran Faith and Prussian militarism.[185]
Now if we look at fascism in other countries, we come to some other conclusions, starting with this one: the bourgeois class has used and elaborated two forms of

democracy

in its struggle against feudal powers, against the nobility and the clergy: politically, parliamentarism; and socially, the freedom of thinking, speaking, conscience, organisation, etc. The bourgeoisie has protected all that for so long and let it run among the people – yes even granted it to more or less hostile tendencies – as doing so was in its own interest. It could for example maintain its social system by absorbing a large part of the socialist movement into its own parliamentarism, like fish in a trap. But when it discovered that societal democracy became dangerous, it simply decided to limit those means and even to abolish them completely, while it maintained its system by other means. That was easiest with the political democracy because it meant so little in reality: it was purely formal in the social reality. That political democracy became something increasingly cumbersome, something impractical for the set goals of imperialism, and when it had become too complex and clumsy, it was pushed aside. We don't need to be too melancholic about this. Everything considered we can only thank fascism for graphically educating us about the fact that *political democracy is not a real power*. Because the parliamentarian system was simply pushed aside, slaughtered; it no longer existed and still the life of capitalism didn't end! In order to prevent people from saying that we see things from an exclusively anarchist point of view, we want to investigate what even roman-catholics have observed about the parliamentarian system. Too bad this conclusion has yet to permeate a large part of the modern labor movement!
Rector Bots, Pr. recounts -in 'Fascism, an old Fallacy in new Clothes'[186]- that Mgr. Kordac of Prague -whose democratic convictions are above any suspicion- has said in a pastoral writing at the end of 1930 about parliamentarism: that the parliaments often just acted as cloaks for the rule of the money magnates, as was proven with the trial of the New York banker John Pierpont Morgan[187]. “This trial clearly demonstrates whose hands control the strings of the democratic state apparatus of the United States in the end.”
Bankers and investors determine the fate of the peoples in the end. By the way didn't MacDonald admit that a modern government can't act against the wishes of the big banks. So who decides then? Not parliament! So who determines the fate of the people? Not the people!
It's not elected representatives of the people who determine the history of the so-called democratic state, but time and again it is the financial and industrial giants who do.
But fascism goes further. It not only abolishes certain political institutions that it no longer has a use

185 Tr. Note: Compare with Marx's position in 1871 during the Franco-Prussian war: ' For example: “The French need a thrashing. If the Prussians win, the centralisation of state power will be useful for the centralisation of the German working class. German predominance would also transfer the centre of gravity of the workers’ movement in Western Europe from France to Germany, and one has only to compare the movement in the two countries from 1866 till now to see that the German working class is superior to the French both theoretically and organisationally. Their predominance over the French on the world stage would also mean the predominance of our theory over Proudhon’s, etc.” (Letter to Engels, July 20, 1870). See for example https://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/t4bb6j, https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/michail-bakunin-letters-to-a-frenchman-on-the-present-crisis , https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/michail-bakunin-the-paris-commune-and-the-idea-of-the-state , etc

186Tr. N.: “Het fascisme, een oude Dwaling in een nieuw Kleed”, Hoorn, 1933.

187 Tr. Note: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._P._Morgan (1837-1913), See JPMorgan Chase bank.

for, but it also erodes the societal democracy, the 'civil freedoms' inasfar as it deems them too dangerous for the existing order. And added to that, it reverts to

feudal means of power.

That is the second point that we must make here. Fascism reverts to the inquisition, to censorship, to terror, to all those means that were -up until a short while ago- thought to be gone forever. For those who had looked deeper it was nothing new, as it had already been demonstrated in the world war. During the world war we have repeatedly stated that, when things get tense between the state and society, the state first turns into a state of war, and after that in a state of siege. And the state of siege is in fact this: that all constitutional rights are suspended because there is an exceptional situation; and all decisions fall into the hands of the military government. The state of war means that the civil rights as such are abolished and the military government can act as a totalitarian dictator and turn to brute violence, even summary judgment. *When the conditions become critical, the state becomes absolute*. We have explained before, during the world war, that it is not right to think: the Catholic Church is over, so the inquisition and the censorship are over as well. The days of the Catholic Church may be over, but the inquisition and the censorship have been absorbed by the State. In Spain the inquisition at the end of the Middle Ages was officially in the service of the Church, but it was instrumentalized by the State; it was a means of power of the ruling class, and anywhere the Catholic Church was expelled in the western states, the State became absolute in principle, and it copied the means of power of the Church – inquisition, control of education and consciences, censorship and terror, etc - and applied those means as a stick in the corner waiting to be used whenever necessary, whenever circumstances demanded. And so it happened in the Church as well: as long as the flock let itself be lead like a tame, blind horse, or a donkey if you like, the Church didn't use it either! So as the national and international situations of several countries are at the moment just as tense and difficult as they were during the world war, it is only logical that the official powers spread a *permanent state of siege* over the peoples, that they return to the feudal methods of power and that the bourgeois parliamentarian and social democracy are increasingly put aside.
Added to that, the bourgeoisie itself has long ago founded the

worship of the state.

It is untrue that fascism brings something new with its state absolutism. It simply continues a tradition that has clearly seen the light during the French Revolution. The French Revolution soon turned into a complete state absolutism, that reached its pinnacle with Napoleon. The situation in France in those days resembles those in Italy today: the nation wasn't fitted together properly yet. So we hear a series of opinions like: We must become like the 'frenches' [French]; we must make a union, 'a nation'; we must found 'a general, national state'; 'the state is superior over the citizen, just like the citizen is superior over the human being'; 'we must start a national religion'. Those are the ideas that were dominant in France when France had to become a modern national unity, and today we hear exactly the same ideas in other countries, where that point has not been reached yet or where the political and economical power of the bourgeois class is threatened. The State is all-in, it's all or nothing now.
And it follows from all that, that the ruling class in the different countries don't so much believe in Hitler, in Mussolini, in Dollfuss, Pilsoedski, etc as messiahs, but they use them as tempters and misleaders, as Pied Pipers of Hamelin that have to whistle in such way that the big mass is enchanted and dragged along to be imprisoned in the dungeons of the ruling classes, in the nationalist, capitalist, imperialist state prison. Hitler, Mussolini, Dollfuss, etc as persons are not the

essential element of fascism,

and we must not even waste too much time on those gentlemen. Because that would make us just as messianistic as the others, just not pro-messianistic but anti-messianistic although we do believe

that the problem is in 'the big man'! But it isn't! Because when that 'big man' disappears there will be another one, or two or three or ten. The essential thing is not that one, those two or three men, but the method that forms the foundation. And in that method, the attempt of the ruling class is expressed to adapt feudal methods of power and pre-feudal methods of deception to the political and economic needs of the moment. Because there simply is a state of emergency, it is openly admitted that emergency measures are taken.
Fascism is so to speak a measure of desperation of the ruling class by which it instrumentalizes the desperation of the big mass in order to still maintain its authority, power and rule. And that fascism continues so easily because it coincides with an economical period that –but we don't treat this subject here tonight– drives towards 'autarchy' everywhere: the system of closing itself off behind high, heavily armed toll walls within the own national circle in which as much as possible of the own needs are satisfied domestically, in the first place with a next war in mind. Fascism is also part of the big imperialist war between the different nations, and the more things get tense in the different capitalist nations, the more fascist measures are taken.
Already here

in the Netherlands.

Of course in the Netherlands, that didn't even take part in the World War except to make war profits, it takes different forms. In the first place everything is always tamer here, and secondly more hypocritical – always with the obligatory religious varnish over everything – and thirdly more careful: we are always busy 'seeing which way the wind blows' – that is simply part of the nature of the Netherlands and the Dutch people; just compare the portrait of Mussert with that of Mussolini for example. The Netherlands is a small people among the global super powers, and at the same time it is a colossal imperialist power.
In the beginning, fascism didn't seem to break through here. It was condemned in all circles and tendencies of politics and economy. The papers, even the bourgeois ones did little else than exhaust themselves in criticism of Hitler and Mussolini. But that has changed. In the first place when it became clear that the 'socialism' of those nationalist messiahs wouldn't be too relevant. But especially since the revolt on 'De Zeven Provinciën'[188]. The revolt has been of very big significance for the development of Dutch capitalism because it made the ruling class realize the dangerous position in which it was, and aware of the fact that 'if we let our democracy and social-democracy continue with its anti-militarism, communism and anarchism, with our laissez-faire, then the whole Dutch Empire will collapse'. Because 'we can't even be sure of our war fleet any longer!' So then the conclusion was: 'measures must be taken'. And those were taken quickly, because the Netherlands as an imperial power was in critical danger.
Those who want some understanding of the situation in the Netherlands shouldn't think that Dutch politics are controlled from Groningen or Maastricht or even from Den Haag or Amsterdam; *Dutch politics are decided in Indonesia*. You will never understand a thing about the politics of the Netherlands, and the state of the Dutch people if you forget even for a moment that the Netherlands are a big imperialist realm in which, as it is chanted in Dutch fascist circles, the sun never sets. The Netherlands with its 8 million inhabitants, that rules over 65 millions people of color in Indonesia and another one of those colonies in West-India – that is the Realm, that is the great Dutch Empire that spans three continents. And that great Dutch Empire has its centre of gravity on the other side of the globe, between the Indian and the Pacific Oceans. That is where the Dutch imperial domain is, and that is what the greatness of Amsterdam is built upon. Amsterdam has drawn the light of its glory from the blood of Indonesia like an oil lamp, at least for a large part. Holland as colonial power is an imperialist power, and the fate of Holland depends on the fate of Indonesia. And the situation of Indonesia at sea is exactly the same as the situation of Belgium on land. Like Belgium found itself between the three great powers in the West -England, France and Germany- so it had no choice but to get dragged into a conflict; and out of a need to be secured it had to live in the shadow

188Tr. Note: see https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muiterij_op_De_Zeven_Provinci%C3%ABn on the Mutiny on the Dutch war ship near Sumatra's shipyard of Oleh-leh of Koeta Radja, mainly because of a wage dispute.

of mighty France; it's the same for the Empire of the Netherlands on the other side of the globe: Indonesia as well is a neutral terrain between great powers, and when war will break out there, that neutrality will certainly be torn apart. Just like Belgium is located between France, England and Germany, Indonesia is located between Great-Britain, France, the U.S. and Japan; and when its neutrality can no longer be maintained, one of the super powers will grab it. The danger of war looms day and night over the Pacific Ocean. One of the most restless places in the world these days is precisely that 'Pacific' Ocean. And that is why Dutch imperialism had to –in order to defend Indonesia– be so sure about the reliability of its army and fleet; and also in order to retain those subjected within the 'national' or Dutch union. And now it became clear that the fleet and army more or less hit a dead-end, that a ghost had awoken that threatened to make the apparatus of power defenceless against the domestic and foreign enemies, it was simply decided that drastic measures would be implemented. It was decided to demonstrate to the world –in the first place the British Empire–, that counts on the Netherlands in the East just as much as France counts on Belgium in the West – that the Netherlands was still 'quite the man'!

Fascism arose at the same time in Germany; it threatened the Dutch border. So from a bourgeois imperialist and nationalist point of view it was necessary to make sure that 'independence could be defended' against the 'barbarism from the East', and so it began to adopt increasingly barbaric methods so that the Netherlands would be capable to defend its age-old democracy! And so we see that the freedom of the press, the freedom of speech, the freedom to convene, organize, etc were increasingly in danger; slowly but surely the flood of fascism penetrates our seawalls.

But the Dutch people don't notice much of it because we have a minister-president who does his job like a true wizard: while he constantly turns fascism away with one hand, he increasingly applies fascist methods with the other. Such gentlemen are much more dangerous than explicit fascists!

Colijn is one of the most able men by the way, that we can think up, and he is so dangerous because he is the leader of the 'Anti-Revolutionaire Partij'[189], and at the same time representative of the oil capital: the **Royal-Dutch Shell**. That fits more or less in the sphere of messianism. You know that 'messiah' -whether it refers to actual saviours or not- in fact means 'the anointed'; Colijn, to say it in the way of the Old Testament, is 'anointed with oil'. He already was more or less at the time when he was still governor of Indonesia! Liberal and other papers of the time remarked that such was improper, inappropriate, etc[190]. Today that all seems forgotten: different times, different morals! Colijn is now revered in the 'Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant' and 'Handelsblad' as Holland's 'big man', no less than by the reformated and roman-catholic press. And yet he is the incarnation of the increasingly intimate connection between the English oil-imperialism and the Dutch one. He even flies back and forth ostentatiously between Den Haag and London, and between the Netherlands and Indonesia[191]. The foreign press asserts without any doubt that he apparantly doesn't want that the oil on Borneo and New Guinea to fall into Japan's hands, and that 'the Dutch Indies are a link in the military-strategic chain that runs from India to Australia'. So now, inasfar as Colijn and his people don't want Japan to control the oil of Borneo and New Guinea, he is -negatively- preparing the war. He constantly advocates for the necessity of 'national defense' in... the Far East, while the Dutch military and the militaristic press explain that this relates to the threaths in and around the Pacific Ocean first of all. So doing this 'god-given leader' as he is praised – yet again a symptom of messianism!- fulfills a very deplorable function. Indeed, because of this the Dutch people finds itself in permanent war danger!

And so fascism grows slowly but surely, and one could draw up a very long list of facts that demonstrate that the freedom of the word, freedom of the press, freedom of opinion, freedom to meet and to organise, are increasingly corroded, and the right of asylum is violated by the government; and that there is an intensifying state of war against socialists, communists, anarchists, radical pacifists and anti-militarists.

189 Tr. N.: Or 'Anti-Revolutionary Party', the first political party in the Netherlands, a result of a much older current that rejected the French revolution. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-Revolutionary_Party

190 See A. L. Constandse, 'Van Calvijn to Colijn'. De Albatros, Den Haag, 1933.

191 Colijn's flight to Indonesia was officially announced when I wrote those words. At the last moment the had to abandon the plan for political reasons, and he sent a stand-in – which changes nothing essential to what I said.

There even came a declaration from the Government, that said that those who incite to refuse military service for example, must be punished more severely than those who are guilty of theft. Theft is not that bad in this society – it is much worse to be guilty of 'incitement' even if that means: incitement to be faithful to humanity and conscience.
So the fact that we are not dealing with something abnormal here, but with

a normal phenomenon

in the development of capitalism, is one of the first things that we need to be aware of when we're dealing with fascism. Whenever in history something new appears, the people always think that it is 'abnormal', but often it only is abnormal because they haven't gotten used to it yet. No matter how strangely fascism presents itself, it is essentially part of the status quo from which it has organically grown; it is linked to a worship of the state - tied in with how the nation is perceived-, that has even permeated large parts of socialism. There was no other possible outcome than this one. And it will continue unless it is stopped by something. France is still called 'the trench of democracy'. There, with its back to the Atlantic Ocean, democracy has withdrawn in the face of the whole mainland of Europe, and it would defend itself there. But these days, France is already infringing on the rights of parliament, eroding freedom of speech and persecuting anti-militarists more harshly. That is because France, at the same time threatened by Germany again, finds itself in a situation of increasing financial difficulties, of army and fleet becoming increasingly unreliable, while the economic crisis deepens and unemployment is rising. The petit-bourgeois are starting to tremble – and they are a powerful faction in France. Those are the phenomena that are the conditions for the development of fascism. Carefully analysed, fascism is just as normal in the development of modern capitalism as imperialism is: it is in fact itself a form of imperialism! *Fascism is imperialism turned inwards*. The same attitude that imperialism demonstrates towards the populations of conquered territories and colonies, it now demonstrates domestically. Said differently: under fascism, the white people are treated by their own governments like they treat the people of color in the colonies: democracy is abolished and civil freedoms scrapped. Fascism is imperialism turned inwards in order to maintain itself more strongly outwards.
One of the reasons why fascism can permeate so easily in the modern labor movement when the workers discover that they can't reach their goals by the traditional means, is also the fact that in those circles the

Führerprinzip[192]

has been pushed so strongly. Socialism has -more than any other movement- pushed leaders to the forefront: our Marx, our Lenin, our Stalin, our Kautsky, our Troelstra, etc. What does the leader say? What does the leader think about it? And at the same time there is a

Parteiprinzip:[193]

the Party is above everything else; in fact there is only one Party, and all the other people that are not part of THE Party are considered to be inferior. Everywhere the social-democracy had a majority, all the people that were not members of THE Party were considered to be inferior, and more or less treated accordingly. We can see this even more in Russia, the land of the ONE Party, where there are only two kinds of people: members and non-members, the chosen ones and the damned ones, we could almost say. This belief in the Party, that system of the single Party State has gone over from bolshevism onto fascism. That is how -on all sides- a mentality was nurtured in

192 Tr. Note: BdL uses the phrase 'leiders-ideologie', literally 'leaders-ideology' but Führerprinzip [the 'Leaders Principle'] is a better translation in this context: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Führerprinzip implying that the Leader is always right, and that the organisation is based on the principle that everybody should be lead (except the Supreme Leader, of course).

193 Tr. Note: in the original: 'partij-ideologie' [the 'Party Principle'] similar to 'leaders-ideology': primacy of the party over its members and everything else. Remenisces of Mussolini's “Everything within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state.”

which people thought that if it wasn't the first Party, then the other Party just had to be the solution; like worshippers they looked at one church or the other one. And time and again we saw people deflect from one Leader to the other, and from one Party to the other.
We can even say that fascism is in many respects related to social-democracy and with the parties of the Third International, and that this is the reason why those parties find it so difficult to advance something essentially different. Especially the Second International is so powerless because it is so stuck in nationalism; it is incapable of breaking with the bourgeois traditions. And as bolshevism increasingly withdraws to the Russian people and Russian State Capitalism, and imposes it from above onto the mass, and maintains it violently, it already demonstrates a deplorable fascist allure. We can even almost see the natural tendency of different fascisms to collaborate politically and economically with bolshevism; and the modern imperialist admires precisely the 'strong authority' in Russia. Even when the socialist world makes plans to create an alternative for fascism, it is completely incapable to abandon the state tradition. One of the most respectable and warm representatives of the Second International, Hendrik de Man[194], has made a plan -and he's propagating it– to reach socialism as quickly as possible. But all of his measures are tied to the existing state instead of putting society centre stage; instead of socializing things he wants to

nationalize

them; instead of handing things over to the people, he hands them over to the state. And he says that his intentions are to do this as a temporary measure and that he essentially focussed his plan on international relations, but for the time being it is tied to the state; and so much so that if the plan would be implemented, the Belgian state would become even more powerful and therefore mightier internationally so that the transition into the fascist state would be even easier.
In India this danger was identified, lucky enough. Gandhi has even identified it, and someone who understands it even more clearly is the young Nehru[195]. Nehru has seen that if India is not careful with its nationalism, a new fascism will simply be founded, and so he launched a new motto: we can only advance in India when we don't aim for 'national independence' but directly for 'international communism', even if there is no option for us to do all the things that bolshevism does, and -although we are convinced that we need other methods of struggle- if we have a lot of sympathy and respect for what happens in Russia. But the main goal of the Indian liberation movement can only be aimed at internationalist communism. We can no longer limit ourselves to 'nationalism'. When Nehru was arrested shortly after, Gandhi was immediately so chivalrous to copy the slogan. And that is meaningful, because there is a real risk that Gandhi involuntarily ends up on a nationalist course. But the young Nehru wasn't even properly arrested or Gandhi as well declared that the main thing in India was 'communism'. That insight is of a lot (and big) importance.
It is strange to notice that the protestants and -especially- the catholics can advance better and stronger ideological arguments than the socialists when it comes to fascism as it unveils itself in the different countries. How is that possible? How is it, that -for example in Germany- a relatively

194 Tr. Note: Hendrik 'Henri' de Man, Belgian social-democrat (1885-1953), probably best known for his 1933 'Plan de Man' or 'Labour Plan' (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plan_De_Man, https://www.belgiumwwii.be/nl/belgie-in-oorlog/artikels/manifest-van-hendrik-de-man.html, http://digital.amsab.be/pubs_serials/Le_Mouvement_Syndical_Belge_1918-1940/mouvsybe_1933/mouvsybe_1933_nr11.pdf). Ended up collaborating with the nazi occupation in Belgium. Like king Leopold III, to whom he was a close advisor, he was convinced that Germany had won the war and his disdain for democracy grew even more as it had proved to be impotent. He published a 'Manifesto' on June 28, 1940 in which he dissolved the 'Belgische Werkliedenpartij' [Belgian Workers Party] or BWP. He instructed socialists not to resist the occupying force; instead the 'crumbling of a rotten world' opened up opportunities and was 'the way toward 'European peace and social justice'. He remained in Belgium, stayed at the side of the king and helped restructure the existing unions into a corporatist 'Union of Hand- and Brain Workers', initially condoned by the occupier. Fleed to Switzerland after the war where he got political asylum, and was convicted in absentia to twenty years of prison in Belgium . His papers online at the IISH (Amsterdam) https://socialhistoryportal.org/news/articles/308068

195 Tr. Note: Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964)

strong

ideological resistance

against fascism has arisen from the side of the catholic church and protestantism? It is mainly because both sides were born in a time when the modern state did not, or barely, exist; because catholicism and protestantism are ideologically related to a philosophy that was born in the Roman Empire, when all kinds of nationalisms dissolved into eachother, and when moral and intellectual discoveries were made that can be summed up in the words *cosmopolitism, world citizenship and the idea of the individual*.

There is a central principle in the ideology of original christianity: the respect for human individuality; and the Catholic Church added something else besides that principle, and soon put it on top of it: theocracy. For the Church, 'theocracy' meant that the spiritual is superior to everything else. But when the modern State was born, the Catholic Church was forced to abandon that theocratic principle. The Church said: “I supercede the State”; the State said: “I am superior to consciousness and the Church”, and the Church had to bend the knee. But there remained an old grudge, and time and again the Catholic Church protested against the absolutism of the State. If you read the brochure of rector Bots, you will see that there is a complete ideological arsenal in the catholic moral teaching to -at least in the social domain, because as you know, in the realm of spirituality it is a whole other matter!- to defend the freedom of individuality. And in a different way, we can find the same in protestantism. Because the protestants, especially the reformed protestants, have grown up in the struggle for the freedom of consciousness, freedom from the Church as well as from the State; and their ideology (although they mostly ridicule and blaspheme it these days in their practice) is one in which consciousness and human individuality are in principle superior to the State. That is why we can read all kinds of interesting exposés even in 'De Standaard' and other reformed papers, where it is explained that fascism is a big crime because we are dealing with a spiritual dominance of a small group over the whole group; and in which mainly the *state slavery* of human beings is attacked. The human being needs self-organisation, self-life, its own life circle in which the state cannot penetrate; a system of oppression does not agree with the character of humanity, etc. But the same parties –whether they want to or not– de facto adopt fascist measures. But they say that those are measures to prevent fascism. But it's all just theory; a theory that we can find in -as such probably decent- idealists and armchair intellectuals, and that they debate in important papers. But it has nothing to do with

the practice of christian parties.

That is what is remarkable. We can see that shortly, when we follow the development of the Anti-Revolutionary Party. If we go back to 1890 you will notice that Abraham Kuyper[196] protests against the up and coming big capital in the name of the petite-bourgeoisie: against the monopolies and imperialism, and against the absolutism of the State. And you will also see that Kuyper says: the salvation can only be sought in socialism. But once he is in the government of a small imperialist state with very large colonies, and so he has to act imperialisticly *because his function demands it*, he breaks with his former ideas –that have become the 'old rag' he once wore– he becomes the man who tries to strangle the labor movement in 1903 by the anti-strike laws; he becomes the one who publishes exposés a few times in 'De Standaard' that lay the foundation of modern Dutch imperialism. He was one of the first to propagate a more powerful Holland with a fleet of dreadnoughts, as if we could ever compete with the English. The successor of Kuyper then was...

196 Tr. Note: founder (1837-1920) of the Anti-Revolutionaire Partij [Anti-Revolutionary Party], founded in 1879 and dissolved in 1980 when it merged into the CDA (Christian Democratic Appeal). A Protestant university and a paper ('De Standaard') were under its control. One main goal was the equal funding of private (religious) schools by the government at the same level as public schools. Generally speaking its bedrock was its opposition to the ideals of the French Revolution. Against the revolution, they put the Bible: instead of liberty, it favoured divine providence, instead of equality it favoured hierarchy and instead of brotherhood it favoured sovereignty in its own circle. Its ideals could be summed up in the tripartite motto "God, the Netherlands and the House of Orange".

Colijn[197]. The [down]fall is clear. The '*fall of man'* for anti-revolutionaries: from Kuyper to Colijn! When you look at the anti-revolutionary literature of last century (Fabius for example) you will find treatises about Germanic and Roman law and about modern state theory; that modern politics is characterized by the absolutism of the State; and with sharp attacks against the absolutism of the policies of Bismarck, against putting power above law, the principle of iron-blood-violence. Practically nothing of it is left these days, now that we have an oil-president so to speak.
In other places we see the same betrayal of principle. Many

freethinking democrats,

very nice and respectable men, were so convinced of the importance of direct national disarmament that their Party has turned it into an election slogan. And everyone voted zealously for the free-thinking democrats because they hoped that disarmement would soon start. But now we see that two representatives of that Party participate in a government that is out to strengthen 'national defense', nothwitstanding overall budget cuts. We must delay disarmament for the time being, they say. And so does Hitler: We are prepared to disarm if all the others do so! We will cut budgets, but we will still arm ourselves as well as we can. We will do everything in our power to achieve as much as we can!
And if we look at the

social-democrats,

we see the exact same thing: all kinds of anti-militarist slogans and declarations, but at the same time parliamentarian politics leading to strengthened ties with the government. Those who follow up the accounts of the First and Second Chamber closely, will have come to the conclusion that very complicated negotiations are constantly taking place between the government and Albarda and his people, about how tall the door must be through which mister Albarda could enter as a member of the Government; and then Albarda thinks it's not tall enough, and Colijn thinks it is. That is the question that is regularly debated in parliament. The gate of honor through which Albarda[198] can enter the fortress of national unity. Albarda abandons his former anti-militarism because of the international situation; one can read now in the 'Socialistische Gids' that the circumstances are such that we have no choice but to change course, we can no longer maintain the spirit of earlier anti-war resolutions, the times demand new measures, etc. The 'brave disobedience' has been abandoned. The once so proud head of Albarda bows: he can almost get through the door! And what is

Colijn trying?

Colijn tries to tame the leaders of the SDAP by alternating compliments and hateful remarks, and to adapt them to a kind of national government that will be needed if we go to war; and Albarda already proves he agrees in principle to make Godspeace in that case, in order to defend what is left of 'our democracy' -with the most barbaric methods- against the barbarians from East -Europe and East-Asia[199]
Colijn seems to ambition the role of Mussert's[200] John the Baptist. There seems to be a time of pre-

197 Tr. Note: Dutch Prime Minister (1869-1944) for the ARP on several occasions and party leader (1922, businessman (agriculture, oil as CEO for Shell), editor of 'De Standaar', head of the Dutch delegation to the League of Nations; called for the acceptance of German leadership in Europe after the Battle of the Netherlands (1940, 'Op de grens van twee werelden' [On the border between two worlds] but tried to organise political resistance in 1941, was taken to Germany and died under house arrest in 1944.

198 Willem Albarda (1877-1957), social-democrat, teacher, parliamentarian, minister, party leader, took part in the 'London cabinets', the government in exile.

199 Since this speech ,the latest congress of the SDAP took place in Utrecht where, under the cheers of the drove of the bourgeois press, Albarda unmistakenly capitulated before Colijn, and the Party reverted to the position of August 1914. The international, or rather supra-national anti-militarism is only maintained by a minority, among others by Mrs. C. Pothuis-Smit in 'De proletarische Vrouw" and Dr. W. Banning in 'Tijd en Taak'.

200 Tr. Note: Anton Mussert (1894-1946), politician and engineer, co-founder and leader of the Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging in Nederland (NSB)' [National-Socialist Movement in the Netherlands], collaborator with the nazis and

christian christianity in the Roman Empire; much in the same way that we are currently living in a time of pre-fascist fascism. If fascism is established here for good, it is because it is prepared just like it was earlier in Germany. That 'John the Baptist' is not just rethoric by the way. Because frankly I don't believe that Mussert himself is already all that dangerous. At the moment there is a strong conviction among the whole bourgeoisie, and even among many social-democrats, that if a strongman is necessary, it must be Colijn. And I think they are right in that regard. If I had to be imperialist and bourgeois, I would prefer Colijn over Mussert. But Colijn is man of one day, maybe a year of five or ten; and after that his days are over. And who will come next? That is the question. We shouldn't fixate on Colijn too much. I for me, I believe that De Savornin Loman for example is more dangerous; an extremely able fanatic, representative for the Christelijk-Historische Partij[201] that constantly pushes for more fascistic measures while he is far stronger in sync with the Dutch tradition than Mussert. I'm not saying that he will become the leader of Dutch fascism. But I'm saying that we mustn't be obsessed on Mussert, and forget to notice that we are already in the middle of pre-fascism and that there is a growing movement of persons and groups who threaten to move in to take definitive control of the fascist regime unless the labor movement takes firm action to prevent them.
As it stands now, we must admit that fascism is stopped by almost nothing here. That is the first conclusion of this evening.
Even so, it risks getting more or less bogged down internationally.
Fascism is until now mainly stopped by itself. Remarkably enough! Why is that? In the first place because

fascism can never internationalise:

the more international it becomes, the more it becomes untennable. We can give some examples.
I have a speech by Mussolini here with me, in which is written: Thanks to fascism, our Italy has been dealt a great and unprecedented fate. No people is superior to the Italian people; Rome is the capital of the world; true peace can only be Roman Peace; Italy must be the first nation of the world, at sea and in the sky, in the dust and in the mind; philosophically, religiously, scientifically, culturally and industrially, Italy will take the lead over the whole world. But at the same time Hitler held a speech of his own in which he declared that the greatest people to ever be put on earth by god was the German people; and that the German people was destined to take the philosophical, religious, scientific, cultural, artistic and industrial lead over the whole world. And like Mussolini had declared that the old Roman Empire had to resurrect to rule over the land, the sea and the sky, Hitler declared that a global German control is the ideal; there must come a realm of 250,000,000 Germans, he has earlier stated in 'Mein Kampf', at the expense of France among others. So the difficulties started immediately when fascism spread over mutliple countries, because they couldn't even be eachother's neighbours anymore at the very same time. The one wanted, but went too far, and so the other didn't want to in turn. Germany wanted to push on towards Vienna and 'liberate' the farmers of Tirol in the same move. Italy wanted to hold on to them and so it started to defend the independence of Austria. Because it fears that German fascism becomes too powerful. And hence the current Italian policy in the Donau and Balkan regions.
A short while ago, I read in a French fascist paper about the Flemish nationalist movement and especially about the Dinaso's, those in Flanders who want to found a Great-Dutch nation. And what does the French fascist paper write? The Dinaso's are absolutely right in their point of view, but we don't want that because our interests are different. We want French culture to penetrate Belgium even deeper, until Antwerpen even, and preferably even further...
There is no other possible outcome because *all fascist politics is of course imperialist politics*, and the more fascism, the more conflicts, the more things get bogged down. A house that is divided against itself, cannot persist.
It's starting to become amusing if we take a look at 'People and Fatherland'. If you ever have the

de-facto leader of the country between 1942-1945 (although of course under nazi control)
201Tr. Note: Christian-Historical Party, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_Historical_Party

possibility to debate at a fascist meeting or to ask a question, you must always ask what was asked at fascist meeting in Hilversum recently: “When a fascist movement of locals is born in Indonesia, who want to govern their own birth grounds, will the N.S.B. release Indonesia then, or not?”
And there you go! If Indonesian fascism is born, Holland must leave, and if fascism rises in Holland, Indonesia suffers under its rule. The propgandist Overwijn couldn't handle the question, 'De Vooruit' reported, and ultimately came to the conclusion that 'according to him' Holland should just let go of Indonesia, but not for the time being because the Indonesians still had too much 'cannibalistic characteristics', as he claimed had been proven apparently in a recent trial; when Holland would no longer take care of Indonesia, the Indonesians would “go roasting eachother's bones”.
That is what 'De Vooruit' reported. In 'Volk en Vaderland' all of it is being denied, and there is an official declaration that the propagandist hasn't said anything of the kind, and could never have said anything like it. But then what? Overwijn – as we're learning – has said, and this is the official declaration, that Holland and Indonesia must remain tied together; everyone can know that this is one of the main points in the N.S.B. programme. But it remains to be seen whether Indonesian fascists will accept this! Never, of course. Who over there would, in fact?
The second area where fascism gets bogged down is

the realm of economy.

When you go to Italy for example, you will see that the lira is in a very difficult position, and many wonder whether the whole regime has in fact been necessary if in the end the financial and other situations are just as bad as in other countries. If fascism had achieved something exceptional, if more humane circumstances had been created, there might have been a point to it. But even from the point of view of 'the ends justify the means', Italy hasn't achieved much. “Yes”, is the reply, “there used to be a state voucher of 5% in Italy. The rate dropped to 3.5% and 'the whole people' agreed. That is proof of at least some enthousiasm.” Let's wait on the 'whole people' for now! It was a matter of approximately 8 billion, of which the interest rate has been reduced from 5% to 3.5%. How has that happened? A transition measure was announced by which those who received 5% for the voucher were invited to content themselves with 3.5%. All those who didn't protest were considered to agree, but those who objected and wanted to hold on to their 5% had to register their names – and were put on the black list. Add the fact that usually, with a conversion like this, enough time is taken, but Italy took 6 days so that most people didn't even get a chance to take action; and third –for those who had the courage to still demand the 5 %- their papers were confiscated by the state, so that their money would only be available to the owners in 1937! The way this conversion was handled is precisely proof of the fact that the most artificial methods had to be used to force the people agree, after which everything was glorified as spontaneous acts. And this is just about those people with savings, of whom one would probably expect enthousiasm.
There was a picture published in an English paper, that portrays Hitler and Mussolini both with one hand in the air: the posture of the magician to distract the audience. They both give the fascist salute. But behind their backs they hide a piece of paper which says for Mussolini: “official number of unemployed in Italy 1,000,000; drop in trade so much and so much; deficit for 1933 such and such, number of failed businesses so much, drop in wages so much.” Hitler hides a similar confession behind his back.
If we look at the 'Haagse Post', we can read the following. The economic situation in Germany is cause for great concern, official optimism nothwithstanding. Unemployment is artificially kept low; indeed the number of unemployed doesn't go down. It may be true that many unemployed are doing a little better, the situation of those who are working is much worse than it used to be. Part of the workers used to have a relatively good wage, but now almost all of them are in a miserable situation. Dissatisfaction is rising in the country, especially *among the middle class* who has great difficulties because the purchasing power of the mass doesn't increase, but decreases. The benefits of the unemployed have decreased: in Germany a healthy unemployed person receives half of what a mentally ill person is given. That is the reason for the official decree, published by 'Die Neue

Weltbühne', in which -in Hitler's name- all those who work in the bureaus of the German labor front will be prohibited to say things like: “we will raise the weekly wages, ask for longer holidays, fight for higher wages, etc” and to raise expectations that can only lead to confusion and unrest. The political adversaries will take note of such promisses and will ask tauntingly when such promisses will at last be fulfilled. So even promisses are outlawed now, when Hitler promised constantly all sorts in the past! They're in the thick of it, and when in the Netherlands, Mussert asks: 'what has become of all the bourgeois party programmes?' he should first answer the question 'what has become of the fascist programmes in Germany and Italy?' Then we'll know simultaneously what we can expect of his own programme.
So in the 'Haagse Post' we can read: Mussolini hasn't succeeded in solving the

capital and labor

problem. Neither employers nor employees are happy, and industrial workers are even very unhappy. A free press is non-existent in Italy, the government inflames the people against certain foreign powers in order to deflect attention of the domestic situation. Has the number of unemployed dropped with a few thousands, we can read all about it in the press in big headlines; if the number has increased it is barely mentioned. The facts are striking. When you speak about this with intelligent Italians, the reply is: “I don't know”. They are embarassed. When fascism broke loose in Germany, a distinguished Italian said: “I have always respected the Germans, but now...” The enthousiasm for the regime has disappeared, “but one is forced to howl with the crowd, to join in the salutes and the marches!” The only thing that is coalesced this way, is adversaries. Anti-fascism is indeed on the rise in Italy...
So what else stops fascism? A most remarkable phenomenon. Mussolini has once passionately quoted Hegel: “Those who are not fathers, are not men”, and he incited women to breed as often as possible for the purpose of national defense. I have the graphics and official statistics of the birth rate here with me, and in spite of all the propaganda, the birth rate is dropping together with the unfavorable economic conditions in the entire country. The women refuse to breed, even in roman-fascist Italy. It has become impossible because of the hardship.[202] Those are things that fascism risks being stopped by at the moment.
Fascism is in contradiction with

human nature.

The Catholics and anti-revolutionaries are absolutely right about this. It is in contradiction with economic reality in a time when all problems can only be solved internationally; in contradiction with political reality because every nation that has applied fascism gets expansive tendencies that would crush all other nations; it is in contradiction with the highest cultural interests; it is in contradiction with almost everything that was the point of modern civilisation, except for making profits and money for relatively small groups that rule at the expense of the whole people and of millions of people of color.
But there is something else. One of the things that fascism is especially stopped by, are some forms of

direct action,

that have been used, here and there among the people. If even 1 person refuses military service and persists, the whole of fascism can't handle him. That must give us pauze to think what it means. Fascism in every country systematically pushes for war, and if 1 boy says “No” it can't move on, and if he continues it can't even go to war. And then it's over! Because the system is built on violence.
Let me remind you here of 'De Zeven Provinciën'. There was a wage strike; by no means what it

202 The same phenomenon exists in Germany in the middle of 1934, in spite of the benefits that marrying couples receive!...

should have been yet, but still a wonderful instinct inspired those men, who had taken control for themselves. If it had been real anti-militarists, they would probably have sunk the whole fleet and withdrawn forever as draft resister. Fascism is stopped inasfar as such actions are taken. When fascism can't be sure of army and fleet, it can't continue because it survives by the grace of the exploited and increasingly gruesomely misguided and abused people.
In my brochure 'De Overwinning van het Geweld'[203], I have recently systematically analysed how modern imperialism will evolve if a broad action of the white workers will connect with an action of refusal of service, boycott and non-cooperation, etc among the people of color. I have recently been in contact with representatives of the peoples of color. More and more, the realization in the world increases that when a critical point is reached, there will be a wave of resistence from Marocco over Egypt, Syria and as far as Indo-China. And if white workers know what their duty is at such moment, all fascism and imperialism will implode. At the moment the big resistence breaks loose in Indonesia, if the Dutch workers and soldiers would refuse to serve and the connections would be severed, Dutch imperialism would be over with - and fascism with it.
The French workers have understood the second part: that we shouldn't wait until it's too late. It is of the utmost importance to be aware that in France, where the faith in parliamentarism has never permeated very deeply in a part of the labor movement, and where the corruption of parliament has disappointed many is already creating a tendency towards direct action that has lead to the first protest strike; a general strike against the fascist threat. Now, it is true that this movement was more or less permitted by a government that deliberately allowed those things. But *the direction in which the people sought answers* and the fact that teachers, postal-, telegraph- and telephone workers have participated so bravely, makes us understand that the danger of fascism can only be countered by direct action.
Of course the tendency toward direct action is strongest precisely in those countries where the labor movement is the least poisoned with parliamentarism. The most important event in Spain recently is this: a little while ago in Spain, the workers and farmers made a big opportunity to push for a revolution, but heir movement was sabotaged because the social-democrats in their ranks were discouraged by their leaders. But the heroism of the anarchists and syndicalists was such that their enthousiasm has swept up the majority of the Spanish social-democrats anyway. And now the majority of the Spanish social-democratic leaders are forced to admit defeat and are willing to form a popular front in favour of the social revolution[204]. We also gratefully remember the heroic direct action in Vienna, even if we strongly object to the tactic that was applied there[205].
Comrades, those are some of the things that fascism is stopped by in the labor movement. Frankly speaking it's not enough yet; frankly speaking it is never enough when –in a war against a movement– one only exposes contradictions and explains some possibilities and examples of resistence. It's not the subject of tonight's speech to treat this specifically, but before we end here, we must nonetheless establish that it's necessary that the labor movement practically and theoretically reviews the tactics of socialism as they have been applied and propagated, and that it does so on the principle of the *self-organisation of labor*. We can already determine that we must add some guidelines; in the first place that no plan for social revolution can have any chance for succes if it doesn't take the situation of the world as it is, as a whole, into account. Either we must limit ourselves to drawing up national plans and serve fascism consciously or unconsciously, or we must focus on the global problem and understand that it is a matter that touches all races and peoples. And that is why we can't be happier with the attitude of Nehru in India, who tries to secure his movement against the dangers of nationalism by his propaganda, and who said: “I don't want our liberation movement to serve the up and coming big bourgeoisie and other social power concentrations; it only makes sense when our movement serves real international communism”.
In any case we can already see that because and in spite of fascism, the socialist movement is

203 ['The Conquest of Violence'], included elsewhere this translation (in the practical volume 'Battle Plan'). The title was re-used for the English edition 'The Conquest of Violence' that is re-published here.
204 Based on recent press releases. Since then it became clear that the Spanish social-democratic leaders are back at doing whatever they can to sabotage an actual revolutionary popular front.
205 See H. Roland Holst, “Sterft, oude Vormen en Gedachten”. Bevrijding, 1934.

healing from

its second utopia.

The first utopia of socialism, that lasted until the Russian Revolution, was that we would be very close to the big decision: “So comrades, come rally and let us face the final fight. The Internationale unites the human race.”... Even men like Marx and Engels, Bakunin, Domela Nieuwenhuis have repeatedly thought that the great revolution, the tipping point was more or less closeby; they have not factored in enough how deep the bourgeois and feudal ideology, the bourgeois and feudal emotions, habits and organisational methods would permeate the labor movement, and would lead it away from its original goals. And the second utopia, that we can cure ourselves of now, is the utopia of bourgeois democracy.
It is impossible that the old political and social democracy can soon return in this society. Social-democracy was possible in the beginning for the proletariat -and the revolutionaries as well- in the times when the benefits of it for the ruling class were bigger than the downsides. But parliamentarian democracy is already essentially over. And social democracy will soon only exist (as freedom of speech, freedom of thought, of meetings, of press, freedom to organize, freedom to build a new society, etc) inasfar as the working class is able -by its own direct action- not just to maintain all of that, but to push through for its own supra-national ends, with a focus on the self-organisation of labor.
By the way we must not revert from the second utopia back to the first one and think that it would be possible to implement the self-organisation of labor on earth tomorrow. Because of the advance of fascism we have reached a situation in which there is little chance of quickly advancing in the direction of a true social revolution. Not only must the obsolete ideas of the great mass disappear, but *completely new ideas must come to life in the big mass*. It must know what it wants, and want what it knows. We can't save the situation by forcing things, by deluding ourselves and by artificial schemes right now; that won't change the situation in the world.
This evening I have specifically focussed on what fascism is. I have pointed out what fascism risks to be stopped by, but I have also made you realize how little strength is left these days in the labor movement itself. Our biggest chance for change for the moment is still the self-destruction of fascism! But even if it would destroy itself –for example in the next war– so what if we are not capable to build things on a higher plane or if we revert to the old ideologies of before 1933, before 1914 or maybe even before Jesus Christ? The old times will not come back. We can comfortably say that a large part of the theories of anarchism are theoretically and practically obsolete as well, and that things must be re-invented from scratch.
What matters most of all is that we must *aim carefully*. And once we have carefully aimed ourselves we can determine our practical technical, social and cultural actions from there. But the driving force of all that can only be the direct action of the people. And that in turn is only possible inasfar as we throw ourselves into this battle with our whole personality.

DEBATE.

OOSTEN: I would like to make two comments. In the first place: doesn't De Ligt believe that fascism must not only be considered politically, but also in a way culturally, as a response to

a new kind of romanticism

against a hundred years of enlightenment and rationalism, and an optimism that was pushed too far? I consider this question to be important because it would mean that we must consider fascism as something that will exist for a fairly long time. And if that is the case, it is important as well because it more or less determines our attitude against fascism. Because if we would indeed resist fascism, it

of course becomes one-sided, from a certain point of view, a more or less 'stupid' resistance. There is no doubt that martyrdom is in a certain sense the seed of a new church possibly, but only when a certain movement for which that blood is spilled, is coming up in history.
At the moment fascism is coming up, and the resistance against it from a humanist and socialist perspective is in decline. That is why I think that resistance against fascism shouldn't just be founded in practicality, but in an ethical and moral, and more or less 'religious' conviction. There is no other way. We don't act in the hopes that what we do now will benefit posterity, but we act because we have no choice but to resist fascism - on moral grounds.
Secondly. If it is true that a new kind of romanticism is an essential part of fascism and for the meaning of fascism – so again as a reaction against an optimism and rationalism that was pushed too far – then it is very important for us as socialists and anarchists as well that we re-orient

our own world view,

because our world view is for a large part founded in the unjustified optimism of the 19th century. De Ligt himself has already explained –and he said as much in the last few sentences of his speech this evening– that it is very important for us as socialists and anarchists to re-orient ourselves precisely in these times. Now my question is this: could you maybe give us some guidelines for such a re-orientation? I would like to hear this from you.

MESMAN: It is with a certain hesitation that I ask to be heard in this meeting to make a few observations, because I don't think I'm fit to debate this magnificent speech. And so it is not for lack of appreciation for De Ligt's colossal work over the years, but because I have a personal sensibility – but not about my own person by the way. It is with all respect for the speech about fascism that I wish to make a remark on something that De Ligt had better left unmentioned, i.e. that during his struggle against fascism he has also attacked

other currents in the labor movement.

The second point is about a remark that brought me here this evening. De Ligt constantly left his own movement out, except when he talked about the case of 'De Zeven Provinciën'; and while I believe that I must consider this to be a personal virtue of De Ligt – to not take himself as an example of leader worship – but a De Ligt worship is very real in the anarchist movement. I don't want to talk about this per sé, but when he analyzes the matter psychologically, he takes

leader worship

-appreciation of leaders is a different thing- as one of the causes for the weakness of the mass and he leaves out his own movement. I think De Ligt will appreciate that this question gives him an opportunity to delve deeper into this.
And now over to a different point: democracy and spectacle democracy. Does De Ligt think that spectacle democracy as we used to know it, is to be preferred over equalisation, or was there an assumption that the anarchist movement would be excluded from it? With all due respect for the big figures that will always rise above the mass, it should probably be feared that the whole movement is wiped away. Does the speaker think that this

spirit of unity

is a better guarantee in the fight against fascism? And again about spectacle democracy, that has been so strongly worshipped especially in the shape of the

worship of France

which Domela Nieuwenhuis as well was guilty of, and that has lead to Cornelissen and others in the anarchist movement to choose the side of this fake democracy during the war.

BEEN: I have only a small remark about something that has been mentioned but that I would like to see underlined more. What fascism will inevitably be stopped by is

the economic factor.

I say that it has been mentioned, but I would have liked it to be stressed more. It's a matter of technical development. What does fascism want, as we have come to know it? Generally speaking it wants to go back in time when we're talking about the production apparatus. It wants to turn back the clock of the amazing technology, back to manual production. For example the fact that in several big German cities there are cigar factories that have been closed, and production has gone back to artisanal production. The inevitable consequence is of course that the machines become much cheaper, and even that people abroad are already cheering, which of course reinforces international contradictions. But I do believe that a very important point is that the technical development will make it possible in the end for fascism to introduce the idea of production limitation.

ZWART: The speaker told us what fascism is, but he forgot to tell us

what fascism wants.

But fascists have such an enormous influence on the mass because of what they want. What does fascism teach? Fascism says: capital and labor are here forever, and therefore we want to make capital and labor subservient to the state; and we want to give that state as much authority and power as we can, and make it as big as possible. So that is the biggest danger: especially the authority and power of the state.
Secondly the speaker has said that one of the things that will stop fascism is that it cannot become international. I don't entirely agree with the speaker on this, because there are already examples that prove that they enter international communities of interest, so that

internationalization

is very well possible. I even want to point to the recent fact that Germany made a 10 year deal with Poland.

BOS: De Ligt spoke about the

peoples of the East

in the last part of his speech. He spoke about what if they would march against fascism and take a stand. Now I wanted to ask: we can see in Germany, Austria and Italy that the ruling classes use the big mass for fascism, and that the big mass allows itself to be used; now wouldn't there be a chance that, when the peoples of the East march against fascism, the big mass would be used against the peoples of color by the ruling class?

ROOS: I just wanted to make a small comment – we have spoken about it before, but the Dutch people don't know yet

what needs to be done,

I think. It is an old truth that a bundle of arrows is harder to break than all the arrows one by one. The Dutch people must stand shoulder to shoulder – no matter whether one is roman-catholic or israelite, because one may well think religiously, but the economic is crucial. And then it shouldn't be forgotten that it must start with the people; everyone must know what needs to happen. A century ago the Netherlands had 3.5 million inhabitants and it now has 8 million, but there is enough in the world, abundance, and so I say: if there is enough, it shouldn't be that people are lacking because they don't have money. Then we should reduce the work time. There is always work to do,

especially for those people who have never done anything but wasting money. If you want to know what needs to happen you must first know what you want, and not allow yourselves to be driven apart because you have grown up in a different religion.

DE BEER: protest against the expressions of

fascism in your own circles,

that often become visible in an atmosphere in which people listen to eachother in a debate for example. And he is also of the opinion that it is said now that Marx was one of the biggest thinkers, but that the results of

marxism

are relatively pathetic, and that it has spawned countless careerists.

REPLIES.

DE LIGT: The remarks that have been made seem generally of great importance. First of all I think that the first speaker is absolutely right to draw attention to an aspect that I have not addressed sufficiently: the aspect of

romantic reaction

against the rationalist optimism that has troubled socialism so deeply. I did mention it when I said that we are in fact healing from utopias. This was part of that, in fact. At the start of the modern-socialist movement, generally the idea has dominated that there would be a big Kladderadatsch around the turn of last century and that things would then immediately start to pivot. This fierce optimism, that was relatively useful we must add, is now over. That whole phantasmagoric mess, I must say, is now useless.
In one of the most recent issues of 'Bevrijding' you can read an article by the French communist George Bataille, about the state. He comes to the conclusion that the bourgeoisie's optimism in the last century has had such a strong influence that a large part of the socialists has also been swept away by it, and that this optimism went together with a certain faith in the bourgeois democratic state, and that it ended up in adopting all kinds of methods of the bourgeoisie in the revolutionary struggle; even feudal ones, as we can see in today's bolshevism – but that these ideas are now being smashed by history itself, and that we now live in the era of

unhappy awareness,

in which the revolutionary labor movement is starting to become aware of its deep misery. We will have to go through all that before we're able to rebuild things. We can't go back to where we come from; we're stuck, and the only option to get out seems to me to really face our misfortune, and don't brush it off too easily or light-heartedly - and when we're asked 'How do we get out of this?' I think that there is a method to at least find

a guiding principle

to make it out: that the human being is part of humanity, and that the human being is characterized by humaneness. A person who is not characterized by humaneness is not a human, but an inhuman. A human is distiguished from the animals firstly because there are relations with the humans through humaneness and secondly the fact that humaneness is the guideline of conduct. Those are two universal values that have evolved so far during the cosmic-historic process of the human species that the human is distinguished from the animals by it. And now it is remarkable to see that

even a human who is so 'historic-materialist' as Marx sees humanity and humaneness as the two big things that drive him, and are the highest goals that his teachings are aiming at. If we ignore the 'marxism' – and a lot of bad things have been said here about it with good reason -, if we only look at what Marx himself thought and wanted, then we see that he suffered under the fact that people are objects and not subjects, and that it comes down to every person becoming an individual. Frankly spoken, the goal of marxism has been to arouse the fighting spirit of the proletariat in order to liberate itself into becoming human individuals in such way that it becomes what it has always been and appears in its full humaneness.
That has always been the main thing of modern socialism, in people like Rosa Luxemburg as well, and Liebknecht for example, but it has more and more been erased from modern socialism, especially because it has increasingly adopted the practices and habits of the bourgoisie; on the other hand because in the Russian Revolution all kinds of methods of power from the bourgeois and pre-bourgeois world have been adopted, so that more and more practices were used – although there are plenty of 'attenuating circumstances' that can be put forward – that violate the generally accepted goal of socialism. Inasfar as we loose sight of -and sacrifice- humanity and humaneness, and forget ourselves as human beings, we -and our world- are lost.
And when the question is how we can rebuild a new view on the world and on life, the solution seems to me to build on

the experience,

and to investigate what is characteristic of humaneness in this human being: where do we come from, and where are we going; that we build on biology first of all, secondly on psychology and thirdly on pedagogy, etc; and that we consider all the discoveries that have been made in recent times.
In this respect we have opportunities. Look at the special time in history we live in. Bourgeois science, that moves relatively independently from the economic system – that has always been the case: there is obviously a link, but science has its own methods, and sometimes a method that rises above the currently existing – and comes to the same conclusions that form the foundations of anarchism. Some time ago it was routine in biology to explain everything from the outside in, from the material, the matter itself that supposedly determined the inside, the human being, as if the human being was the result of all kinds of chemicals and influences. This idea has now become untennable from a technical-scientific point of view, and Wells and Huxley[206] demonstrate this influence: the recognition that there is a tendency towards self-realization, self-development, self-healing, etc that becomes ever more clear as one looks higher in the realm of life; and which gets stronger as the mind develops, so that the human can intervene, in one's personal life as well as in social and cosmic life. The conclusions of biology, psychology, pedagogy, that were born in the bourgois science, are all fundamentally in conflict with fascism. *Fascism is an onslaught on the best conclusions of bourgeois science*, and bourgeois science doesn't know how to handle it. If it applies its own conclusions, fascism must implode; and if not, everything must be twisted and turned to explain it. Everything results in self-organisation, self-government, self-development: the same principles that form the basis of the self-organisation of labor. And fascism doesn't know how to deal with that, because fascism is essentially uniform, it wants to dictate the same rules to everything, and is therefore in conflict with human nature and culture because those are necessarily pluriform: diverse and versatile. Because in the end no-one is the same as anyone else; on top of that, each person is constantly evolving differently throughout life, and lives individually and in relation to others. So if each person should get a chance, then every person must be able to develop differently from everyone else in such way that the principles of humanity and humaneness can fully develop, and it should be the same for everyone else.
That is more or less the direction in which -I think- we should look, and there must indeed be a

206 H. G. Wells, G. P. Wells, Julian Huxley, 'De Wetenschap van het Leven' ['The science of life'], I-II, Service, Den Haag. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Science_of_Life , https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.221951

reorientation

because the socialist science lives too much under the suggestion of bourgeois science of the middle of last century. There are plenty of socialists and anarchists who come up with slogans that sound very clever (apart from half truths, science has room for a lot of untruths as well) that are invoked as if they were the latest wisdom because they are scientifically formulated. We do have to be mindful of that. It's ridiculous to fall from one bible into the next. In the anarchist world as well it has repeatedly been the habit to quote the alledgedly scientific expressions of big forerunners like a holy scripture, and not read them critically but accept them like others accept the gospel. This has become even worse because the materialistic-atheist side proclaims things very dogmatically, that were never meant to be dogmas. Marx is quoted for example. But if you read Marx you will see that he is researching things, and changes opinion multiple times, and it was never his intention to *determine* the truth once and for all. And that is even more true for the anarchist world. If you look at Bakunin or others, there is no suggestion of having found everlasting truth. What did they do? They looked for the purest conclusions of science in their own time, and tried to see to what degree they could support the foundations of their own ideas, and made useful for their struggle. And that is what we need to do yet again today. Not that we must pretend to say: we'll give all that a twist so that it fits our claims, but in the sense that if it becomes clear that certain ideas are going in the direction of freedom and humaneness, we shouldn't turn away from them just because those ideas were not born in our milieu or because they sound so new and strange that we must rethink things. Because generally the tendency to cling to old forms and ideas is born from a deep intellectual fatigue or from laziness. It is easiest to never review one's own thoughts, never to think things through very deeply, to have everything in a booklet and to always repeat the same answers to the same questions. But then we're talking about catechism. And that is why I think I need to draw attention to the fact that we can't advance unless we subject our whole view on the world and on life to a thorough critique.
The remark was made that

other currents

of the labor movement have also been criticizezd. That is correct and there is no other way. When we criticize our own part of the labor movement, we encounter objections there as well. That is not because we find it so pleasant, but simply because we can't move forward if we don't look where the errors are. And when we criticize other movements, we do so because we believe that there are people there that disagree with us; so we want them to understand *why* we disagree with them. Vice versa it's time to stop thinking that everyone should only speak about other currents as if our own movement couldn't be criticised. We must give everyone the opportunity to speak their minds and to criticize us if we can trust that everyone involved is looking for a reorientation of socialism. We will say what we have to say, and we are willing to accept any criticism that convinces us.
Now on the remarks about a 'De Ligt worship': I hope that I can pass up on such fate. I haven't noticed too much of it, fortunately, but inasfar as I have, it has felt extremely unpleasant. If you appreciate that I do what I can for our movement, of course that is nice. But please don't subject yourself to anyone. “Don't trust princes”, the bible says. Don't have princes! Place no-one above you!

Every leader is fallible,

and so am I; and the whole movement is fallible and we can only move forward by an exchange where we all do our best, and we all criticize eachother.
If I didn't mention Domela Nieuwenhuis in connection to this leader worship, that is because I think that this worship as we've known it in the past is over, and that these days we can appreciate what he essentially and truly was. Now that his time is over, and we can give him a place in history, and are able to appreciate his role, there is every opportunity to give him the appreciation that he deserves. But never like a messiah or anything similar.

It has also been said that we must beware of being homogenised. That is right. I have briefly pointed out how I think this should be done, and that should be elaborated on, but the main principle is of course the development of

direct action,

not just *against* fascism, but *in favor* of a broader and higher humanity, and meanwhile it must be analysed what the right time is for certain actions, individual and collective.

The remark about the spectacle democracy of France -that was so

revered

by Domela Nieuwenhuis and Cornelissen- is very relevant. Coincidently I'm working on an analysis of the cause of this worship, because I have noticed that it has had a very adverse influence on the whole movement and the whole ideology of anarchism. I haven't spoken more about it as it was outside of the subject of this evening, but in principle I have no refutation of this point of view.

I'm also grateful for the remark on certain

economic ideas of fascism.

I have taken a note about it. It remains to be seen whether it will always be true, but we can take it into account and can elaborate on it later in a precise analysis of fascism.

What fascism wants

is not the same as what it says it wants. What it says it wants is what the big mass expects; what it wants we cannot say, but what fascism is aiming for is what we must investigate, and once we know, we must take action against that. Whether they declare that capital and labor can't harmonize, so everything must be subjected to the State, for the moment that is only a declaration. It is precisely what should be investigated: *how it must, and how it can*. And then it appears that we encounter contradictions. I have mentioned the announcements in 'De Haagse Post' and the 'Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant' because they are certainly not prejudiced in the favour of the workers!

Can fascism internationalize?

That depends on how the word is used. Germany can ally with Poland, but that is not internationalizing; that is a temporary arrangement between two essentially hostile powers. The fascist states will always be hostile against eachother because they all want to expand beyond their own borders. And while it's possible that a group of fascist states unites against a different group, they can do so only in the way of thieves; and for thieves today's friends are tomorrow's enemies. When I say that fascism can't become international, I mean that every fascism as nationalism of course stops at its own borders.
“Fascism has succeeded in drenching the coming youth in imperialism”, it was recently said in a foreign paper. That means that it can never be in a pure relationship with other peoples, obsessed as it is with *sacro egoïsmo*[207] .

207 In Rotterdam, Den Haag, Leiden, Utrecht, Leeuwarden, Groningen and other places I have pointed out (in February-March of 1934) the following as well in connection to a speech that Mussert had given at the time in Den Haag. The Dutch Messiah constantly blabbers about his desire for national independence, autonomy, self-satisfaction, etc precisely in a time when every country and continent is economically and culturally more dependent on the others than ever before, and one can't even maintain its national weaponry without the others! The 'international mixing' and 'interdependence' of all peoples and races is simply impossible to erase from history. That is what the essentially reactionary 'autarchy' runs into everywhere. It is as immoral as it is anti-historic. Meanwhile Mussert declares explicitly that national-socialist Indonesia could not exist without East India! That is why he wants to keep Indonesia subjected under Dutch rule forever, in other words the rule of a parasite on foreign peoples, who

The remark about

the colored races

is important.
I don't know how things will evolve if the white proletariat doesn't understand its task and thereby pushes the peoples of color back into nationalism and therefore fascism. India would have been free for a long time if the workers in England had been as bravely on the side of the Indians as Annie Besant[208] has been. If the British working class had stood up for the Indians, India would have been free a long time ago. The misfortune at the moment is that in fact the white workers are so tied to nationalism, and essentially have become so fascist that they have no empathy at all for the suffering that is inflicted on other peoples when their own interest is not at stake. The people in Inda say: “We stopped appealing to the English workers, they only want to exploit us anyway.” And the relation with the Dutch proletariat has also been quite platonic. And that is so dangerous because when we are unable to prove by our actions that we stand up against injustice when that injustice is the exploitation of the peoples of color – those peoples will turn away from us reluctantly. So they have tended to unite with Japan against all the whites.
I know very telling examples of this. I had a Chinese friend with whom I have collaborated for years, who has collaborated in the IAMB secretariat with me, who was a total anti-militarist. He went back to China, where he was so deeply offended by the whites that he said: “You can't act humanely amongst dogs” and he turned to the camp of violence and militarism in order to expell the whites from his country. That is the situation today for the peoples of color.
They no longer trust the white proletariat; they see how weapons are constantly produced in the west and sent to the East; they see how the white proletariat simply abandons the peoples of color when it comes down to it. In this regard the Third International is far superior to the Second International: it is the great merit of the Third International that it has from the beginning understood the moral and practical necessity to defend the oppressed peoples of color beyond all the racial divides; no matter how it further applies this. It is more necessary than ever to fulfill our duty in this regard. Or the world will be ripped apart. We are increasingly threatened by racial conflicts. And vice versa: when the white workers show solidarity with the workers of color, India, Indonesia, etc will be detached from the Western imperialist *states* but the *peoples* of color will stay connected to the white peoples, and the peoples of color will stay connected to the white *people*. That is precisely one of the reasons why we must design a new tactic that is superior to all imperialisms, and ties into the new construction of the whole humanity. Nehru sees this as well in India for example, who is -like us- not blind for the possibility of an indigenous fascism, and therefore aims his struggle on international socialism or communism.
It is clear that if we want to resist fascism, we indeed need to stand

shoulder to shoulder

and that we must transcend small differences. From our side – and I can speak for the whole of the anarchist movement now with a few exceptions – we have always been prepared to collaborate in all kinds of ways when there is a certain freedom on specific issues and each is given a chance. Let's take the movement of service refusal. If you read the Service Refusal Manifesto[209] you will see that roman-catholics, anarchists and social-democrats have signed it because they agree on the issue. And the movement has achieved some great things. The newer ideas –from those who have actually developed and adapted marxism for our times as well– result in not being bound by our

doesn't allow others what he demands for his own. By the way, Mussert himself is unthinkable without all kinds of international export goods: he is morally and intellectually dependent of *very un-Dutch import articles* to the point of melancholy: Italian fascism and German national-socialism, both forms of a state slavery that are in conflict with the typical character of the Dutch people.

208 Tr. Note: née Wood, (1847 in London – 1933 in Adyar, India). British socialist, theosophist, freemason, women's rights and Home Rule activist, educationist and campaigner for Indian nationalism. Supporter of both Irish and Indian self-rule. First female president of the Indian National Congress in 1917.

209 Tr. Note: https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dienstweigeringsmanifest_1915

own organisations anymore and we must rather liberate ourselves from obsolete organisations. I'm talking about a new labor movement of individuals that one by one, man for man and woman for woman, must understand that the working class has a task to fulfill in the workplace, for which it cannot allow itself to be held back by the official leadership of those who act as if they alone know everything. It goes without saying that we must analyze our task in this regard as well.

Marxism

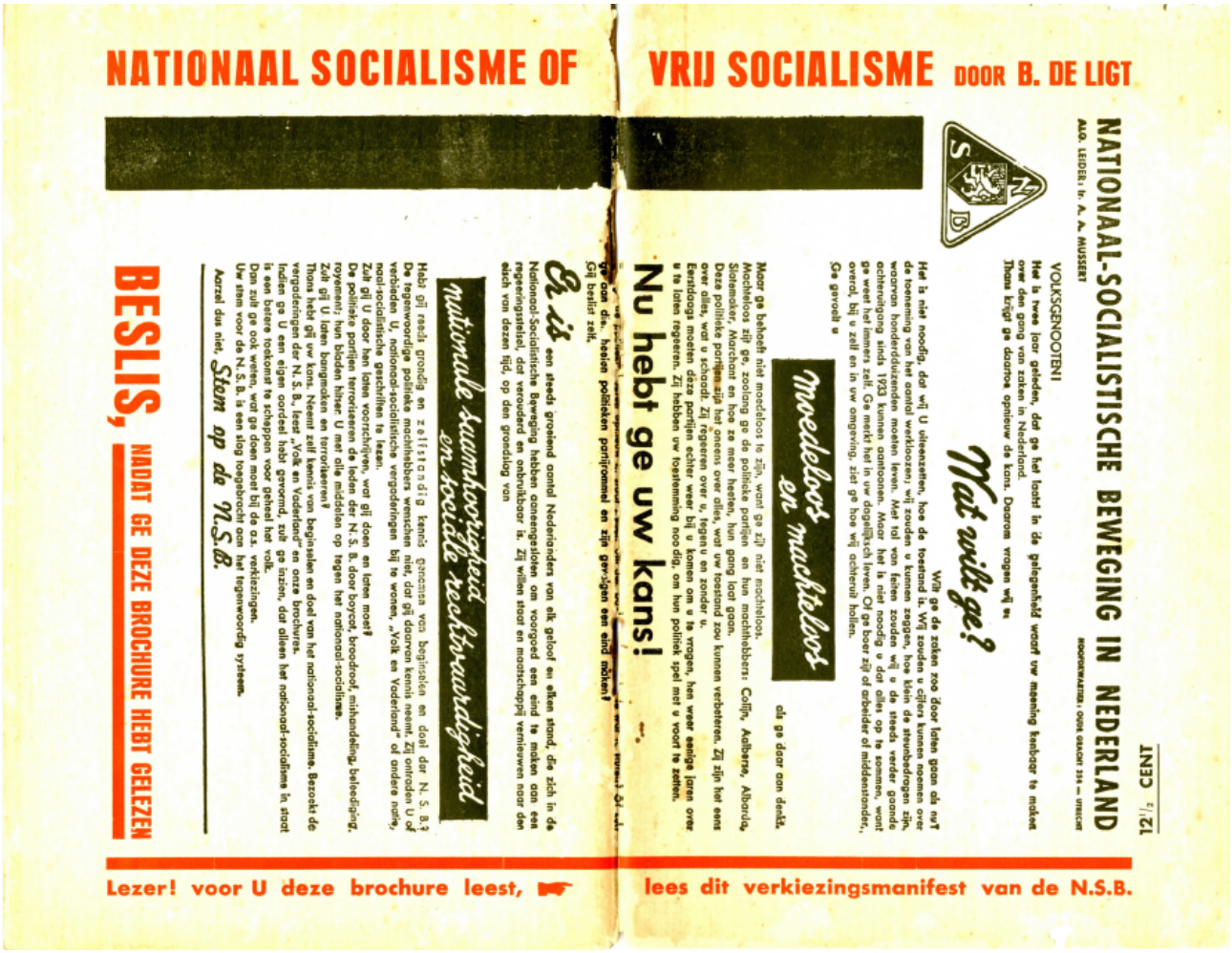
is generally speaking so pathetic, and there was mention of how it has so much careerists. And it's true. The error is not just the careerists but as well those who have fostered them. How else can it turn out when people give careerists so much opportunity to exist? That is why we shouldn't give them the opportunity any longer, and they will automatically disappear. When we analyze the history of the careerists, it's clear that they often started out with the best intentions; but once they're dragged along and have gotten stuck in parliament they had no choice but to function in a way that was opposed to the interests of the proletariat. So we must liberate ourselves from those organisations – of course the way of getting some things done – that are in opposition to the interests of socialism.
And to end this evening, I have also received some written questions. I have answered most of them for a large part, but I would like to delve a little deeper into some of them.
“Is

the national tradition

to be considered a hollow phrase?” I have never claimed that it is. I think that the national tradition is a *reality*; I believe that the cultural traditions, as they present themselves in national traditions, are rooted in history, and that we need to take them into account. In my book 'Vrede als Daad' about the development of anti-militarism, I had to agree with the opinion of those who say that socialism is different among the different peoples. English socialism is different from Dutch socialism, etc. And that will never change; and you will need to take it into account. Even anarchism in France is completely different than anarchism in the Netherlands. That is because of deep national traditions; we can transcend and outgrow them, but the tradition is a *fact* even simply because of the language. No matter how well schooled you are, you must express yourself in some language. We as people must express ourselves and find ourselves trapped in a language. Because even if you master your languages, you are controlled by them. There are all kinds of things in that language. In the West some concepts are separated that are unified in the East, and vice versa. And that is why – even if you can translate an idea by a correct word, people still understand different things. You can say: the sea is part of the Dutch language – and how could it not? - and the forest is part of the German language. It's in your stature and in your psychic construction; it's a reality that impacts you to the extreme. That is the *national* tradition, and this tradition must be distinguished from the *nationalist* one. The nationalist tradition is an attempt to abuse a natural fact and a cultural fact to turn them into an instrument that makes people subordinate to a certain state – that is: an artificial construct that was deliberately established at a certain moment of the history of capitalism. That is something entirely different. We must first of all realize: *the nation is not the state*. We are all different; the people of Amsterdam are different from those in Rotterdam, it's a fact. The Dutch are different from the Belgians or the Germans. But that is no reason to clobber eachother to death. That is something entirely different! We don't need to fight wars. But we must not force this point, and remain loyal to the best traditions of our own people and race. I have no plans to become unfaithful to the most essential traditions of the Dutch people. Because when we study the history of the peoples we can see that the best national traditions are essentially universal. What is the best thing about the Dutch people? Its sense of independence. May the whole world become so independent! If only we were as independent as we're often described! Our love of freedom, our tolerance. Let's stay true to those traditions! The more faithful we are to the best traditions of our people, the more we correspond to the best traditions of the whole of humankind. I'm even grateful to be closely connected to the Dutch tradition. I see that comrades from countries where anti-militarist tradition has not been born

yet, tell me: “I envy you because it is already a tradition; it's not just a word, it seems to have permeated the subconsciousness of the people”. So we must differentiate between a national and a nationalist tradition. We must cure ourselves from the national shortcomings, and develop our national virtues even further. And we must gift those, as it were, to the world, and then the world gives us back what it has to offer. Nationalism is: to make a principle out of the national idea as a cultural and natural fact, at the expense of humanity and humaneness.
So is it first of all a matter of “breaking the national tradition”? No. Why do I always come back to this? I live in Switzerland myself, for a number of reasons, but I can speak much easier here and write for Dutch people, because I come from a Dutch tradition: one word of me here goes ten times deeper than in Switzerland. Probably, if I would want an equally big influence in Switzerlang and the same network, I would have to become so one with the Swiss tradition that I wouldn't feel Dutch anymore. The only way to rise above this, is in the idea, as is demonstrated in big congresses for example, but there is no way that we can disconnect from our traditional community, from the nation that we originate in. At those congresses as well we say things like 'he acts like a real German again', 'there is the Dutch showing through', etc. Those are facts, natural facts and cultural facts. But again, while it may be facts, they're not principles. Our Dutch nature, our Dutch tradition is only meaningful as far as it remains inferior to our principles of humanity and humaneness. And as far as it is in conflict with those principles, we must liberate ourselves from it both theoretically and practically.

J) National socialism or free socialism (1935)[210]



We like to give our adversaries their full opportunity, so we have reprinted the latest election pamphlet of the N.S.B. [Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging[211] *or National-Socialist Movement] on the cover.*

Comrades!

Approximately a year ago I held a speech here in Amsterdam about the question: “What stops fascism?” 'De Arbeider'[212] published this speech shortly after, and then the S.A.A.[213] published it as a pamphlet. I suggest we go over the main argument of what we treated at the time, and how things have evolved since. We are under pressure of history itself as it were. Because we drew several conclusions in the beginning of March 1934 from our analysis of the situation, so that now

210 Speech held on February 20, 1935 in the building 'De Ruyter' in Amsterdam at a meeting convened by the S.A.A. [Vereniging voor Sociaal-Anarchistische Actie in Nederland]. Anarchistische uitgeverij der S.A.A. “De Boemerang”. After a stenogram by JEANNE DE JONG, reviewed by the speaker.

211 Tr. Note: Dutch fascist and later nazi political organisation that eventually became a political party (1931-1945) that remained the only legal party under nazi occupation. It had a branch in the 'Dutch East Indies': https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Socialist_Movement_in_the_Dutch_East_Indies (1931-1940) in which two thirds were so-called 'Indos' of mixed Dutch and Indonesian descent.

212 Tr. Note: Weekly of the Nederlands Syndicalistisch Vakverbond [Dutch Syndicalist Trade Union]

213 Tr. Note: Vereniging voor Sociaal-Anarchistische Actie in Nederland [League for Social-Anarchist Action in the Netherlands]

everyone can see whether our ideas are confirmed or refuted by the actual events.
First of all we have explained that there are all kinds of forms of fascism and national-socialism that have emerged from the same social and social-psychological

main causes,

specifically first and most aggressive where the social, economical and political tensions were the most intense; where social life was most unhinged, and the position of the ruling class most threatened.
We have also determined that national-socialism is all but an abnormal phenomenon in the development of international capitalism. When, as we have uncovered for example, fascists or national-socialists make the state absolute with so much ruckus, that has already happened before, during the French revolution and under Napoleon. It is in the nature of modern political-economical life itself to make the state absolute when it's do or die; when the powerful are put before the question: “Can we still maintain our power?” When the ruling class no longer feels capable of maintaining its position in the traditional ways, it takes special measures. As soon as it sees that -if it continues to act according to the officially democratic notions- its power and authority are in danger, it suspends the political rights and the more or less democratic situation. We know this from the time of the world war: when it comes down to it in modern society, then first comes the law of war and then the martial law. Every time there was a serious threat in political life somewhere, or if the class system was actually under attack, we have seen this happen all-over the world. By the way we know from the official declarations that the army serves against the “domestic enemy” in the first place and against the “foreign enemy” second.
In other words, critical moments happen for the capitalist nations, in which the ruling class feels so threatened that it sees itself forced to return to methods of raw power. Then “civil liberties” are abolished and the rulers turn to

feudal and pre-feudal means of violence and seduction,

like terror, inquisition, oppression of freedom of speech, of the right of assembly and to organize, and in the end of any individual initiative - all kinds of desperate measures, instrumentalizing the desperate situation in which the masses live in order to seduce them with false promisses.
After the world war this was made even easier because the masses had been made accustomed to the regime of violence. Since 1914 even several neutral countries had gone through a phase of mobilisation in which big parts of the civil liberties had been abolished; since 1914 the spirit of the people had been increasingly militarized on all sides. And when at a given time in several countries, the elites declared a permanent state of siege, that happened almost automatically: because, wherever a command sounded, the masses were psychologically prepared, and automatically ready to obey.
That habit to surrender to the authority of others and to simply wait and see what the orders would be, made it almost natural for those same masses to expect the same, in terms of ideology, from – an Other. Even more so because they had been habituated to it for centuries by religion. So the remarkable fascist phenomenon arose that we have called 'messianism' in our last meeting. As people surrendered to the Supreme Command militarily, so ideologically they surrendered to the political-social Messiah. And with that, all kinds of feudal and pre-feudal magical symbols and mythological motifs reappeared in modern life, that are with reason seriously studied today from a psychological and psycho-analytical perspective.
We have determined that, in several countries, almost desperate masses surrender themselves in blind faith to political-social Messiahs, who had promised all kinds of miracles. Dragged along by their dazzling promises, they had followed them with increasing zeal. Until the time came to fulfill those promises! Then the moment of great disappointment came. We'll return to this later.
Traditionally those in power everywhere have used the Messiah and the messianic belief not for themselves as such, but especially for the oppressed masses in order to get them where they wanted them. They have done that with Jezus Christ by the way. And still we shouldn't think that they do it

just for fun. It would be most shallow to think that this would just be an expression of something especially evil: they simply have to act like this

by virtue of their positions [functions][214],

of the role they play in the political-social process. They simply have no other choice, even if it goes against their sensibilities, even if it clashes with their conscience. Without a doubt a man like Colijn for example -who was raised in certain bourgeois traditions and under all kinds of slogans about freedom that go back to Willem van Oranje- finds no joy in taking increasingly fascist measures as well within his lifetime. We can be sure that the free-thinking democrats are not so evil to do for their pleasure what they simply 'have to do'. But they ask themselves from a capitalist point of view: “What else can we do?” The situation simply demands that -in order to maintain bourgeois power- the civil rights are increasingly abolished, the state became increasingly absolute and the masses increasingly nationalized, militarized, etc. And if all that doesn't do it, they fall back on brute force and finally takes fascist measures.
At first glance we're dealing everywhere with the rise of the middle class and its ideology; in fact a new kind of middle class suddenly pushes “its Man” to the forefront. At first glance there are lots of proletarians and petit-bourgois who follow a new Messiah, and nationalism is made to serve socialism. Indeed everwhere a national-socialist Messiah will stand up, we are dealing with a neo-capitalist movement in a deliberate reaction to the 'demo-liberalism' of the last century, to the economic individualism of the last century, to the one-dimensional rational optimism of the last century – to everything that resulted in the world war eventually. The resistance against the belief in the advancement of humanity as a consequence of the development of economic conditions – against the idea that humanity automatically climbs up through history like a window cleaner does on a ladder – against the belief that the evolution of humanity would continue all by itself – makes sense though. Last time, Van Oosten correctly pointed out that we are also dealing here with a

romantic reaction

against rationalism, that in turn reverts to irrationalism. Tired of all those indeed outdated principles and slogans, it is now said -lumping intelligence and reasoning together-: “Intelligence is not the best and highest. The best is precisely not to think so much, maybe not at all. Use reason in the service of your urges and emotions. Let the truth be a means and no longer an end.” The pragmatism that subjugates the truth to purely utilitarian goals, is typical for national-socialism. And once truth has become an afterthought for some practical more or less nearby goal, it is not a great leap to morph into a blind faith in some primitive, simplistic solution, especially if a prophetic-pathetic Messiah stands up who “knows” and makes all kinds of promises. And so we see the rise of a national-socialism that shouts:
Instead of the domination of modern culture: back to nature!
Instead of the distress of the modern city: the freshness of the countryside!
Instead of the worship of machine and technology that have created such chaos: back to the organic!
Instead of the dead international capital: the living nation!
Instead of the pressure of an outdated morality: the full blossoming of instincts and intuitions!
Instead of atomising individualism and infertile rationalism: common belief in a genius Leader who will have the final say!
It is clear that we are dealing with phenomena of collective-psychological fatigue. A big part of modern humanity has become so tired because of the one-dimensional rationality of last century, the world war and the crazed development of technology that they couldn't keep up with, and all that resulted from that, that they don't know what to make of it anymore. And so they turn to – an Other. Added to that, the so-called

214 Tr. Note: in Dutch 'uit hoofde van hun functie' or 'logic result of their functions': someone's position can influence or even determine their ideas and actions, much like means determine the ends (outcomes).

liberal-democracy[215]

is indeed obsolete. Capitalism, in its 19th century form, has made itself impossible since 1914 and the official political democracy, that has once served the bourgeoisie so well, has made itself equally impossible: it has degenerated into something that is most useless in the modern process of history.
These days everybody knows that parliament is not much more than a charade, a theatre, and that the big, important decisions of modern life are taken behind closed doors. MacDonald has admitted that his government couldn't do anything that wasn't sanctioned by the big banks. Indeed the big financers, with the large corporations, the high military and the statesmen, etc increasingly decided things amonst eachother behind the political-democratic scenes. A few hundred people, a few thousand at most, decided the faiths of hundreds of millions. It became a new feudality! The political democracy turned out to be untenable under imperialism. Well now, the fascists, the national-socialists, have not just recognized this reality, but fundamentally accepted it. In Italy, Germany and elsewhere they could do this even more easily because parliamentarianism didn't have such strong tradition there as it did in Western-Europe. In Italy, Germany, Turkey, Poland, etc parliamentarianism was only implemented to some extent once it had already started losing its historical relevance, or had almost lost it completely. That is why fascism and national-socialism succeeded in pushing aside that whole parliamentarian mess, that sham, with one big push, and shed light on the reality of social life as clearly as brutally.
That, of course, is painful and unpleasant for many parties involved. But it is a clear case. Parliament has become such a pseudo-power almost everywhere, that if under certain circumstances an officer went out with a couple of soldiers and abolished it, the whole of social life would continue. That means that in most countries the parliamentarian system de facto no longer exists, but is really just a ghost of the past, and where it still exists it is under threat of becoming powerless.
This parliamentarism, that fits the situations that we have since long left behind us, and that never had anything to do with the social revolution, was also riddled with all kinds of careerism that -of course 'not in the Netherlands, but abroad'[216]- went hand in hand more and more with corruption, not just politically but economically as well. Over here we only meet highly decent people like Kröller, Van Beuningen, Fentener van Vlissingen, not to mention Paul Koster. But in France we find Stavisky for example, Barmat in Germany, etc. In this regard the fascists or national-socialists have the merit of making things clearer than they were before, so that we have now come a little closer to the social reality. They have dragged all kinds of hidden tensions and have made the disease acute, so that everyone could see what illnesses we suffer from these days.
Next -as we have already seen last time- the appearance of national-socialism was a strong reaction to the indeed completely failed policy of the 2nd International that had lead especially Germany into the swamp. As we all know the German social-democrats have indeed nothing but enabled the development of an improbable kind of Republic, with a policy that could only end with Hitler climbing over Hindenburg. Yes in as sense

the social-democrats

had for the most part become national-socialists since a very long time. We have determined that when, in 1914, the Emperor stretched his hand towards the social-democracy, and the social-democracy had reached out for the Emperor, and the Emperor -that is: the nation- allied itself with social-democracy -that is: socialism- “national-socialism” was born, in which the nation was the essence and socialism had become the sideshow. And when Troelstra declared in those days that the national unity came before all else, he said exactly the same thing. To which was added that the worship of the Leader and the Party that had always been so strong among the social-democrats, and the systematic abandonment of anything even remotely resembling direct action, had to lead in

215 Tr. Note: in the original Dutch 'demo-liberalisme' or 'democratic liberalism'
216 Tr. Note: sarcasm

the same direction. The consequence could be only one thing: national-socialism. And so we can say that national-socialism was on the one hand a reaction against and on the other hand the consequence of 19th century capitalism as well as the parliamentarianism of the 2nd International that functioned within it, and that in the end functioned only as an integral part of bourgeois imperialism.
On top of that the workers of the world were increasingly disappointed by

the 3rd International,

because soon nothing was left of the big revolutionary idea of the self-organisation of labor that had given birth to the Russian Revolution and the council system; because in Russia the working class was subjected to the dictatorship of the party and was increasingly militarized, and the bolshevik International was soon controlled so severely by the moskovites that it became almost impossible under their leadership to come to a homegrown revolution in the different countries, that would be carried out by the masses themselves; because time and again the new changes in the tactic and policy of the 3rd International and the red labor movement were decreed that -no matter how much they were in alignment with the political interests of the Kremlin- were increasingly clearly at odds with the social interests of the masses in question.
This could only push the countless proletarians, petit-bourgeois and farmers into despair, so much that they did no longer know which way to turn. The masses were already led too far astray, too seduced, cheated and pushed around. They felt like cattle that no longer knew who the true sheppard was, distraught, helpless and in the end senseless. So that they followed first this one and then another one, and in the end millions followed Hitler. The many millions of German socialists and bolsheviks proved to be of no use against the national-socialist hordes when it came down to it, because they were neither morally nor practically prepared. Things were a little more positive in Austria in this regard, no matter what one thinks about the means of struggle that were used there.[217]
It goes without saying that fascism can rise most easily where human personality is developed the weakest. It is no coincidence that it became so strong precisely in Italy and Germany, countries where people were used to all kinds of domination and tyranny, and where the modern personality had not risen to the same hights as in England, France, the Netherlands or Scandinavia for example. Political as well as social circumstances, and all kinds of cultural traditions join forces to make fascism strong in those countries.
But elsewhere too national-socialism rose more and more in those groups that had enough of capitalist atomism and individualistic intellectualism. This is important from a collective[218]-psychological point of view. On the one hand people still lived - in Germany and Italy first of all- under such pre-bourgeois traditions that it was relatively easy to handle the people in a feudal fashion again; on the other hand people in the more modern-bourgeois countries were getting increasingly fed up with 19th century individualism and rationalism, -so big was the disappointment in the consequences of the “Every man for himself and God for us all!”- that people went looking for an alternative there too. Add a troubling weakening of the modern awareness in general to that, as a consequence of the industrial-technical development of the production process and the mechanization of modern civilization, that we can't further elaborate on tonight.
As a consequence of the demo-liberalism and the social-parliamentarism of the 2nd International that came with it, first we had the world war and then the economic crisis - as Colijn recognizes: a structural crisis. Meanwhile the political and social problems became increasingly complicated. And on top of that came -especially in the last few years- unemployment with its physical and psychological mysery.
Is it surprising then that millions in the end bowed their heads and started hoping for the coming of Christ, Hitler, Mussert, or of anyone or anything at all?
I remember coming back from Berlin in 1921, where I had spoken with representatives of the labor opposition from Moscow; how deeply I realized then that the revolution in Russia was in mortal

217 See Henriette Roland Holst, “Sterft! oude vormen en gedachten. Uitgeverij Bevrijding.
218 Tr. Note: social-sociology, for example Proudhon, Fromm, Reich, Arendt, etc

danger, and that things were taking a turn for the worst in any case. A few years later, comrades from Holland, who had been in the struggle, sought comfort at some other table: they turned to spiritism and the afterlife because they couldn't find a way out anymore here on earth. Again a mental state that can easily shift into messianism and fascism. By the way there are other similar phenomena as well, among the ruling classes too: there was in yesterday's “Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant” an article about the ever increasing use of sleeping medication, which is related in turn to the ever increasing tendency of suicide. The regular drinking of cocktails and the constant smoking and dancing is symptomatic as well. In all kinds of circles the need exists to sing themselves into unconsciousness as it were, to shed responsibilities, to fall back to a lower stage of consciousness.[219]
The brute, harsch world has become unbearable; the urge to lose oneself in whatever individual or collective trance grows ever stronger. Think of the soccer madness and the escapism of the cinema. And when such a humanity is offered a Thousand Year Empire with some pathos, if some demagogue shouts: “Just follow me!”, and he criticizes and condemns the existing conditions possibly even stronger than we do so ourselves, and then says: “Come to me you all who are too tired and burdened, and I will give you peace... My yoke is soft, my burden is light”, he has unlimited chance to win over increasingly larger masses.
Such a gospel has always been symptomatic for exhausted, more or less degenerated crowds. That it gains momentum now proves how cursed the society is that we live in. How many youths, for whom life has simply lost all meaning, daily ask their parents these days: “Why have you made me and forced me to live? I can't work and I can hardly find food!”
Individual and collective disillusionments and disappointments, physical and moral abuse, financial, moral and intellectual bankruptcy – all that causes

inferiority complexes everywhere:

a feeling of not actually being -nor being able to be- what one appears to be: a true human being; the feeling of not being human any longer. To escape this, there is a tendency to periodically strongly over-compensate and find comfort in the delusion of being more than one really is, and to identify with all kinds of uniforms and more or less official garments, even togas, and with all manner of weighty and solemn symbols like the Dutch Lion. Tortured people and tortured masses also have a tendency towards aggression – a beautiful opportunity for national-socialists to exploit! All those feelings that find no way out can be channeled into it. Because where a Christ appears, an Antichrist is found as well: when here is a Hitler, then there is a Scapegoat - “the Jews”, “the marxists”, “the socialists”, “the bolsheviks”, etc – to collectively aim all the resentment, hatred and horror at. And all that without becoming a danger to capitalism!
Look at all kinds of feudal and pre-feudal emotions that incite more and more people, alienated from their sense of responsibility and human awareness, and often directly against it, that they can be swept up with in critical moments. Add the fact that -in respect to the development of modern-economic life and the political-strategic relations- we have entered a phase of

autarchy,

or “imperial self-reliance”. Every country tries to be an entity on its own as much as possible, and to be self-sufficient. It arms itself against every 'abroad' with tarrifs. Every people locks itself up as much as possible within the tight borders of a State, that is essentially supreme over everything else and that can do whatever it pleases; and there is really only one inspiring sense of community left in the end: the national one. It wants as little as possible to do with other countries. “After all” -so the national-socialists say- “internationalism doesn't exist”. And sadly enough that is all too true.
Comrades! we too -us people of internationalist conviction- must admit that, although the world sees whiffs and waves of international solidarity every now and then, the true international solidarity is almost non-existent yet. The world war has proved that the big majority of people have

219 Tr. Note: cfr. Erich Fromm's trilogy 'Escape from Freedom' (1941, also 'The Fear of Freedom'), 'Man for Himself: an Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics' (1947), The Sane Society' (1955)

barely risen to the level of

national solidarity

at best. Even now those who want to maintain solidarity among all humans against all odds, are still greatly outnumbered. This is clear, especially in critical moments. We have spoken about 1914. Let's speak about 1934 now. When “the danger from the East”, from Germany and Japan, was not big yet in the Netherlands, and when Average Joe was still “pacifist”, the social-democrats even accepted the “brave disobedience” more or less. But when, precisely 20 years after 1914, the heat began to rise again, they hurried to the throne like good dogs to defend national unity once again. The national sentiment was real for them; internationalism was not.
“We are realists” -is what the international national-socialists say-, “we see reality better than the social-democrats”. And they are right for 90%, whatever conclusions they may draw from their brutal realism by the way. “And we are idealists” -so they continue- “but the social-democrats are careerists and opportunists”. Now, I doubt that there are no careerists or opportunists with the national-socialists, and I know very well that there are still a lot of respectable -all be it very naive- S.D.A.P.'ers. But there is no denying that there is a strong aspect of idealism especially in the national-socialist youth, and even in some leaders. And then we also find a kind of military mentality abroad -another product of the world war-, some kind of military spirit of men who were mobilized together, went through war together, lived through dangers together and have sacrificed immeasurably; and they feel as one. They want to continue to live and die for the National Cause. But still rather... simply live. And so we can understand why there was written on a German locomotive with big, national letters: “Hitler is Peace”. They used to write: “Christ is Peace”. But that has become too cosmopolitan. Not the jew Jesus, but Germanic Hitler is now Germany's Locomotive!
By the way it is typical for Germany that Hitler must promise his people peace. I'm not saying that he intends to give it. But he promises it because they crave it so deeply. “I will give you rest” - done with all that endless ruckus! And besides that, comrades, he promises them the end of the oppression by outsiders and the exploitation by big capitalists.
We have seen last time that this has been a lie. It is hard to determine in how far it was a deliberate lie or an unconscious one – usually that line isn't very clear. But history has already proved that Hitler played a deceitful role when he promised freedom like a Peace-apostle, and the abolition of all exploitation and oppresson. History has already determined that his role has been no different -like most Messiahs- from the Pied Piper of Hamelin. The ruling class has used Hitler to instrumentalize the despair of the German masses in order to save its own desperate position. Now that they, dragged along by Hitler's passionately-monotonous vision, have now been stored under the prison vaults of the State, all the miseries are unleashed upon them in the name of a national-socialism that -as Albert de Jong recently said- is not national-socialism but

national capitalism.

So called national-socialism -and that will be our first conclusion this evening- is in fact national-capitalism that has initially presented itself as national-socialism and has succeeded -with a dreadful mixture of truth and lies- to distract the big masses away from true social revolution; and continues to distract increasingly larger masses.
Recently the Jongeren Vredes-Actie[220] published a nice booklet by Garmt Stuiveling[221]. Parts of the

220 Tr. Note: or 'JVA', ['Youth Peace Action'], http://www.christianarchy.nl/2012/05/jongeren-vredes-actie-1924-1940.html, https://papierentijger.org/boek/van-jeugdig-pacifisme-naar-geestelijke-weerbaarheid/ . Its periodical was 'Vredesstrijd; orgaan van de Jongeren Vredes Actie (1929-1935). They also published BdL's 'Oorlog en geslachtsdrift' ['War and Sexual Urge'] ca 1930 and other small books. See www.delpher.nl for more. There also was a Belgian organisation in Antwerpen, with a.o. Frans Arijs. They published the first edition of the 'Battle Plan'.

221 Tr. Note: Dutch poet, scientist and (social-democrat) anti-militarist activist, a.o. in de 'JVA'

original programmes of Mussolini[222] and Hitler[223] is reprinted – slogans and promisses, that were spread everywhere before these leaders came to power, and that the author compares with present reality. You can see there that today's reality is even hostility towards those programmes. Yes, it has already come so far that it is not only forbidden to spread the original programme of fascism –that once swept away the masses- in Italy, but the copies of Mussolini's programme that could be found amongst the people have recently been bought and... destroyed by fascist agents. We established last year that fascism must get stranded politically in all kinds of ways.
Fascism or national-socialism -that turned out to be national-capitalism- must get bogged down politically. We have debated this subject last time. I had said then that national-socialism

cannot internationalise.

It can spread into different countries like the plague though. But it can never bring true unity in the world. Because it pitches nations against eachother. And the more it spreads the harder the peoples clash, because it makes all states absolute. It demands everything for its own State, that is: in the end for the domestic capitalist class. That's why it de facto lives in constant tension with all other countries, especially -think of Mussert!- with the colonized peoples who are denied their own national-socialism! As capitalist imperialism, as imperialist capitalism, it is essentially out to conquer and exploit all that is so-called 'foreign'. Outside of its borders the human solidarity and cultural community is essentially cancelled. For a national-socialist every foreigner equals an enemy – at least a potential one, - someone, who can become an actual enemy at any moment. And with that, there is a mental relapse to the time before the Greec historian Herodotus, at least to the time long before Jesus Christ. National-socialism is socially linked to a domestic concentration of capital that can only push for expansion abroad; and all that in a time where the possibilities to expand are diminishing. And if that happens everywhere -if capital is concentrated within ever increasing numbers of countries, while they simultaneously push outward to appropriate everything they can-, national-socialism means fist against fist, and it is inevitable that those countries will clash. Time and again fascism runs into fascism. In all more or less fascist countries a “final decision” is being prepared. Everywhere youth, woman, the whole people are militarised. Everywhere inferiority-crazed individuals and peoples preach the insanity of hubris. The masses everywhere are forced into cadaver discipline, so that they will be ready for anything in the end. Of course there will be an attempt to avoid war as much as possible, as long as that seems advantageous, and different groups each time will “tie themselves” to fascism as long as that fits their interest. But that doesn't abolish the movement. Mussolini openly declares that he deliberately counts on war.
Last time in our debate it was remarked that the juxtaposition of Germany and England wouldn't become a big deal. We have seen how quickly things have evolved since then! Italy was -before Germany became fascist- relatively Germany-minded because back then Germany was only moderately imperialist. But as soon as Germany had become national-socialist -that is: more imperialist than ever before- Italy became anti-German. It even allied with liberal-democracy France against Germany! Because at the moment when Germany became national-socialist, the old inclinations resurfaced to control a territory that stretches from the North Sea to Bagdad, it had its eyes on Austria, it started to develop a very active Balkan-policy, and tried to crawl up the Donau as far as it could go. But Italy wanted Austria as a buffer-state between itself and Hitler's imperialism; it wanted to control as much of the Balkan as possible and the East of the Midditerranean Sea. And so the Italian politicians, lead by the Duce, have found themselves in the anti-German camp while they had been following a pro-German policy before the Führer came to power.
It is inevitable that -if Italy gets more power over Europe- Germany does nót; etc etc: in Abessinia, Italy and Japan are already clashing with eachother...
Last year we said that national-socialist political competition comes with increasingly fanatic

222 Tr. Note: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fascist_Manifesto
223 Tr. Note: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Socialist_Program

cultural competition.

So Germany tries harder than ever to convince the world that nothing trumps the Germanic culture that will rule all of humanity. They call it “Aufnordung”: the whole global culture must be oriented towards the north because... the Sun rises in the North these days. But when I was listening to Roma on the radio last February 11 at night, I heard a beautiful speech that declared that the ideas of those who want to turn everything to the North -because alledgedly that is where the highest culture comes from- are a big mistake: the North has always been barbaric, and without a doubt there is an interesting national culture there, but the only truly universal culture is the culture of “eternal Rome”, not only founded on the tradition of the noblest State of the world -the Roman Empire- but also on the noblest religious institution -the Catholic Church. That is why Rome is the true centre of the world from where the whole of humanity is (and will be) increasingly lead. No wonder that fascists were convinced a few years ago that there shouldn't be a French flag flying over the Mont Blanc, the highest mountain of Europe, but an Italian flag, and they wanted to go conquer its eternal snow.

So if this is where it starts, where will it end!!! I spoke with a zionist national-socialist recently, who said that the whole universe revolves around mount Sion, and the universe should be ruled from Jerusalem. Shortly after, I met an Indian fascist for whom everything revolved around the Himalaya. The Japanese national-socialists are convinced that the world should revolve around the Fuji Yama. And Mussert, “the consciousness and the will of life of the Dutch Nation” is sure that -for lack of Dutch mountains- the world should revolve around the Dom Tower of Utrecht...

And since we're speaking about stupids and stupidities, I am so happy, comrades, to be able to finally inform you about something that will surely be of interest to you, and that has held my attention for a long time. A while ago the Messiah Mussert was asked whatever the “socialism” was that would define his national-socialism. And do you know what the Leader answered? You can find the answer in “De Groene Amsterdammer” of January 21, 1933. Asked what the socialism is that is mentioned in the name of his party, our Mussert answered that it is the mindset that was expressed while building the Dom of Cologne.

So now we know. The Dom of Cologne has nothing at all do with socialism. But in any case it has everything to do with extreme superstition, messianism and church-ism especially. And in turn that is the truth of what he said. If there was a certain sense of community in the Middle-Ages, it is completely different from what we experience in our day: it was a relatively primitive, through and through feudal mindset that was connected to the hierarchical composition of church- and social life, and in the end based on all kinds of mental and social authority, and exploitation of relatively primitive masses. With Mussert we end up back with the hierarchy and the pope -and what kind of pope-: Mussert on the Dom Tower of Utrecht: that is Dutch national-socialism. And meanwhile the French fascists want to increase their territory... as far as the woods of the Rhine.

And so national-socialism competes with national-socialism in a delirious fever, a drunkenness against which a farmers fair pales in comparison. And when the weapons are drawn eventually, and it comes to blows, it ends in murder and manslaughter.

It is inevitable. Because the Italians, who at least don't mince words, say openly that the great principle of fascism is “holy egoism” and invoke Machiavelli who declared to be the foundation of politics: Violence and Deceit -a conviction that is paired in Germany with that of Bismarck, whose political slogan was: “Blood and Iron!”

All means -in the first place the deceit of the big popular masses- all means are allowed to maintain the capitalist nationalism, the national-capitalism that is obscured by the word “national-socialism”. And the more national-socialist the states are, the more powerfully they participate in the militarisation of the peoples, in which complete continents are already implicated and that risks ending up in a new world war that could well mean the end of what is left of higher culture. Indeed the development of the war preparation in Italy, Germany and other countries where fascism has come to power or tries to come to power, proves that national-socialism is -in political terms- increasingly aimed at tearing the world apart.

Last time we proved with facts that national-socialism must grind to a halt

economically.

In the pamphlet where my speech was printed, I have published a calculation from “World Events” that clearly demonstrated that the economy in Italy started to deteriorate immediately. Since then the Italian Lire is in crisis; wages are decreasing; the unemployed are largely abandoned to their fate – their situation is worse than it was in the Netherlands 30 years ago. Mussolini has -despite his boasting- not been able to come through on almost none of his promisses. As the 'Nieuwe Nederlandse Courant' once established that Mussolini's policy has failed, we can now say the same from a financial and economical point of view as well: the boastful plans of Italian fascism have amounted to nearly nothing. Truthfully 'Het Volk' has recently spoken about the “bankruptcy politics of Italy”. And the problems are still growing. In the last 5 years the foreign debt has increased with £10,000,000,000. And the export is still shrinking. So it's not too crazy that the children must pray each day in the schools: “Lord, who helps everyone of us according to our duty, we prey to You to give strength to the man who -called by you to govern- tries to repair our country, so that Italy can fulfill its calling through him!”. Our Dear Lord seems not to care: the situation gets worse day after day.

I brought a whole file of papers and figures about the economic development of Germany. The situation there is even more miserable -that is the only conclusion I can draw- than in Italy: nearly on the level of the worst period of inflation. And that for a people that is used to far better than the Italians, economically as well as mentally. I don't rely on the messages from the anarchist, syndicalist, bolshevik or socialist press, but on the last reports of the Chambers of Commerce in Hamburg, Bremen and other places in Germany where it is bluntly admitted that the export-import ratio between the ever increasing shortage of raw materials etc has dramatically turned for the worse in 1934. In Germany the Leaders are legion, first of all Hitler, Goebbels and Goering -a sort of Germanic Trinity. Now a new Messiah , Führer N° 2, Herr Schacht was added, an economical Saviour. This one, who has already openly aligned himself with modern capitalism, and takes the most dangerous financial decisions, still promises the Little Man of Fallada[224] all kinds of miracles. He says among other things: We're really in a bad spot; the wages are extremely low, yes, and they will have to go down even further. But in order to face the difficult situation of the workers I have made a new plan: the “Kleinsiedlung”: we will give every worker a little garden to grow their own vegetables. But he forgets to research what the farmers will have to say about that; and he doesn't even touch the big problems. That “solution” is so ridiculous, that it is hard to understand how a grown man dares to come up with it – that is only possible if no criticism of the Authority is allowed at all.

I can also refer to an article that appeared yesterday in 'De Telegraaf' titled 'Increasingly pressing situation in Germany'. They came out of the frying pan and into the fire. It may be true, as Hitler claims, that he has already accomplished ¾ of his goals – for himself. But for the German people? Nothingl. And why not? Hitler -no, let's go further: even if it were Christ himself- no-one can undo the consequences of the capitalist system when they leave that system fundamentally intact. It must be deconstructed - or applied. That is what every national-socialist Messiah runs into. Capitalism continues in Germany, continues in Italy, more than ever, faster than ever, harsher than ever, more demonic than ever before; and it prepares a new world war.

- 'Yes but', so it is said, 'Hitler had successes in the Saar region!' Yes, that is true. We won't reconstruct how that came to be here, but the fact there is: all those people will soon be absorbed into the Third Reich. Let's assume for a moment that they will enter the Promised Land with music and beer under a new Josiah. What will happen to them there? Not much. They are allowed -as we can read- to send representatives to Berlin. And who do you think appoints those representatives? Hitler himself, comrades. The Saar region wants to be represented in the capital, and Hitler will take care of it...

The inhabitants of the Saar region can be just as pleased as the women of Turkey. Turkish women have general suffrage. But there is only one party. So people can vote; and can be elected into

224Tr. Note: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Man,_What_Now%3F_(novel)

parliament, even as a woman. But under one condition: everything the government proposes must be approved! A blind faith in the Supreme Turk is required. It resembles a new harem. The Netherlands wouldn't be much different under Mussert. What this all comes down to is clear from what follows. In the organ of the N.S.B.[225] sub-Messiah Geelkerken writes that every member is completely free to ask questions and accountability about the finances, but that those who would do so will be expelled because... they have no faith in the Leader. You laugh! And yet I'm not making jokes. I merely quote a famous historic person, a man of Authority, comrades.
You've seen an image lately on the screen or in the papers that shows that the heavily armed German border officers have arrived in the Saar region, and that countless German toll barriers are being constructed; in other words that the inhabitants of the Saar region are absorbed into the national capitalism, the capitalist nationalism where Hitler, increasingly hoarse and under ever dwindling popular support serves as national Messiah... And that is all.
Let's remind ourselves of the situation that the Treaty of Versailles created and all that resulted from it the following years, the strong impulses that were caused by it among the German masses, and especially the fact that -enchanted by his promisses- in the end countless petit-bourgeois and farmers, even all kinds of communist and socialist elements supported Hitler, along with a powerful couple of adventurers. That could only end in collective disillusionment, a crises of faith, all kinds of protest if not in an actual revolution. Therefore

June 30, 1934,

a day that is only talked about in whispers in Germany: the day of the great battle against the left opposition and the murdering of all kinds of difficult elements; when the big surgeon amputated the socialism off of national-socialism; or –as the national-socialists here call it- the German Leader applied “the new Germanic Law”. In each case Hitler silenced his former Praetorians for good. It was the end of the S.A. We know that Hitler no longer relies on the most consistent members of his party since then, not on his own laborers, farmers and soldiers and all those women who so passionately hoped for Him; but on the Reichwehr[226]. The “Neues Wiener Journal” determines that the role of the S.A. has recently become that of... a choir: those brave fighters now serve mainly to embelish national celebration days while the real military power has returned into the hands of the Reichswehr, the generals. And now the press tells us that a command has been issued that says it is forbidden from now on to say 'Heil Hitler' in the Reichwehr. Generally speaking only 'Heil Führer' is used, and when a private encounters a general, he says 'Heil General!' and the general replies 'Heil' – and then acknowledges his inferior according to his rank. The idolatry of Hitler in Germany is slowly undermined that way inasfar as he has not done so himself yet.
It's clear enough that the big men of the army together with the big men of land property, banks and industry are underway to increasingly take control. Meanwhile the situation in the work camps is such that 50% of the youth is complaining and moaning – the very youth that once believed so strongly in Hitler! And waves of illegal propaganda sweep over Germany. In November 1934 Goebbels spoke in a big Berlin venue at a meeting of S.A. veterans – I mean that choir. His speech would be recorded to be distributed throughout the Third Reich on records. But there was loud whistling, and shouting: “We don't have work! We want work! Down with the bosses! We have not fought for new bosses!” As far as I know, this music has never been aired.
All that means that history has clearly proved that our analysis of national-socialism and everything around it last year was correct. We are not dealing with national-socialism, but with national-capitalism, a national-capitalism with increasingly stronger state-capitalist tendencies. That national-capitalism with state-capitalist tendencies is much the same allover Europe. The more it develops, the clearer it is at odds with human nature, human dignity; the more the peoples involved are pushed back to the level of colonial masses who don't know human rights, let alone civil rights. That is the reality of national-socialism as it has been mercilessly unveiled by history itself in the last month or 12.

225Tr. Note: 'Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging' or 'National-Socialist Movement'
226Tr. Note: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reichswehr

BREAK.

The question is raised then whether national-socialism exists at all: whether we are exclusively dealing with national-capitalism. The answer must be that there are certain socialist tendencies for example in Japan, so that -if this remains the case- it might result in some kind of state-socialism. But that is unsure. For the rest I think that the ever spreading national-socialism is much rather neo-capitalism, in the Netherlands as well for example.
But there is another phenomenon that usually goes by a different name and yet is the only national-socialism that I know. And that is

bolshevism.

The only national-socialism that exists to date, is bolshevism. But there is a surprising similarity between fascist or national-socialist, and bolshevik methods. And that is no coincidence. Because the methods of fascists and national-socialists are to a large degree borrowed from bolshevism. We find dictatorship, one-party system, terror, espionage, inquisition and even the violation of family members of opponents. Recently -'De Syndicalist' reports- a law on state crimes was adopted in Russia, that says that in case a soldier flees abroad the adult members of his family can be punished with a prison sentence of 5 to 10 years and forfeiture of the whole capital inasfar as they have helped or known about the preparation or the actual treason; the other adult family members that lived with them or depended on them are deprived of their right to vote for 5 years and banned to remote areas in Siberia.
Those are measures that can be adopted by Mussolini or Hitler except for some specific details. Such methods surprisingly (but painfully) resemble theirs. In Russia we also see an equal militarisation of the masses; even an equal nationalisation of the masses – in France they would say "the nationalisation of human consciousness". But all those means

serve a different purpose.

While the essential goal of national-capitalism or fascism is ultimately the preservation of neo-capitalism and the development of imperialism, in the case of bolshevism we see an attempt to use all those means in the service of the socialist principle; nationalism is made to serve socialism here. Unfortunately they can never lead to socialism, but only to state-capitalism! National-socialism -the subject of this evening- adopts increasingly consistent state-capitalist methods. These national-socialists or bolsheviks recognize themselves that they are a long way from their goal.
A different question though, is whether they will ever reach it. I mean: actual socialism; that communism that was envisioned originally not just by the Russian leaders but by the Russian masses as well, and even Marx and Engels.
And I must answer: NO! We are sad to say that in Russia as well, those so-called leaders have played a role that eerily resembles that of the Pied Piper of Hamelin. At the beginning of the Russian revolution as well, a passionately-monotonous tune rang out -"Bread and Freedom!"- that swept up large masses. But these days we must acknowledge that -despite the wishes of those who sang the tune- the masses have not gone in the direction that international socialism intended. Finally after 18 years it appears that they have enough bread. But what has become of freedom meanwhile?
Without a doubt the bolsheviks have started their struggle infinitely more pure and conscious than Hitler or Mussolini. Without a doubt they have achieved important things in many respects -simply compare the conditions in Russia with those in Poland that was under the same tsarist rule. But in a different way Mussolini has accomplished quite something as well. Even Hitler did in some regards. Every regime has something good; even the worst regime. Just as the best has some bad too. The question here is not whether "something was accomplished" here or there, but what matters is the

deepest tendency of social life,

when we want to know whether socialism is developing the way it should. The bolsheviks usually point to the very big economic and technical progress that has indeed taken place in Russia - and no-one can deny that any longer. But that is no measuring stick in this case. There was a beautiful article on Persia in the "Nieuwe Rotterdamsche" last week, that demonstrated the economic and technical achievements there as well. And yet we don't have bolshevism there, something that rather resembles national-socialism in the sense of fascism. On the other hand, the social-democrats will boast about Sweden, where things are alledgedly even better in economic and technical respect. So that measuring stick is useless. By the way it goes without saying that in times like these, things are a little worse here or a little better there. But the purely technical-economic development can be no measure for the progress on the way to what socialism has always promised, and what the bolsheviks can't help but to promise inasfar as they are still revolutionaries. It is possible that different things in the field of technics and economy are doing well without socialism having anything to do with it. So when we pointed to the economic failures in Italy and Germany, that is not because we consider that to be the best social measuring stick of fascism or socialism but because the Leaders of fascism and national-socialism have always bragged that they had found the solution for a new economy and a new politics. So we measured them by their own stick, and have demonstrated that they have proven themselves to be impotent in this regard. But our measuring stick is a different one when it comes to the evaluation of socialism, communism, etc. If we examine the bolshevik national-socialism more closely, we come to the conclusion that we are dealing with

state-capitalism,

as I have already mentioned. That is the essence of bolshevism, and the bolsheviks have known that for a long time. It was expressed multiple times, by Lenin for starters. By the way it is remarkable that when the history and work of Lenin is studied, every time a certain hesitation is sensed in him, a certain mistrust for the road the bolshevik revolution had taken. It is clear that he sometimes fears for the development of Russia. That proves that we are dealing with a responsible person who doesn't think -in spite of so much "marxism"- that he is an infallible Messiah who descended upon earth to propagate an absolute truth, but as someone who tries to control himself and the masses, and who tries to arouse the whole revolutionary movement to self-control; and who time and again asks himself responsibly: "Are we going in the right direction?" In 1918 for example Lenin said at a C[ommunist].P[arty of].R[ussia]. Congress: "We take German state-capitalism as an example for ourselves... the German capital is ahead of us... establishing such state-capitalism in Russia would be our salvation." But the same Lenin openly recognized in 1922: "We have taken over the old state apparatus, but that was our misfortune. The state apparatus now works against us. When we took power in 1917, the state apparatus sabotaged us. And so we were stuck and we asked: please come back to us. And they came back. And that was our misfortune."

I have already explained that I had some conversations in 1921 in Berlin with members of the communist labor opposition from Russia who had been banished inasfar as they had not been arrested or killed. Around that time Alexandra Kolontai published an important brochure about "The communist labor Opposition in Russia"[227] in which she determined that while there was really a visible first attempt for self-organisation of the masses in the beginning of the revolution, it didn't take long before the old methods of tsarist militarism were implemented again, the traditional discipline and the ranks reinstalled, all kinds of military and bourgeois experts and the old bureaucracy back in their places; and that spirit of bureaucracy permeated from the army into social life. The Russian Revolution also faced difficult circumstances because of the disloyalty of the world proletariat. It was attacked from all sides by the international counter-revolution, so the focus on the military became increasingly unilateral and social reconstruction was seriously atrophied.

It also didn't take long before council socialism was subordinated to the labor bureaucracy which in

227Tr. Note: https://files.libcom.org/files/The%20Workers'%20Opposition%20-%20Alexandra%20Kollontai.pdf

turn was subjected to the party bureaucracy ruled by the Party Central Committee. Soon we were no longer dealing with a true dictatorship of labor but of the Party and its committees, the Bureau and ultimately the Party Secretary. No wonder that bourgeois intellectuals with vaying degrees of sympathy for Moscow, praisingly wrote in praise: “We used to have a white Tsar and now we have a red Tsar in Russia”. There was indeed no dictatorship by the proletariat, but over the proletariat, in which countless intellectuals were eager to... participate.
That whole hierarchy, that whole state-capitalism has pushed through and maintained itself with all kinds of bourgeois and pre-bourgeois, feudal and pre-feudal methods – because militarism and bureaucracy are typically bourgeois, and absolute state, inquisition and violence are typically feudal and pre-feudal institutions. And therefore the revolution has alienated itself more and more from its own nature.
We don't say this in order to blame anyone individually. Anyone who has looked around a bit in life knows that it is not about 'guilt' or 'innocence'; but that -even with the best intentions- using the wrong means leads away from the most beautiful goal in the end.
If I have a young son that I hit with a stick every day, can I pound freedom into him? It's possible that he grabs the stick at a certain moment and hits me with it. But by then he is already on the wrong path: in his desperation he has countered violence with violence and is therefore far removed from freedom even if his resistance is a very beneficial symptom as such. Those who long for freedom must use means that serve that purpose.
And the remarkable thing is that Marx and Engels and the great marxists, Gorter and even Troelstra at the beginning of this century have known very well that

state-capitalism is the biggest enemy

of socialism. I remember how I visited a workers meeting in Middelburg around 1900 where Troelstra, Gorter and others spoke about the necessity of socialism before the workers. And they always warned against the danger of state-capitalism. Because -they said- state-capitalism can never lead to socialism; it always remains capitalism; in which a powerful and authoritarian bureaucracy rises above and against the masses as exploiter: instead of being exploited by individual capitalism we're exploited by a State vested with absolute authority. These days for example -according to Knickerbocker- the Russian state makes a 1000% profit on the farmers.
By the way if you are slightly familiar with the history and literature of marxism, you know that Marx and Engels have always been staunch enemies of the state, and have recognized -especially in response to the Paris Commune- that the state as such must be abolished and the people must create its own institutions in a true revolution, outside of all traditional party and state authority. Yes, if you open Lenin's brochure on 'State and Revolution' -one of the most remarkable writings that he published- you will see that he says there that the purpose of every true revolution is anarchism; Marx and Engels have already recognized in 1847 in their 'Communist Manifesto' that what matters in a revolution is an association of free producers. The goal of the true revolution is to establish a free community of personalities that together control

not just the means of production but the products as well,

and of the whole social process. That is the original marxism. That comes very close to anarchism, and is deeply related to it. But Marx and his people immediately accepted parliamentarian methods temporarily. And so down the years the 'marxists' of the 2nd International have -increasingly fatally- started to shift the struggle from the masses to the Party, and from the people to the Leadership, from the social reality to Parliament, from the economy to Politics; and the whole 2nd International has alienated itself from the revolutionary purposes of Marx and Engels themselves. And the 3rd International has fatally gone down the road of state-capitalism of which Lenin had already anticipated the consequences even if he hadn't really understood them...
So why is it that all kinds of people, often even fascists or national-socialists as well, start out with wonderful ideals and really want to bring something good into the world, but still get stuck so painfully? If we analyse that in relation with the economic principles of society, we must recognize

the following:
First of all, there is so-called national-socialism that is indeed fascism or national-capitalism with more or less state-capitalist tendencies. There are three main factors in the production process:

- labor,
- means of labor [means of production]
- products of labor, the goal and result of the whole economical process.

So if we return to the capitalist society -whether so-called democracy, the fascism of Mussolini or the national-capitalism of Hitler- we can see that the laboring masses are fundamentally and practically excluded from the control of the means of labor and the products of their own labor; that means and products of labor remain in the hands of property classes, and that everyone that is not part of those classes is exclusively regarded as exploitable labor force and only used as such inasfar as the property classes think they can extract profit from that labor. If not they are expelled from the production process into the ever increasing reserve army of unemployed. The property classes try to pay as little as possible for this labor force and to extract as much surplus value as possible from it in order to put it back into the economic process somehow, first and foremost in the interest of the capitalists themselves.
What matters here tonight is that -in whatever version of capitalism- the laboring masses have a wage relation to the capitalist classes, and they are separated from the social means and products of their labor. The factory is there, but the worker can't enter unless a boss or a group of bosses 'hires' him. If the boss says: “You don't get in!” he stays out. People work for their bosses as long as their boss decides so, and gets thrown out if the boss thinks it's necessary or advisable. The factory, and all that is in it, is owned by the boss, no matter whose hands produced it. In that sense the whole social production process serves the property classes: they alone are subject, they alone count as legal and moral individuals, they alone control things, and the masses are de facto objects of exploitation. The worker only serves as an extension of the machine, as Dr. Abram Kuyper said, and only if (and as long as) his employer wants it so. And even if national-socialism is on the rise, attempting as it may to pacify the class antagonisms, and even if it attempts to obscure the class struggle and force the workers to be complicit in it, -when it essentially leaves those relations untouched, and says -weapons in hand- “So they will remain!”- then the exploitation and misery of ever growing masses, the unemployment and all those gruesome things continue mercilessly, even if the State is ever increasingly made more powerful as the workers, farmers and petite-bourgeoisie becomes more disgruntled and restless.
Inasfar as this society, based on private competition, gets stuck ever more clearly, these days especially from social-democratic side all kinds of plans are proposed to 'regulate' and 'structure' capitalism, and there is talk about this plan or another plan. But for all the plans made, as long as the economic foundation of society remains the same, a reasonable solution is impossible. And even if 'corporations' or all kinds of more or less covert state-capitalist entities are established, and even if there are serious attempts to accommodate the workers in conflicts about wages etc, the laboring masses simply don't control the means of production nor the social products of their labor; they continue -because of the systemically skimmed wages- to produce surplus value for others, who control things behind or on the scenes, and who can even throw the masses into war as soon as their capitalist or imperialist interests demand it.
The situation in Russia is different. If we analyse the relations there between producer, means of production and product, we soon discover that there has indeed been a dramatic change. In Russia, we see that the means of production have fallen into the hands of the bolshevik state and that political and bureaucratic rulers in that state control the whole of the production process in the name of the laboring masses. The capitalist class society has been dissolved, the private exploitation essentially abolished: in that regard some kind of 'equalizing justice' has taken place in favour of the state. The distribution of the collective products of the whole of Russia and Siberia are in the hands of the state, and the relation of the laboring masses towards the state is one of

salaried people.

So the Russian farmers and workers are still salaried, albeit by the bolshevik state; they are controlled and exploited by the bureaucracy of the Russian labor movement and the Communist Party and all that is tied to it, all concentrated in an immense apparatus of power that rules the millions with an iron hand. So there remains the objection in Russia that the means and products of labor are not in the hands of the laboring masses themselves; that the workers are separated from the means of production without the right to control their products as free producers. The distribution is organised exclusively through the bureaucracy of an equally abstract as violent institute; and that state doesn't care for the principle of meeting the needs of all in the first place, but that state-capitalist superstructure controls everything by means of prices and wages like an immeasurable giant and in the end heartless Boss.

The difference with traditional capitalism is therefore that the Russian rulers try -by means of a through and through hierarchical apparatus- to exploit the laboring masses exclusively in their own interest; and because they can solve all kinds of business problems with more ease than outside of Russia because private profit and the contradictions of competition are almost eliminated. But the essence of the original revolution -the self-organisation of the workers in councils- has been abandoned completely. That is why there are continuous movements for higher wages and strikes.

So what is the characteristic of that self-organisation, of that socialism by means of councils? This, which would eliminate the whole detour of state bureaucracy, which the state is simply dismantled and the laboring masses themselves -as exclusive social subject- not only control the means of production, but the products as well of their own production process. Inasfar and wherever social life moves in that direction, we are in fact dealing with a revolution and wage servitude disappears.

If the workers want to move further in the direction of the revolution today, they must unreservedly rise up against bolshevik state-capitalism. And we indeed see movements of farmers and workers rising up again and again, who have had it with the hierarchies as they are today. We know that most conscious and responsible elements will continue to arise to claim their fair share in the leadership and to share control of the process of production and distribution. It is clear that they can only andvance in these matters by means of a 'revolution of the revolution' – even that is not necessarily with in the traditionally violent way -: when things in Russia are overturned from the base upwards. Because it has never occurred in history that when a mighty political-military-bureaucratic apparatus was constructed -with its secret diplomacy, its secret police and everything that goes with all that- those who had grabbed power in it, simply gave up their places. All enlightened despotism tries to immortalize itself; so too the state-capitalism of the bolsheviks.

There is even something in Russia that -although it is a relatively good thing in itself- dysfunctions, because things are not how they were supposed to be: even high officials receive relatively low salaries. Partly because of this fact, a new ambition came to be: instead of the struggle to become rich as is so typical of individualist capitalism, there is mainly a war for power and the position one is in -in the Party, in the State, in the army, etc, the position of power even that one occupies in the secret police (and not in the least there). All those positions are officially highly valued as well, and that inevitably awakens the strife to become a 'high ranking' member of the bolshevik society. It is similar to the Catholic Church. It's beautiful to be a layman believer there, but it is more beautiful for a priest and even more beautiful for a bishop. And being cardinal is even more beautiful and so on. That situation inevitably creates new ambition, a new passion to maintain oneself against one's fellow humans in all kinds of official relations. Precisely because the higher positions are relatively low payed, that passion grows even more dangerously. Because one or other official position is the pinnacle of what can be achieved from a bolshevik point of view. And on top of that, there are certain economic benefits tied into it that are even more appealing because production lags far behind production in the West and the median person has very very little. And so we see a struggle for 'proletarian honor' and all kinds of tributes according to a new codex. The whole system looks like it is copied from the Catholic Church, even from the Jesuit Order.

And that is no coincidence! Because, when I use certain means, those means must manifest themselves according to the intended results: the so-called dictatorship of the means follows from

the immanent goals of those means. When you install a secret police, this is in the first place a police -and a secret one at that- and therefore there is almost no difference between the tsarist or the fascist and the bolshevik one; if you need an army you need corporals and sergeants and officers and generals: that is in the nature of militarism, in the mechanism as such. Because of the means that were used in the Russian Revolution, the whole movement was dragged along the wrong road, and was -from a principled, revolutionary point of view- increasingly bogged down; and as the whole system grinded to a standstill it became increasingly harder to get rid of it again.
So you must not believe that in Russia the big decision will ever be made to undo itself as a state power and to dissolve itself into the people. That is against the psychology of the dictatorship, bureaucracy and the law of historic inertia, so to speak. The only way in which such mechanism can be undone is

by the masses themselves rising up,

by them simply taking the things that are rightfully theirs and indeed take over the whole production process. And not just the production process but the distribution as well, so that they freely control both the means and the products of labor. That is the way that Russia will need to go if the bolshevik national-socialism is to be transcend.
I say 'national-socialism' and I now accentuate 'national' because the bolsheviks have, over the years, increasingly ended up trying to construct an autarchic system so that the country would be able to satisfy its own economic needs. In relation to other countries outside Russia, Russian state-capitalism established purely capitalist relations of export and import, finances, etc. They increasingly put themselves outside the global revolutionary movement and ultimately fell prey to a traditional political bourgeois and pre-bourgeois methodology. A short while ago Litwinof even piously entered the League of Nations where he turned out to be the best ally of... Barthou, the most notorious representative of French imperialism who, had he not been accidentally shot, would probably have driven France and Germany to a new war... State-socialist nationalism, national-socialist state-capitalism: that is the nature of bolshevism.
In relation to Moscow we now have an advantage and a disadvantage. The disadvantage is that we were outpaced by the Russian Revolution in 1917-1918. But the advantage is that we can learn an incredible amount from it. When we're analysing here this evenening, it is not to 'blame' the Russians or to push them away with hostility, but to prevent that things turn out the same way here, or even worse, if the methods that have caused Russa to fail would be applied here. We must,

here in the West,

try to put the movement on the right track from the start in a chivalrous competition with bolshevik Russia, by adopting those means that truly correspond with the goal, and by ensureing that -leaving the bourgeois and pre-bourgeois, feudal and pre-feudal methods to the bourgeois reaction- we create our own organisations according to our real needs and according to the corresponding system. That is the main thing here. And so there are some very important issues that we must address. First of all this:
Vis à vis the social-democrats and the bolsheviks, the anarchists, syndicalists and the libertarian movement in general have always taken firm position in the sense that they refuse all state-capitalism, all statism and has advocated the free personality in the free community; in so far as they have always denounced all militarism and have unrelentingly tried to appeal to the direct action and the self-organisation of the masses. They even have a good track record on this subject. But the free-socialists have de facto not been able to paint a clear picture of the new society that should be central in that revolution, nor to link the existing situations and the goal that is set. By the way the marxists too have failed in this regard. There have been plenty of preludes and initial directives. The Englishman Owen gave all kinds of them, as did Marx for example. But until recently the knowledge of social life was not developed enough to practically design the free-socialist system, especially on the point of the 'transitional period'. I am convinced that one of the most important events of recent times in this regard is the work of the international communists.

The Group of International Communists (G.I.C.) published an excellent book a few years ago that has just been republished:

Principles of the communist production and distribution[228].

So finally the first clear and consistent attempt to draw up a complete system based on the economic and social principles that I have just described: that the laboring masses are no longer separated from their means of labor nor of the products of it; that the producer freely controls the means of production and the products and that there is a harmonic interaction between the three factors of labor, means of labor and products of labor. There is no way that I can explain the whole system for you here tonight. But I believe that we -as marxists and as free socialists- are bound to examine whether there are no things to be found here that give us a chance to make a great leap forwards. Especially the way in which they make all bureaucracy superficial by means of a social accounting based on the average labor time, is of special interest.
I suggest you study this work individually and together as soon as possible, even though it is of course not infallible and even seriously objectionable in some ways, especially from a revolutionary-antimilitarist point of view; especially as it will also form the basis of the talks at the next Summer School 'Bevrijding'[229] in August 1935.
And so I believe -as I have already explained last year in the debate- that there are multiple tendencies in modern society that we can team up with; tendencies that we find in all areas of culture where the principles of self-development and self-organisation are pushed into the light. Because in order to gather those workers who will be able to make society function with a reasonable and conscious way of producing and distributing as it should,

a new education

is necessary. And this education must be based on the new science of psychology. Precisely in the last period of bourgeois science, principles and methods were elaborated in the realm of psychology and education, like the Montessori system for example, that created the foundations for a truly free society. In the new education, at the school of Kees Boeke for example, the children already relate to eachother as free persons in a free community; each works consciously according to their own nature and ability, and the leadership passes over to whomever de facto proves worthy of leadership in a certain domain while their leadership is under continuous control of the others. Meanwhile the educators try to make themselves increasingly superfluous. So children's councils are created as it were! That is the essence of modern education, in all kinds of other 'labor schools' as well. And you understand: if that is consistently applied, no-one will enter the barracks; if that continues, soon no-one fits in the traditional Party anymore; if it goes on even further, the whole state and the whole army –even the revolutionary state and the revolutionary army- become impossible and... unnecessary. Inasfar as such principles and methods are applied, they must inevitably lead in the direction of free socialism.
So it is of the greatest importance that we as adults, as parents first of all, apply the principles of the modern psychology and education as rigorously as possible, and to draw the necessary consequences from them for society as a whole. That is why those mothers are so significant who stood with their sons when the boys refused military service. Or who -even better- stood in front of their sons when the state wanted to grab their boys. That's the way it should be! That is the great achievement of those comrades who have had the courage to be who they were and to go against the

228 Tr. Note: https://libcom.org/article/fundamental-principles-communist-production-and-distribution. Compare for example with the CNT's principles of Libertarian Communism as agreed in the Zaragoza Congress of 1936: https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/the-confederal-concept-of-libertarian-communism

229 Tr. Note: Tr. Note: 'Liberation'; https://www.delpher.nl/nl/tijdschriften/results?page=1&cql%5B%5D=(alternative+all+%22bevrijding+orgaan%22)&coll=dts ; the 'Zomerschool' or Summer School was a week of workshops, talks and personal contacts for the readers of the magazine. For example the first one July 22-29, 1933 in Bentveld with the general subject 'Our task in the realisation of Socialism. Later absorbed and internationalised in the 'Peace Academy'; second in this series in Switzerland August 1-12, 1939 with the general subject: 'supra-violent revolution' with Martin Buber, Han Kuysten, etc.

grain of modern times. We must focus on these things more than ever, and act in this spirit more than ever, now that in this time national-socialism has a big chance to spread -in the Netherlands as well-; the national-socialism -in the spirit of fascism as well as in the spirit of bolshevism-, because it seems so easy for the Average Joe who loves to continue to believe in authority and power. Especially national-capitalism.
The masses are exhausted, the masses feel more or less exhausted here as well and appear very deeply disappointed. There are hundreds of thousands of unemployed who risk a situation in which they start saying: “What do I care?” That is why it is of such immense importance that we give clear directions for the social struggle, under generally understandable slogans, and actually inspire people to act. Inasfar as we are conscious people, we have the awe-inspiring task to make the masses aware of themselves as humans before it's too late and to inspire them to stay faithful to the best traditions of this land. Because with every day that national-socialism -in the sense of fascism- pushes on, that which is so characteristic for the Dutch people is offended more and deeper! The remarkable thing is that

only revolutionaries

are capable to maintain the best Dutch traditions. Because this people has historically been characterized by a certain strength of character, an almost stubborn sense of independence, hatred for slavery, despising militarism, repulsion for anything that has been called the 'Prussian mentality'. It has exelled in its organisational capacities for centuries, which resulted in the sea dikes and the whole of Dutch water management. Time and again in Dutch history we see attempts for self-organisation, attempts to realize things themselves, individually or collectively. We are talking about peculiarities here that are not typical just for the Netherlands but that are in the end universally human. That is the nature of Dutch traditions: that we have been able to maintain some typical-human traits here. That is not an 'achievement': it depends on countless conditions, circumstances and whole series of factors. But it's a fact nonetheless.
We have to maintain these traditions. And if we maintain them, so-called national-socialism -that is in reality nothing but imperialist state-slavery- cannot infiltrate the Netherlands: by doing so we create ever stronger dams against national-capitalism, like we have created dams against the rivers and the sea. Thought through and applied consistently, this inevitably leads to social revolution.
In the first place we must set up conscious nuclei everywhere. And when for example the people are agitated at the unemployment bureaus, - when spontaneous strikes break out in the factories, - when powerful popular resistance breaks out anywhere, - then our people among them must try to aim the common struggle on free-socialism, and to educate the people on what they are unconsciously seeking, and to point out means of struggle that correspond with their goal. Because one can only become a slave of capitalism, imperialism and fascism inasfar as one abandons human dignity: the responsible function in the historic-cosmic process. If we study history, we notice that the earmark of humanity in its development is always precisely the liberation of personality. And every fascism means onslaught after onslaught, and so does every bolshevism too, despite itself.
So this is where we stand now:

before a decision.

We are still in a position to choose. We can let things happen and think: “O, national-socialism won't happen here. The workers are against it! We have the labor movement and the social-democratic party, and the calvinists and the catholics don't seem too fond of it”... But that means very little. Because things are getting tighter here from a capitalist-imperialist point of view, so that the powers that be have little other choice than violence and deceit in order to maintain themselves. And to start with social-democracy: it doesn't do much more than prepare fascism morally and practically. In this respect there is even little difference between Albarda and Colijn, even if they act differently. So if we don't try to connect with the 'party comrades' on a personal level, and make it clear to them that this is how their Party functions; that there is a risk that the Netherlands end up with national-socialism as well; then we don't fulfill our task towards these people. Because

everywhere in the official socialism of the 2nd International, the modern labor movement, etc the workers are kept away from self-action, of taking responsibility, of direct action, of social self-organisation especially. It was again demonstrated in Belgium, in the Borinage region, and whenever things get tense, the leadership tries to keep the workers within the national union and to pit them against one 'abroad' or another as if that would be the big enemy of the workers and farmers. There is -despite countless pathetic articles in 'Het Volk' etc- at the moment almost no resistance here against the rising national-socialism, because the character of Dutch socialism is dramatically eroded and in fact already impotent. And the bolsheviks cultivate a new religion of violence against fascism that can only harm the revolution. Time and again they relapse into the same methods while they condemn the same methods when their enemy uses them.
So our social-pedagogic task as well as our individual-psychological task and our political and economical task automatically transform into a moral task. We must always stay aware of our human values, of our human dignity. We must value our children as being worth too much to not withdraw them from the influence of the modern slave mind as much as we can. We have to spread our revolutionary convictions among the people as much as we can, especially among small farmers and the tradesmen who find themselves in such miserable circumstances and are under threat of being manipulated by Messiah Mussert.
We must not waste time in easy, superficial propaganda – even if it is our duty to come up with understandable and clear slogans, as we already mentioned -, but to study things seriously and to get to the bottom of the matter. We must exploit any opportunity that can present itself, and always seek connection with whatever humanity and humaneness exists at any moment – in so-called national-socialists or fascists as well, and certainly among the bolsheviks, although we shouldn't fall victim to their often very cunning and dangerous tactics, for example if they appeal to support “the peace policy of Russia”.
I've explained to you before the break under which circumstances national-socialism has arisen, and I have demonstrated that the masses that move in that direction are much more undergoing social situations rather than they are in control over them. I've demonstrated that, if things continue, people after people will be swept along, and the political, economic as well as moral bankruptcy is closing in. We should not ingore the essential when we meet national-socialists, nor should we react blindly and automatically on their brutal convictions; but we must realise that we stand before people who see no way out, and have therefore fallen into a crude messianism. But we shouldn't lose ourselves in vulgar cursing; we should reply “Indeed! The situation is miserable. And parliamentarism is obsolete. The fascist critique of liberal-democracy is by the way just a bad copy of the criticism that anarchists and syndicalists have expressed for over a century”. And so on. We can largely agree with them in many respects when they are right. But we must also prove by facts that their

national-capitalism

must inevitably get bogged down – and why.
That is what we're up against:
either get dragged along,
or to resist
in the most effective way and aimed as purely as we can.
If we resist we don't turn against anyone as enemies, but we appeal to each of them all as a fellow humans: to their sense of solidarity, their insight, their sense of responsibility, their creative abilities. And if there are fascists or bolsheviks who can prove by facts that we are wrong, that we insult humanity, violate humaneness, undermine individuality, become unfaithfull to the best Dutch and international traditions, and that they themselves have found a social system that is far superior to ours and that in fact liberates the people, then I am prepared to become national-socialist, either in the sense of national-capitalist or in the sense of state-capitalist.

DEBATE.

De Beer: What De Ligt has said about the council organisations has been said by myself a long time ago. But people often forget that each must

strive for simplicity,

for oneself as human being, and not for the outside world. Is not in fact everything that exists -except for working the land-, lies and deceit? People who want to live as human beings must desire to work for themselves and their fellow humans. That is what I call being clear.

Holtwijk: I have listened with great interest to the presentation of our preceding speaker, and especially to when he came up with the G.I.C.-plan because I have always thought it was a shortcoming that he didn't evolve much in respect of practice. And so I wanted to ask what the difference is between

the syndicalists and the international communists.

What do you see as the fundamental difference between the developed action and programme of the syndicalists and that of the international communists?

Randel: My objection to the speech of De Ligt is not that his analysis of the birth of national-socialism was strongly psychologically influenced. But I object that he has simply copied the laws of the complexes of individual

psychology

onto social psychology. For me those laws from the schools of Freud, Jung, Adler and others of a different nature than what we are taught in social respect. So that process of taking out their feeling of inferiority and hatred against anything foreign, and the process of sublimation as well, that we know from depth psychology, can not simply be replanted on the social groups. And finally we must not forget that -even if we say that the mass is formed by humans- the sum of the parts is not the same as the totality, which is controlled by entirely different laws.
And then I want to come back on the matter where a parallel is drawn between

national-boshevism

and national-socialism as we find it in Hitler. Yes of course there are similarities in their methods. Both methods are in the end derived from Sorel whose ideas on violence have also influenced the practice and ideology of Mussolini, and have been absorbed by Lenin on the other hand. But then there is the big difference -even if they are both dictatorships; let me even call them class dictatorships, because in the end there is now a dictatorship in Russia that has grown out of the degeneration of the class dictatorship- that in Hitler's case it turned mainly into a personality dictatorship. As De Ligt has already said we must ask ourselves: “What power stands behind those dictatorship?” and in Hitler's case that is the power of capitalism and the remains of feudalism while in the case of Russia -no matter how much the direct influence has been swept away and erased, it has simply grown historically in the interest of the proletariat. Those things must be considered dialectically. It is a dictatorship with all of the cancers, all the unpleasantness and dangers that are tied to it, but still the question must be raised: “In whose interest is this dictatorship exercised?” De Ligt has pointed out that according to Lenin, Russia still lived under state-capitalism in 1922. But the big difference is that we have a state-capitalism under the dictatorship of the proletariat here, while in Germany there is a state-capitalism under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and all kinds of half-feudal powers. For that reason the comparison of state-capitalism in both cases is not correct either, because the state-capitalism that Marx and the later socialists have agitated against was also a state-capitalism of the bourgeoisie. From that point of view they desired for example not the

nationalisation of the railways by the state, because they did not want a reinforcement of the economic power of the state. But that is entirely different than what happens today in Russia because in Russia it is a dictatorship of the proletariat. Without a doubt Lenin wants anarchism in the end, but it just had to go through the stage of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Because that entire anti-state theory -as Engels has explained in his "Anti-Dühring" and as Lenin developed it further in "State and Revolution"- also teaches us that we must first still have some sort of state, concentrated even more strongly than in the bourgeois society. And then, because there will no longer be a need for an apparatus of oppression,

the State will wither away.

And so we must first go through the stage of the dictatorship of the proletariat -that we cannot simply skip-, a stage of state dictatorship as we see it in Russia today. And that is not just the case only for the state; the production process as well must first morph into state-capitalism -in Russia under the proletarian dictatorship and therefore different from in Western Europe where it happens under bourgeois dictatorship- in order to come to industrial production. I think that process must be completed first. And then it remains to be seen whether or not the production process is possible along anarchist principles. Because there is the simple fact that the production process is so complex that we can certainly move to a kind communism, but certainly not to a kind of primitive communism in which everyone simply works their own garden and the production process would be complete.

Van Bon: What especially spoke to me in the speech of De Ligt was the moment when he spoke about his relation to his son and the violence in the education. He has of course said that this

violence was wrong

and that it wouldn't be education when his son would be hit with a cane, and it wouldn't lead to freedom unless the child himself would start hitting back. I conclude from this – and that is my point -, that he has put forward two things – of which one is not my thing but the other is. I want to try to clarify this in a few words. My thought is this: ratio ends where violence starts. But when a child hits their father because the father hit it -and thus gives them a wrong education- I can't blame the child because it is in the end more intelligent than the father, and it tries to defend itself. That in itself does not mean that the child loves violence. And as I see it, the mass is educated by the masters, and those masters are cruel and slavish, and so the mass as well will copy the violent characteristics of its masters. And so I think that the difference between the pacifists and what I would call the revolutionary anti-militarists is that the former fundamentally object all violence, without understanding that it is not wrong to use violence when it is used to oppose violence.

Bos: De Ligt talked about Russia using

bad methods for a good cause,

and that those bad methods resulted in the wrong path because the good cause was not the primary object nor were the right methods used. So he takes a goal that is good and wants to see those methods used that are in accordance with that goal. But is that possible? Because anarchism has identified the mistakes of parliamentarism since long years, and just now people are coming to power who do the same. So why is it that the anarchists have not been able to achieve this goal? The methods of the anarchists have not proven practical. Or they should have had achieved their goal. It comes down to this: are not all means good as long as we reach the desired outcome? That is a more or less opportunistic reasoning. But is all opportunism wrong? We shouldn't oppose fascism with anarchism, because "people" are not ready for it. Freud has also been the man who explained the transfer of responsibility. When someone can no longer carry their own responsibility, they transfer it to someone else and submit themselves to them. The whole mass does the same, and each individual does it in turn. There seems to be no way out of the situation, so can the good

method really be used then?

Donker: How is it possible – if superficial propaganda cannot be used – to win over the big mass of

unemployed youngsters

for the anarchist ideas?

REPLIES.

De Ligt: Comrades, it pleases me that De Beer has said so many things now that I have said before; and I hope that -inasfar as those things are correct- he and others will continue to say the same things –and even better than I say them– long after I can no longer say them. But that is not a point of debate. We acknowledge it.
I get the impression from the rest of his argument, that De Beer has retired to his farm and now pleads with us to become farmers as well. Does that mean that the machines must be abolished, industry ignored, and we should all go back to living like Adam and Eve? I haven't understood what he wanted.

De Beer: I think that the mass says: “You don't need anyone anyway” and then I say: “No”. Then the dialogue starts again from the top and I must accept that what people say is: “Yes but you can't do without bread”and I reply: “So then you have to bake it yourself”. If the will is strong, we can do without any colonial wares, the booze and religion. And especially religion must be treated with care because it brings us under the slave yoke while we yearn for freedom.

De Ligt: For me, I think that it is impossible to go down this path because when we would all go back to farming each for our own, and when each would go back to constructing things for themselves first and eliminate the whole modern production process, our whole cultural level would drop and we would soon enter an era without any machines at all...

De Beer: My vision is -and maybe it is hard to understand because I see that whenever I say what I mean, people prefer to put me on an island-: to seek what is reasonable and in accordance with what every person wants. He wants to live, he wants to develop. The machine comes to be because of the competence of the engineer. But if I am engineer and I design a machine, it must really be in my interest and then I must not rent out my abilities for a certain amount.

De Ligt: So now it appears that we're not just talking about agriculture, but about industry as well, and about the elimination of delusion and authority, and especially about

abolishing the wage system,

about attempting to take control of production and distribution. And that is precisely what I meant in the second half of my speech. Now someone might be unilaterally focussed on agriculture, and someone else on some desk work or factory work, etc. But that is not what matters here.
By the way the ruling classes may be partisan of a certain level of

simplicity,

but the proletarian and the small farmer and petit-bourgeois much rather need abundance that would indeed be possible if things operated reasonably; even if this does not exclude a certain simplicity.
Now on to the second speaker. Because of all kinds of circumstances that are partly outside of my control – a man can not control every circumstance -, my specific work in the revolutionary movement has first of all been anti-militarism, the war against war and the preparation for war. That

task is so important and entails so much that I have not been able to act on as many other terrains as I would have wanted, and have in other regards only been able to give limited direction that -by the way- all pointed in the same direction as my main work. Though because the editorial group of 'Bevrijding' of which I am part increasingly understood the necessity to put the questions of the practice of the revolution first, we have given -amongst others- the international communists multiple occasions to express themselves in our magazine, just like the syndicalists and other tendencies have. Now the point of view of

the syndicalists

has been expressed here by Albert de Jong on Sunday in a 'Bevrijding' gathering. A report of it has been made that will be published in the March and April issues of 'Bevrijding'. It seems best that I refer to that report for the ideas of the syndicalists themselves. I for one have the impression that

the international communists

are closer to the solution of the problem at hand than the syndicalists, no matter how much I respect their traditions, especially when it comes to the war against war and the anti-statism. Is that not clear from the fact that the syndicalists come increasingly closer to the council communists when they elaborate their practical plans?
The objection against the syndicalist movement as it exists here in the Netherlands is mainly that, as a labor movement, it is complicit in the capitalist process in general as well as in the state process. Several syndicalist functionaries -not the worst ones- have said to me: “We have joined the syndicalist movement in the first place to fight for the revolution. But more than we'd like, we have no choice than to take care of all kinds of things that directly or indirectly serve the capitalist system and the state”. That is why syndicalism finds it relatively difficult to untie itself from -and independently confront- the economic and political powers that rule society.
Syndicalism still has a strong revolutionary tendency. What we can only wish is that those syndicalists with the strongest revolutionary consciousness are theoretically and practically able to rise above the old traditions of the labor unions, and work in the direction of

the free council system.

But in Spain the organisations involved have this great advantage of not being so connected to the official institutions as is the case with the unions in capitalistically more developed countries. And so we see multiple syndicalist actions in Spain with very strong momentum that could lead in the direction of the council organisation under the right circumstances. And that is all that I can say about that tonight here briefly.
Now on the matter of

psychology,

I have not indiscriminately copy-pasted individual cases onto collective phenomena. But I think that -when we analyse mass movements, popular movements etc- collective phenomena occur that resemble what we can also see in individuals in multiple respects. Which is not so strange, as the collective is rooted into the individual. I also don't support individual psychology exclusively. On the contrary I for one have learned an extraordinary lot from Lebon's collective psychology. If you study it -we can hardly go deeper into the subject here- you will see that Lebon has determined that human life has several layers of existence and consciousness, and each of them functions according to a specific set of laws. According to him, we obey first of all the 'physicological logic' in our lives, which means: we have a body, a physique, a constitution; and that body lives and moves in a specific order. That starts when we are a developing embryo that separates from the mother's body in the end, breaks loose and breathes on its own. A baby mainly sleeps. But it develops nonetheless according to the physiological logic – an amazing process. Most of our life, carried by those completely unknown laws. It's a scandal in fact! Any boy knows how a motor works. But how their

own corpus works is unknown to most of them, or barely known. And they often ruin their body, and don't know what they're doing because they don't know about the physiologic logic and don't understand “the science of life” well enough.
And over all that, Lebon has determined, the world of 'the affective logic' rises up. That is a second, different system that rises up when the child is yet unconscious but is already starting to develop a certain individuality and still moves in an almost animal fashion, and harbors feelings towards all its fellow humans, clearly controlled by all kinds of heavy passions and sentiments. That world as well is something awesome in itself, where everything follows a different order. It is the world where urges are expressed, and collaborate, or interfere with eachother. That second layer, as we could call it, that world of lowest of low feelings interacts with the physical one, and the physical with the emotional world again. We all know that if an animal gets angry, and it bites, it is often poisonous; and when the people says: “That's a toxic man” it is indeed very well possible that this man is indeed poisoned physically more or less by his toxic feelings or in any case looks terrible because of it. The opposite is also true by the way!
When the individual is a little older, it discovers that it lives in a community: family, friends, the village, the town, the country and ultimately humanity. And then we see that, unconsciously, “the collective logic” develops in relation. And that is yet another world in itself, also following its own order in which man is most involved outside of the full control of his knowing: he thinks he does but is mainly done, and often swept up in all kinds of directions that he frankly doesn't want or would not want if he knew what he was doing. This world as well is barely known to us and we can not control it enough yet.
And on top of that Lebon described yet another level of consciousness and life that he calls “the mystical logic”. That is again a higher degree of consciousness, essentially religious[230] in nature. That layer as well interacts with us according to its own set of laws, deeply within us and simultaneously on all the lower layers and upwards. And that is true not just for the individual as such but also for the whole community; in the collective and in the mystical consciousness the whole of nature resonates, even the sun, the moon, the stars, the universe.
And above all that in turn, above all those worlds, I must say with all those laws of existence, life and consciousness -thousands and tens and hundreds of thousands of years if we keep descending- a new consciousness has developed since just a few centuries: 'the reasonable logic'; and that is human consciousness as we more or less recognize it and that seems to be seated mainly in our head. But that last logic is still so new that thousands of years before Christ, the Greeks could still be convinced that humans thought with their diaphragm. They were people of so many moods and emotions that if they started thinking, they couldn't do so “with a cool head”. Their thinking always came with so much emotions, and often intense movements of all kinds of internal organs. That kind of thinking is still found in young soldiers who go into battle for the first times: they soil their pants.
The highest human consciousness has only recently risen above all those older layers. That is why humankind has become human, separated from the animals, and has somewhat learnt to control itself, regulate its behaviour amongst itself and structure individual and social life. So: the highest phase of development is the most recent one. And at the same time the most sensitive, as fragile as a wallflower. And that is precisely what is most difficult in our struggle: that the highest is also the finest, that gets tainted the most in critical times. The self-control of man soon weakens under big moral shocks and heavy moodswings. And so we see that if a freethinker finds himself cornered, all kinds of religious images from his youth rise to the surface. Often people deliberately flee from their higher consciousness into all kinds of magic and mysticism or in some individual or collective trance.
So not only do we find all those layers of life and consciousness within ourselves, in synergy from the bottom upwards and from the top downwards, but at the same time -as we have already

230 Tr. Note: we would probably distinguish between religion and spirituality; and again between any kind of hierarchy or church. As BdL did not distinguish, I chose to use the literal translation, but 'spirituality' is probably closer to what he meant.

mentioned- there are influences at work from the outside in: from the collective to the individual, first of all. When we recognize this and keep Freud, Jung and other psychologists in mind, and simultaneously bring in modern sociology, we begin to discover how all kinds of group and mass movements unfold.
For example we are faced with the fact that a 15, 16 or 17 years old boy barely lives in the highest phase of human awareness; his judgement is not entirely formed yet, his personality not developed yet, and therefore he is relatively easily swept away by the collective urges and more or less primitive inflictions. And that is why it is so dangerous for the average boy to follow some banner. Almost spontaneously he finds one banner or another in this phase –or fascist troops in all kinds of impressive uniforms– much more beautiful than a refuser of military service that is arrested by the police while wearing some shabby civilian clothes: his instinctive sympathy is rather with the police, unless he's really of a north-Dutchlike stubborn nature; in itself not a virtue either! When military music sounds, all kinds of age-old collective inflictions start stirring in his gut, etc. And that's what makes it so difficult to spread effective propaganda against the national-socialist spring tide that resonates so deeply with all too naïve boys and so many women as well for example. But in any case we have to take all this into account very well. We must also make the adults understand what a childish, deeply sad scene it is to see fully grown ups there following along, degraded into a era that is no longer worthy of man.
The second point is this:
All humans live under specific historical circumstances, so too

in Russia

things have not descended from heaven like the holy stone of Mecca. Everything has developed dialectically, Randel says. But now the question is in which direction this dialectical development is going. 'Dialectic' means: the movement of logic and history develops like a conversation - I say one thing and you answer, so then I reply again, etc, etc and slowly we discover the truth more or less: from position to opposition and then to a composition, and so on. Something like that can indeed be found in history, although not in absolute terms! But there is something else, comrades: we can dialectically go up, but down as well, or to hell. We must question every historical process to see where it is aiming at. The dialectical logic is very well suited for someone who has studied it thoroughly, but for whom it has become an abstract intellectual labor – to justify anything and everything. And therefore dialectic is only useful when it is aimed at humanity and humane-ness, and helps to direct personal life and history with precision. We can recognize for example that bolshevism has gotten stuck more or less dialectically in some sort of enlightened despotism. But then it is dialectically not less necessary -and morally not less desirable- that the Russians rise up to relieve themselves and to liberate themselves from all despotism, even the most benevolent. Or else they will remain stuck in the phase of violent filantropism. When people in Russia discover that they live in a dictatorship *over* the proletariat in the name of the dictatorship *of* the proletariat, then the proletariat is precisely dialectically obliged to turn the slogan into actions and the endlessly proclaimed principle a reality; then that enlightened despotism must be abolished – dialectically or otherwise. Behold:

the revolution of the revolution.

So, comrades, you will understand that because of all kinds of circumstances and situations, what took place in Russia may well have been historically inevitable, but not automatically morally justified or correct from a revolutionary tactical point of view; that -from a dialectical understanding of necessity- it is only a matter of “unfortunate coincidence” that the bolshevik state mechanism looks down on the Russian masses these days. I think I have proved that this evening.
But even that doesn't imply

that this state would wither away all by itself.

We can say: the dictatorship of any enlightened despotism whatsoever does not die unless it is

killed. And it is killed the moment it is abolished. And it is abolished when those who are ruled rise up and act as if it did not exist. Because the dictatorship and enlightened despotism are only possible by the grace of those who allow themselves to be dictated. When they refuse, -when at last the people dictates itself,- then we are dealing with that “dictatorship of labor” that coincides with free-socialism. And that is what we should redirect our aim at, time and time again.
Comrades, it is of the utmost importance that I am keeping you here so long, and it makes me happy that you are not showing any signs of impatience. Because the one matter that we touched upon here is even more important than the one before. What is key is this: that in most marxist circles there is not enough differentiation between what is historically likely if not inevitable on the one hand, and what is desirable from a revolutionary perspective and fundamentally necessary on the other. When for example it is historically probable that national-socialism will break through, it is not therefore inevitable from a revolutionary perspective; we as revolutionaries are precisely obliged to not simply bend over for it in advance, but to counter it as effectively as we can, and to prevent as much of it as we can. If it were historically inevitable that there would be a party and state dictatorship in Russia, it is not less necessary from a revolutionary perspective to abolish that dictatorship. And by the way the political dictatorship that Marx and Engels intended is completely different from... state-capitalism.
I strongly distinguish here between the historical dialectics and the revolutionary dialectics, no matter how much both interact with eachother – dialectically. But our point of departure and goal remains:

direct action

in the sense of self-action and self-organisation of those masses who have become conscious. Lucky enough we can point to examples of direct action in history, making history a reality for the first time, and humanity becoming itself.
So humanity has to become itself through the council system. The particularity of the work of the international communists is -especially in this context- that they have made the production process comprehensible and understandable for all.
And now a different debater returns on the example of the mistreated son and remarks that if he hits his father back, he defends himself commendably. I have already said that I value this

violence

relatively, and not just in the case of the boy but of the oppressed classes, masses, etc as well. I find nothing more sad and desperate than the people acting so passively as it does these days. And it would genuinely somewhat please me despite of everything, when a big spontaneous event of primitive violence rose up that proved that the masses have not become absolute slaves. But that is no reason for me to say: “That is a good thing! That is the right tactic!” Last year I was abroad when I heard that the people of Amsterdam had started to act in whatever way, and I was really satisfied: the people wasn't dead yet. But that was no reason for us to say: “This is the right method that we should direct our energy towards; those are the methods of struggle that we need to reinforce as much as we can. We need violence against violence”, etc. Violence exists, sadly, because the people is not educated enough yet, not aware enough of the strength of solidarity, doesn't trust the effective direct action enough yet, because anti-militarism has not permeated the barracks, the fleet and the air force enough yet, etc. That is why those people in Amsterdam didn't come up with better methods. But the more the masses become better at direct action by participating in it, liberating themselves and making official violence impossible by non-cooperation, the more all dictatorship can and will disappear. What can Colijn do when the soldiers refuse to leave the barracks?
That is precisely the reason why we are not just revolutionaries, but

revolutionary anti-militarists as well,

because we are convinced that anti-militarism has two functions in social life: in the first place

helping the individual to remain itself, and so the masses too becoming themselves. As they participate in all kinds of forms of direct action, they become aware of their own moral strength, of the strength of solidarity and the weakening of the power apparatus of the ruling classes at the same time, that can not exist without the permanent cooperation of the popular masses. That is something that the bolsheviks have gravely neglected. Even if the insight has grown these last few years: some change for the good can be seen. They used to say: “Learn how to shoot, enter the service. You learn to shoot in the service of the bourgeoisie, but later you can use the skill in the service of the revolution!” But if that system of discipline has infected you, it is hard to get rid of it again, and so you carry it around in your life - and yes into the revolution. Because the trick of military discipline is the systematic alienation of the people from their higher consciousness, their own judgement and their personal sense of responsibility. Huzella says that the essence of military training is this: individuals and groups are tamed into a lower phase of collective and mystical logic in which many -more primitive- people still are, so that they can be ordered around in blind obedience so they obey automatically. And therefore anti-militarism is an essential element of the revolutionary education, and anti-militarism is so necessary for the revolution. And that is why the ruling class is so afraid of anti-militarism, and objectors are so harshly punished everywhere, because those boys hurt the Achilles heel of all those who rule over the peoples. From which follows that we must push forward on this, with words and with actions.
But then what about

the good means and the good goals?

People ask me: “You want to achieve a good goal and to use only good means to achieve that goal; but if the people are just not up for those good means, then what should we do?”
Yes, as long as they are not ready for the good means, they will of course use less good or wrong ones. What we can always continue to do is to make people aware of the ineffectiveness of their means, and to make it increasinly clear what the good means are, preferably with words and actions. But the big question remains: how do we get rid of more and more of those means of struggle that do not correspond with our goal, and that lead us further and further away from it the more we use them; how do we bring the whole struggle

on a different level,

and how do we find the means that correspond to the highest interests of humanity. How far we come with the theoretical and practical response to that, of course depends not just from us and our comrades. But we come a long way if we work harder in all kinds of social circles, to make the way that leads to the harmony between means and ends known, and the more we ourselves try to use only those methods that -no matter how circumstances develop- lead by their very nature in the direction of the goal. So that when we fail we at least know that if we had started out with other means, things would have failed even more.
The failure can -to speak dialectically- be just a coincidence, and not inevitable: it cannot hurt the essence of the matter! When we would for example establish a party socialism because of some impatience, and say: “Tomorrow, or at the day after at the latest, we want to violently realise anarchism!” - when we would -if we were capable of such thing- want to grab power, we would betray ourselves as free socialists and free-socialism itself; and we would be doomed to apply all those means that we have debunked tonight, and get stuck precisely where we want to get things unstuck and back in motion. Without a doubt the time of anarchism is far away still. But it comes closer.
I see that it is time to end our event tonight. The question of how we can get the people and especially the

unemployed youth

on our side, is not something I can answer in a few minutes. The first demand these days is, as we have said: clear, practical directives, slogans that are equally impactful and deeply humane, and

tireless propaganda by word and deed.
It seems to me that we must dedicate a separate investigation into this matter. I propose that you conduct a systematic research amongst yourselves -modern sociology, individual and social psychology- on how we have to review our propaganda in this time with a highly peculiar mentality in order to make

more contact with the mass than ever before.

As I see it there are new possibilities, not just among the proletariat but in a growing part of the petit-bourgeoisie as well and in all kinds of circles and in the most diverse tendencies in current society. Among -and despite- all kinds of religions, sects, parties, movements and tendencies something new is being prepared, even bolshevism and fascism. In the end the humane is immortal. And the humane is precisely the subject and essence of anarchism!

Bart de Ligt.

K) The problem of the civil war (Bevrijding 1938)[231]

Comrades!
Three years ago, at the International Conference in Welwyn, our friend Fenner Brockway opened an exchange on 'anti-militarism and class war' that has become a burning issue again because of the tragic events in Spain.
Fenner stated that the question of the class war -we can say more broadly: the question of revolutionary war- was one of the most difficult and most urgent. He thought correctly that we, as fighters against war, could not possibly stay away from the struggle against exploitation and oppression, and must also fight for a new social order. Indeed our fight against war is not complete if we are simply anti-militarists and anti-navalists: we should also be anti-capitalists, anti-imperialists and anti-colonialists. We can nor want to stay away from the struggle for social justice and freedom.
All that being said we reject every form of war, including the class war. In short we accept the class struggle in a sense, while we reject the class war. In our opinion the class war is therefore a wrong, -although often understandable- form of revolutionary struggle because it is inhumane in nature and is through and through at odds with our goal: the creation of a new humanity.
Violence is a necessary part of capitalism, imperialism and colonialism: those three are of course just as violent as rain is wet. Exploitation and oppression of classes and races, international competition for natural resources etc are not even possible without systematic use of ever more violence. Take away the violence and the whole modern social system crumbles. On the other hand it is safe to say that the more violence is used in the class struggle, the smaller the chances are for real success.
We accept the struggle for a new social order. We accept the class struggle insasfar as it is a struggle for justice and freedom and is practiced with truly humane methods. We strongly participate in the self-liberation movement of all oppressed humans and groups, but at the same time we try to introduce and apply **those** methods of struggle that are in harmony with our goal. Because we know from bitter personal and shared experience that -when we use means on whatever aspect at all that are essentially at odds with our set goal-, those means will inevitably pull us away from our goal even when they are applied with the best intentions.
Each means is closely related with a certain outcome. It is even determined by its original intent and keeps the tendency to serve it under the most diverse conditions. The original goal of a knife for example is to cut. Of course we can try to use a knife as a violin bow, and maybe produce some barbaric noises with it. But the closer we come to using the knife according to its original purpose, and the stronger we apply the knife to the strings, the sooner the violin will be destroyed. On the other hand it is foolish to try to cut bread with a violin bow, because its purpose is not to cut, but to stroke it over strings.
It often happens that we are forced to use non-appropriate means for one goal or another. Lacking better ones, we regularly turn to methods that are not completey fit for purpose. And yet we know from experience that we always again have to try to find the best fitting means for every purpose and in each case look for those methods that are as much in line as possible with our purpose, and ideally fit it completely.
When there is no ink, it is more practical to write with a pencil or even with charcoal than for example with blood. Probably a highly romantic youngster in an amorous mood will try to write with his blood instead of with ink. But then as well the means fits the purpose. Probably his use of blood will be very moderate, knowing that his blood serves him to stay alive in the first place. It is true that he tries to express that he is inclined to give his life for the object of his affection by using his blood. But he probably hopes to continue his life, together with that of his loved one.
Anyway this is only about deciding over one's own blood. It's a whole other matter when it's about deciding -for whatever reason- over the blood of others and to ruthlessly use the blood, life and

231 Tr. Note: Speech before the WRI congress in Kopenhagen, July 1937 ('Bevrijding' 1937-08/09, pp 116-119)

personality of other humans purely as 'material'. This would be the biggest violation imaginable of his peers!
The German philosopher Kant correctly said that nobody should use someone else purely as material or as instrument, because every personality has purpose in itself, so to speak. Indeed the fact that in war the human personality is used and abused as raw material, and must at a given moment stop being rational and moral being to become a simple instrument of murder, is one of the main reasons why we are so much against war. Because we know that the most responsible revolutionaries, even when they accept certain forms of class war, have always rejected every form of militarism, that is to say: complete subordination of human personality to military interests. Maintaining in principle everyone's right to be considered to be a reasonable and moral being and to be treated as such, those revolutionaries couldn't and wouldn't resort to militarism. They always rejected every form of militarism as counter-revolutionary.
In a famous text on 'the defense of the Revolution'[232] Alexander Berkman stated that a true revolutionary is prepared to defend his goal and principles, if necessary 'even by the weapon', but that he was in principle opposed to every interference in anyone's personal freedom, be it by violent or any other means. Berkman rejected every form of infringement and coercion, but he continued: "*If then again you are yourself attacked by someone, then the one who uses violence against you, infringes upon you, and you have the right to defend yourself. Yes, then it is your duty to protect your freedom and to resist all coercion and pressure. Otherwise you are a slave instead of a human being. The social revolution will attack no-one, but it will protect itself against every infringement, against all violence".* But the same Berkman agrees that "*the means shapes the goal, just like the tool that you use must fit the work that you want to accomplish... Revolutionary self-defense must be in harmony with the spirit of the revolution. Self-defense exlcudes acts of coercion, persecution or revenge completely... We must never forget that the strength of the social revolution is organic and not mechanic. Its power lays not in mechanistic measures but in its industrial capability, in its ability to reconstruct life and to establish freedom and justice... The social revolution must be based, from the start, on a new conception and a new attitude to life. Freedom is the breath of existence. It should never be forgotten that evil and chaos should be cured with* ***more*** *freedom, not by oppression.*"
Indeed, comrades! The whole course of the Russian civil war has proved the accuracy of this position. The social revolution in Russia has failed because it increasingly used bourgeois and pre-bourgeois, feudal and pre-feudal methods. The more it leaned on absolute state guardianship, and used secret police and other means that initially served political absolutism; the more it used the methods of inquisition and jezuïtism, originally means in the service of medieval catholicism; the more it sought refuge in militarism and nationalism, initially means in the service of capitalism; the further it grew apart from its own original purpose: self-organisation of labor. The sovjet system itself was the first victim of all those through and through counter-revolutionary means and methods.
Alexandra Kollontai was among the first[233] in Russia who had the courage to openly establish the contradiction between the formulated goal and the applied means. According to the principles of Marx, Engels and Lenin the old bourgeois society with its classes and class conflicts had to be replaced with an association in which the free development of each would be the condition for the free development of all. Already during the Russian revolution of 1905, the bolsheviks discovered that such society had to be organized by means of councils of industrial workers and farmers, i.e. sovjets. So the original goal of the revolution of 1917 was a 'worldwide federation of sovjet republics'.
In the beginning the bolsheviks even tried to organize the army according to the revolutionary principle of self-organisation, and they formed not just sovjets of labor, but also of soldiers. But Alexandra Kollontai recognized even in 1920 that nothing had come of the free self-organisation in

232 Tr. Note: See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TLr05DX_heU, https://libcom.org/library/what-is-anarchism-alexander-berkman-31
233 Tr. Note: of course the anarchists were first.

the army: for military-technical reasons the bolsheviks saw themselves forced to replace the system of volunteers with military conscription. Military specialists and technicians -the large majority of them impregnated with the old bourgeois and even tsarist spirit- were invited to help organize the defense of the revolution, and re-joined the army. They re-established the blind subordination, slavish obedience, all kinds of ranks and grades, and autocratic decisions by superiors. The military spirit spread from the army into civilian life and gradually united with the tyrannical spirit of the bureaucratic party politics. Soon the whole bolshevik Party was militarized and jezuitized, and its leaders started to persecute, imprison and kill all the revolutionaries who continued to fight for social freedom and self-organisation. So doing, leninism became stalinism. The contradictions between the revolutionary goal and the counter-revolutionary means left almost nothing of the original Russian sovjet system in the end.
Alexander Berkman emphasized that in the beginning the revolution was effectively defended by the Red Voluntary Guard in its most critical moments, and that the Russian army, as it lost its voluntary character, it consistently became less reliable as a revolutionary class army.
We anti-militarists too see very clearly the difference between spontaneous, violent revolutionary defense on the one hand, and on the other hand military conscription as a technical instrument in the hands of a dictatorial state. The difference between those two systems is immediately obvious: in the former the individuals take part in the struggle as volunteers and they fight for a common goal; in the latter case they are simply used as instruments in the hands of their superiors for purposes that they cannot control. The command of a revolutionary militia is controlled from the bottom up, and the personal freedom of each soldier is respected as much as possible. But the fact remains that the class war, even if it is based on a revolutionary system of volunteers, must inevitably result in misery and death of countless human lives of which a large part is completely innocent. And in the end the class war, just like any other war, causes all kinds of other ruthless destruction and devastation.
Alexander Berkman and his group don't address their side of the class war. Precisely because of the destructive nature of the class war we neither can nor want to consider it as a truly revolutionary method of struggle, not even if it is based on a system of volunteers. From an individual, collective-psychological as well as cultural-historic position we understand very well that there are moments in which oppressed individuals, groups, classes, peoples or races turn to violent resistance. Indeed they have a certain right to act this way against their violent oppressors. We appreciate their heroism and sacrificial spirit, and we see the big moral value of the action of those who spontaneously participate in such violent struggle. We are even inclined to ask if it is not only their right, but in a certain sense even their duty to fight violently as long as they don't know of a better way or are not able to apply it. Gandhi has correctly stated that armed struggle for freedom and justice are superior than characterless and despicable subservience.
Besides all that it is a fact that more or less revolutionary social groups will lean towards violence in their struggle for self-liberation as long as they don't know of other means of struggle. This doesn't solve the problem though. Even the voluntary, violent revolutionary struggle will always be at odds with the essential humane goal that the warriors envision. On top of that every method not only touches on the set goal, but it also touches the individual or group that uses it. Those who always use a stick in their role as educator, not only roughen their pupil but themselves as well. And how many veterans have not admitted that they felt morally wounded and defiled after the first shot that they killed an adversary with. By committing certain acts and repeating them often, in the end we become what we do. This phenomenon that the French psychiatrists call 'professional malformation' under certain conditions, is especially visible in bureaucrats, officers, diplomats, politicians, prostitutes, executioners and dictators. Previously school teachers excelled in this respect as well...
But to return to the voluntary class war – people can commend the Russian Voluntary Red Guard as much as they like, anyone that is familiar with the Makhnovist movement will agree that Makhno and his volunteers have behaved inhumanely multiple times.
We even dare to argue that -from a military-technical viewpoint- the militarization of the Russian revolution couldn't be avoided. In our opinion the Russian revolutionaries, once they accepted

collective violence as a method of struggle, were forced to apply it more and more by its very nature. It is simply impossible to control the modern warfare by soldier soviets, or to command it federatively by the popular masses. The modern apparatus of war demands in the first place general subservience of man to the military technology that, as a consequence of modern industrialization, is completely mechanized and motorized; and without a strongly organized command that everyone and everything must blindly obey, it can not even be waged. The most freedom loving revolutionary militia must in the end give way to the modernly organized, i.e. mechanized army.
Because the civil war is a specific form of warfare, it must be conducted according to the rules of war. The only way to achieve a victory in war is to be superior over one's opponent not just morally, but mainly military-technically. But this means that the revolutionary must in the end accept the same war methods as his opponent. In 1920 the English communists Eden and Cedar Paul remarked in their 'Creative Revolution': "*The dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be established by the methods of bourgeois democracy. The proletariat must create its own apparatus, the council system, that is currently the most powerful weapon in the hands of the masses*". But the same writers continued: "*The civil war is being pushed upon the working classes by their mortal enemies. The workers must react tit for tat. It is therefore necessary to disarm the bourgeoisie and to arm the proletariat*". We already talked about the consequences of these contradictory principles and methods and determined that because of this a federation of sovjet republics -as was originally intended by the Russian revolution- no longer exists under the stalinist regime.
At the time England, France and other democratic states intervened in Russia against the revolution. At the moment we see how the fascist states Italy, Germany and Portugal intervene in Spain. Franco, a professional military man with his Foreign Legion, colonial troops and a motorized, mechanized army, for the large part made up of specially trained Italian and German soldiers, marched against the spanish population. The revolutionary masses, once they had decided to defend themselves with violence against their usurpers, saw themselves forced to apply the same methods of struggle as their opponents. The militarist spirit arose in the army and spread steadily into civil life. Durutti, the murdered anarchist-general who experienced only the first period of this cruel class war, was immediately aware of this danger. When he was once asked whether the acceptance of the war in the service of the class war meant the militarization of not just the army but the civil society as well, he openly admitted that this danger was indeed real and that it was even the reason to try to win the class war as soon as possible. In the same spirit, one of the most reliable Spanish anarchists, D. A. Santillán -who was first in charge of the organisation of the volunteer militia and later worked in the ministry of economic affairs- often warned the revolutionaries against the symptoms of militarism, statism and bureaucracy, that were the inevitable consequences of the war methods.
As we know, in the beginning of the spanish civil war the anarchists and syndicalists were in the lead. In the army they excelled by their heroism, in social life by their dedication and creative capability. But even then they were a minority among the fighters against Franco. So they felt compelled to form a coalition with the catholic-nationalist Basques, the spanish democrats who were only interested in maintaining the political **status quo**, and with the socialists and stalinists who didn't want to hear about immediate social revolution. Especially the supporters of the 3rd International stated that the moment for a revolution in Spain had not yet come: now that the war had started, it was important to win it before all else, and the problem of the social revolution could only be faced later.
But three organisations – the CNT, the FAI and the POUM- didn't share those ideas. They were convinced that the class war only made sense as part of the social revolution, and that it was useless to try to win from Franco only militarily while the current political-economic system was maintained. They thought that the result of an eventual victory over Franco and his fascists would -by itself- only reinforce the bourgeois government and the militarism that had resurfaced in unloyal [republican] circles, and that a military victory without social revolution at the same time would inevitably reinforce the fascist tendencies in the democratic republic itself.
History has shown that the Spanish libertarian movement has slowly but surely become the victim of the class war that they wanted to wage in the service of the social revolution. In their struggle

against Franco and the foreign loyalist forces that helped him militarily, the republican forces were forced, when push came to shove, to replace the free militia with military conscription, and to increasingly make the social organisation subservient to the demands of the modernized army. The latter came under autocratic command in the end and became completely dependend on the last -bourgeois-socialist-stalinist-, government in Valencia. As on top of this the Spanish fascists, helped by Germany, Italy and Portugal, disposed of modern war materials, the Spanish republicans were forced to ask the completely militarized Sovjet Russia for ever more modern war materials and military-technical advice for the defense of their freedom. With this in mind even the anarchists and syndicalists were obliged to let Soviet Russia off the hook more and more, while it forced the government in Valencia to take an increasingly hostile stance against these true revolutionaries. It led to a short class war within the class war in May 1937: under the command of the anarchist youth and the POUM, a large part of the Catalan population rose up against the militarization, bureaucratization and statism of the new social order and against the growing influence of Moscow. As you know, Moscow now wants fronts of national unity everywhere where stalinists collaborate with bourgeois-socialists and petit-bourgeois nationalists for 'national defense' – a policy that completely fits the goals and wishes of the English and French imperialists on who the government in Valencia depends in many respects. No wonder that the Spanish revolutionary opposition declared that the war -as it is currently waged- has become a threat to the revolution. Even then this labor opposition tried to fight this war in the ways of war, so to speak. And because they are the weaker party both in respect of numbers and of military-technical abilities, they were doomed to lose.

At the same time the CNT and the FAI -who dared not completely cut ties with the government in Valencia in order not to lose the armed struggle against Franco- increasingly abandoned their revolutionary-socialist goals. Indeed a part of the formerly anti-militarist Spanish anarchists were so contaminated by the spirit of war that they openly started making propaganda for a European revolutionay war against international fascism. Fortunately these form as yet a very small minority. But their influence in other countries rather increases, and they try to convince the masses everywhere that an international anti-fascist war is not only possible, but even that it's necessary.

Not long ago one of our German revolutionary comrades wrote me a desperate letter from the Spanish trenches in which he observed: "*Our biggest weakness is that we are still too humane in our means of struggle, Franco burns and murders behind the front, as much as he likes, something the revolutionary socialists just can't possibly do*". A Spanish comrade declared: "*Up until now Franco hasn't used toxic gasses. But if he'd use them on a large scale then we will too, even if Spain and part of France would perish. In any case we keep our poison gasses ready*". This may be true or this may be exagerated, the essential tendency of modern class warfare, that leads to blind competition in destruction with the adversary, is obvioust.

It is clear that the social revolution in Spain is in grave danger because it tries to achieve its humane goal with inhumane means and methods. Not that we would accuse anyone. But we think that it is our duty to speak the truth so that this can be a lesson for the future and helps other peoples to avoid repeating these equally cruel as ineffective practices.

We have already determined that the Spanish revolutionaries probably didn't have a choice to act different than they did. On top of that, their class war **with a minimum of violence** would have ended and since long been won if the international proletariat hadn't abandoned its Spanish comrades so dishonorably. The attitude of the League of Nations as well must be condemned, whose members (with few exceptions) abandonned the Spanish government in violation of their own Pact and placed Franco, a political adventurer, on the same level with the offended Spanish people. Only a powerful, well-organized boycott and non-cooperation movement of the international working masses against Franco would have saved the Spanish revolution and swiftly ended the violent class war.

On our previous Congress in Welwyn, Fenner Brockway remarked correctly that the masses' violent struggle for justice and freedom is only possible when the workers have politically, morally and organisationally prepared for it in every mine, factory and workshop, in the railways and

everywhere, -in order to use the method of the general strike effectively- and if they can convince the armed force of the state to not intervene against the workers. But he didn't assume that the masses in any country had achieved this yet. Historically speaking, intentional or unintentional bloodshed would be inevitable in the struggle against capitalism.
This is right. And still we have reason not to follow our comrade Fenner who, since the outbreak of the Spanish class war, himself as well accepted the modern methods of war as simply inevitable to achieve our social goal. We agree with Fenner when he insists on the necessity of practical solidarity with the revolutionary movement in Iberia. But we are convinced that he is mistaken when he says that the only way to prove this solidarity is by giving up the nonviolent struggle and accepting the class war, and everything that follows from it. In an interview with the correspondent of the socialist 'Travail' in Geneva last July 10, Fenner proudly speaks about his Independent Workers' Party, that organized contingents of volunteers for the Spanish class war in collaboration with the British Communist Party, and practiced some other forms of solidarity that he couldn't name publicly but of which the character was clear, as he remarked.
At the same time Fenner was consistent enough to recognize that his new view on the class struggle implied a new workers' politics for his own country as well. He even declared that his IWP, that continues to reject the armament of any bourgeois government, is ready to vote for those budgets that would procure the necessary funding for the armed defense of the rights of workers and the armed resistance against any attack by foreign, capitalist powers.
I'm sad to see that the IWP of Keir Hardy and Bruce Glasier has taken the same position about this as Lenin's Communist Party. If we abandon our non-violent struggle in any case of class war, the result will be that we will constantly support war in the name of the revolution, while we systematically undermine it by supporting unfit means.
We, warriors against war, think that we have a different task. It is not our fault that the only efficient methods of struggle in favor of the social revolution been barely accepted anywhere up until now. The less they are accepted though, the **more** reason we have to propagate them in word and deed. It's not our fault that the masses everywhere are still largely hypnotized by the traditional bourgeois and pre-bourgeois cult of violence. But we neglect our first duty if we don't maximally fight against this obsolete ideology and point the masses to new methods and means to reach their socialist goal.
Of course we can't suddenly convince the whole world of our principles. It would be a lot if we could limit violence in the class war in some countries to a minimum, maybe even to something incidental. It's very good that this is already more or less possible in certain regions. Last year's **sit-down** strikes in France and the United States are already a good omen in this respect.
We have tried to maintain this attitude with strength. It is by the way morally impossible to do otherwise for a revolutionary socialist. On top of that it is of the utmost importance in a practical respect, that by behaving this way we don't lose the trust of those socialist comrades who -even if they partly use other methods- fight for the same truly humane goals besides us. Practical solidarity is the only basis for a discussion about class war between those anti-militarists and anti-navalists that are at the same time anti-capitalists, anti-imperialists and anti-colonial, and who fight for social renewal.

Bart de Ligt

POSTSCRIPT Bart de Ligt (in 'Le problème de la guerre civile', Pensée et Action, Hem DAY[234], Bruxelles, October 1937)

The theses developed in the foregoing submission have just been confirmed by the declarations of our friend Hem Day at the triennial Conference of the WRI in Copenhagen (July 23-27) and at the Congress against war and militarism in Paris (August 1-5). Hem Day, the daring conscienscious objector -while refusing all participation in whatever national war-, admitted however, like multiple Belgian comrades, that he would participate in a possible revolutionary civil war. They justified this opinion "given the motives and objectives of such war being far superior to those of the national war". In addition these comrades -looking at undeniable data from the past- thought that the disastrous consequences of a civil war would be minute compared to those caused by an international war.

Hem Day, as always having the courage of his ideas, left for Spain to take stock for himself and to participate in the social revolution. Soon he realized that, because of the foreign intervention –a fact that we see as inevitable, as the history of the Russian Revolution has already demonstrated-, the civil war had to degenerate into a real international war with all the disastrous consequences from a material and moral point of view.

Educated by this dreadful lesson our friend Hem Day declared in the name of his Belgian comrades at the Congresses mentioned above, that they too had seen themselves forced to review their position on the revolutionary problem:

Undertaking a revolution (i.e. a sudden regime transformation) or the defense of a state of social revolution or pre-revolution by means of extreme collective violence seems horribly absurd today. Just like war.

The interdependence of states, for better and for worse, as well as the monstrous efficiency of the instruments of destruction, turn the reliance on extreme collective violence catastrophic.

Not just the latter brings the people that use it to their knees, but it also threatens the peace of other peoples.

It's not about eternally condemning the reliance on extreme collective violence. It's possible that relying on it brings a big improvement in the conditions of the social lives without necessarily unleashing great evils. It's also possible that a civil war prevents national war for a people. But we are incapable of foreseeing the reinstalment of the political conditions that would justify, in our view, the reliance on extreme collective violence.

We are just as incapable of determining in advance the nature and importance of the effects of civil war.

So it seems necessary to us not to condemn it, but to make it clear that the risks are too big, and the madness of it, and to advise a different method of struggle to abolish capitalism or to destroy fascism. A collective method of struggle that is so to speak exclusively based on the most comprehensive non-cooperation.

"We insist on reminding and confirming that no power of aggression –domestic or foreign– could resist a collective defense that is well organised and that would take the three following points into consideration: general strike, refusal to pay taxes, refusal of military service." (Patrie Humaine)

Without doubt the collectivities would prove that -today- they are not better able to reject the extreme violence of the social conflicts than that of the national conflicts. But despite the little bit of succes that could be garnered for our propaganda in favor of the method of collective peaceful struggle, we insist on advocating for it - everywhere and always.

"The ideas of the human spirit advance sleeping, they are sometimes so numb that they seem

234 Tr. Note: Hem Day (pseudonym of https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcel_Dieu) was a Belgian anarchist and anti-militarist, was convicted for sending back his military papers ('livret militaire'), together with his close comrad Léo Campion. He published 'Pensée et Action', had a book shop in Brussels. He went to join the Spanish Revolution and was one of BdL's contacts to keep himself informed. What he saw in Spain made him lose all remaining hope and faith in violent revolution.
https://anarchief.org/wiki/Categorie:Dieu,_Marcel_(aka_Hem_Day)

immobile; their strength and vitality are only felt on the road that they have travelled; at last the day comes and they appear: they are recognized, they are victorious." (J.-M. Guyau[235])

Such declarations, based on experience itself, demand first of all the attention of those who – with our French comrade Rene Gérin[236] - still accept "the defensive civil war" as a "just war". After the first months of the class war in Spain, Gérin could maybe write with a certain validity: "although internationalized, this war is still a *civil* war". But since then the *international* character of this war has become stronger and stronger to the detriment of the social and revolutionary struggle. *In abstracto* "the defensive civil war is a just war". *In concreto* – for the reasons explained above – it is damned to morph into a purely modern war that goes hand in hand with a suffocating state-formation, the totalitarian State being – we can't repeat it enough – the unavoidable result of the total war just as the total war is the unavoidable result of the totalitarian State. Simone Weil was right when she wrote in '*La critique sociale*' of November 1933: "The revolutionary war is the tomb of the revolution".

So what should be done? For the moment, our Belgian comrades refuse (and rightly so) to demand of the Spanish revolutionaries that they suddenly drop their guns. From a psychological and practical point of view such a demand would even be a meaningless gesture. On the other hand –as I have demonstrated at the Paris congress– a mediation between the war parties can never result in a real solution from the revolutionary point of view. In a civil war, once it has broken out, neither effective resolution nor mediation are possible. Continuing their propaganda for the boycott and the international non-cooperation against Franco and his allies in order to save what can still be saved in Spain, the anti-fascists of the world have as their first duty to fight against the fascist mentality and activity each in their own country, not just in their governments, but also in workers' circles and in political parties – especially in the Third International that is killing the embryo of any possible true revolution in Iberia and elsewhere. Most of all we need to demonstrate by word and action that we have other methods of struggle at our disposal for the defense of the human individuality and to fight for social justice – methods that are more effective and more humane than war. By the way that is the general sense of the resolutions of the Congress against war and militarism in Paris (R.I.G.M.)[237].

Bart de Ligt

235 Tr. N.: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Marie_Guyau

236 See R. Gérin, 'Pacifisme intégral et guerre civile'; L. I. C. P. 30, rue Joubert, Paris IX

237 Tr. Note: 'Rassemblement International contre la Guerre et le Militarisme'. Congress 1-5 August, 1937 in Paris. French: Contre la Guerre et le Militarisme. Compte rendu du Congrés du Rassemblement International Contre la Guerre et le Militarisme tenu á Paris, les 2, 3 et 4 août 1937 dans la salle des sociétés svantes. Ed. Groupement Pacifiste International (Hg.). Dutch: https://anarchief.org/w/images/b/b4/RIGM%2C_Internationale_aaneensluiting_tegen_oorlog_en_militarisme_-_Verslag_Internationaal_Congres_Parijs_%281937.pdf

Published by Paris., 1938

3. Bart de Ligt - THE CONQUEST OF VIOLENCE (250p)

Transl. HONOR TRACY from the French text revised and enlarged by the author

4. From anti-militarism of the deed to social defence (Bibliographic essay).

Bart de Ligt's 'Battle Plan' and 'Conquest of Violence weren't invented out of thin air. With many of his comrades (Clara Wichmann, Arthur Lehning, Albert de Jong, Catharina Lydia van Rossem, Pierre Ramus to mention just a few) he built on the old legacy of the anarchist tradition ranging from individualists like Proudhon to Tolstoy and from Domela Nieuwenhuis to Bakunin in the IWA-AIT.

a. Early antimilitarism of the deed.

Seeing the limitations of 'violent' strategies and tactics they all searched for effective and efficient additions to the toolbox. Syndicalism is an obvious one, even if early anarchists had reservations about strikes as means of actions. First of all because of the often materialist and reformist goals of many strikes. Second because they believed that capitalists could easily outlast strikers' endurance: strikers who weren't paid went hungry.

One of the objections against strikes was that they could lead to violent confrontation – a confrontation that would systematically be won by the capitalists except for some incremental improvements to the system of exploitation. While history has proven some of these objections right, and others exagerated or resolvable, the urge to minimize violence has always been part of the anarchist movement even if almost none of the old anarchists rejected people who made other choices (or, more often, saw no other options).

They advocated for alternatives like appropriation and setting up parallel systems (cooperatives for example) to raise the potential for lasting struggle, giving workers a possibility to build experience in socialized 'ownership' and 'building the new world within the shell of the old one'. Proudhon's 'People's Bank' is a good example; today LETS groups, permaculture, homesteading, dumpster diving, Food Not Bombs and communal kitchens, productive and consumption coops, etc etc could be examples.

From Thoreau's[238] antimilitarism in 'Civil Disobiendience', de la Boétie's[239] 'Discourse on Voluntary Servitude – or the Anti-Dictator' and Proudhon's 'War and Peace'[240] to the Proudhonist initiative for the 1864 'First' International, the rejection of militarism has always been a very clear and integral part of anarchism. Not just of the militarism of the status quo, but 'revolutionary' militarism as well, were rejected for a number of reasons, ranging from inherent centralism and dependence on the producers and merchants of weaponry to the relation between means and ends.

> *"Proudhon's exposure to militant workers' societies may also have helped him develop a more consistent concept of revolutionary change. Instead of relying on the state as the initiator of social reform, Proudhon could look to the workers' associations. 'The new socialist movement,' he wrote, 'will begin with a fact sui generis, the war of the workshop."*
> (Proudhon, quoted in Woodcock, 'Proudhon' p 75)

Despite his militant rhetoric, Proudhon conceived of the revolution in pacific terms:

238 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_Disobedience_(Thoreau)
239 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%89tienne_de_La_Bo%C3%A9tie
240 https://www.libertarian-labyrinth.org/working-translations/proudhon-on-force-and-rights/ , https://www.libertarian-labyrinth.org/contrun/war-whats-it-good-for/ , https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/robert-graham-the-general-idea-of-proudhon-s-revolution

"The Workers, organized among themselves, without the assistance of the capitalist, and marching by Work to the conquest of the world, will at no time need a brusque uprising, but will become all, by invading all, through the force of principle."
(Proudhon in 'General Idea of the Revolution)

"In 1861 Proudhon published La Guerre et la Paix (War and Peace), a book which generated considerable controversy. In the first half of the book Proudhon extolled the heroic virtues of war, only to condemn war in the second half as barbaric and antediluvian. He argued that the cause of war is poverty. Peace will be achieved through the organization of economic forces by the workers themselves."
(Robert Graham, The General Idea of Proudhon's Revolution
See also Bart's introduction to Jeanne Duprat's 'About War and Peace in the Spirit of Proudhon' in this book. And of course Jeanne Duprat's work itself[241]. Also Dr. Ludwig Oppenheimer titled 'The mental principles of Anarchism' (in part III of *Die Dioskuren. Jahrbuch für Geisteswissenschaften*, München, Meyer & Jessen, 1924)[242])

Bart de Ligt's 'Battle Plan' was just one single example of this long tradition. It was also aimed at a broader public than his own anarchist comrades. Much of is politics and analysis is implied, in order to allow as many people as possible to use it. I've tried to give more context, in order to bring back an understanding of anarchism, that was much better known at the time – everybody in the W.R.I. knew Bart and his anarchist convictions, even if the W.R.I. was (and is) by no means an anarchist organization.

This anarchist antimilitarism is in stark contrast to the nationalism and the war-enthousiasm that Marx and his gang displayed, for example in the Franco-Prussian war that was the direct lead-up to the Paris Commune. Marx & Co. were staunch enthousiasts of Prussia's war and victory, that they perceived as a victory of their own centralism over the 'French' federalism of Proudhon. Both bolsheviks and 'social'-'democrats' have consistently defended militarism – at best, they decried 'capitalist wars' to cover up their own imperialism. After all, State and Capitalism always lead to war – and the ideological or mythical rationale makes little difference - as one could expect 'dialectical' and 'historical materialists' to know all too well. So they were subject to the exact same 'logic' as their 'enemies'. A few quotes here, as Bart has tried to forge common ground with Marxians by using a revisionist version of Marx:

"In analysing capitalism, Karl Marx dealt little with issues of international relations and militarism – Friedrich Engels was in charge of these questions. But war has never been integrated in the Marxist diagram. However, Marx and Engels' writings contain essential remarks on international conflicts conceived as a consequence of the class war, on militarism's role in industrial development and on trade wars replacing armed conflicts."
(Fanny Coulomb & Renaud Bellais)

"Is it a misfortune that the wonderful California was wrested from the lazy Mexicans, who did not know what to do with it?... All impotent nations must, in the final analysis, be grateful to those who, obeying historical necessities, attach them to a great empire, thus allowing them participation in a

241 Originally in French as "La Conception proudhonienne des Facteurs économiques de la Guerre et de la Paix', 1928. See also her work 'Proudhon, sociologue et moraliste'
242 https://archive.org/details/diedioskurenjahr3192unse

historical development which would otherwise be unknown to them. It is self-evident that such a result could not be obtained without crushing some sweet little flowers. Without violence, nothing can be accomplished in history... "
(Marx & Engels, quoted in Were Marx and Engels White Racists: The Prolet-Aryan Outlook of Marxism by Carlos Moore (1974), originally an article for the February 15 1849 copy of Neue Rheinische Zeitung)

"The French need a thrashing. If the Prussians win, the centralization of state power will be useful for the centralization of the German working class. German predominance would also transfer the center of gravity of the workers' movement in Western Europe from France to Germany, and one has only to compare the movement in the two countries from 1866 until now to see that the German working class is superior to the French both theoretically and organizationally. Their predominance over the French on the world stage would also mean the predominance of our theory over Proudhon's, etc."
(Marx to Engels, London, 20 July 1870)

"There existed no war between Prussia and the Commune of Paris."
(Karl Marx, The fall of Paris, in which Marx posits that the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71) was not a war between Prussian forces and the working class of France. He states that the socialist group the Paris Commune had agreed to a peace treaty between France and Germany. However, the treaty had not been accepted by the French Emperor Napoléon III (1808–73) and the bourgeoisie filled French parliament. Marx asserts that the French working class was tricked by the French government to fight a war between the rulers of countries and not a war between the people of those countries.)

The anarchists had always relied on guerilla and uprisings instead (and on syndicalism, strikes, etc): the Paris Commune, the Russian Revolution, the 'Makhnovist' campaigns against the white armies (which they held off, only to be attacked from behind by the 'Red' Army, and butchered just like the Kronstadt sailors), Manchuria[243], the early stages of the Chinese Revolution[244] with its rural uprisings, etc.

"*War and Standing Armies.*

Considering that our social institution as well as the centralisation of political power, are a permanent cause of war, which can only be removed by a thorough social reform ; that the people even now can diminish the number of wars by opposing those who declare and make war; that this concerns above all the working classes, who have almost exclusively to shed their blood ; that to do this there is a practical and legal means which can be immediately acted upon ; that as the body politic could not go on for any length of time without labour, it would suffice for the working men to strike work to render war impossible ; the International Working Men's Congress recommends to all the sections, and to the members of working men's societies in particular and to the working classes in general, to cease work in case a war be declared in their country. The Congress counts upon the spirit of solidarity which animates the working men of all countries, and entertains a hope that means

243 https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/francesco-dalessandro-the-forgotten-anarchist-commune-in-manchuria , https://zabalaza.net/2014/01/22/the-story-of-the-korean-anarchists-and-the-anarchist-revolution-in-manchuria-1929-1931/ ,

244 https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/arif-dirlik-anarchism-in-the-chinese-revolution

would not be wanting in such an emergency to support the people against their government."

(Resolution on War and Standing Armies of the 1864 International at the Brussels Congress of 1868)

Or, as Lehning summarized it:

"Marxism, as the theory and movement of conquest of state power by the proletariat in order to use that state to implement socialism, has always been an impediment to consistent war against war. Marxism, that has systematically infused the labour movement with the poison of state worship -and therefore of nationalism- currently threatens to lead the proletariat towards a new demise – one that is the suicide of socialism and civilization. Since the labour movement has exchanged the economic struggle for the political, and since the economic organisation like the one that had formed in the First International has been exchanged with the political party whose goal is always the conquest of state power, the labour movement couldn't wage a consistent war against war any longer.

Because those who wants the state must want the national state; and with the national state come nationalism and militarism and war."

(De Wapens Neder, Christmas 1930)

b. Confusion in the ranks.

Kropotkin and the 'Manifesto of 16'.

Even so, there seem to be exceptions or moments of confusion. Kropotkin and the 'Manifesto of the Sixteen' sparked fierce debates: Kropotkin and 'the Sixteen' saw that the international general strike that should be the response of the international working class to the First World War didn't materialize (largely because the 'social'-'democracy' –which at the time included what would later become the bolsheviks, a Robespierre-like version of it- had broken the antimilitarists spirit of the workers and had enthousiastically joined the war efforts on all sides of the conflict). Given that fact they fell into 'lesser evilism' and 'real-Politik' and decided to call the working class to rally against the imperialist war of the Prussians. The anarchists had protested against the earlier Franco-Prussian War, but without choosing sides in the conflict. Other anarchists like Malatesta reacted full of scorn and talked about anarchists who had 'forgotten their principles'. The confusion that followed the disappointment of the failure of the international general strike, gave the anarchist movement a severe blow. Shortly after followed by droves of anarchists who turned their coats and decided to support the bolshevik coup d'état and their militarization of labour and the rest of society, and who quickly reinstated the old officers in their own 'Red' Army.

Revolutionary Spain.

A second distinct moment of confusion is the Spanish Revolution that was turned into a Civil War: the CNT-AIT decided to put the Revolution on hold and to make a front with bourgeois, liberal, 'social'-'democratic' and bolshevik parties. While the anarchists among the working class had largely saved the republic from being overrun by the fascists. Seizing the opportunity the workers started

the revolution – the only war worth fighting: collectivization, brigades, the Columns, etc. But the leadership would have none of it: it accepted the ceasing of the revolution 'for now' and the militarization of the Columns. There was method to the madness of course: once the defence of the Republic was pushed as the goal of the War, the Republic enforced its own methods and 'logic': the 'logic' of militarization, hierarchy, discipline, terror, 'collateral damage' by the bombers, etc etc. The confusion of the workers contributed to the failure to stop fascism: if they didn't fight for themselves then who were they fighting for? Within (as well as outside of) the IWA-AIT, there was fierce criticism and debate on the subject. The open letter of 'An Incontrolado in the Iron Column', published in installments on 12, 13, 15, 16 and 17 March 1937 in '*Nosotros*'[245], was just one example of criticism within the revolution and the ranks of the CNT[246] But the CNT wanted to accept none of it. And because the anarchist movement in the rest of the world had become too weak to help much, there wasn't much of an alternative than to accept the CNT-AIT 'logic', so clearly demonstrated in Federica Montseny's 'Militant Anarchism and the Reality in Spain' for example[247].

Vernon Richards re-summarized the anarchist case against militarism:

> *"But from the anarchist point of view there are two vital objections to militarization:*
>
> *1. that it would result in the deformation of the armed struggle which began with a socio-revolutionary character to a national war the outcome of which would matter only to the ruling class;*
>
> 2. *that militarization implies centralisation of power, the mobilisation and conscription of a whole people, and is the negation of individual freedom. We shall discuss these questions in greater detail in our final chapter.*"[248]

While the 'urban guerilla's', 'expropriators' and 'maquisards' went underground and chose other methods than syndicalism, they largely adopted the same strategy as the CNT: postpone the revolution and defend 'the Republic'. The Sabaté brothers[249] are a good example. They were part of the anarchist Columns -first the 'Young Eagles', later the 'Durruti Column' that crossed the French border with the defeat of the Republican forces- Francisco 'El Quico'[250] joined the French resistance after their emprisonment in the concentration camp in Vernet. The tank unit of a 120 or so anarchists in General Leclerc's 9th Company ('La Nueve') were the first allied soldiers to enter Paris and drive to the Hôtel de Ville.[251] 'El Quico' fought a guerilla war until he was murdered in 1960. And his comrades continued the struggle for decades after, influencing much of what would later become largely Maoist Leninist 'urban guerilla' movements in Europe and the America's.

So let it be said that Kropotkin and the Manifesto wasn't the only moment of confusion in the anarchist ranks – a confusion that is too easily weaponized in recent tensions between factions that

245 "Originally written in Spanish by an "Uncontrollable" in the Iron Column, this text was published anonymously by *Nosotros,* an anarchist daily newspaper in Valencia, in installments on 12, 13, 15, 16 and 17 March 1937. It was translated into French by "two aficionados without qualities," that is to say, by Alice Becker-Ho and Guy Debord, who wrote a brief preface to it. The French translation was published by Editions Gerard Lebovici in December 1979 and reprinted by Editions Ivrea in November 1995. There was an English translation published by News From Everywhere in 1987 and then reprinted by the London Anarchist Black Cross in 1993. It was not consulted during the creation of this version, which was translated from the French, with recourse to the Spanish original when necessary, by NOT BORED! 18 June 2007. All footnotes by NOT BORED!" (from the notbored website: https://notbored.org/incontrolado.html

246 https://notbored.org/incontrolado.html

247 https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/federica-montseny-militant-anarchism-and-the-reality-in-spain

248 Richards, 'Lessons from the Spanish Revolution', Freedom Press, 1983, p162; https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/vernon-richards-lessons-of-the-spanish-revolution

249 https://libcom.org/article/anarchists-who-liberated-paris-and-why-they-did-it-robert-p-helms , https://libcom.org/article/anarchists-who-liberated-paris-and-why-they-did-it-robert-p-helms

250 https://libcom.org/article/anarchists-who-liberated-paris-and-why-they-did-it-robert-p-helms

251 https://libcom.org/article/anarchists-who-liberated-paris-and-why-they-did-it-robert-p-helms

have largely centered on difference of tactics.

The same can be said about the Paris Commune, the Russian Revolution and other instances where the defence of the revolution was closely linked to the problem of militarism – too often anarchists have done a lot of the work, but once the militarization of the revolution started we lost and became sidelined (if not persecuted)

And much the same confusion seems to paralyze the movement in the face of the conflicts in Ukraine for example, where comrades seem to find themselves in a similar position.

Some of the questions that we need to answer:

- how do we relate to the defense of the status quo of State and Capitalism?
- how do we approach 'lesser evilism'?
- Are these answers universal and therefore fundamental to our theory? Or conditional and contextual (and if so: on what conditions and under what circumstances do we deviate?)
- Towards which goals? What about means and ends? Ends and means?
    - Do we define ourselves on single issues? Single tactics?
    - Is organization required? If so: which? (and uniformly or pluriformly?), how much?, why/to what purposes and ends?
    - How do we evaluate whether we reach our goals using the means we use? How do we evaluate the best means towards the best ends?
    - What about solidarity and freedom? How do we converge our strengths, complete our flaws, correct our mistakes, avoid sabotaging ourselves and eachother, etc?

      \+ = PRAGMATISM NOT DOGMATISM + PRINCIPLES NOT CLIQUES
    - Defence of the revolution: how?

      > An interesting debate on this subject was the one between Huart & Besnard versus de Jong & Lehning in the IWA-AIT[252] that also spilled over to the IAMV and the periodicals of the time. The latter had prepared a discussion text for the 1928 Liège Congress that never got discussed. At the IAMV Den Haag Congress that same year, Lehning held a speech on 'Effective War Prevention'. Later he later wrote 'Anti-militarism and the defence of the revolution' for the Press Service of the IAK. In 1931 Lehning and de Jong wrote an article about 'The social revolution and the antimilitarist tactic'. In May of the same year de Jong wrote a referate for the IWA-AIT Congress on 'War, revolution and the tactic of syndicalism'. In August Lehning and de Jong wrote 'Should we create a red army? Our answer to Huart'.
      >
      > Huart had replied to 'The social revolution and the anti-militarist tactic' in 'La Voix Libertaire (21 March 1931). The 1932 Congress of the 'NSV' [Dutch Syndicalist League] put the discussion on its agenda.
      >
      > In 1930, Pierre Besnard had published [The workers syndicates and the social revolution'], largely taking the same position as Huart.[253]

252 http://www.free.de/schwarze-katze/texte/a31.html

253 *(I hope to return to the subject in parts III and IV of the 'War or Revolution' series and on www.antimilitarism.org)*
For more on the Dutch discussions see also 'De Syndicalist', 'Bevrijding', 'De Wapens Neder', etc.
For more in the French press:

c. After WW2.

What was left of the anarchist movement largely fell apart after the failed Spanish Revolution and WW2. Many of our ideas sunk into oblivion, at least in Europe and shortly after in places like Cuba as well (butchered by Marxists instead of fascists this time -yet again), where part of the escaped Spanish anarchists had fled to, where they immediately started to lay the syndicalist foundations of the Cuban Revolution[254].

The lessons of the Spanish Revolution were largely not learned – mainly because the debate about how the defeat could have been prevented never really took place: during the Civil War, the solidarity was so important that criticism was largely reserved for 'back-room' conversations. After the War, many people had fled, were in hiding, in jail, dead, or continued to accept any criticism. Then came WW2 and its horrors – hardly a time for analysis and soul-searching.

People like Albert de Jong and his son Rudolf de Jong, Alexander Schapiro, etc formulated analysis and diagnosis. André Prudhommeaux protested against CNT claims that 'there had never been any criticism from the IWA-AIT by publishing part of the minutes of the 'Extra-ordinary Congress' in Paris (1937) where at least the delegates from Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Sweden had formulated clear criticisms. Bart de Ligt had died before the end of the Civil War. In Belgium the

La voix libertaire #**67 (Huart** biographie: www.militants-anarchistes.info/spip.phparticle2718 , www.maitron.fr/spip.php?article155278 **)**, **101/102/103 (A Müller Lehning and A. de Jong)**, **108 (Huart)**, 116 (Faure), 119 (Besnard & Rocker), 123 (Faure) 127 (Madeleine Vernet), 128 (Huart), 129 (Faure, Besnard), 131 (Faure), (135 (Groupe @ Cannes-Nice-Antibes), 136 (Faure), 138 (Huart), 139 (Faure, Faure), 140 (Jean Marestan), 141 (Faure), 146 (Trencoserp), 151 (Huart), **178 (? 'Pour le sécretaire du B.IA., Albert de Jong)**, 214 (Huart), 282 (**Hem Day: Pacifisme et révolution**), 283 (**Hem Day: De l'antimilitarisme à l'anarchisme**)

Combat Syndicaliste – CGTSR (1926-1939) #236 (26/11/'37) (?, Réflexions sur la violence (www.archivesautonomies.org/spip.php?article5173)

L'Espagne Nouvelle 1937-1939 (www.archivesautonomies.org/spip.php?article46567: #3 (Prudhommeaux éditorial; ? La FAI parle, ? La CNT parle I, II, III), 5 (Berneri p 5-9, I: traduction 'Spain and the world'; ?, **p9-11 trad du tract 'Aux soldats allemands'**), 14-15 (L'ordre nouveau #26 **Défense du principe de la population armée défendant son sol**), 26-27 (José Cabana: **Une voix de la tranchée. Défense de la guerre comme condition de la révolution**), 46-47 (?, p4 + #44-45: Le pacte d'unité UGT-CNT, une modèle de caporalisation des travailleurs; **R.L.: Tribune libre: le crédit gratuit' Banque syndicale selon Proudhon**), 48-49 (A. **Souchy p4: 'Trois révolutions' défense du plénum économique + de la création d'une banque syndicale et des idées de Proudhon**), 58-59 (**A. P. p4: Guerre politique et défense de la liberté; ? P4 Pour une solution révolutionnaire en Espagne**), 62 (Ce qui est l'ARME; **polémique entre Prudhommeaux et Lapeyre sur supplément pour #63**) + **supplément 63** (Congrès extraordinaire de l'AIT, Discussion sur le rapport de la CNT + Rapport de la CNT), 63 (**Un Sans-patrie: 'Pour en sortir, chercher une 3ième voie entre pacifisme aligné sur les réactionnaires ét anti-fascisme national pro guèrre**; ?: '**Précisions en précisions, suite de la polémique Prudh-Lapeyre sur supplément #63**), 67-69 (Hem Day: un billet du Comité international de défense anarchiste (BXL)

Solidarité internationale antifasciste (10/11/'38-24/8/'39) archivesautonomies.org/spip.phparticle5340 comme encart dans Le Libertaire archivesautonomies.org/spip.phparticle5339

Le réveil 1936-1940 (www.archivesautonomies.org/spip.phparticle2850): #941 (?, La guerre et les pacifistes), 945 (L. B.: Les pacifistes et la guerre), 947 (?: La guerre et les anarchistes), 951 (M. C.: Causes des guerres; E. Leverday: L'impossibilité pacifisme bourgeois), 953 (Domela Nieuwehuis: La guerre et le socialisme, republished from 'Le socialisme en danger' 1897), 954 (L. B.: Autour du pacifisme), 961 (L. Bertoni: Guerre et révolution; L. B.: Violence et anarchie), 965 (L. Bertoni: Franche canaillerie et piteuse hypocrisie; L. Bertoni: Ce que veut la situation), 967 (L. Bertoni: Guerre et Révolution indissolubles), 969 (?: La Belgique va-t-elle vers le fascisme?), 970 (L. Bertoni: Congrès anarchiste international, L. Bertoni: Guerre et anarchisme), 974 (R.: Où sont les provocateurs et les incontrôlables?), 976 (R.: La guerre: éternel instrument du capitalisme, ?: Rapport sur le 5e objet à l'ordre du jour du congrès International anarchiste)

254 https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/frank-fernandez-cuban-anarchism-the-history-of-a-movement , https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/sam-dolgoff-the-cuban-revolution

important anarchist Marcel Dieu (aka Hem Day) had traveled to Spain to support the troops but returned a resolute believer that a violent revolution could only lead to militarism and defeat. And many others with him.

Later, people like Murray Bookchin ('To remember Spain'), Sam Dolgoff (https://libcom.org/article/controversy-anarchists-spanish-revolution-sam-dolgoff), Stuart Christie ('Building Utopia', 'We, the anarchists!'), José Peirats ('The CNT in the Spanish Revolution') Albert Meltzer ('The Faces of Spanish Anarchism' (ed) p98 a.f. Ch. 'The Debate on Spanish Anarchism Today'), Camillo Berneri[255] (especiall his daughters Marie Louise and Giliana) and others added to the analysis, Vernon Richards (Lessons of the Spanish Revolution -1983-, Chapter16: 'From the militias to the militarization'), José Peirats (https://libcom.org/search?search_api_fulltext=jos%C3%A9+peirats), Garcia Oliver (https://libcom.org/search?search_api_fulltext=garcia+oliver), Abel Paz (https://libcom.org/article/interview-abel-paz-miguel-riera-el-viejo-topo-2001 for example).

In the Netherlands, where the movement had all but disintegrated by that time, Albert de Jong (°1891-†1970) continued to analyse the events of revolutionary Spain in periodicals[256] and looking for ways to revive the movement. In 1921 he had written ['The practice of antimilitarism']'[257], in 1929 [25 years of war against war, 1904-1929']'[258] and in 1933 [War against Hitler's Germany?]'[259] In 1937 he wrote "The Spanish Problem' in 9 installments in 'De Syndicalist'[260]. In 1954 het wrote [The revolutionary antimilitarism in the Netherlands] that is translated in this volume.

His son Rudolf de Jong published [60 years Spanish Revolution 1936-1996] in collaboration with Hanneke Willemse, who also wrote her dissertation [Shared Past – Memories of anarcho-syndicalists about Albalate de Cinca, 1928-1938, 356 pages] in 1996[261] and [The incomplete revolution – Civil war in a Spanish village] in 1986.

Elly Kloosterman wrote an analysis on [The Dutch anarchists and the Spanish Civil War. How the Dutch anarchist movement fell apart.][262]

This is not the place and time for a full exegesis of the Spanish Revolution[263]. Suffice to say that there was a lot of confusion and debate on the subject of militarization flowing from the strategy of

255 https://libcom.org/article/camillo-berneri-decolonization-and-spanish-revolution-jeff-shantz for example, where Jeff Shantz examines Camillo's perspectives on anti-colonialism in the context of the Spanish Revolution. “His ecperiences in Spain cemented in Berneri's mind the fundamental, inextricable connection between imperialism and colonialism and the revolution. This conclusion made him especially critical of the Republican indifference, even spiritlessness, regarding Moroccan independence, and the failure of anarchists to confront it.” Bart de Ligt had (with his comrades) made that connection long before, and his strategy and agitation on this point as well should have been taken more seriously.
Shantz has also written about the anarchist opposition to belgian colonialism and the 'social'-'democratic' leadership of the day: https://libcom.org/article/victor-serges-anarchist-opposition-belgian-colonialism-congo-jeff-shantz which demonstrates that this theme had long before Berneri been a subject in the 'Low Countries'. Serge published 'Apropos of the Congo' in Gassy Marin's periodical 'Le Communiste' (May Day, 1908). - (Although Serge's qualification as an anarchist is debatable given his many links to (proto-)bolshevism.)

256 'Socialisme van onderop!' from 1946 onwards, 'Buiten de Perken' be'tween 1960 and 1965

257'De praktijk van het antimilitarisme', Den Haag.

258'25 jaar oorlog aan den oorlog, 1904-1929'

259'Oorlog tegen het Duitsland van Hitler?', Amsterdam.

260There were more debates in the Dutch periodicals 'Bevrijding' [Liberation], 'De Wapens Neder' [Down the Weapons], etc

261Amsterdamse Historische Reeks, Kleine Serie, Deel 31, Amsterdam.

262https://anarchief.org/wiki/Kloosterman,_Elly_-_De_Nederlandse_anarchisten_en_de_Spaanse_Burgeroorlog._Hoe_de_Nederlandse_anarchistische_beweging_uit_elkaar_viel.

263I hope to follow up this 'War or Revolution' series with an anthology of anarchist antimilitarism (volume 3) and a case study (volume 4) of the discussions on 'Spain' in this context in and around the anarchist press of the time (focussed on the French, Dutch and Belgian periodicals).

'unity' in defence of the bourgeois Republic and the 'suspension' of the Revolution. 'Spain 36-39' has become more of a mythical event, largely obscured by the fogs of time, and sometimes seen as 'a bore' or dismissed offhand as 'reformist syndicalism'. The IWA-AIT has still not recovered, and it is my suspicion that the conflicts from the days of 'Spain' have never been resolved has greatly contributed to the split of the anarcho-syndicalist International.

It's not that the material for discussions were completely non-existant. Incomplete and sometimes difficult to acces before the internet and the English translations. But that is hardly an excuse.

d. The movement resurfaces.

The years after WW2 leading to the activism of the 60's saw re-emerging radicalism[264]

The movement in Europe fragmented into detached 'single issue' struggles, one of which was the 'peace movement' that re-emerged in Europe (with many others like radical feminism, ecology, democracy, etc). Alex Comfort, active in the Peace Pledge Union, wrote a leaflet 'Civil Defence – what you should do now'[265].

Bookchin came up with his Libertarian Municipalism (not unfamiliar for people who were following the evolution of anarchist antimilitarism to social defence. While Bookchin claimed he rejected syndicalism, he re-applied syndicalism to the political sphere. His municipalism and social defence came together in Occupy, the Indignados, the 'Arab' Spring. But Bookchin also influenced Öcalan, that great figure of the Kurdish struggle: he rejected the old Leninist 'liberation army' strategy of the PKK without giving up the armed struggle. In fact the Kurds adopted their 'democratic confederalism', a mix of anarchist democratic federalism, anarchist 'Column' style armed struggle and an anarchist openness of the territory and ethnic-cultural 'identity'.[266]

Albert de Jong's son Rudolf wrote [The conditions for a radical-pacifism] in 1985[267], mainly a critique of what Bart would probably have called bourgeois pacifism, but with some outlines of principles for what we would call radical pacifism (or pacifist radicalism, or antimilitarism of the deed, etc – this optical inversion may be confusing) in which he quotes Albert's speech [A popular movement against the atomic war][268] (bold by me):

> *Radical-Pacifism, being passive, has no alternative to armament to offer and is therefore*

264 For example: https://freedomnews.org.uk/2017/11/16/a-year-through-anarchist-eyes-1950/

265 In 1950 he wrote an official-looking leaflet (published by the PPU) called Civil Defence — What you should do now, which was the subject of angry questions in the House of Commons because of what the Home Secretary called its "subversive" character. In 1958, at the meeting which launched the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, he declared:
Much has been said about a summit conference. Sanity is always hardest to restore at the summit — the air there is rarified. It seems to affect the brain. We can reassert it at the base. The people must take over.
I do not see the parties giving an answer to the hundreds of people of all persuasions who are asking what they individually can do to reassert the rule of sanity. That is the foundation of the campaign we are launching tonight; to make every individual reassume the normal responsibility for opposing insanity. The issue is one for direct action.
He was one of those original members of the Committee of 100 who were sentenced to a month's imprisonment for organising the Trafalgar Square sit-down, his voice has frequently been heard on the pirate radio station Voice of Nuclear Disarmament, he was arrested for sticking up anti-bomb posters, and is the author of a collection of anti-bomb songs called Are You Sitting Comfortably?
(Source: https://libcom.org/library/anarchism-alex-comfort)

266 This is not an attempt to mythologize the issue. Anarchists know we have to choose our battles and our friends well. See for example https://libcom.org/article/stalinist-caterpillar-libertarian-butterfly-evolving-ideology-pkk-alex-de-jong

267'De voorwaarden voor een radicaal-pacifisme', in 'De Nieuwe Stem', December 1958, Year 13, nr 12. In 2012 he wrote [About the nightmare that is called Marxism], in 'De As' Year 40, nr 180, and many other texts.

268Speech on the 10th aniversary of the [Support Fund for principled and active anti-militarism', November 11, 1956. See 'Recht voor Allen', January 12, 1957 + reactions and replies January 19 – March 30, 1957.

not a political factor of great importance. This might be the case, however, if radical-pacifists moved to an active denialist attitude towards injustice and war preparations. An attitude not based on the dogma of love to and with one's fellow man, but based on the conception of a human dignity and a human equality, for which one is willing to be broken in order not to have to bow down.

An elaborate programme of action for an active pacifism does not belong in this treatise. What does belong here are the requirements it must meet, and these can be gleaned from the foregoing. In summary, ***it must: first, be opportunistic towards violence; non-violence is to be used as a means, not a dogma; second, be prepared and organised; third, be aggressive.***

In a speech, 'A popular movement against nuclear war', non-violent anti-militarist Albert de Jong arrives at some of these demands. He points out the difference between totalitarian and democratic regimes and the need for an alternative to nuclear war and war preparations. He advocates ***civil disobedience, non-cooperation and complete dissolution of the administrative apparatus in case of a Russian occupation and stresses the need to prepare this already now****. He does not necessarily reject individual armament . The demand for aggressive action in peacetime does not appear in this speech. Apart from the speech itself, the almost exclusively dogmatically hostile reactions of non-violent people to it are interesting.*[269]

In Australia the Libertarian Socialist Organisation made the anarchist case against terrorism in their pamphlet 'You can't blow up a social relationship'[270], the anarchist case against terrorism as a tool for revolution.

The question of non/violence in its many manifestations and variations remains largely unsolved, it seems. Although the movement isn't served by magnifying the differences of opinion and by creating chasms where they may not actually be so deep and wide.

Nicolas Walter[271], Brian Martin[272], George Lakey[273], Geoffrey Ostergaard[274], Gabriel Kuhn[275], Gene

269 Van de opvattingen van Sir Stephen King-Hall in diens boek 'Defence in the Nuclear Age' had ik bij het afsluiten van dit artikel (december 1957) nog geen kennis kunnen nemen. (Noot bij de correctie.)1

270 Late 1978 or 1979 in the aftermatch of the Sydney Hilton Bombing. https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/libertarian-socialist-organisation-you-can-t-blow-up-a-social-relationship

271 https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/nicolas-walter-direct-action-and-the-new-pacifism (1962), Disobedience and the New Pacifism | The Anarchist Library (1962)

272 See 'Further Reading'.

273 https://archive.org/details/nonviolent00lake (Nonviolent action: how it works, 1963), 'In place of war: Moving toward a new society', (1965), https://archive.org/details/NnvlntRvoManifesto (Manifesto for nonviolent revolution, 1976), https://www.satyagrahafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/lakey-strategizing-for-a-living-revolution.pdf (2003), etc.

274 https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/geoffrey-ostergaard-resisting-the-nation-state-the-pacifist-and-anarchist-tradition, https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/geoffrey-ostergaard-nonviolent-revolution, https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/geoffrey-ostergaard-the-relevance-of-syndicalism, https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/geoffrey-ostergaard-approaches-to-industrial-democracy

275 https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/gabriel-kuhn-violence-sells-but-who-s-buying, https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/gabriel-kuhn-diversity-of-tactics-and-more,

Sharp[276], Hem Day[277], Gaston Leval[278], Jacques Ellul[279] elaborated on the question.
The (anarcho-marxian hybrid) Provo's, Situationists and autonomists came and went.
As did the Peace Movements (Greenham Common, Netherlands, Vietnam, 'Florennade', etc), of which the Atom Bomb became a big focus, but that were to some extent pawns in the agenda's of the power blocks of the 'Cold' War - at least they were instrumentalized to some extent on the one hand, while they were infiltrated, repressed and sabotaged on the other hand.
The War Resisters' International played its role and survived, as did organizations like GraswürzelRevolution,
The project 'anarchisme et violence'[280] worked on the issue of violence and militarism (in French).

All in all -and this is not an attempt to prove anyone right or wrong- there are too many honest anarchists who have been carving out this path of non-violence or less-violence (or 'as less as possible', which every anarchist could most likely agree on) to dismiss their proposals out of hand.

Even the most violent revolutionary is violent only so much of their time. Even the most violent revolutionary needs a whole lot of non-violent work done by a whole lot of people to achieve the revolutionary goal. So while the use of violence should be evaluated on its (contextual) merits, so should 'non-violence. And it turns out that most of us in large parts of the world today could use those strategies and tactics every day, so they should be taken seriously.

I realize that there is a lot of linguistic confusion between anti-militarism, pacifism, non-violence, anti-violence, etc – I'm not here to add to the pile of linguistics. I chose to present some concrete proposals and reading suggestions.

e. Social Defence.

All this sparked a renewed interest for antimiltarism in academic circles – there is no surprise that the anarchist origins were largely obscured. People like Gene Sharp, Gernot Jochheim, Jeanne Duprat[281], Brian Martin, George Lakey and many others transformed what I call 'the Antimilitarism

276https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/12/30/gene-sharp-obituary-academic-nonviolent-revolution-223555/, https://www.aeinstein.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/How-Nonviolent-Struggle-Works.pdf, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Making_Europe_Unconquerable, https://nonviolence.rutgers.edu/document/IIP0025F01 (198 Methods of Nonviolent Action (1973), etc

277https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcel_Dieu,https://anarchief.org/wiki/Dieu,_Marcel_(aka_Hem_Day)_-_Non-violence_et_action_directe_(Pens%C3%A9e_et_action,_1948), 'L'objection de conscience et la loi en Belgique (1949), https://anarchief.org/wiki/Dieu,_Marcel_(aka_Hem_Day)_-_Anthologie_de_l%27objection_de_conscience_et_de_raison_(%C3%89d_Pens%C3%A9e_et_Action,_Bruxelles,_1951) 'Bible de l'objection de conscience' (1957),https://anarchief.org/wiki/Campion,_L%C3%A9o_et_Day,_Hem_-_Autour_d%27un_proc%C3%A8s,_Comptes_rendus,_plaidoiries,_etc_(%C3%89ditions_Pens%C3%A9e_et_action,_Paris-Bruxelles,_1968) '(1968, with Léo Campion), https://anarchief.org/wiki/Hem_Day_%26_Grelaud,_Lucien_-_Lettre_ouverte_Anarchisme_et_nonviolence_Et_r%C3%A9ponse_(1967), https://anarchief.org/wiki/Hem_Day_-_Violence,_nonviolence,_anarchie_(Anarchisme_et_non-violence_N%C2%B0001,_1965), https://anarchief.org/wiki/Hem_Day,_E._Armand,_W.J._Jong,_J._Hooijberg_-_Domela_Nieuwenhuis;_Bart_De_Ligt_(%C3%89d._Pens%C3%A9e_et_Action,_Bruxelles,_1960), https://libcom.org/search?search_api_fulltext=hem+day, etc

278https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/gaston-leval-libertarian-socialism-a-practical-outline, https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/gaston-leval-collectives-in-the-spanish-revolution,

279https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/jacques-ellul-autopsy-of-revolution

280https://archivesautonomies.org/spip.php?article4887, https://calucha.lautre.net/images/pdf/Anarchisme-violence-non-violence.pdf, https://www.theyliewedie.org/ressources/biblio/fr/Anonyme_-_La_Pensee_Anarchiste_Et_La_Non-Violence.html, https://cras31.info/spip.php?article495, https://www.socialisme-libertaire.fr/2017/05/anarchisme-et-non-violence.html, https://www.socialisme-libertaire.fr/search/non-violence/

281Jeanne Duprat, 'Proudhon: sociologue et moraliste'

of the Deed' into 'Social Defence'.

In a different context the '60 and '70's also saw the right-wing, ultra-'liberal' version of the Austrian (economic) School of von Hayek, von Mises, Rothbard, etc try to replace the anarchists, among other things by calling themselves 'libertarians' and 'anarcho'-capitalists. *"One gratifying aspect of our rise to some prominence is that, for the first time in my memory, we, 'our side,' had captured a crucial word from the enemy. 'Libertarians' had long been simply a polite word for left-wing anarchists, that is for anti-private property anarchists, either of the communist or syndicalist variety. But now we had taken it over."*[282] *(Rothbard)* This illustrates the academic interest in anarchist, libertarian and antimilitarist ideas and practice.

Indeed anyone looking for updates of the theoretical and practical ideas and action should look to sources centered around the label 'Social Defence', sadly largely in academic circles.

It's time to reclaim our legacy and re-radicalize antimilitarism, like 'Anarchists against the Wall', Occupy, Indignados, the 'Arab' Spring, Graswürzelrevolution[283], and many other people, organizations and movements have already started to do (or have kept doing!).

The Zapatistas and Öcalan's 'Democratic confederalism' have prioritized community resistance, avoided militarism -and even violence- as much as possible and have rejected of leninism/maoism.

The resistance in Palestine could never have lasted as long as it has without enormous community resilience in the face of genocide and State terrorism – even if none of those three examples have absolutely rejected violence. The absolute rejection of violence is -no matter how adamantly academics try to pretend otherwise- a requirement for social defence or antimilitarism.

So let's take back what's useful and push back against the reformist or even reactionary elements like Otpor!/[Social-]Democratic Party and the 'Colour Revolutions' – although they are clear proof of the effectiveness of our strategies and tactics, but they will always make the wrong choice between war and revolution.

I've compiled a section of starting points for analysis and discussion in the 'Further Reading' Section.

f. Organize!

The confusion is widespread even if a new world war has already started. The debates are vivid online, and the positions haven't changed much. It's urgent to go back to basics and find commons ground to stand together – or be swept away yet again.
outlines for a strategy:

- *4 axes of anarchist organizing:*
  - ***OFFENSE – DEFENSE – SURVIVAL*** *are three key aspects of any good strategy;*
  - ***MEANS = ENDS***
  - ***AEIOU: Agitate, Educate, Innoculate, Organize, Unite*** *(See IWW, 'Weakening the Dam')*
  - *From* ***Indentity*** *over* ***Intersectionaliy*** *to* ***Revolutionary Solidarity***

282 in 'The Betrayal of the American Right', Mises Institute, 1979, p. 83
Of course Joseph Déjacque, a French anarcho-communist who lived from 1821-1864, was the first person to employ the word "libertarian" to describe oneself in a political sense.
Similarly, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, a French mutualist who lived from 1809-1865, was the first person to employ the word "anarchist" to describe oneself in a political sense. Neither were liberals, corporatists or capitalists.

283 www.grazwurzel.net, since 1973 See its Nr 0: https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/1972/06/nullnummer/ , https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/ueber-uns/geschichte/

- *upgrade syndicalism to 'social defence',*
- *common ground in practice: campaigns about conscience objectors, propaganda against war and its causes- capitalism and the state-;*
- *create platforms for international communication and common campaigns*
- *SWOT: identify Strenghts and Weaknesses + allies and enemies (Opportunities and Threats; network analysis)*
- *finding intersections between 'single issues'*

Let's update our strategies and come together in this time of renewed war fever.

First by understanding the fundamental and systemic causes (to quote Bart one last time here):

> "We have only glanced briefly over our society and we already realize how it's full of *contradictions*.
> 1. We have seen that it's goal is unsound: profit for individuals, adverse to the interests of the collective.
> 2. The products, produced in community, benefit only small groups of individuals.
> 3. If we look more closely it becomes clear that surplus always becomes a source of want. Event though the mass wants to work, the capitalist class will rather leave them hungry if their labour won't yield enough profit for the moment. After all the goal isn't to meet needs, and the means not labour to ability, inclination and nature – but *private profit that justifies all means*. And so it often happens that warehouses and storehouses are filled with clothing and food while starving unemployed pass by in droves. The blessing -surplus- has become a curse that robs the workers of what little they have. Endless needs – but as their satisfaction isn't profitable enough, the principle is not to satisfy them.
> 4. As the living human isn't the measure of the production process, but what can be extracted from that being, it has come to falsifying products on a large scale. "Almost every product, be it cotton, linnen, wool or silk like our ancestors used, is almost unavailable... Even worse almost is the falsifying of food products – including the sugar wares that tempts our children so strongly- with all kinds of chemicals that are often harmful and sometimes even detrimental to our health." (A. R. Wallace) The mass falsifies the necessities and stimulants that it subsequently poisons its own guts, on command of the capitalist class and for the profit of manufacturers who make sure not to consume their own products. Can it be more insane?
> 5. The mass produces all kinds of ugly stuff and deformed articles on command of the capitalist class – so it can buy back afterwards to decorate its houses and embellish its lives.
> 6. The mass has almost no part in the cultural products even if it produces them to a large degree; for which it at least creates the conditions.
> 7. First the mass is exploited on the side of its wage [production]: it deserves more than it earns.
> 8. Then it is again exploited by renting its houses. You know how big the percentage of their wages is that go to rent. To the benefit of the capitalist class.
> 9. And then the mass is again exploited when it buys food products, clothing, etc. There must be a 'margin' for the shop keeper, the wholesale distributor, the manufacturer and the suppliers of the manufacturer... It's endless.
> 10. Add all kinds of taxes – direct or indirect, that weigh much harder on non-capitalists.

11. Because of all this the wealth of the capitalists accumulate within the borders of the different countries – so obfuscatingly called national wealth [or Gross Domestic Product]: each time the wealth of one people, although the large majority has no part in it.
12. To protect a national wealth, that is in fact the wealth of international capitalists, the productive armies of labour must suffer unproductive armies of war.
13. And these armed forces is again a defenceless victim of unarmed elites!...
In short: the people receives the worst of everything, and must pay for that with all its best: its bodies, its property, its blood, its life."
(Bart de Ligt, 'Twee Revoluties' ['Two Revolutions'], May 1917)[284]

In other words the dynamic is always:

1. Internal or localized exploitation and competition, leading to concentration of power over:
   - Soil and raw materials, energy sources, etc
   - Labour (human, animal, machine, etc)
   - Agricultural surface: control over production and distribution of basic necessities
   - Capital (be it land, money, power, identity like royal blood, etc). Etc.

   ==> Search for sales markets (social liberalism and social democracy just as well as feudalism; leaning each on their own ideological justifications)
   ==> increased concentration of power, wealth and other privileges

2. Exploitation and competition externalized when the concentration is too strong and the local production base is unable to survive and produce:
   ==> Search for markets, labour, resources, etc
   ==> colonialism (military, debt, "aid", etc), "trade", national competition and power blocks (empires and alliances), imperialism, etc
   ==> ideological justification (racism, 'christening', 'civilizing', etc
   ==> War and war preparation

3. Militarization, debt, nationalism, need for control over labour ==> fascism

4. End of war for example exhaustion, 'Spanish Flu', refusal of people to fight, etc. Pushing too far is always a risk for revolution, as the Russian Revolution and the Paris Commune demonstrate for example. But what if we could skip the fase of war and have a revolution that is as little bloodthirsty as possible? Bart and the anarchists would ask: "How can we prepare to prevent war except for organizing for revolution?"
   The answer to the second question is: we can't.
   The answer to the first question is: let's try. Starting here and now. With this Battle Plan for example: reading it, spreading it, talking about it, completing it and adapting it to our needs here and now. "Don't wait for the eleventh hour!", as Bart said.

Or, otherwise:

> "*Fascism is the desperate consequence of imperialist capitalism, unless the working mass actively resist. Hopefully it's the last attempt by the bourgeoisie to take back the social development that it risks losing control*

284 In the midst of WW1, Bart held a number of speeches, summarized in this 'Two Revolutions' pamphlet, that led to him being expulsed from the provinces of Gelderland and Overijsel where he was a protestand pastor. The pamphlet was his reply, and he continued his agitation that landed him in jail for example -together with his comrade Albert de Jong- in the agitation about the case of Herman Groenendaal.

over. From a social-psychological perspective, we're dealing with desperado-politics. And that's precisely what explains its unspeakable cruelty.

If capitalism has no choice but to result in fascist methods, socialism should never fall prey to them: it would be corroded in its core. Violence and war, that result from the foreign and domestic imperialist relations, are at odds with social self-liberation, that is the task of the world proletariat. The more violence, the less revolution; even where violence is in theory at the service of the revolution. And the more revolution and social reconstruction, the less destruction and havoc."

Bart de Ligt - The Conquest of Violence (1935)

Don't moan. Organize! Now!

AmoRyRabiA,

J/M-Pépé.

5. Further Reading:

www.antimilitarism.org

Some starting points for further reading. The list tends to focus on non-violent sources because the antimilitarist literature seems to focus on them. That doesn't mean other means are abdicated or condemned per sé – except 'red' and other militarism. The idea that militarism will end war is absurd. Bart de Ligt refused the label 'pacifist' (and rightly so) and so does the translator.

In no particular order:

Anarchism

Randolph Bourne 'War is the health of the State' https://libcom.org/article/war-health-state-randolph-bourne
You can't blow up a social relationship https://azinelibrary.org/approved/u_cant_blow_up_a_social_relationship.pdf
Hourriya – Break ranks. Against war, against peace, for social revolution https://hourriya.noblogs.org/post/2019/05/25/n5-break-ranks-against-war-against-peace-for-socialrevolution/
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/luigi-galleani-against-war-against-peace-for-the-social-revolution ,
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/tiqqun-introduction-to-civil-war#toc71 ,
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/osvaldo-bayer-anarchism-and-violence-severino-di-giovanni-in-argentina-1923-1931
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/benjamin-franks-rebel-alliances#toc51
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/chris-beaumont-defending-an-anarchist-society
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/organizing-armed-defense-in-america#toc22 the role of the militia
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/alexander-atabekian-the-problem-of-a-free-army
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/alfredo-m-bonanno-why-a-vanguard
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/lorenzo-kom-boa-ervin-community-control-of-the-poor-community
Geoffrey Ostergaard 'Resisting the Nation State' https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/geoffrey-ostergaard-resisting-the-nation-state-the-pacifist-and-anarchist-tradition , https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/geoffrey-ostergaard-nonviolent-revolution
Gabriel Kuhn https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/gabriel-kuhn-violence-sells-but-who-s-buying,
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/gabriel-kuhn-diversity-of-tactics-and-more
Gaston Leval https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/gaston-leval-the-path-of-anarchism ,
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/gaston-leval-libertarian-socialism-a-practical-outline
Nicolas Walter https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/nicolas-walter-direct-action-and-the-new-pacifism ,
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/nicholas-walter-disobedience-and-the-new-pacifism
George Lakey, https://wagingnonviolence.org/2012/08/a-diversity-of-tactics-a-paucity-of-participants/ (a rebuttal of Ward Churchill's https://archive.org/details/pacifismaspathol0000chur_i5u9)
Pierre-Joseph Proudhon https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/iain-mckay-pierre-joseph-proudhon-harbinger-of-anarchism#toc4 , https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/pierre-joseph-proudhon-the-general-idea-of-the-revolution-in-the-19th-century
Errico Malatesta https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/errico-malatesta-malatesta-life-and-ideas#toc12 ,
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/errico-malatesta-malatesta-life-and-ideas#toc36
and many many others.
www.anarchismenonviolence2.org
https://onkruitvergaatniet.nl/
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/vagabond-an-investigation-into-red-brown-alliances

Social Defence

C. T. Butler & Amy Rothstein 'On conflict and consensus': https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/c-t-butler-and-amy-rothstein-on-conflict-and-consensus-a-handbook-on-formal-consensus-decisionm
Bart de Ligt: 'The Conquest of violence'
Gene Sharp 198 methods of nonviolent action (5p) https://wri-irg.org/en/resources/2008/gene-sharps-198-methods-nonviolent-action
Brian Martin: https://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/peace.html

- Uprooting War https://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/90uw

- Nonviolence versus capitalism https://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/01nvc,
- Technology for nonviolent struggle https://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/01tnvs,
- Social defence, Social Change https://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/93sdsc,
- Nonviolent security: an alternative to African militaries https://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/24Harris.html
- **How nonviolence is misrepresented https://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/08gm2.html (a short comment on Peter Gelderloos' https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/peter-gelderloos-how-nonviolence-protects-the-state)**

www.wagingnonviolence.org
www.wri-irg.org
www.grazwurzel.net
www.iwa-ait.org
www.soziale-verteidigung.de
Manifesto 1972 by the www.WRI-IRG.org : https://wri-irg.org/en/story/2012/how-start-revolution-power-nonviolence
https://wagingnonviolence.org/2021/01/we-need-to-prepare-for-ongoing-insurrectionary-violence/
https://wri-irg.org/en/story/2012/how-start-revolution-power-nonviolence
https://commonslibrary.org/civil-resistance-tactics-in-the-21st-century/
https://commonslibrary.org/198-methods-of-nonviolent-action/
https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/external-support-for-nonviolent-campaigns/
www.berghof-foundation.org (Véronique Dudouet)
www.guiomarrovira.wordpress.com
www.janataweekly.org/mohandas-gandhi-speaks-to-abdullah-ocalan , www.peaceinkurdistancampaign.com
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/chaz-bufe-listen-anarchist
https://www.warresisters.org/nonviolence
https://www.activistacademy.eu/
https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/wri_handbook_2014_inner_AMENDED.compressed1.pdf
https://wri-irg.org/en/pubs/NonviolenceHandbook
https://www.filmsforaction.org/

SOURCES FOR PERSPECTIVES ON NONVIOLENT REVOLUTIONS TODAY AND TOMORROW; concrete cases.

There are many great sources for updated discussions on any of these examples, for example theanarchistlibrary.org, libcom.org, a-infos.ca, anarchistnews.org, etc. I have focussed here not on the newest updates on these platforms, but on some specific 'other' voices – as I trust that the anarchist community will already have found its way on those platforms. This may misrepresent this list somewhat as it may give the impression of offering answers that I don't actually have. I have tried to accentuate what could be a possible meeting ground between anarchists and antimilitarists. And that's the extent of my ambition here.

Indignados, Arab Spring, Square occupations https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/laura-galian-squares-occupy-movements-and-the-arab-revolutions

OCCUPY:
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/occupy-everything , https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/david-graeber-the-democracy-project , https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/david-graeber-occupy-s-anarchist-roots

CHIAPAS:
https://www.anarchistfederation.net/shengal-womens-units-salute-the-30th-anniversary-of-the-zapatista-uprising/
https://www.anarchistfederation.net/another-world-is-possible-30-years-after-the-zapatista-uprising/
https://www.anarchistfederation.net/ezln-announces-changes-to-autonomous-governing-structures/
https://www.anarchistfederation.net/shengal-womens-units-salute-the-30th-anniversary-of-the-zapatista-uprising/
https://www.anarchistfederation.net/notes-on-the-ezlns-latest-announcement-from-chiapas/ 2023-11-08
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/ejercito-zapatista-de-liberacion-nacional-a-zapatista-response-to-the-ezln-is-not-anarchist

https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/?s=Chiapas
https://wri-irg.org/en/nonviolence/nvsd.shtml#nvsd14-en
https://guiomarrovira.files.wordpress.com/2023/01/civil-resistance-and-conflict-capitulo-rovira.pdf and
https://guiomarrovira.wordpress.com/
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/chris-hedges-war-is-a-force-that-gives-us-meaning

ROJAVA, and SYRIA

https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/a-las-barricadas-interview-with-the-kurdistan-anarchists-forum-kaf-about-the-situation-in-iraq
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/korydallos-anarchist-initiative-on-the-syrian-revolution
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/javier-sethness-castro-an-anti-authoritarian-analysis-of-syria-s-uprising-and-civil-war
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/leila-al-shami-building-alternative-futures-in-the-present-the-case-of-syria-s-communes
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/robin-yassin-kassab-and-leila-al-shami-burning-country
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/leila-al-shami-the-life-and-work-of-anarchist-omar-aziz-and-his-impact-on-self-organization-in
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/omar-aziz-the-formation-of-local-councils
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/budour-hassan-omar-aziz-rest-in-power
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/javier-sethness-castro-omar-aziz-abu-kamel-1949-2013
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/leila-al-shami-building-alternative-futures-in-the-present-the-case-of-syria-s-communes
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/walid-daou-the-experience-of-local-councils-in-the-syrian-revolution
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/omar-aziz-a-discussion-paper-on-local-councils-in-syria
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/javier-sethness-dan-fischer-revolution-in-permanence-in-syria-after-the-uprisings
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/korydallos-anarchist-initiative-on-the-syrian-revolution
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/leila-al-shami-interview-with-apatris-on-the-syrian-revolution
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/leila-al-shami-syria-s-shock-doctrine
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/first-of-may-anarchist-alliance-toward-an-anarchist-policy-on-syria and
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/shiar-response-by-a-syrian-anarchist-to-the-first-of-may-statement-on-syria
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/anonymous-hourriya-revolutionary-echoes-from-syria
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/leila-al-shami-the-anti-imperialism-of-idiots
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/interviewed-by-the-federacion-anarquista-uruguaya-interview-with-tekosina-anarsist-an-armed-col
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/crimethinc-the-threat-to-rojava
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/zaher-baher-the-experiment-of-west-kurdistan-syrian-kurdistan-has-proved-that-people-can-make-c
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/abdullah-ocalan-declaration-on-the-democratic-solution-of-the-kurdish-question

https://janataweekly.org/mohandas-gandhi-speaks-to-abdullah-ocalan/

https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/2015/02/revolution-in-rojava/
https://libcom.org/article/anarchist-federation-statement-rojava-december-2014
https://www.weareplanc.org/blog/a-real-revolution-is-a-mass-of-contradictions-interview-with-our-member-in-rojava/
https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/2015/02/revolution-in-rojava/
https://libcom.org/article/anarchist-federation-statement-rojava-december-2014
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https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/2020/04/rojava-ypg-der-militaerischen-niederlage-ins-auge-blicken/ and
https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/2020/04/rojava-ypg-der-militaerischen-niederlage-ins-auge-blicken-2/
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/alexander-kolokotronis-the-no-state-solution
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/crimethinc-understanding-the-kurdish-resistance
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/rage-against-capital-anarchist-critique-of-the-pkk
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/david-graeber-ocalan-as-thinker

https://www.peaceinkurdistancampaign.com/abdullah-ocalans-beyond-state-power-and-violence-published-in-english/

GAZA/PALESTINE/etc,

https://wri-irg.org/en/nonviolence/nvsd.shtml#nvsd07-en
https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/2014/09/widerstandsutopie-gaza-exodus/
https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/2024/01/wir-muessen-keine-feinde-sein/
https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/2023/10/nicht-nur-ueber-israel-reden/
https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/produkt/barrieren-durchbrechen/
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/uri-gordon-anarchism-in-israel-and-palestine
https://autonomies.org/2023/11/uri-gordon-the-national-question-in-palestine-israel-and-trying-to-read-events-after-october-7/
https://autonomies.org/2023/10/uri-gordon-anarchism-in-israel-and-palestine/
https://berghof-foundation.org/files/publications/dudouet_handbook.pdf: p. 14 Box 3: Palestinian empowerment during the First Intifada; p. 16 Box 4: Impact of the Palestinian intifada on the israeli state and public; p. 17 Box 5: External effects of the Palestinian intifiada; p. 19 Box 6: Ends and means of the Palestinian intifada: Conversion or coercion?
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/albert-meltzer-anarchist-tactic-for-palestine

UKRAINE

https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/25751654.2022.2060634
https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/2023/09/ueber-militarisierung-ukrainesolidaritaet-und-luegengebaeude/
https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/2023/09/anarchie-kongress-und-ukraine-krieg/
https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/2023/03/belarus-vor-der-beteiligung-am-ukraine-krieg/
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https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/2022/05/offener-brief-ehemaliger-kaempfer-aus-dem-libanon-an-die-kaempferinnen-und-soldatinnen-in-der-ukraine-und-in-russland/
https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/2022/04/putins-angriff-auf-die-ukraine-was-tun/
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https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/2015/02/machtkaempfe-um-die-ostukraine/
https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/2014/10/krieg-in-der-ukraine-machtproben-in-einem-zerrissenen-land-2/
https://www.graswurzel.net/gwr/2023/11/putins-kanonenfutter/
https://theconversation.com/ukraine-nonviolent-resistance-is-a-brave-and-often-effective-response-to-aggression-178361
https://www.peace-ed-campaign.org/nonviolence-ukraine/
https://www.mettacenter.org/nonviolencereport/resistance-to-war-in-ukraine-resource-list
https://wagingnonviolence.org/2022/03/5-ways-to-support-courageous-nonviolent-resistance-in-ukraine/
https://wagingnonviolence.org/rs/2022/03/ukrainians-could-defeat-a-russian-occupation-by-scaling-up-unarmed-resistance/
https://kroc.nd.edu/news-events/events/2022/03/22/civil-resistance-in-ukraine-and-the-region/
https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/node/1033
https://wagingnonviolence.org/2022/02/ukraine-secret-weapon-civilian-resistance/
https://wagingnonviolence.org/2022/02/ukraine-doesnt-need-to-match-russias-military-might-to-defend-against-invasion/
https://theconversation.com/why-ukrainians-are-ready-to-fight-for-their-democracy-175649
https://commonslibrary.org/perspectives-on-ukrainian-civil-resistance/
https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/civilresistance/ukraine-nonviolent-victory/
https://wagingnonviolence.org/metta/podcast/amplifying-stories-nonviolent-struggle-ukraine-russia-maria-stephan/
https://www.soziale-verteidigung.de/artikel/ziviler-widerstand-gegen-krieg-ukraine
https://www.soziale-verteidigung.de/artikel/soziale-verteidigung-alternative-aufrustung-krieg
https://www.soziale-verteidigung.de/bereich/ukraine

The anti-militarist principles, we could say, are well known these days; the important thing now is *practice*. But many view this one-sidedly romantic. They mainly want to be prepared for 'the big moment', a 'decisive act', etc.
Without a doubt a 'big moment' can come at any given time, and under certain circumstances 'decisive actions' are required. But in the meantime -and for how long already?- ordinary life goes on, which means that too little is done by radical pacifists and anti-militarists, while on the other side, the modern war is constantly prepared in the smallest detail.
"If only I could refuse military service!" one woman exclaims, at the same time ignoring her anti-militarist tasks in other areas. "What you advocate is wonderful, but *what can I personally do?*", a young man writes, who coincidentally does not have to serve. Etc, etc. Even with so much zeal, nothing much happens; not enough anyway.
The overview further on will clarify that every one of us has more than enough work to do, and will clarify what each of us can do.

Albert de Jong - Revolutionary anti-militarism in the Netherlands

IAMV Declaration of Principles

How and why de Ligt incites.)

Anarchism and revolution, Reflections in light of the anarchist congres in Berlin 1921

Direct Action! The anti-militarists of the deed at the IFTU peace congress December 1922: A voice in the desert.

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THE CONQUEST OF VIOLENCE

+ Translator essay:

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