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Émile Armand

Letter from Orleans, France

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January 1915

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Orleans, France, November 8th.

Dear Comrade:

I read in *The Spur* your few lines to Guy Aldred. A large number of our comrades, especially the Individualist Anarchists, have withstood the jingo contagion.

Others have enlisted as volunteers, it is true, but they are a small minority. On the other hand, I am literally terrified by the ideas revealed by the communists and the syndicalists.

As an Individualist Anarchist, I am against war, ever and forever. First of all, because, in a country at war, what few liberties an individual possessed are taken from him. Everything under the arbitrary control of the military administration; every plan of meeting, all literature, every newspaper, must pass the military censor. You no longer belong to yourself, neither your person nor your property. Not only this, but Nationalism and Clericalism develop into frightful proportions. Under the pretext of "unity," the advanced parties give up hard won liberties to the reactionaries, who always profit from times such as these. The military caste, and the clerical caste are the masters of the day. How much of our propaganda can we restore the moment war is over is what I ask? And what will the reactionaries not dare to do against us?

I know well enough that the problem is complex. The victory of "Kaiserism" will not profit our propaganda. But neither do I believe that French jingoism, English imperialism and Tzarism will be favorable for the spread of our ideas. It seems to me that, though I am not a Communist, Kropotkin, Malato, Cornelissen and others could have shown another point of view.

We live in sad days and the future does not appear very clear to me.

I have read with pleasure "The Social Significance of the Modern Drama." You know that "Chanticleer" made rather (from a literary standpoint) an unfavorable impression on us.

Sincerely,

E. Armand.