

# 'Birth Strike'

## *How the Predecessors of Antifa Laid the Foundations for Abortion in America*

In the past few years most Americans have become acquainted with Antifa, the ultra destructive group of anarchists known for physically attacking conservatives and tearing down historical monuments.

What is unknown to many Americans is that their ideological ancestors were promoting contraception and abortion decades before Roe v. Wade as part of a strategic socialist agenda against capitalism. This link, while seemingly irrelevant, is crucial to understanding the pro-death philosophy the far left espouses today.

### The 'Birth Strike'

In 1870, the French Neo-Malthusian [Marie Huot](#) called for a "strike of the wombs" as a way of gradually phasing out the human race. Though unrelated to leftist politics of the time, this concept was modified and taken up by the French anarcho-syndicalist (radical trade unionist) movement in the 1890s who saw its potential as a tool of "class warfare."

For these [anarchist syndicalists](#), procreation under capitalism was an abomination since it prolonged the system by creating more "wage slaves" for capitalist bosses. In their view no one should have any children under capitalism. The agenda was to have working-class women drastically reduce the number of births via contraception and abortion. The lower birthrates would dry up the pool of labor, which would then ensure imminent crisis for capitalism and imperialism. This applied the syndicalist call for a massive general strike to the realm of childbearing.

They erroneously believed this strategy would empower working-class women and the working class as a whole. Women would supposedly be "freed" from household labor. Workers' wages would supposedly increase as the birthrate shrunk, since the absence of a reserve army of labor would force capitalist bosses to give into workers' demands. Deliberately reducing the population would also give workers bargaining power with the State, these anarchists alleged.

Inspired by the philosophy of [Georges Sorel](#), the syndicalists believed socialism would come about through the acts of violent labor unions and gangs (the parallels to Antifa are obvious here). Having children would also be considered a distraction from these revolutionary aims.

In 1896, [Paul Robin](#), a French follower of anarchist terrorist Mikhail Bakunin, created the eugenicist League for Human Regeneration, which played an instrumental role in the distribution of “birth strike” propaganda across France and most of Southern Europe. Tragically, through promotion of contraception and abortion as tools of revolt, the syndicalists greatly succeeded in reducing the French urban birthrate by the 1910s to the point where new births were almost equal to the number of deaths.

## ‘Birth Strike’ and American Anarchists

The call for a “birth strike” eventually became espoused among American anarcho-syndicalists, inspired directly by the actions of their comrades in Europe. Women members of the [Industrial Workers of the World](#), an organization known for their promotion of violent strikes, were some of the first to propagate it.

Though the IWW had largely been a male-centered organization, they gained support from women by supporting rebellions in female-dominated industries. Women soon became some of the union’s most radical members, and with this came the call to weaponize childbearing (or refusal to do so) as part of the struggle. In a section at the end of her 1915 pamphlet [Sabotage: The Conscious Withdrawal of the Workers’ Efficiency](#) entitled “Limiting The Over-Supply of Slaves”, notable IWW member [Elizabeth Gurley Flynn](#) pushed the notion of contraception as industrial sabotage. She stated:

“It is my hope that the workers will not only ‘sabotage’ the supply of products, but also the over-supply of producers. In Europe the syndicalists have carried on a propaganda that we are too cowardly to carry on in the United States as yet... In Europe they are carrying on this sort of limitation of product: they are saying, ‘Not only will we limit the product in the factory, but we are going to limit the supply of producers. We are going to limit the supply of workers on the market.’ Men and women of the working class in France and Italy and even Germany today are saying, ‘We are not going to have ten, twelve and fourteen-children for the army, the navy, the factory and the mine. We are going to have fewer children, with quality and not quantity accentuated as our ideal who can be better fed, better clothed, better equipped mentally and will become better fighters for the social revolution.’ Although it is not a strictly scientific definition I like to include this as

indicative of the spirit that produces sabotage. It certainly is one of the most vital forms of class warfare there are, to strike at the roots of the capitalist system by limiting their supply of slaves on their own behalf."

In this view, the sanctity of human life became reduced to an economic factor, the natural outcome of the socialist materialistic philosophy. In the best tradition of the anarchist mentality there is no indication of morality, just recipe for mass destruction.

Perhaps the most famous anarchist of the 20th century, [Emma Goldman](#) made the birth strike a defining aspect of her ideology. She held a complex social agenda which combined violent anarchism, socialist revolution, atheism, militant feminism, and hatred of monogamy and motherhood. Her thought was considered so radical that it even shocked the mainstream feminists of her time.

Through her connections to the French syndicalists, Goldman traveled to France in 1900 to study contraception at a Neo-Malthusian congress. She notoriously snuck birth control devices back into America upon her return. With her then-lover Ben Reitman, Goldman co-authored a pamphlet full of contraception propaganda entitled *Why the Poor Shouldn't Have Many Children* in 1914. That same year she began publicly speaking on the birth strike, a topic which she admitted brought out her largest and most enthusiastic crowds. As with other advocates of this movement, Goldman believed through contraception "fewer and better" children would be born into capitalist wage slavery. On more than one occasion Goldman was arrested for violating the Comstock Law, which took her to trial in 1916.

## Margaret Sanger's Anarchist Influences

Goldman's agenda would be realized through her most infamous protégée. Though many know of her involvement in the eugenics movement, Margaret Sanger took up the "crusade" of birth control [years earlier with her association with the IWW starting in 1911](#), with which she had participated alongside in the Lawrence textile strike of 1912 and Paterson strike in 1913.

According to her [autobiography](#), Sanger was introduced to contraception through Goldman whom she greatly admired. In 1913 she was instructed to go to Paris by notable IWW member "Big Bill" Haywood. It was there where she learned from the same old surviving French syndicalists who had introduced Goldman to contraceptive ideas a

decade prior.

It is not surprising then, that Sanger's publication [The Woman Rebel](#) had a distinctly anarcho-syndicalist bent, applying the rhetoric of socialist revolution to a sexual one. Goldman participated in distributing copies during her lectures. Its motto of "No Gods No Masters" was an anarchist slogan from the 1912 textile strike. Sanger [stated in the first issue of her publication](#): "I believe that woman is enslaved by the world machine, by sex conventions, by motherhood and its present necessary childbearing, by wage-slavery, by middle-class morality, by customs, laws and superstitions."

Like Goldman, she sought to challenge the restrictions on contraceptive information, and like Goldman, Sanger found herself facing obscenity charges in 1914 via the Comstock Law. By that time, the birth control movement was growing substantially with many participants coming from the IWW, [Socialist Party](#), or various feminist organizations.

In 1920, Sanger openly called for "[A Birth Strike to End World Famine](#)". Her pamphlet stated: "Shall we bring children into a world that is bankrupt and starving? All of our mother instincts, all of our humane feelings, all of our common sense must cry out against such a course... In this hour of crisis and peril, women alone can save the world. They can save it by refusing for five years to bring a child into being. And there is no other way."

It must be emphasized that within this standard there is no dichotomy between the desire for promiscuous sex and revolutionary socialism. According to the book [Anarchism and Eugenics](#), promotion of the birth strike was undoubtedly tied to anarchist desire for "free love". By destroying the connection between sex and reproduction, one could indulge in sexuality outside the boundaries of marriage while not creating more children. The birth strike and its eugenicist implications was supposedly a scientific and less emotional means to promote this. Socialism and sex reinforced each other as anarchist disgust of motherhood and monogamy (and the separation of sanctity from intimacy) were now core parts of their political strategy.

## Communist Party USA

Several individuals in the Communist Party USA leadership had been former anarcho-syndicalists who brought along many of those tendencies, including the hatred for procreation under capitalism. This was most notably the case with William Z. Foster, who later became the head of the

Party and - along with Elizabeth Gurley Flynn — a founding board member of the ACLU. (One should ask if there is any wonder why the ACLU has consistently pushed for abortion.)

Before his time as Party chairman, Foster had been a member of both the IWW and a militant anarchist group of goons he established called the Syndicalist League. A [Marxist journalist](#) sums up the rules they had for members:

“...[M]embers of the Syndicalist League of North America can't have children, because having children leads to increasing the population and thus increasing competition for jobs, and leading to poverty. And plus, being a parent distracts from the revolution. However, after the revolution it will be the duty of revolutionaries to populate the earth as much as possible to increase the labor supply and the general surplus that the working class will enjoy, which I think is fascinating... And the goal is to eventually have the great general strike, that's like the armageddon in anarcho-syndicalism, is one day there will just be a great general strike where all the workers will go on strike and the bosses will be brought down in one fowl swoop and the workers will own their factories. And that was the idea.”

Many people in Foster's faction of the Communist Party came out of the Syndicalist League. Not surprisingly, CPUSA leaders were outright discouraged from having children in a cruel remnant of the syndicalist birth strike. The Party, which was entirely beholden to Moscow, modeled its agenda for women off of Soviet policies which included the [liberalization of abortion and birth control](#). There couldn't have been a more perfect storm.

According to Paul Kengor, author of the book [Takedown: From Communists To Progressives, How the Left Has Sabotaged Family and Marriage](#), abortion in the CPUSA was commonly “embraced as a means of birth control” years before Roe v. Wade. Although there are no statistics documenting the prevalence of abortion among CPUSA members (given its illegality at the time), plenty of anecdotes give a glimpse into this horrid culture. Communist Party dissident Whittaker Chambers, who later testified to the communist infiltration of the US government, described the rampant amount of abortion within Party life in his infamous memoir [Witness](#):

“Abortion was a commonplace of party life. There were Communist doctors who rendered that service for a small fee.

Communists who were more choosy knew liberal doctors who would render the same service for a larger fee. Abortion, which now fills me with physical horror, I then regarded, like all Communists, as a mere physical manipulation."

Given the frequency of abortion among hardline communists, Chambers assumed his wife would abort their child. They refused, and this instance would later inspire their desertion of the Party.

This expectation was hardly unusual. Woman comrades were often compelled to have abortions — one may guess this was ideological as well as "practical." In [Autobiography of an American Communist](#), Peggy Dennis (the wife of prominent CPUSA leader [Eugene Dennis](#)) recalled the traumatic abortion experience she underwent allegedly for the sake of the communist movement. Likewise, Vera Buch Weisbord (wife of Party member [Albert Weisbord](#)) stated in her memoir [A Radical Life](#) that she also felt forced to abort in order to maintain her and her husband's lives as revolutionaries — "Albert had made it clear from the start there would be no children." Neither one of these women said they received any emotional support from their men as they underwent their terrible procedures.

When the wife of Louis Budenz — another former high-ranking Communist Party official — found herself pregnant with their third child, others in the Party demanded the child be aborted on the basis that it would hinder their Party work and cause them to become "bourgeois."<sup>1</sup> Like Chambers, they refused. The family would later get out of communism and [return to the Catholic Church](#) under the hand of the venerable Fulton Sheen.

Clearly, CPUSA members had no moral issues with killing their own children even if their abortions caused them atrocious damage. It must not be forgotten that deep within the communist agenda lies the desire to

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## <sup>1</sup> bourgeois

[bʊər'ʒwɑ, 'bʊər ʒwɑ, 'bu ʒwɑ; French bur'ʒwɑ]

ADJECTIVE

of or characteristic of the middle class, typically with reference to its perceived materialistic values or conventional attitudes.

NOUN

a bourgeois person.

"a self-confessed and proud bourgeois"

synonyms: *member of the middle class · property owner*

re-define (and destroy) the family. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels even stated in the [Communist Manifesto](#): "Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this proposal of the Communists." Communists, like the old anarchists, have always seen the family as one barrier to their revolution.

## Conclusion

Today the anarcho-syndicalists and communists appear to have gotten their way, as birthrates in the West have fallen to the point where they are [causing a pending economic crisis](#). The lack of births is already hurting the ability of countries to pay for social programs or create any kind of economic growth. And this is the legacy of the radical left. Children are seen as nothing more than tools of the productive forces which Marx said governed the world in place of God. By disregarding the spiritual, the anarchists and communists will force their control over the human body and soul without remorse.

This drive to destroy is the pinnacle of modern leftism. The Antifa death cult of today takes their inspiration from the anarcho-syndicalist gangs of old, not only in their hatred for capitalism and the state but also in their secret hatred of human life itself. This exemplifies the ideology of the radical left in a nutshell: by seeing politics entirely in negative terms, they have no vision for the future. They only seek to destroy, never create. It is a demonic worldview that must be exposed and countered.

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