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Let us deal again with G. Valenti’s article republished by the Reggio Emilia newspaper *Giustizia*.

Valenti dwells on enumerating all the masses that are indifferent or hostile to subversive propaganda. Writing about the United States, he claims that there are 60 (?) million Catholics organized in religious associations who go to church and pray God, and he invites the anarchists to go and make propaganda among those 60 millions, if they want to speed up the revolution. He claims that only 4 and a half million producers out of 40 million are organized in organizations, the majority of which, as a matter of fact, are still opposed to socialism; he also invites trade unionists to start working at organizing workers in unions, if they really want to speed up the revolution. He claims that only one million voters out of twenty-five million voted for Debs in the last polls, he recalls that in the South socialist speakers get beaten and driven out of towns by mobs intoxicated with patriotism; finally, he invites communists to go and propagandize their 21 points in the South, instead of “bugging socialists into accepting them”.

This is all too true and right, if it means that we have to make propaganda and do our best to win over as many individuals, as many masses as possible to the ideas of emancipation.

On the other hand, the argument is completely wrong if it means that the demolition of capitalism has to wait until those 60 million Catholics become free thinkers, all workers (or their majority) are organized for class struggle, and Debs gets out of prison thanks to the majority of voters.

Let us not misunderstand. It is an axiomatic, self-evident truth that a revolution can only be made when there is enough strength to make it. However, it is an historical truth that the forces determining evolution and social revolutions cannot be reckoned with census papers.

Catholics in the United States and elsewhere will remain as numerous as they are, or even grow, as long as there is a class, holding the power of wealth and science, interested in keeping the masses in their intellectual slavery, in order to dominate them more easily. Workers will never be fully organized, and their organizations will always be subject to breaking down or degenerating, as long as poverty, unemployment, fear of losing one's job, desire to improve one's conditions feed the antagonism among workers, and give the masters the opportunity to profit from any circumstances and any crises to make the workers compete against each other. And voters will always be sheep by definition, even if sometimes they happen to kick back.

Given certain economic conditions and a certain social environment, it is proven that the intellectual and moral conditions of the masses stay basically the same. Until an external, ideally or materially violent event comes and changes that environment, propaganda, education and instruction remain helpless; they only act upon those individuals who can overcome the environment in which they are forced to live, in virtue of natural or social privileges. However, that small number, that self-conscious and rebellious minority born by every social order in consequence

of those injustices to which the masses are subject, acts like a historical ferment, which suffices, as it always did, to make the world progress.

Every new idea and institution, all progress and every revolution have always been the work of minorities. It is our aspiration and our aim that everyone should become socially conscious and effective; but to achieve this end, it is necessary to provide all with the means of life and for development, and it is therefore necessary to destroy with violence, since one cannot do otherwise, the violence which denies these means to the workers.

Naturally, the "small numbers", the minority, must be sufficient, and those who imagine that we want to have an insurrection a day without taking into account the forces opposing us, or whether circumstances are in our favour or against us, misjudge us. In the, now remote, past, we were able, and did, carry out a number of minute insurrectionary acts which had no probability of success. But in those days we were indeed only a handful, and wanted the public to talk about us, and our attempts were simply means of propaganda.

Now it is no longer a question of uprising to make propaganda; now we can win, and so we want to win, and only take such action when we think we can win. Of course we can be mistaken, and on the grounds of temperament may be led into believing that the fruit is ripe when it is still green; but we must confess our preference for those who err on the side of haste as opposed to those who always play a waiting game and let the best opportunities slip through their fingers for they, through fear of picking a green fruit then let the whole crop go rotten!

In conclusion, we completely agree with *La Giustizia* when it emphasizes the necessity of making a lot of propaganda and of developing proletarian struggle organizations as much as possible; but we definitely depart from it when it maintains that we should not take action until we have drawn the majority of that inert mass,

which will only be converted by the events and will only accept the revolution after the revolution has begun.