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# Union of Egoists

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-Kevin I. Slaughter

## **What is a UnionOfEgoists.com?**

This is an informational resource provided by Kevin I. Slaughter of Underworld Amusements and Trevor Blake of OVO, initiated in February and publicly launched April 1st of 2016. The website initially focuses on providing historical, biographical and bibliographical details of a few their favorite Egoist philosophers. It is also integrating the archives of egoist website i-studies.com, the former project of Svein Olav Nyberg, and the EgoistArchives.com project of Dan Davies. Further, it will be home to Der Geist, a Journal of Egoism in print 1845 – 1945. UnionOfEgoists.com will be the best resource for Egoism online.

## **What is a Union of Egoists?**

"We two, the State and I, are enemies. I, the egoist, have not at heart the welfare of this "human society," I sacrifice nothing to it, I only utilize it; but to be able to utilize it completely I transform it rather into my property and my creature; i. e., I annihilate it, and form in its place the Union of Egoists."

- Max Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own*

## **What is Egoism?**

"Egoism is the claim that the Individual is the measure of all things. In ethics, in epistemology, in aesthetics, in society, the Individual is the best and only arbitrator. Egoism claims social convention, laws, other people, religion, language, time and all other forces outside of the Individual are an impediment to the liberty and existence of the Individual. Such impediments may be tolerated but they have no special standing to the Individual, who may elect to ignore or subvert or destroy them as He can. In egoism the State has no monopoly to take tax or to wage war."

-Trevor Blake, *Confessions of a Failed Egoist*

# The Storm!

• A JOURNAL FOR FREE SPIRITS •

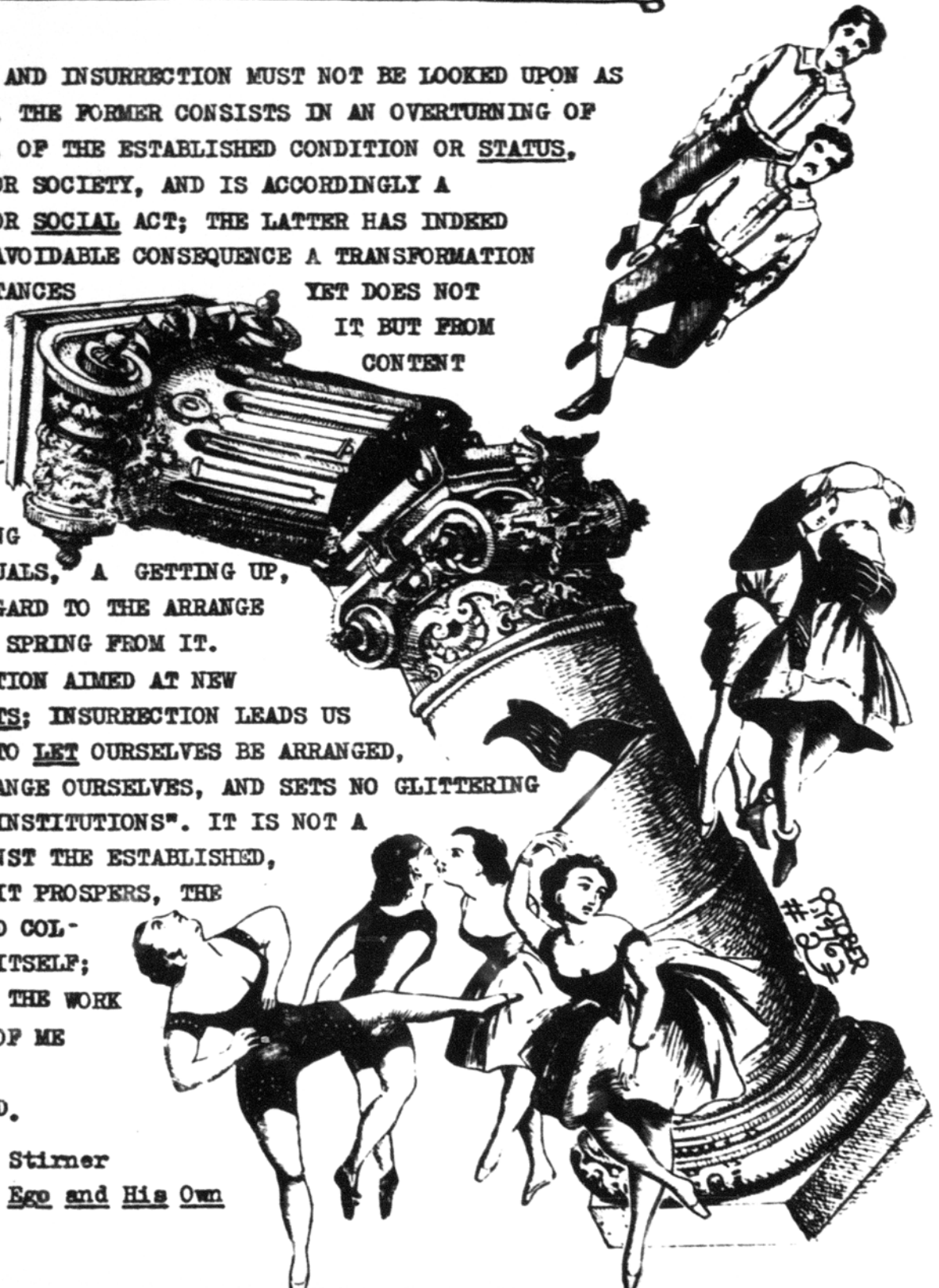
REVOLUTION AND INSURRECTION MUST NOT BE LOOKED UPON AS SYNONYMOUS. THE FORMER CONSISTS IN AN OVERTURNING OF CONDITIONS, OF THE ESTABLISHED CONDITION OR STATUS, THE STATE OR SOCIETY, AND IS ACCORDINGLY A POLITICAL, OR SOCIAL ACT; THE LATTER HAS INDEED FOR ITS UNAVOIDABLE CONSEQUENCE A TRANSFORMATION OF CIRCUMSTANCES

YET DOES NOT START FROM MEN'S DIS- WITH THEM SELVES, IS NOT AN ARMED RISING, BUT A RISING OF INDIVIDUALS, A GETTING UP, WITHOUT REGARD TO THE ARRANGEMENTS THAT SPRING FROM IT.

THE REVOLUTION AIMED AT NEW ARRANGEMENTS; INSURRECTION LEADS US NO LONGER TO LET OURSELVES BE ARRANGED, BUT TO ARRANGE OURSELVES, AND SETS NO GLITTERING HOPES ON "INSTITUTIONS". IT IS NOT A FIGHT AGAINST THE ESTABLISHED, SINCE, IF IT PROSPERS, THE ESTABLISHED COLLAPSES OF ITSELF; IT IS ONLY THE WORKING FORTH OF ME OUT OF THE ESTABLISHED.

- Max Stirner

The Ego and His Own



# THE EYE OF <sup>014</sup> the Storm!

THE STORM! presents its second issue in hopes of arousing the readers' critical and whimsical faculties. Those who try to pin THE STORM! down to a strict ideological position will find it difficult to locate that position on the map. The anarchism of THE STORM! is an open-ended radical (not liberal or conservative) individualism of an eclectic nature. Being always open to new developments and insights, the editor is not afraid to agree with Emerson that "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines." Ideological consistency for the sake of consistency precludes any development of consciousness and sets up the tyranny of fixed ideas. THE STORM!, on the other hand, treats philosophy as the play of ideas; and the journal itself becomes a labor of love, and an indulgence in the gay abandon of intellectual and emotional insurrection. May those who read these pages enjoy in the same spirit.

BEFORE LEAVING THE SUBJECT OF GAY ABANDON...It is my pleasure to note that this summer has been more active than last for gay liberationists here in New York City. A week of demonstrating for gay rights outside the Democratic National Convention culminated in anarchy in the streets as a contingent of gay anarchists danced in celebration of their sexuality under the eyes of television cameras and police lines to Yippie chants of "Nobody for President!" Psychologically it was a joyous thumbing of noses at social morality (yes, a kind of insurrection, to use the word again). The government proved to be an excellent host for the festivities, there wasn't even a cover charge! The government is just a font of free benefits, don't you know? Readers detecting a gay bias in this journal will have their best suspicions confirmed when THE STORM! COMES OUT with its gay freedom issue in the near future. Gay anarchists are invited to send in literary contributions (I will print the best and return the rest). Be forewarned: THE STORM! is anti-copyright, so those not wishing to have their material copied out of these pages (all authors will be credited in this journal) should not send anything in to this closet pirate. Yes, THE STORM! is consistent(!) in flying the black flag.

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE PARTY...Thanks to Lysander Spooner's NO TREASON, many have come to realize that government is nothing but a "secret band of robbers and murderers" (while Richard Nixon enlightened many more who did not read Spooner). Voting, said Spooner, does not always mean consent to the robbery and murder; it is often an act of self-defence against such actions. It is a moot point whether or not self-protection is served by voting for any of the candidates this election year. As Reagan is out of the running, there is no need to elect Carter to keep the California fascist out of the White House. Then again, Ford, being the hand-picked successor to the Dictator, deserves to get crowned (but good!) this time. On the other hand, I'm sure that if you fancy peanut butter you'll want to vote for the Ford - to prevent Carter from manipulating a "peanut shortage" to raise the price of his crap (excuse me, that's "crOp"). Remember the way gasoline prices rose during Nixon's "oil shortage"; while less crude than petroleum, peanut oil is pretty slippery, too. And then there's Roger McBride who, while denying anarchism, is running on the quasi-anarchist platform of the Libertarian Party. The Party takes an uncompromising stand in favor of the abolition

of all victimless crimes, the FBI and CIA, gun control, legal tender, and government subsidies to corporations. At the same time, the Party encourages private arbitration, tax resistance on "moral, legal, or constitutional grounds", and calls for the withdrawal of all U.S. troops from foreign countries, the end of imperialism, and full amnesty for draft resisters. An admirable platform, to be sure, but the powers behind the throne would render the efforts of a libertarian president ineffective, as would resistance from the federal bureaucracy and the military whose interests would be threatened. The "secret band of robbers and murderers" is more powerful than the Libertarian Party and would prove it in a showdown if necessary, as they did against a much less direct threat in '63. At best the Party would provoke State repression and subsequent libertarian revolution. However, there is yet to be a successful uprising of the people in the 20th century; and the U.S. is hardly ready to do without its revered political and economic structures. At worst, the Libertarian Party lends support to the myth that one person is able to "represent" another - and woe the day when we rest easy in the knowledge that our libertarian government in Washington is protecting our liberty! I would rather the day when...

WE REPRESENT N O B O D Y REPRESENTS US... July 4th this bicentennial year was a pure disappointment from an anarchist point of view. The few rallies here on the east coast (Philadelphia and Washington) tended to support liberal or socialist governmental solutions to social problems. The libertarian nature of the American Revolution was ignored or dubiously represented. The next American Revolution would abolish representative democracy, that half-way house between monarchy and self-government or anarchy. Rather than a libertarian (so-called) president, the only candidate whose election will not violate the self-sovereignty of all individuals is...Nobody. Rejected at the Washington rally, Nobody recieved a warm welcome at the rallies outside the Democratic National Convention. How Nobody will fare in this election is anybody's guess; Nobody certainly deserves everybody's support. Those interested can contact the Counter-campaign manager Phil Fellows at 153 E Street, SE Washington, D.C. 20003, or call 202-546-2592. I might add that if Phil burns up much more energy in the struggle, he's liable to evaporate off the face of the earth, thus becoming a nobody, himself! Fundamentalist Christians would interpret this phenomenon as a sign that one is elected by God. I would not count on God's support if I were Nobody as He's been noted for switching sides - and always ending up on the winning side. Rather than solicit His support, we would do better to challenge His rule over the minds of millions and also, along with Nobody for President, support the election of Nobody for God.

SPEAKING OF GOD... John Lennon, whose influence has often challenged that of the diety's in young minds, has been granted permanent residency in the U.S. The Immigration and Naturalization Service granted this privilege (ie. usurped natural right) on July 29, after the rock-star's three year battle against government forces who did not want the outspoken critic of war and government to continue speaking out. Lennon's anarchism is evident in such songs as Imagine, Power to the People, Woman Is the Nigger of the World, and Free the People. The event went unnoticed here on the Upper West Side where Lennon resides - THE STORM! sends its congrats, however, and hopes that John continues in his audacious style.

# LIBERTAT!



DO YOU REMEMBER SPAIN?...  
 Several veterans of the Spanish Revolution did, as they told of their experiences to a large enthusiastic audience on July 19th to raise funds for the INTERNATIONAL LIBERTARIAN LABOR FUND  
 PO Box 733 Cooper Station  
 New York, NY 10003  
 (Tel.212-477-3355).

This group is supporting the re-emergence of the CNT (National Labor Confederation), which was and is a major anarchist force in Spain. The eloquent reminiscing of Spain's Augustin Suchy, New York's Abe Bluestein, and others raised over \$3000 that one night. The experiences of the Iberian anarchists demonstrated that society is possible without a state or elite class of managers, bureaucrats, and capitalists. While the forces of totalitarianism won the first battle in Spain, the war still goes on, and will go on - until the end of history, until the triumph of liberty and anarchy, or the victory of tyranny, stagnation, and death. To the fallen heroes of July 19, 1936 - SALUD!

RIDERS ON THE STORM!... I have received several letters in response to the first issue, two of which are published below. Those sending in letters should indicate whether or not they are for public reading.

A comrade from England writes:  
 I enjoyed reading The Storm! but wonder how much use resurrecting Tuckerian economics will be. If one believes that a "free society" is possible and can be established there may be some point to it, but I don't and therefore think, as Armand put it towards the end of his life, that anarchist individualism "situates itself on the psychological plane of resistance to social totalitarianism"...

S.E.Parker

## The Storm!

A Journal for Free Spirits

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\* \* \*

"Cost - the Limit of Price."  
 - Josiah Warren

A reply to friend Parker:

As always, it is a pleasure to hear from you, and a pleasure to respond. My decision to "resurrect" Tuckerian economics (actually, it never died, but was kept alive by Laurance Labadie and the School of Living in the '50s and '60s) is part and parcel of the whole purpose of THE STORM!, which is to present individualism in its most radical form - as a rejection of ALL power and authority over the individual, ie., as anarchism. The "school" of individualist anarchism, of which Tucker was the chief propagandist, rejected as invasive, authoritarian, and unnecessary, a property system which empowered those who owned the means of production and exchange to collect tribute from the workers who made these resources productive. Income not derived from the performance of an actual service is exploitation, supported by most everyone who hope to some day find themselves in a position to live without working, by grace of a title or privilege granted by the State.

I am not optimistic, given the general desire to rule and exploit others, while thus going along with BEING so ruled and exploited, that a "free society" will ever come to pass. Free associations within the present society is both a possible and desirable goal. I am inclined to believe that the struggle against authority will go on as long as the human race endures - thus I agree with Armand, with whom I feel the strongest affinity, that the prime struggle is one of psychological "resistance to social totalitarianism". But in this struggle, the economic criticisms levelled by Warren, Proudhon, Tucker, AND Armand (himself influenced by Tucker, as you know) can indicate to many the degree of their economic enslavement and move them to avoid or resist exploitation whenever possible. There have been and continue to be many attempts to carry on life outside the state-capitalist economy which are oriented toward the ideal of equitable exchange, which is the economic cornerstone, as I see it, of anarchist individualism. Current experiments in urban and rural co-operatives which attempt to eliminate the "middleman" and substitute an exchange or barter of services is one step away from Warren's substitution of labor-notes for legal tender. What keeps us more enslaved to the "System" than the fact that, in order to live, we must use a medium of exchange created at whim to benefit those who get to exploit us EVERY TIME we use the stuff?! Who doesn't pay sales and income taxes, interest on loans and mortgages, and more and more dollars (pounds, etc.) for the same (at best) goods and services every day? Hopefully, psychological resistance will flower into alternative means of livelihood and interaction outside legal channels.

However, it is more likely that political revolution rather than alternative economies will be attempted as the solution to social totalitarianism. Along with the authoritarian left, most revolutionary anarchists believe that unregulated free exchange, laissez faire, will lead to even greater exploitation than exists under present capitalism. This impression is fostered by the fact that some defenders of free exchange include capitalistic income as the result of free exchange, and not the result of State-created privileges. THE STORM! answers the arguments of anarcho-capitalists with heavy doses of "Tuckerian economics" in order to prevent throwing out economic freedom along with exploitation, which many anarchists have a habit of doing. I am in favor of any attempt to end economic exploitation which does not sacrifice individual liberty. A revolu-

any anarchist movement ignorant of Tucker's arguments for economic freedom will lead to communal totalitarianism. In his later years, Tucker gave up on a peaceful transition to anarchy, but not on its ultimate validity. Why does THE STORM! propagate Tuckerian economics? Tucker himself can best answer that question. 6

Until measures of forcible confiscation, through the State or in defiance of it, shall have abolished the concentrations (of wealth and power, ed. note) that monopoly has created, the economic solution proposed by Anarchism...and there is no other solution will remain a thing to be taught to rising generation, that conditions may be favorable to its application after the great levelling.... If this lesson shall not be learned in season, the past will be repeated in the future... (B.R.T. January 6, 1911)

\* \* \*

Mark Sullivan - I am glad you liked OCCULT TECHNOLOGY. I also welcome the publication of your STORM. I have always hoped there would be a Stirnerite-Egoist Anarchist publication available. I enclose a subscription.

However, I am afraid a serious error lurks in your Anarchism as Politico-Economic Criticism from the Stirnerite point-of-view (to which I subscribe intellectually - my spook directed emotions lag behind!). As I tried to point out in OCCULT TECH, the finance capitalists are consistent Egoists and in a sense, even anarchists, since they effectively put themselves above government, not just verbally, like the rest of us.

They are excellent producers and exploiters as the occasion demands. They are too smart to carry "reductive" means to the point of self-destruction. Only when internecine warfare among themselves war, inflation, etc. are they seriously hurt.

The rational egoist cannot have a firm position against aggression, but simply weigh the long & short run benefits against risk and costs, individually!

Pete Mc Alpine

My correspondent is referring to OCCULT TECHNOLOGY OF POWER, an entertaining expose of finance capitalism, suitable to those not versed in economics, available from Alpine Enterprises, PO Box 766, Dearborn, Michigan 48121.

As I think I make clear in this issue, I am all for "the rest of us" putting ourselves effectively above government and above financiers.

I do not consider these capitalists to be anarchists for two reasons:

- 1) they are not above government, they are dependent upon government, if not "effectively" the government itself!
- 2) I consider the refusal to rule others essential to being an anarchist, not only the refusal to be ruled.

Egoists they certainly are, and my own egoistic desire is to see them put effectively out of the way! Yes, they may be too smart to deliberately carry economic exploitation to the point of self-destruction, yet it is exactly their internecine power struggles causing war and inflation that is self-destructive. We, and they, cannot survive another world war. Individually, my position against aggression is egoistic in that it is not in my long-run interests or short-run tastes to go about beating-up people, climbing social ladders, and "succeeding" at the cost of cutting off my capacity to enjoy the sunlight and love my friends. (MAS)

NEITHER CAPITALIST NOR COMMUNIST ANARCHISM  
 \*\*\*\*\*

While the anarcho-communists and anarcho-capitalists try to convert each other and the unsuspecting human race to their respective eternal truths, there are a few anarchists who sit back and watch the display with an amusement tempered with a slight disappointment. With amusement because these anarchists, who call themselves individualists to distinguish themselves from their comrades on the right and the left, see in the battle over the Idea a re-enactment of the authoritarian propagandisms of our witless society. With disappointment because the disputants who profess to be anarchists do not seem to understand the nature of anarchist philosophy - or anarchist society, should such, in spite of their mutual and endless repudiations, ever come into existence.

An anarchist society is one where no person or group of persons is given authority (by obedient subjects) to enforce their will upon another person(s). An anarchist society is, therefore, one where there is a person or group of persons (usually called government or the State) whose will is given the authority to be enforced upon any and all others. Naked force is not enough to constitute a state - the belief, support, and acquiescence of the populace is what gives to the forces of government their esteemed and protected position. As the anarchist individualist Enzo Martucci has pointed out:

Authority is a power that oppresses in the name of the Sacred (God, Morality, Society, etc.) which it pretends to represent. It is a power which all must adore and serve even if they possess the energy and capacity to overthrow it.\*

The anarchist situation depends upon the blind obedience of the many in order to enforce one general will (so-called) upon the few. A plurality of interests, which is as natural as individual differentiation among us humans, cannot be tolerated by a statist social structure. On the other hand, it is only anarchy that allows for a diversity of interests and does not escalate diversity into violent conflict by attempting to motivate everyone to sacrifice their individual interests to the general interests of the whole (ie. those interests which no individuals in particular hold, but which society holds in spite of the actual interests of its constituents). Unlike anarchy, statist society pushes one ideological outlook (with minor variations when the appearance of freedom of thought is helpful) in order to secure obedience to intellectual leaders in service to the (often hidden) power structure.

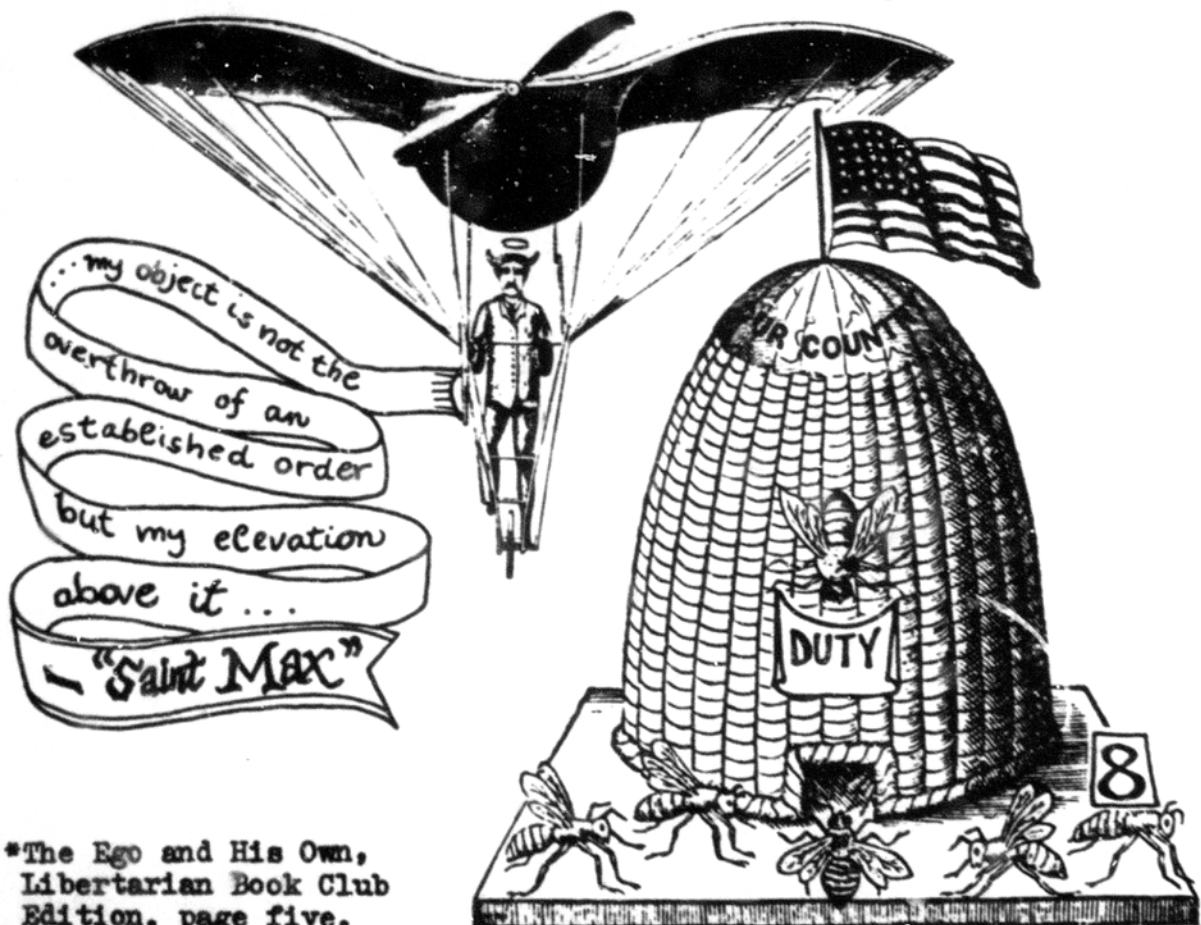
While it is expected that those who desire to rule others will invoke moral reprimands in an attempt to convert (or purge) the ideological deviationist or critical iconoclast, it is interesting to see that self-professed anarchists have also been acting out the same farce. It was such ideological bickering that split the anarchist movement here in New York at the Hunter Anarchist Festival of the Spring of '74. The anarcho-communists would have nothing to do with anarcho-capitalists, ignoring the cry of an attending Wobbly that "excommunication before the revolution means execution after the revolution".

\*Minus One #27, pg.11, "A Note On Authority"



Despite claims on both sides that pure anarchy is the realization of a certain set of economic conditions, neither the anarcho-communists nor the anarcho-capitalists have the final solutions to the problems caused by the state. There are as many forms of anarchy as there are forms of authority to be overcome. There are as many modes of anarchy as there are individuals who choose to live without authority: without the authority of national leaders, supernatural beings, parents, peers, gurus, chemistry, money, and, of course, psychologists, sociologists, economists, and ideologists (including professional radicals and would-be anarchist leaders). The anarchist individualist places nothing and no one above the judgement of his or her experience and reason. The anarchist individualist may agree with certain economists, seek new insights in various philosophies, pursue wealth or bizarre experiences; but she or he AS AN ANARCHIST denies these objects and pursuits any authority in and of themselves, and AS AN INDIVIDUALIST asserts the authority of the self over all those areas of life that directly affect the life of the individual. While most of those who rebel against the social system invoke some "higher authority" to justify their cause (the People, the dialectic, the Constitution, the scriptures, the Revolution, etc.), the anarchist individualist invokes only the desire and ability to be one's own sovereign, as in the words of Max Stirner:

The divine is God's concern, the human, man's. My concern is neither the divine nor the human, not the true, good, just, free, etc., but solely what is mine, and it is not a general one, but is - unique, as I am unique. \*



\*The Ego and His Own,  
Libertarian Book Club  
Edition, page five.

An anarchist society is one where the individual does not surrender personal authority to leaders, causes, or ideologies of any kind. Nothing outside the self is ultimately sacred or absolute in such a society - neither the all-embracing collective of the anarcho-communist, nor the all-producing corporation of the anarcho-capitalist. In the absence of the legal mystification of the group, all persons would be left alone to pursue their own concerns alone or in free associations, and to produce, own, and dispose of the products of their labor on their own terms. The absentee ownership of natural and technological resources would collapse without the protection of the State, allowing for control and ownership to be exercised by the actual occupiers and users, i.e. the productive workers. The absence of legal tender would allow for new forms of money and credit to be developed free from monopoly rates of interest. This would allow workers to easily obtain the capital to become their own employers - abandoning the capitalists, who in order to survive, would have to become their own workers! Finally, in the absence of restrictions on trade, i.e. taxes, tariffs, patents, and copyrights, new knowledge would spread freely to all, improving living conditions while reducing the possibilities of the rise of technocratic ruling class.

An anarchist society could be neither communist nor capitalist as there would be no legal mechanism to enforce the respective claims to property that these systems imply. In anarchy, de jure property would surrender to de facto property; that is, legal title would give way before tangible possession, occupancy, and use. Legal titles to property ensure that those who control valuable productive resources will be able to exact an exorbitant fee for the loan of, while still retaining ownership rights over, these resources. Hence the anarchist Proudhon declared property to be robbery committed by the non-using owners against the non-owning users of the means of production; and the exploitative income derived he called usury. The egoist Stirner responded by saying that if property is robbery, then it is about time for the robbed to engage in their own robbery. He called upon the dispossessed producers, the proletariat, to possess the means of production and extract the full value of their labors for themselves. Neither Proudhon nor Stirner wanted to see the capitalist replaced by society as sole owner of the means of production - rather, they both railed against communism as a new (and very old) form of slavery of the individual.

If men reach the point of losing respect for property, everyone will have property, as all slaves become free men as soon as they no longer respect the master as master. Unions will then, in this matter too, multiply the individual's means and secure his assailed property.

According to the Communists' opinion the commune should be proprietor. On the contrary, I am proprietor, and I only come to an understanding with others about my property. I am proprietor, but property is not sacred.

Property, therefore, should not and cannot be abolished; it must rather be torn from ghostly hands and become my property: then the erroneous consciousness, that I cannot entitle myself to as much as I require, will vanish.

While anarchy would have no legal mechanism to protect peaceful people against "greedy" ones; more importantly there would be no legal mechanism to facilitate the invasions of those who would require more than they had contributed to society. There is no need to solve the problem of capitalistic monopoly by setting up a communistic one, which would eventually be taken over by the greedy ones it was designed to check. As social ownership of the means of production is based upon the fiction of collective identity, it would require a professional class of administrators in order to operate with any efficiency - decisions must be made by thinking individuals, and cannot be made by abstractions such as "Society" and "the People." So in the name of an abstraction, the communist anarchist would perfect the dispossession of the workers begun by capitalism. As they are against intellectual slavery to abstractions, the anarchist individualists are against economic slavery to monopolisms - advocating, instead, a pluralism of individual and freely associated worker-owners exchanging their products and services in an unrestricted market; which assumes free access to the means of production, negating the role of the capitalists as custodians (for their own good, of course) of both natural and financial resources.

In the final analysis, both anarcho-capitalism and anarcho-communism compromise their anarchism to their ideal conceptions regarding property. Both systems require everyone to respect the legal norms defining property titles; thus, both require the surrender of the sovereignty of the individual to the sovereignty of an external agent of society. Whether this agent is called the corporation, the commune, the union, or the capitalist, in reality it is but another incarnation of sacred authority, of government, which Tucker defined as "the subjection of the non-invasive individual to an external will."

Returning finally to Martucci, it is easy to see that "To destroy authority, one must overthrow the Sacred." But how can one overthrow authority by means of either Property or Community when these are considered above question, not to be tampered with, ie. sacred?! When such conceptual ABSOLUTES are invoked the purpose is usually to secure (otherwise it merely reflects) conformity to party lines and official ideology. Anarchism, one would think, is the denial of all social-isms which inevitably crystallize into legal-isms and stifle freedom of action as well as freedom of thought. However, the deadening slavery to abstract absolutes has its grip upon anarchists as well as archists. Struggling with this perhaps unavoidable human condition, the anarchist movement is spinning in endless circles over concepts of society, property, capitalism, and communism - this essay being but another symptom of this condition. Drawing a line between the ideal and the real, there are a few anarchists who have taken (and no doubt will continue to take) playful delight in these battles over the Idea. Iconoclasts all, these anarchists choose to label their personal rejection of all authority and the State as INDIVIDUALIST.

Mark A. Sullivan

# Storm Signals

LIBERTARIAN BOOK CLUB  
Fall Lecture Series  
Thurs. 7:30 pm at  
Workmen's Circle Center  
southwest corner of  
8th Ave & 29th St, NY, NY.

-Oct 14, Abe Klusstein  
"Reflections of the  
Spanish Revolution"  
-Nov 11, Paul Berman  
"The Haymarket Martyrs"  
-Dec 9, Murray Kempton  
"Radicalism as a Career"  
-Winter and Spring,  
James T. Farrell,  
Dwight Macdonald,  
and others.

FREE admission;  
coffee and cake,  
anarchist literature (and  
engaging conversation-ed.)  
\*\*\*\*\*

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\*\*\*\*\*

ANARCHIST LITERATURE (French,  
Spanish, Italian, English)  
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164-38 76th Ave, Fresh Meadows,  
N.Y. 11366 (usa)  
\*\*\*\*\*

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(proceeds to promote anarchist  
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\*\*\*\*\*

IN MEMORIAM

*William Caback*

1902-1976

Quotations from the translator of  
P.J. Proudhon's "General Idea of the  
Revolution in the 19th Century" -  
JOHN BEVERLEY ROBINSON (1853-1923)



Whether Government is organized as  
an autocracy, or a monarchy, or a  
democracy, makes no difference, it  
is always the rule of the propertied  
class.

We have yet to learn that, with the  
most benevolent intentions in the  
world, no one can rule over another  
without oppressing him.... If we  
grant power to anybody to order us  
about, we soon find that their notion  
of what is good for us is very differ-  
ent from our own notion.

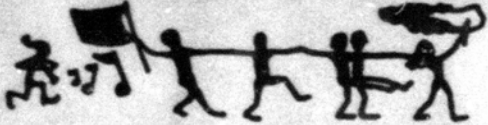
Suppose that the workers should stop  
voting for lawyers, and should vote  
a whole legislature full of workers  
of their own kind. What would result?

If the "reform legislature" should  
attempt any vital change... propri-  
etors would rally such soldiers as  
remained loyal to them, denounce the  
new legislators through such news-  
papers as they still controlled as  
cutthroats and rioters, turn loose  
the troops to shoot them down at  
sight, and call upon all other gov-  
ernments which might still remain in  
the hands of proprietors to aid in  
suppressing the "disorder".

Far better simply to abstain from  
voting, and devote all energy to  
spreading the light!

-Rebuilding the World, 1917

# An Anarchist Primer



by Harold Pickett and Susan Williams



What is "Anarchy"? According to common notions and the popular press, anarchy is chaos. For example, Time Magazine, in several articles, equated instances of social and political chaos with a "state of anarchy" during the Portuguese revolution. This occurred in several successive issues of the magazine. Confusion is chaotic and there is much confusion regarding Anarchism. However, Anarchy does not mean chaos. Rather, it is a practical and idealistic philosophy. A few points need to be briefly clarified about Anarchism.

Anarchy is anti-state and recognizes that it is the State that is chaotic. Examples of bureaucratic inefficiency, waste, and plunder are too numerous to mention. These conditions of governmental systems are taken for granted. Occasional reforms only touch the surface, and reforms are short-lived. Anarchy takes the reins out of the hands of the bureaucratic drivers and returns them to the people, who are then free to determine and control their own existence.

The principle of liberty is fundamental to Anarchism. The individual achieves sovereignty over all areas of life. No exterior authority is forced upon any person. When individuals are allowed to exercise reason and responsibility in their lives, freed from coercion and force, the structures of society are revolutionized. A real and meaningful basis in living is attained, grounded in self-respect and personal dignity.

Anarchism is not anti-organizational or anti-structural, as is commonly thought. However, it does question and redefine the essentials of structures and organizations. Organizations exist for the common good, which serves the interests of the individual. The individual voluntarily works within the structure of an organization to further personal goals and ideals. In an Anarchist collective, individuals work together on equal status with one another, without resorting to a hierarchy of power and authority. Anarchy is opposed to the coercion by which present structures are imposed.

Syndicalism is an example of non-coercive Anarchist theory. It envisions the economic structure of communities as based on organizations similar to trade unions. This is worker control of their own factories and shops-- sharing the actual work, as well as the decision-making and the rewards of their labor. Again, it is a free association of individuals working for their personal, and therefore common, well-being.

Individual initiative in all cases is essential to Anarchism. It must be emphasized that the individual takes conscious and personal responsibility and acts with responsibility for their goals within society. In the context of a collective, the group provides additional means of support to the individual pursuing these goals which reflect the interests and intentions of the collective. These supports can be informational, financial, or moral. But it is the individual who acts. When a collective takes action, it is the acting-together of free individuals.