

CHAPTER VII.

SIGNIFICANCE OF COMPULSORY SERVICE.

Universal Compulsory Service is not a Political Accident, but the Furthest Limit of the Contradiction Inherent in the Social Conception of Life--Origin of Authority in Society--Basis of Authority is Physical Violence--To be Able to Perform its Acts of Violence Authority Needs a Special Organization--The Army--Authority, that is, Violence, is the Principle which is Destroying the Social Conception of Life--Attitude of Authority to the Masses, that is, Attitude of Government to Working Oppressed Classes--Governments Try to Foster in Working Classes the Idea that State Force is Necessary to Defend Them from External Enemies--But the Army is Principally Needed to Preserve Government from its own Subjects--The Working Classes--Speech of M. de Caprivi--All Privileges of Ruling Classes Based on Violence--The Increase of Armies up to Point of Universal Service--Universal Compulsory Service Destroys all the Advantages of Social Life, which Government is Intended to Preserve--Compulsory Service is the Furthest Limit of Submission, since in Name of the State it Requires Sacrifice of all that can be Precious to a Man--Is Government Necessary?--The Sacrifices Demanded by Government in Compulsory Service have No Longer any Reasonable Basis--And there is More Advantage to be Gained by not Submitting to the Demands of the State than by Submitting to Them.

Educated people of the upper classes are trying to stifle the ever-growing sense of the necessity of transforming the existing social order. But life, which goes on growing more complex, and developing in the same direction, and increases the inconsistencies and the sufferings of men, brings them to the limit beyond which they cannot go. This furthest limit of inconsistency is universal compulsory military service.

It is usually supposed that universal military service and the increased armaments connected with it, as well as the resulting increase of taxes and national debts, are a passing phenomenon, produced by the particular political situation of Europe, and that it may be removed by certain political combinations without any modification of the inner order of life.

This is absolutely incorrect. Universal military service is only the internal inconsistency inherent in the social conception of life, carried to its furthest limits, and becoming evident when a certain stage of material development is reached.

The social conception of life, we have seen, consists in the transfer of the aim of life from the individual to groups and their maintenance--to the tribe, family, race, or state.

In the social conception of life it is supposed that since the aim of life is found in groups of individuals, individuals will

voluntarily sacrifice their own interests for the interests of the group. And so it has been, and still is, in fact, in certain groups, the distinction being that they are the most primitive forms of association in the family or tribe or race, or even in the patriarchal state. Through tradition handed down by education and supported by religious sentiment, individuals without compulsion merged their interests in the interest of the group and sacrificed their own good for the general welfare.

But the more complex and the larger societies become, and especially the more often conquest becomes the cause of the amalgamation of people into a state, the more often individuals strive to attain their own aims at the public expense, and the more often it becomes necessary to restrain these insubordinate individuals by recourse to authority, that is, to violence. The champions of the social conception of life usually try to connect the idea of authority, that is, of violence, with the idea of moral influence, but this connection is quite impossible.

The effect of moral influence on a man is to change his desires and to bend them in the direction of the duty required of him. The man who is controlled by moral influence acts in accordance with his own desires. Authority, in the sense in which the word is ordinarily understood, is a means of forcing a man to act in opposition to his desires. The man who submits to authority does not do as he chooses but as he is obliged by authority. Nothing

can oblige a man to do what he does not choose except physical force, or the threat of it, that is--deprivation of freedom, blows, imprisonment, or threats--easily carried out--of such punishments. This is what authority consists of and always has consisted of.

In spite of the unceasing efforts of those who happen to be in authority to conceal this and attribute some other significance to it, authority has always meant for man the cord, the chain with which he is bound and fettered, or the knout with which he is to be flogged, or the ax with which he is to have hands, ears, nose, or head cut off, or at the very least, the threat of these terrors. So it was under Nero and Ghenghis Khan, and so it is to-day, even under the most liberal government in the Republics of the United States or of France. If men submit to authority, it is only because they are liable to these punishments in case of non-submission. All state obligations, payment of taxes, fulfillment of state duties, and submission to punishments, exile, fines, etc., to which people appear to submit voluntarily, are always based on bodily violence or the threat of it.

The basis of authority is bodily violence. The possibility of applying bodily violence to people is provided above all by an organization of armed men, trained to act in unison in submission to one will. These bands of armed men, submissive to a single will, are what constitute the army. The army has always been and still is the basis of power. Power is always in the hands of

those who control the army, and all men in power--from the Roman Caesars to the Russian and German Emperors--take more interest in their army than in anything, and court popularity in the army, knowing that if that is on their side their power is secure.

The formation and aggrandizement of the army, indispensable to the maintenance of authority, is what has introduced into the social conception of life the principle that is destroying it.

The object of authority and the justification for its existence lie in the restraint of those who aim at attaining their personal interests to the detriment of the interests of society.

But however power has been gained, those who possess it are in no way different from other men, and therefore no more disposed than others to subordinate their own interests to those of the society. On the contrary, having the power to do so at their disposal, they are more disposed than others to subordinate the public interests to their own. Whatever means men have devised for preventing those in authority from over-riding public interests for their own benefit, or for intrusting power only to the most faultless people, they have not so far succeeded in either of those aims.

All the methods of appointing authorities that have been tried, divine right, and election, and heredity, and balloting, and assemblies and parliaments and senate--have all proved

ineffectual. Everyone knows that not one of these methods attains the aim either of intrusting power only to the incorruptible, or of preventing power from being abused. Everyone knows on the contrary that men in authority--be they emperors, ministers, governors, or police officers--are always, simply from the possession of power, more liable to be demoralized, that is, to subordinate public interests to their personal aims than those who have not the power to do so. Indeed, it could not be otherwise.

The state conception of life could be justified only so long as all men voluntarily sacrificed their personal interests to the public welfare. But so soon as there were individuals who would not voluntarily sacrifice their own interests, and authority, that is, violence, was needed to restrain them, then the disintegrating principle of the coercion of one set of people by another set entered into the social conception of the organization based on it.

For the authority of one set of men over another to attain its object of restraining those who override public interests for their personal ends, power ought only to be put into the hands of the impeccable, as it is supposed to be among the Chinese, and as it was supposed to be in the Middle Ages, and is even now supposed to be by those who believe in the consecration by anointing. Only under those conditions could the social organization be justified.

But since this is not the case, and on the contrary men in power are always far from being saints, through the very fact of their possession of power, the social organization based on power has no justification.

Even if there was once a time when, owing to the low standard of morals, and the disposition of men to violence, the existence of an authority to restrain such violence was an advantage, because the violence of government was less than the violence of individuals, one cannot but see that this advantage could not be lasting. As the disposition of individuals to violence diminished, and as the habits of the people became more civilized, and as power grew more social organization demoralized through lack of restraint, this advantage disappeared.

The whole history of the last two thousand years is nothing but the history of this gradual change of relation between the moral development of the masses on the one hand and the demoralization of governments on the other.

This, put simply, is how it has come to pass.

Men lived in families, tribes, and races, at feud with one another, plundering, outraging, and killing one another. These violent hostilities were carried on on a large and on a small scale: man against man, family against family, tribe against

tribe, race against race, and people against people. The larger and stronger groups conquered and absorbed the weaker, and the larger and stronger they became, the more internal feuds disappeared and the more the continuity of the group seemed assured.

The members of a family or tribe, united into one community, are less hostile among themselves, and families and tribes do not die like one man, but have a continuity of existence. Between the members of one state, subject to a single authority, the strife between individuals seems still less and the life of the state seems even more secure.

Their association into larger and larger groups was not the result of the conscious recognition of the benefits of such associations, as it is said to be in the story of the Varyagi. It was produced, on one hand, by the natural growth of population, and, on the other, by struggle and conquest.

After conquest the power of the emperor puts an end to internal dissensions, and so the state conception of life justifies itself. But this justification is never more than temporary. Internal dissensions disappear only in proportion to the degree of oppression exerted by the authority over the dissentient individuals. The violence of internal feud crushed by authority reappears in authority itself, which falls into the hands of men

who, like the rest, are frequently or always ready to sacrifice the public welfare to their personal interest, with the difference that their subjects cannot resist them, and thus they are exposed to all the demoralizing influence of authority. And thus the evil of violence, when it passes into the hands of authority, is always growing and growing, and in time becomes greater than the evil it is supposed to suppress, while, at the same time, the tendency to violence in the members of the society becomes weaker and weaker, so that the violence of authority is less and less needed.

Government authority, even if it does suppress private violence, always introduces into the life of men fresh forms of violence, which tend to become greater and greater in proportion to the duration and strength of the government.

So that though the violence of power is less noticeable in government than when it is employed by members of society against one another, because it finds expression in submission, and not in strife, it nevertheless exists, and often to a greater degree than in former days.

And it could not be otherwise, since, apart from the demoralizing influence of power, the policy or even the unconscious tendency of those in power will always be to reduce their subjects to the extreme of weakness, for the weaker the oppressed, the less effort need be made to keep him in subjection.

And therefore the oppression of the oppressed always goes on growing up to the furthest limit, beyond which it cannot go without killing the goose with the golden eggs. And if the goose lays no more eggs, like the American Indians, negroes, and Fijians, then it is killed in spite of the sincere protests of philanthropists.

The most convincing example of this is to be found in the condition of the working classes of our epoch, who are in reality no better than the slaves of ancient times subdued by conquest.

In spite of the pretended efforts of the higher classes to ameliorate the position of the workers, all the working classes of the present day are kept down by the inflexible iron law by which they only get just what is barely necessary, so that they are forced to work without ceasing while still retaining strength enough to labor for their employers, who are really those who have conquered and enslaved them.

So it has always been. In ratio to the duration and increasing strength of authority its advantages for its subjects disappear and its disadvantages increase.

And this has been so, independently of the forms of government under which nations have lived. The only difference is that under

a despotic form of government the authority is concentrated in a small number of oppressors and violence takes a cruder form; under constitutional monarchies and republics as in France and America authority is divided among a great number of oppressors and the forms assumed by violence is less crude, but its effect of making the disadvantages of authority greater than its advantages, and of enfeebling the oppressed to the furthest extreme to which they can be reduced with advantage to the oppressors, remains always the same.

Such has been and still is the condition of all the oppressed, but hitherto they have not recognized the fact. In the majority of instances they have believed in all simplicity that governments exist for their benefit; that they would be lost without a government; that the very idea of living without a government is a blasphemy which one hardly dare put into words; that this is the--for some reason terrible--doctrine of anarchism, with which a mental picture of all kinds of horrors is associated.

People have believed, as though it were something fully proved, and so needing no proof, that since all nations have hitherto developed in the form of states, that form of organization is an indispensable condition of the development of humanity.

And in that way it has lasted for hundreds and thousands of years, and governments--those who happened to be in power--have tried it,

and are now trying more zealously than ever to keep their subjects in this error.

So it was under the Roman emperors and so it is now. In spite of the fact that the sense of the uselessness and even injurious effects of state violence is more and more penetrating into men's consciousness, things might have gone on in the same way forever if governments were not under the necessity of constantly increasing their armies in order to maintain their power.

It is generally supposed that governments strengthen their forces only to defend the state from other states, in oblivion of the fact that armies are necessary, before all things, for the defense of governments from their own oppressed and enslaved subjects.

That has always been necessary, and has become more and more necessary with the increased diffusion of education among the masses, with the improved communication between people of the same and of different nationalities. It has become particularly indispensable now in the face of communism, socialism, anarchism, and the labor movement generally. Governments feel that it is so, and strengthen the force of their disciplined armies. [See Footnote]

[Footnote: The fact that in America the abuses of authority exist in spite of the small number of their

troops not only fails to disprove this position, but positively confirms it. In America there are fewer soldiers than in other states. That is why there is nowhere else so little oppression of the working classes, and no country where the end of the abuses of government and of government itself seems so near. Of late as the combinations of laborers gain in strength, one hears more and more frequently the cry raised for the increase of the army, though the United States are not threatened with any attack from without. The upper classes know that an army of fifty thousand will soon be insufficient, and no longer relying on Pinkerton's men, they feel that the security of their position depends on the increased strength of the army.]

In the German Reichstag not long ago, in reply to a question why funds were needed for raising the salaries of the under-officers, the German Chancellor openly declared that trustworthy under-officers were necessary to contend against socialism. Caprivi only said aloud what every statesman knows and assiduously conceals from the people. The reason to which he gave expression is essentially the same as that which made the French kings and the popes engage Swiss and Scotch guards, and makes the Russian authorities of to-day so carefully distribute the recruits, so that the regiments from the frontiers are stationed in

central districts, and the regiments from the center are stationed on the frontiers. The meaning of Caprivi's speech, put into plain language, is that funds are needed, not to resist foreign foes, but to BUY UNDER-OFFICERS to be ready to act against the enslaved toiling masses.

Caprivi incautiously gave utterance to what everyone knows perfectly well, or at least feels vaguely if he does not recognize it, that is, that the existing order of life is as it is, not, as would be natural and right, because the people wish it to be so, but because it is so maintained by state violence, by the army with its BOUGHT UNDER-OFFICERS and generals.

If the laborer has no land, if he cannot use the natural right of every man to derive subsistence for himself and his family out of the land, that is not because the people wish it to be so, but because a certain set of men, the land-owners, have appropriated the right of giving or refusing admittance to the land to the laborers. And this abnormal order of things is maintained by the army. If the immense wealth produced by the labor of the working classes is not regarded as the property of all, but as the property of a few exceptional persons; if labor is taxed by authority and the taxes spent by a few on what they think fit; if strikes on the part of laborers are repressed, while on the part of capitalists they are encouraged; if certain persons appropriate the right of choosing the form of the education, religious and secular, of children, and certain persons monopolize the right of

making the laws all must obey, and so dispose of the lives and properties of other people--all this is not done because the people wish it and because it is what is natural and right, but because the government and ruling classes wish this to be so for their own benefit, and insist on its being so even by physical violence.

Everyone, if he does not recognize this now, will know that it is so at the first attempt at insubordination or at a revolution of the existing order.

Armies, then, are needed by governments and by the ruling classes above all to support the present order, which, far from being the result of the people's needs, is often in direct antagonism to them, and is only beneficial to the government and ruling classes.

To keep their subjects in oppression and to be able to enjoy the fruits of their labor the government must have armed forces.

But there is not only one government. There are other governments, exploiting their subjects by violence in the same way, and always ready to pounce down on any other government and carry off the fruits of the toil of its enslaved subjects. And so every government needs an army also to protect its booty from its neighbor brigands. Every government is thus involuntarily reduced to the necessity of emulating one another in the increase of their

armies. This increase is contagious, as Montesquieu pointed out 150 years ago.

Every increase in the army of one state, with the aim of self-defense against its subjects, becomes a source of danger for neighboring states and calls for a similar increase in their armies.

The armed forces have reached their present number of millions not only through the menace of danger from neighboring states, but principally through the necessity of subduing every effort at revolt on the part of the subjects.

Both causes, mutually dependent, contribute to the same result at once; troops are required against internal forces and also to keep up a position with other states. One is the result of the other. The despotism of a government always increases with the strength of the army and its external successes, and the aggressiveness of a government increases with its internal despotism.

The rivalry of the European states in constantly increasing their forces has reduced them to the necessity of having recourse to universal military service, since by that means the greatest possible number of soldiers is obtained at the least possible expense. Germany first hit on this device. And directly one state adopted it the others were obliged to do the same. And by

this means all citizens are under arms to support the iniquities practiced upon them; all citizens have become their own oppressors.

Universal military service was an inevitable logical necessity, to which we were bound to come. But it is also the last expression of the inconsistency inherent in the social conception of life, when violence is needed to maintain it. This inconsistency has become obvious in universal military service. In fact, the whole significance of the social conception of life consists in man's recognition of the barbarity of strife between individuals, and the transitoriness of personal life itself, and the transference of the aim of life to groups of persons. But with universal military service it comes to pass that men, after making every sacrifice to get rid of the cruelty of strife and the insecurity of existence, are called upon to face all the perils they had meant to avoid. And in addition to this the state, for whose sake individuals renounced their personal advantages, is exposed again to the same risks of insecurity and lack of permanence as the individual himself was in previous times.

Governments were to give men freedom from the cruelty of personal strife and security in the permanence of the state order of existence. But instead of doing that they expose the individuals to the same necessity of strife, substituting strife with individuals of other states for strife with neighbors. And the

danger of destruction for the individual, and the state too, they leave just as it was.

Universal military service may be compared to the efforts of a man to prop up his falling house who so surrounds it and fills it with props and buttresses and planks and scaffolding that he manages to keep the house standing only by making it impossible to live in it.

In the same way universal military service destroys all the benefits of the social order of life which it is employed to maintain.

The advantages of social organization are security of property and labor and associated action for the improvement of existence--universal military service destroys all this.

The taxes raised from the people for war preparations absorb the greater part of the produce of labor which the army ought to defend.

The withdrawing of all men from the ordinary course of life destroys the possibility of labor itself. The danger of war, ever ready to break out, renders all reforms of life social life vain and fruitless.

In former days if a man were told that if he did not acknowledge

the authority of the state, he would be exposed to attack from enemies domestic and foreign, that he would have to resist them alone, and would be liable to be killed, and that therefore it would be to his advantage to put up with some hardships to secure himself from these calamities, he might well believe it, seeing that the sacrifices he made to the state were only partial and gave him the hope of a tranquil existence in a permanent state. But now, when the sacrifices have been increased tenfold and the promised advantages are disappearing, it would be a natural reflection that submission to authority is absolutely useless.

But the fatal significance of universal military service, as the manifestation of the contradiction inherent in the social conception of life, is not only apparent in that. The greatest manifestation of this contradiction consists in the fact that every citizen in being made a soldier becomes a prop of the government organization, and shares the responsibility of everything the government does, even though he may not admit its legitimacy.

Governments assert that armies are needed above all for external defense, but that is not true. They are needed principally against their subjects, and every man, under universal military service, becomes an accomplice in all the acts of violence of the government against the citizens without any choice of his own.

To convince oneself of this one need only remember what things are done in every state, in the name of order and the public welfare, of which the execution always falls to the army. All civil outbreaks for dynastic or other party reasons, all the executions that follow on such disturbances, all repression of insurrections, and military intervention to break up meetings and to suppress strikes, all forced extortion of taxes, all the iniquitous distributions of land, all the restrictions on labor--are either carried out directly by the military or by the police with the army at their back. Anyone who serves his time in the army shares the responsibility of all these things, about which he is, in some cases, dubious, while very often they are directly opposed to his conscience. People are unwilling to be turned out of the land they have cultivated for generations, or they are unwilling to disperse when the government authority orders them, or they are unwilling to pay the taxes required of them, or to recognize laws as binding on them when they have had no hand in making them, or to be deprived of their nationality--and I, in the fulfillment of my military duty, must go and shoot them for it. How can I help asking myself when I take part in such punishments, whether they are just, and whether I ought to assist in carrying them out?

Universal service is the extreme limit of violence necessary for the support of the whole state organization, and it is the extreme limit to which submission on the part of the subjects can go. It

is the keystone of the whole edifice, and its fall will bring it all down.

The time has come when the ever-growing abuse of power by governments and their struggles with one another has led to their demanding such material and even moral sacrifices from their subjects that everyone is forced to reflect and ask himself, "Can I make these sacrifices? And for the sake of what am I making them? I am expected for the sake of the state to make these sacrifices, to renounce everything that can be precious to man--peace, family, security, and human dignity." What is this state, for whose sake such terrible sacrifices have to be made? And why is it so indispensably necessary? "The state," they tell us, "is indispensably needed, in the first place, because without it we should not be protected against the attacks of evil-disposed persons; and secondly, except for the state we should be savages and should have neither religion, culture, education, nor commerce, nor means of communication, nor other social institutions; and thirdly, without the state to defend us we should be liable to be conquered and enslaved by neighboring peoples."

"Except for the state," they say, "we should be exposed to the attacks of evil-disposed persons in our own country."

But who are these evil-disposed persons in our midst from whose attacks we are preserved by the state and its army? Even if, three or four centuries ago, when men prided themselves on their warlike prowess, when

killing men was considered an heroic achievement, there were such persons; we know very well that there are no such persons now, that we do not nowadays carry or use firearms, but everyone professes humane principles and feels sympathy for his fellows, and wants nothing more than we all do--that is, to be left in peace to enjoy his existence undisturbed. So that nowadays there are no special malefactors from whom the state could defend us. If by these evil disposed persons is meant the men who are punished as criminals, we know very well that they are not a different kind of being like wild beasts among sheep, but are men just like ourselves, and no more naturally inclined to crimes than those against whom they commit them. We know now that threats and punishments cannot diminish their number; that that can only be done by change of environment and moral influence. So that the justification of state violence on the ground of the protection it gives us from evil-disposed persons, even if it had some foundation three or four centuries ago, has none whatever now. At present one would rather say on the contrary that the action of the state with its cruel methods of punishment, behind the general moral standard of the age, such as prisons, galleys, gibbets, and guillotines, tends rather to brutalize the people than to civilize them, and consequently rather to increase than diminish the number of malefactors.

"Except for the state," they tell us, "we should not have any religion, education, culture, means of communication, and so on. Without the state men would not have been able to form the social institutions needed for doing any thing." This argument too was

well founded only some centuries ago.

If there was a time when people were so disunited, when they had so little means of communication and interchange of ideas, that they could not co-operate and agree together in any common action in commerce, economics, or education without the state as a center, this want of common action exists no longer. The great extension of means of communication and interchange of ideas has made men completely able to dispense with state aid in forming societies, associations, corporations, and congresses for scientific, economic, and political objects. Indeed government is more often an obstacle than an assistance in attaining these aims.

From the end of last century there has hardly been a single progressive movement of humanity which has not been retarded by the government. So it has been with abolition of corporal punishment, of trial by torture, and of slavery, as well as with the establishment of the liberty of the press and the right of public meeting. In our day governments not only fail to encourage, but directly hinder every movement by which people try to work out new forms of life for themselves. Every attempt at the solution of the problems of labor, land, politics, and religion meets with direct opposition on the part of government.

"Without governments nations would be enslaved by their neighbors." It is scarcely necessary to refute this last

argument. It carries its refutation on the face of it. The government, they tell us, with its army, is necessary to defend us from neighboring states who might enslave us. But we know this is what all governments say of one another, and yet we know that all the European nations profess the same principles of liberty and fraternity, and therefore stand in no need of protection against one another. And if defense against barbarous nations is meant, one-thousandth part of the troops now under arms would be amply sufficient for that purpose. We see that it is really the very opposite of what we have been told. The power of the state, far from being a security against the attacks of our neighbors, exposes us, on the contrary, to much greater danger of such attacks. So that every man who is led, through his compulsory service in the army, to reflect on the value of the state for whose sake he is expected to be ready to sacrifice his peace, security, and life, cannot fail to perceive that there is no kind of justification in modern times for such a sacrifice.

And it is not only from the theoretical standpoint that every man must see that the sacrifices demanded by the state have no justification. Even looking at it practically, weighing, that is to say, all the burdens laid on him by the state, no man can fail to see that for him personally to comply with state demands and serve in the army, would, in the majority of cases, be more disadvantageous than to refuse to do so.

If the majority of men choose to submit rather than to refuse, it is not the result of sober balancing of advantages and disadvantages, but because they are induced by a kind of hypnotizing process practiced upon them. In submitting they simply yield to the suggestions given them as orders, without thought or effort of will. To resist would need independent thought and effort of which every man is not capable. Even apart from the moral significance of compliance or non-compliance, considering material advantage only, non-compliance will be more advantageous in general.

Whoever I may be, whether I belong to the well-to-do class of the oppressors, or the working class of the oppressed, in either case the disadvantages of non-compliance are less and its advantages greater than those of compliance. If I belong to the minority of oppressors the disadvantages of non-compliance will consist in my being brought to judgment for refusing to perform my duties to the state, and if I am lucky, being acquitted or, as is done in the case of the Mennonites in Russia, being set to work out my military service at some civil occupation for the state; while if I am unlucky, I may be condemned to exile or imprisonment for two or three years (I judge by the cases that have occurred in Russia), possibly to even longer imprisonment, or possibly to death, though the probability of that latter is very remote.

So much for the disadvantages of non-compliance. The

disadvantages of compliance will be as follows: if I am lucky I shall not be sent to murder my fellow-creatures, and shall not be exposed to great danger of being maimed and killed, but shall only be enrolled into military slavery. I shall be dressed up like a clown, I shall be at the beck and call of every man of a higher grade than my own from corporal to field-marshal, shall be put through any bodily contortions at their pleasure, and after being kept from one to five years I shall have for ten years afterward to be in readiness to undertake all of it again at any minute. If I am unlucky I may, in addition, be sent to war, where I shall be forced to kill men of foreign nations who have done me no harm, where I may be maimed or killed, or sent to certain destruction as in the case of the garrison of Sevastopol, and other cases in every war, or what would be most terrible of all, I may be sent against my own compatriots and have to kill my own brothers for some dynastic or other state interests which have absolutely nothing to do with me. So much for the comparative disadvantages.

The comparative advantages of compliance and non-compliance are as follows:

For the man who submits, the advantages will be that, after exposing himself to all the humiliation and performing all the barbarities required of him, he may, if he escapes being killed, get a decoration of red or gold tinsel to stick on his clown's dress; he may, if he is very lucky, be put in command of hundreds

of thousands of others as brutalized as himself; be called a field-marshal, and get a lot of money.

The advantages of the man who refuses to obey will consist in preserving his dignity as a man, gaining the approbation of good men, and above all knowing that he is doing the work of God, and so undoubtedly doing good to his fellow-men.

So much for the advantages and disadvantages of both lines of conduct for a man of the wealthy classes, an oppressor. For a man of the poor working class the advantages and disadvantages will be the same, but with a great increase of disadvantages. The disadvantages for the poor man who submits will be aggravated by the fact that he will by taking part in it, and, as it were, assenting to it strengthen the state of subjection in which he is held himself.

But no considerations as to how far the state is useful or beneficial to the men who help to support it by serving in the army, nor of the advantages or disadvantages for the individual of compliance or non-compliance with state demands, will decide the question of the continued existence or the abolition of government. This question will be finally decided beyond appeal by the religious consciousness or conscience of every man who is forced, whether he will or no, through universal conscription, to face the question whether the state is to continue to exist or

not.