

Chapter 14 - War is the Health of the State

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Quotes from this phony history book are in red.

p 359 - “War is the health of the state” the radical writer Randolph Bourne said, in the midst of the First World War.”

Comment - This is one of those sayings the political left always uses and this saying has zero statistical support. **War does not and never has brought prosperity to any nation.** Britain’s economy was devastated from the costs of World War One and World War Two. In 1940, the US debt to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio was 49% but by 1946 had risen to 119% of GDP. Financing a war is crippling to any economy.

Obviously, companies making products needed for the war effort have increased business during wartime, but this is only temporary.

Wars destroy people and property. No one would want to have his own house destroyed either in war or peace. What is harmful to an individual must be equally harmful to the collection of individuals that make up a nation.

p 372 - “Emma Goldman and her fellow anarchist, Alexander Berkman (he had already been locked up fourteen years in Pennsylvania; she had served a year on Blackwell’s Island), were sentenced to prison for opposing the draft.”

Comment - Zinn leaves it to your imagination on why Berkman had been locked up fourteen years in prison. Here is what happened. Berkman was born in Russia to a prosperous family. He became an anarchist in Russia but after his parents died, he emigrated to the United States. Berkman arrived in New York City in 1888 and in 1892, Berkman, his lover Emma Goldman and a friend relocated to Worcester, Massachusetts, where they operated a successful luncheonette. Now dedicated to anarchy, he decided to kill a capitalist, Henry Clay Frick, the manager of the Carnegie Steel Company plant in Homestead, Pa. On July 23, 1892 he burst into Frick’s office and fired two shots with a handgun. Berkman missed and was wrestled to the ground by bystanders. Still, he managed to pull out a knife and stab Frick three times. A nearby carpenter hit Berkman on the head with his hammer and he was arrested by police.



Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman.

At his trial, Berkman was found guilty on all charges and was sentenced to a total of 21 years in prison. He was released in 1906. After his release, Berkman continued preaching anarchy and in late 1919, due to the on-going anarchist/bolshevik bombing campaign in the northeast US, he, Goldman and 247 other anarchists were deported to Communist Russia. Berkman and Goldman quickly found out that freedom of speech and other basic rights they had taken for granted in the US was outlawed in Lenin’s Communist dictatorship and after only two years, left Russia for Germany and then France. He died on June 28, 1936 after shooting himself.

p 375 - “‘What happened in Washington last night’ was the explosion of a bomb in front of the home of Wilson’s Attorney General S. Mitchell Palmer.”

Comment - Zinn mentions one bombing by Anarchists, but this was but one of many. On January 1, 1919, Vladimir Lenin, Soviet Russia’s first communist dictator, urged the workers of the world to join in revolution against the establishment. Although anarchists and bolsheviks started revolutions in parts of Europe, none occurred in the US. Unable to start a communist revolution in America and unable to win at the ballot box, American Anarchists and Bolsheviks resorted to a bombing campaign.

On May 1, 1919, 36 package bombs were found in the mail at the General Post Office in New York City. Some of the intended targets were Postmaster General Burleson, Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, New York Mayor Hylan, New York City Police commissioner Enright and Governor Sproul of Pennsylvania.

On June 2, 1919, explosions occurred in 8 different cities at the same hour which targeted public officials, judges and businessmen. One of the targets was US Attorney General Alexander Palmer. The bomb went off prematurely, killing the bomber. Future President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, then Secretary of the Navy under Woodrow Wilson, who lived across the street called the police.



On June, 1919, the Boston home of Judge Albert Hayden was wrecked by a bomb. Hayden was a foe of the Bolsheviks.

Still more bombs were detonated at homes of opponents of the Anarchists/bolsheviks. But the biggest bombing occurred on Sep 16, 1920, when a massive bomb hidden in a horse drawn wagon exploded in New York City. The massive bomb left 39 dead and wounded 200 bystanders. The horse was blown to bits. No one was ever charged with this crime. In fact, few people were ever charged in any of these bombings, **so it is quite possible that some of these anarchists and bolsheviks Zinn so admires in this book could have been involved in these bombings.**

The public demanded action and towards the end of 1919, 4,000 suspected anarchists were arrested and 249 deported to Communist Russia. This was the first mass deportations of anarchists in the country's history, although anarchists had committed other acts of violence against the country, including the September 6, 1901 assassination of President William McKinley by Leon Czolgosz, a self-proclaimed anarchist.

Zinn claims "The Constitution gave no right to Congress to deport aliens. . ." Actually the Constitution doesn't say anything about deporting aliens. That is a matter for Congress and the voters to decide.

See the attached sheet for the whole story on the *"Anarchist bombing campaign in the US, 1919-1920."*

P. 376, 377 - "In the spring of 1920, a typesetter and anarchist named Andrea Salsedo was arrested in New York by FBI agents and held for eight weeks in the FBI offices on the fourteenth floor of the Park Row Building, not allowed to contact family or friends or lawyers. Then his crushed body was found on the pavement below the building and the FBI said he had committed suicide by jumping from the fourteenth floor window."

Comment - Many errors in this statement. Zinn doesn't tell his readers why Salsedo and Elia were taken into custody. As noted above, on June 2, 1919, explosions occurred in 8 different cities at the same hour which targeted public officials, judges and businessmen. Each of the bombs was delivered with several copies of a pink flyer that were later traced to a printing shop where two known anarchists – Andrea Salsedo, a typesetter and Roberto Elia worked. Elia was also the publisher-editor of *L'Ordine*, an anarchist newsletter. The two men had printed up the flyers in their spare time and were the first people arrested in connection with the June 2 bombings. The manuscript was supplied by the notorious anarchist Nicolas Recchi, who had lost four fingers on his left hand from an earlier bomb making accident.(1) The flyers, titled "Plain Words," read in part:



Andrea Salsedo

"There will have to be bloodshed; we will not dodge; there will have to be murder: we will kill, because it is necessary; there will have to be destruction; we will destroy to rid the world of tyrannical institutions."(1)

Recchi returned days later and picked up the manuscript and 700 copies of "Plain Words." Both men were taken into custody and taken to BOI headquarters - which later became the FBI.

After their initial interrogation, they were asked if they would like to stay in a room at BOI pending their cooperation or go to a prison cell. Not surprisingly, they decided to stay in a room at BOI.(2) The men were not mistreated. They had a room on the 14th floor and were supplied with two comfortable beds, could wash and bathe regularly and agents took them out to eat often.(2)

Zinn says the men were not allowed to contact lawyers or family. NOT true. Elia was a loner bachelor, but Salsedo's wife visited nearly everyday.(2) Marcus A. Donato, a lawyer in the same building became council for both men. Donato visited them twice a day and was present when questioned by BOI chief Flynn.(1)

Zinn implies that Salsedo may not have committed suicide but was murdered. There is no evidence to support homicide but a lot of facts that support death by suicide. Donato visited the two men on the Saturday before Salsedo died (Monday at 4 am) and stated that 8 weeks of confinement had put Salsedo "under a tremendous nervous strain."(1) Salsedo and Elia were in the same unlocked room and Elia woke up when he heard glass breaking. He ran out into the hallway yelling for help. That Salsedo didn't scream indicates suicide. If he was thrown out Elia would have woken up and witnessed it and Elia would have



On Sep. 16, 1920. a huge bomb killed 39 people in front of the U.S. Sub Treasury Building in New York City.

been thrown out too so there would be no witnesses. Most importantly, the Justice Dept. had no reason to kill Salsedo. His death actually hindered the government investigation into the people behind the anarchist bombing campaign. Elia was deported to Italy 3 months later and he never claimed that the FBI had murdered Salsedo.

Sources:

1. May 4, 1920 New York Times. Download pdf of article.

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=9E01E3D81E31E03ABC4C53DFB366838B639EDE>

2. Sacco & Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background, pub. 1996 by Paul Avrich - p 185-187