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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

MINUS ONE

AN INDIVIDUALIST ANARCHIST REVIEW

13

DECEMBER 1968

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THOUGHTS OUT OF SEASON

Individualism, Anarchism and the Police

The Coptic Press recently published a pamphlet on the "Aims and Principles of Anarchism". At least, this is what it purports to be, but in fact it is mostly a reiteration of the usual paternosters of anti-parliamentary socialist rhetoric. It also contains several distortions concerning individualist anarchists, particularly in regard to their attitude towards the police. Not all of these are worth a comment, since its anonymous author seems incapable of writing coherently on the subject of individualism, but three examples of his method are instructive.

First is his citing of an unnamed "super-individualist" as saying "of course I would call in the police to protect my individuality". Who said it and in what context our "anarchist" does not state, but it is clear that the implication is that individualists are in favour of the police and therefore not anarchists. (Perhaps we should be in favour of syndicalist workers' militias?) Where, in fact, do we stand?

Individualist anarchists are under no illusions regarding the police institution. They recognise it for what it is: an organ of government primarily designed to suppress any individuals whose words or actions violate the laws enacted by government and also to enforce the judgements of the civil courts. As such it is the antithesis of anarchism. As such it is the enemy of individualism. Individuality cannot be limited by legality. The individual is a particularity, the law is a generality, and conflict between the two is inevitable.

However, individualist anarchists are concrete entities living in present time. They acknowledge no sacred principles and place themselves at the centre of their lives. Self-survival, then, is the pre-condition for their being. If, therefore, their lives are endangered or their possessions threatened and they are not strong enough to defend themselves, and if they have no-one else on whom they can call, then they might well make use of the police as an expedient for defence and survival. And, I suspect, so would the anti-state collectivists of the Coptic Press, despite their show of moral righteousness. Only a person possessed by the sacred would not, and he is under the sway of a stronger government than any the State can provide.

Second is an attempt, following in the footsteps of Nicolas Walter in "The Listener", to make Donald Rooum a spokesman for individualist anarchism. The anonymous author quotes a statement made by D.R. in a radio broadcast as a proof that individualists favour the police.

Now D.R., while calling himself a conscious egoist, is a libertarian communist, not an individualist. He has been known to make out a case for State comprehensive schools on socialist grounds, and to be surprised when asked what this had to do with anarchism! Yet our

expert on "anarchism" says that Donald Room is "the honest voice of Individualism".....

Third is the malicious accusation that "the school of Benjamin Tucker - by virtue of their 'individualism' - accepted the need for police to break strikes so as to guarantee the employers' 'freedom'."

This is an accusation made before from the same quarter and it is time it was nailed. Tucker was not a consistent individualist. His attempt to synthesize Stirner and Proudhon and his concern with social engineering placed him in a kind of limbo between socialism and individualism, to the detriment of the latter. But he did some good work for individualism, nonetheless, especially his publication of the English translation of "The Ego and His Own". For this reason alone, apart from that of intellectual honesty, his name deserves to be cleared of the mud thrown at it.

Tucker did not advocate the use of police to break strikes. What he did say was something rather different and it can be found on pages 259-260 of his book "Individual Liberty", published by the Vanguard Press of New York in 1926. He wrote:

"Conspicuous among the scoundrels who have upheld....monopolies is the editor of the New York 'Sun'. If he tells truth today, he tells it as the devil quotes the scriptures - to suit his purpose. He will never consent to the application of equal liberty in the interest of labour. If only he would, we anarchists would meet him with cheerful acquiescence in its fullest application to the interest of capital. Let Carnegie, Dana and Co. first see to it that every law in violation of equal liberty is removed from the statute-book. If, after that, any labourers shall interfere with the rights of their employers, or shall use force upon inoffensive 'scabs', or shall attack their employer's watchmen, whether these be Pinkerton detectives, sherriff's deputies, of the State militia, I pledge myself that, as an anarchist and in consequence of my anarchistic faith, I will be the first to volunteer as a member of a force to repress these disturbers of order and, if necessary to sweep them from the earth. But while these invasive laws remain, I must view every forcible conflict that arises as the consequence of an original violation of liberty on the part of the employing classes, and, if any sweeping is done, may the labourers hold the broom! Still, while my sympathies thus go with the under dog, I shall never cease to proclaim my conviction that the annihilation of neither party can secure justice, and that the only effective sweeping will be that which clears from the statute-book every restriction of freedom of the market."

No doubt a particularly obtuse type of mentality could construe this passage in the same way as does the author of "Aims and Principles of Anarchism". But to any intelligent reader it will be clear that such a construction could only be made by deforming Tucker's thought.

To finish, I cannot resist quoting our anonymous critic's description of the individualist anarchist carrying out the path he lays down for individualists:

".....and so Super-Ego standing on its own right Man Defying The Universe I Myself The Outsider, Man Incarnate in his Own Destiny, recreates the old Mumbo-Jumbo of the State."

Well, what are you laughing at? Shiver, damn you, shiver!

S.E.PARKER

INDIVIDUALISM - a regard for and emphasis of the individual. In the (from Eng. Am.) field of ethics. those doctrines which dwell upon individual welfare and are based upon the dictates of individual feeling. Under these views, it is taken for granted that if each individual seeks his own highest welfare, social welfare will take care of itself.

MORE ON THE GREEN REVOLUTION

Like all words, the term Green Revolution means different things to different people. Lyman Sargent sees in it only the return to the land. We in the School of Living see more: we see many psychological, educational, economic and political changes towards voluntarism. I myself have never written about the green revolution without saying or implying that our goal (The Green Revolution) involved a new and free land system, a new and free banking system, new and free trade. When legal coercion is eliminated from these basic institutions, the need for and possibility of a Political State is wall-nigh gone.

I agree that under all our present coercive, unethical land, money, and trade systems, "men (and women) are drawn to the cities". Yes, there's music and art there, of a kind, but there are also riots, violence and squalor in the cities. And a host of thoughtful urban people are now fleeing to the hinterlands, there to produce their own art, drama and recreation, as well as their livelihood. One place this trend is spelled out and illustrated in is the May 1968 "Maclean's" of Canada (481 University, Toronto) in a long article on "Green Power". "Ramparts" in California and some of the underground papers are presenting the green revolution too.

But to see the new human culture - the green revolution - in its entirety, as envisioned by Ralph Borsodi, founder of the School of Living, and author in 1928 (!) of "This Ugly Civilization" (Harpers) one must study his latest 600 page book on "Seventeen Problems of Man and of Society". Here is rigorous definition of all the universal aspects of human experience, and examination of the various ways men have dealt with them over the centuries. Here one sees that the green revolution is not some mere notion, or a vague utopia. Here is a consistent probing of all men's experience tested by the basic essence of their nature, i.e., their disposition to act in terms of their own needs and interests, as they conceive them. First, a student examines with Borsodi the four great riddles of men: The Nature of Human Nature, the Nature of the World, the interaction of these two (to seek out Cause and Effect) and the riddle of Truth and communication. Here one is exposed to the major religious, metaphysical, materialist, scientific and humanistic answers men have come up with. The student is faced with the need to make a selection, and is helped to make that selection because the comparison is so clear. Mr. Borsodi does not hide his bias for the rational answers, but he is no dogmatist. He wants each reader to make his own choices. These four great queries constitute one fourth of the book.

Borsodi carries the reader further into four problems in values - into the purpose of his living, into beauty, goodness and economic values. The last half of the book goes into the nine problems of action, - health, occupation, production, distribution, organization, political, institutional and educational areas. In all these, the terms are explicitly defined. The various ways of dealing with them again carefully exposed - the supernal, the objective or materialist, and the pluralist or rational which (for many of us) seem in line with the real nature of the human animals at the centre of them.

The final product of all this probing and wealth of knowledge is a realistic picture of a human culture - i.e., a green revolution. Nor is it only a vision - the ways, the methods, are indicated. Action is basic. And the Way is Freedom.

Hundreds of books for further study are listed in the bibliographies following each of the 17 problems. These too are classified as to whether they deal with the problem according to supernal, materialist or pluralist-rational points of view.

MILDRED J. LOMIS

("Seventeen Problems of Living" by Ralph Borsodi is one of the New Horizon Series of Porter Sargent, Publisher, Boston. It is 8 U.S. dolls. from Heathcote Sch. of Living, Rt. 1, Box 129, Freeland 21653.)

WALKING ON AIR

In the May 1967 issue of Minus One I had an article called "Notes on Individualism" which does not seem to have given complete satisfaction to the few prominent American-born anarchists who read it. It was, they claimed, "rather bland and inadequate". Now the writer of the article, a European anarchist, wants to give some blunt explanations for it, particularly since he was accused in the September-October 1967 issue of A Way Out of "walking on air as far as any practical imperatives of life are concerned."

Tickled to death by such a mild insinuation here is his answer.

Being a born anarchist I was naturally led to chose the individualist shade of anarchism. I did this as soon as I got hold of Stirner's lucubrations in 1898 and found it the only tool that allowed me to reason logically and safely. As soon as I had interpreted Stirner's thinking I felt at ease. I became free from belief, credo, romanticism, poetry, idolatry and so forth. I could think on my own natural ground and born disposition - just what Stirner had expected to produce. Twenty years old, enough elementary information in my mind, and a desire to do and be something and somebody.....

An individualist anarchist such as I feel myself to be may claim to be himself the only possible god he recognizes or admits - passing before any other god. He has a right to anything within his reach, using the Stirnerian slogan: "only two things in existence - me on one side and the world on the other....the world is mine if I am able to appropriate it."

Given this anarchist way of thinking and logically following such a free and simple doctrine (free and abominable, let us admit...) any anarchist may say he is entitled to use the world after his own personal manner. There being nothing above him to obey or *aside?* consider, he may assume any possible right and use it. And so simple is this conclusion that no-one can deny this right. For did not the Creator himself give him full liberty, having made man in his own image and created him free to do whatever he pleased in life, guided by his own interest or not, even using wisdom and vision?

In this article I want to express what I think about individualist anarchism, but I object to being called a "Stirnerite" because I am making use of Stirnerian thinking. I have no social remedy for a pseudo-universal suffering, nor a solution to any social problem. Indeed, I may say that for me there is no standing social problem, any more than there is for bees or termites.

Writing about what one believes is not always very convincing or convenient, but it may lead to an understanding about what I have in or on my mind. In the case of individualism, when Stirner is used and quoted, the job is harder and plainness of speech exposes the writer to misunderstanding, rejection and condemnation. Thus when I claim that I have every right to do as I please - that I have the right to cut your throat, for instance - I run the risk of being taken for a lunatic or an abominable creature.

It might be said that I am exaggerating and will loose all sympathy when I formulate such abominations. But such thinking is not, after all, so false or so impudent as one may imagine when nature offers such good examples in the animal world where innocent, god-made creatures keep eating and destroying one another. The criminal, after all, does not do anything else than what the beasts do and he has as much right to do so as they have.

"Individualist anarchism", then, is the affirmation that an individualist such as I profess to be is entitled in life to all possible rights, that accordingly he may decide to do whatever he

pleases - good, bad, lawful, unlawful, right or wrong - and act after his own appreciation, judgement, conscience, taste, culture, roughness - remaining what nature made him, or becoming what instruction, training or culture may produce, good or evil, however we may denominate our actions and impulses.

It does not at all follow that an individualistically inspired individual is obliged to use such extensive right (but I am not at all saying that he must not follow such naughty inspirations).? A full knowledge of his true interest is necessary and the extensive rights remain. The question is for the individual to know his legitimate and true interest. The point for anarchists is to determine and define it.

I beg to quote Stirner again, where he surely meant to give us the tip on how to solve plenty of our difficulties in life. I translate in my own way: "I walk around the rock barring my way until I have enough powder to blow it up....I do the same with the laws of my country, evading them as long as I have not the strength to destroy them."

Such a statement establishes the original or criminal logic of our friend and master Stirner (St. Max, as Karl Marx called him) and you need not wonder what happened to a young fellow like I used to be around 1900 when I came upon such views. I tried to follow his "tips" on many occasions and broke the laws of my own and others' countries - and paid the price for my rashness.

Here is the police and and life record of L.A.R., otherwise E. Bertran:

Born in Paris 1878. 1895, Paris: 3 months imprisonment as a result of first contact with police as an anarchist. 1897, Brussels: 18 months for contempt of laws and inciting revolt. 1900, London: 9 months hard labour for counterfeiting. 1901, Paris: 5 years reclusion for counterfeiting. 1905, Bristol (England): 7 years penal servitude served in Dartmoor. 1912, Paris: 8 years forced labour for counterfeiting. Deported for life to French Guyana. Escaped from there in 1920. A deserter from the French Army, into which he had been conscripted, L.A.R. was expelled and remained an outlaw all his life, being deported from Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, and Venezuela. Using assumed names and false documents he has lived for 20 years respectively in English, Spanish and Italian speaking countries, and 30 years in French speaking countries.

Anen!

I am not at all disposed or prepared to give any advice tending to encourage people to adopt a criminal career, nor to represent wrongdoing as an admirable or admissible business to follow. This is certainly not my intention or desire as I have been a criminal and paid dearly for it. What I am after is to see things clearly and so arrive at a fit and proper conclusion. Besides, defending crime would be both foolish and childish. *What he, & other followers of Stirner, have never clearly seen & understood is the concept of rights or equal liberties, as defined by F* With so many years behind him a fellow of my complexion, psychology or temperament is practically unable or unfit to lie deliberately and deform his own history when he gets an honest chance to expose and analyse it. I have tried in the foregoing lines to expound the kind of logic I have attempted to follow during my "criminal", or not-criminal, life. I may qualify this logic of mine as individualist-anarchism, you are free to find another definition, not forgetting that I consider myself as an entirely responsible individual, criminal or not. Ranking me among irresponsible individuals would be a mistake. *r/e.g. Kant & Spencer. J.E. 15.227.*

I have not in these pages treated exactly the subject of "illegalism" as I might have done. The reason is that I wanted to give more of my ideas about individualist anarchism. I am not sure I *with arbitrariness as liberty a right.*

have done so satisfactorily. Nevertheless, I think I can sum up some of my ideas regarding such a vast theme:

We have the words unlawful, unlawfulness. An illegalist, of course, is a lawbreaker and we are all lawbreakers one way or another. So with us anarchists "illegalism" has become a doctrinal notion that we may accept as a justified practice. We grant ourselves the right to practice it. We may be right, wrong, whatever you please. I accepted it and followed its inspiration, but what I did with it is open to doubt.....

Coming across the anarchist way of thinking, and more hungry for truth than for any altruistic notion or inspiration, the Stirnerian system gave me a strong kick and has led all my life. You may remark that such a way of thinking is wrong, abominable, shocking, contemptible. So, like you, would conclude many of my fellow creatures. But what do I care? You and my fellow creatures have not so far been able to shake my own conclusions about this question. Seventy years after accepting that new truth I keep thinking the same way. In fact, how could I think differently? It is so natural, so clear to me, following a natural way of thinking egoistically, without deviation. Read Stirner, read him well. He offers a programme. The question is to extract from his writings this programme and to extract it wisely.

E. BERTRAN

CONTROVERSY-

I was surprised to see in Minus One a long article by the normally astute Francis Ellingham to the effect that anarchism necessarily involves the belief that everyone will one day become anarchists, and taking to task Sid Parker for asserting the contrary.

Francis E. should realise that the encyclopedias and dictionaries he quotes to "prove" his point get their definitions from anarchist communist sources, especially the definition of anarchism that appeared in the Encyclopedia Brittanica some 60 years ago written by Kropotkin who, as an anarchist communist, naturally stated that a belief in the practicability of world-wide anarchy is an essential part of anarchism. In 1886 Kropotkin was saying that Europe would be a-narchist before 1900. After 1900 he postponed it for a bit. English anarchist communists in 1944 said it would come in 1945. I don't know what date they have their eyes on now, but I am sure they are stupid.

Francis E. does not take into account the fact that there are in the world a few people with libertarian temperaments and inclinations, a few people with blatantly authoritarian ones, and that the mass of humanity comes somewhere in between. You can read about this in books on genetics, psychology, etc., but you don't need to read books. Your own experience of day to day living should tell you that this is so.

This situation can never be changed except slightly and Sid Parker is quite right in saying that anarchists will always be a small minority. Anarchists don't have to believe in world-wide anarchy as something that will eventually come about.

with individual "consumers" free to choose their preferred degrees of liberty or security for themselves, at their own risk & expense - & for their own benefit. JEFF ROBINSON benefit we would see great changes soon, with the positive ones being more & more asked for. 7.1.15.1977.
I think that S.E. Parker's reply to my piece on "permanent protest" (see our respective articles in Minus One, No. 22) makes many valid points. But he mis-states the main issue.

He says the issue is whether or not a true anarchist must believe in the practicability of an anarchist society - an expression I

never used. I spoke of the possibility of an anarchist transformation of existing social systems, but I did not say the result would be a new system. Rather, I think it would be the "generalized anarchy" of which Parker himself says a true anarchist may believe in its practicability. It would not be a society - i.e. not a static system of human relationships for the purpose of sustaining a collective life-process. It would be a spontaneous Stirnerite "union of egoists", or multiplicity of such unions, based on the creative, unsystematized intelligence of the individual.

The issue is whether or not the true anarchist must believe in the practicability of some kind of anarchist social transformation. I say he must, Parker says he need not.

My quotations from various commentators on anarchism were meant to show that the word "anarchism" means the belief that our existing authoritarian social systems could and should be transformed into some way or ways of going on without authority - i.e. that an anarchist must by definition believe in the practicability of an anarchist social transformation. Parker says he cannot see why he should define anarchism as the commentators do. The reason is that the meaning of a word, unless it is a technical term, is determined by the way it is customarily used by educated people; and I take it that the way "anarchism" is so used is the way the commentators all seem to use it. It is not used to mean just a personal negation of authority. A man who believes in a "natural law" that government is always and everywhere inevitable is not an anarchist in normal parlance, whatever his personal attitude to authority may be. An anarchist is an advocate of anarchy, i.e. of absence of government.

Parker says that to regard anarchism as necessarily involving some concept of social transformation is to have what I once called a "socialized mind". But what I meant by such a mind is one that cannot think of human beings except as totally conditioned members of society - i.e. as cells in a collective social body. Some anarchists are "socialized" in that sense, and can only think in terms of building an anarchist system. But those who believe in the unconditioned, creative intelligence of the individual, and who think in terms of a generalized anarchy arising from that intelligence, are not "socialized". Yet even they hope for the transformation of all static systems into spontaneous unions. Stirner - surely the least "socialized" of men - spoke of a "German union".

Parker considers it vain to hope for a generalized anarchy, because he thinks Nature has ordained that the majority of men must always prefer submission to authority. I cannot see how the existence of such a "natural law" can be proved. Parker argues that the majority always has preferred authority. But is that a convincing proof? Arguments of the form "X always has happened, therefore X always will happen" may be convincing when they concern such matters as the rising of the sun, or the boiling-point of water, but are not always reliable. And, as I tried to show, there are good reasons for doubting the reliability of such an argument when it concerns such changeable, unpredictable creatures as human beings.

When I wrote "mankind is still in its infancy" I meant that mankind has existed for only a tiny fraction of the time it will exist (barring accidents). That hardly implies "a teleological attitude which reduces the individual to nothing" - but is one good reason for refusing to assume that the present preferences of mankind will never change. The point is that Parker is making an enormous generalization about human beings although the overwhelming majority of possible human beings have yet to be born.

Parker demands evidence, as opposed to "hopes", that a generalized anarchy will actually come. But surely the burden of proof rests on him: he must show it will never come. I only say it might. Whether it will I don't know. Indeed, how could anybody know?

x) Given free market choices individuals tend to make them, in every sphere. Freedom options should become collectivist choices of volunteers only. Collectivism a maximum individualism only upon individual choice - & as long as that preference lasts. J.E. 15.8.97.

What sort of "evidence" would be conclusive? Great changes in human affairs are not heralded by conclusive evidence of their approach. There may be little sign yet of a generalized anarchy, but the only convincing sign would be - the generalized anarchy itself.

Parker rightly says that we do not have to wait for a social transformation before we can negate authority for ourselves; that the "realization of the ego" should not be made dependent on the realization of the "social organism"; and that all attempts to build a new "social order" are to be deprecated. But nothing I wrote conflicts with those points. I have no schemes for social salvation I do not preach self-sacrifice or self-discipline for the sake of some future Utopia, and I am not asking anybody to "wager his life" on anything. I simply hope that one day, through the spontaneous, unorganized action of "egoistic" or psychologically free individuals, certain widespread changes - changes that nobody will plan or even, in any detail, foresee - will naturally take place. Even if I hardly expect such changes, I can still believe in their practicability; and, without compromising my individuality, I can still hope for them.

FRANCIS ELLINGHAM

Francis Ellingham stretches words to breaking point in his criticism of my position. All three of the encyclopedic definitions of anarchism that he quotes lay it down that an anarchist must be a believer in an anarchist society. Having used these definitions to assert I am not an anarchist because I am a social pessimist, he claims that he does not believe in an anarchist society either, but that he is an anarchist whereas I am not! This piece of verbal juggling he performs by ringing the changes with euphemisms like the "transformation of existing social systems" and "social transformation". In fact, his emphasis on these terms makes me suspect that he is much closer to believing in the compatibility of anarchism and society than he seems to think. ②

For myself, Max Stirner summed up the individualist anarchist approach to this question when he wrote: *for anarchists, not necessarily for non-anarchists! J.Z. 15.8.97*
 "My object is not the overthrow of the established, but my elevation above it; my purpose and deed are not political or social, but (as directed to myself and my oneness alone) an egoistic purpose and deed."

It is no part of my position "that government is always and everywhere inevitable". Most people in every known time have needed and acknowledged a government in one form or another (State, morality, priesthood, custom, etc.), and I see no convincing reason to suppose that this will not always be the case. But this does not mean that government has to be acknowledged as necessary for those who are strong enough to do without it. Anarchy can certainly exist for them to the extent that they have the power to affirm it. Indeed, one could perhaps say that, in this sense, anarchy is not a place, but an individual state of mind and will.

Ellingham has completely misunderstood my remarks on "natural law". A "natural law" is not something that "Nature has ordained" as he says. It is, I repeat, a description of the behaviour of phenomena. If one observes that water always boils at 100° C one can describe this as a "natural law". No-one and nothing orders this to happen, it just does. Ellingham confuses law as command with law as description - and personifies nature into the bargain.

To write of mankind being in its "infancy" is to imply that it can develop to "adulthood", not simply that it has existed for only a small fraction of its potential span. In other words, Ellingham implies that mankind has a goal. Human "development", however, is not an up-escalator, and my generalisations about "are made on the only basis that they can be made - what has happened, not what I would like to happen.

② There are 4 forms of anarchism, anarchy in society. S.B. PARKER To each his own. Agreement on THIS aim seems at least theoretically possible. In other spheres we too practise this kind of tolerance every day, taking it for granted. 1967, J.Z. 15.8.97.

SIX INTO ONE WON'T GO...

"Individualism is not an object of proselytism. It has value only in its own eyes as a personal sensation of life."

Georges Palante

"Art in the only thing and that is inadequate."

Oscar Wilde

"I know you approve of it, but do you enjoy it?"

Vera Krischek

The conscious egoist who is hopefully, half-heartedly, or perhaps even desperately, clinging to his anarchism, has never produced any satisfactory explanation of how he comes to be in such a pretty pickle.

Jean-Pierre Schweitzer, in his three essays on individualist anarchism called "O Idios", makes an attempt, and then not surprisingly retires into "conscious schizophrenia". I believe this "spiritual or mystical activity" is made necessary because the author is:

- (a) beyond good and evil
- (b) an individualist anarchist
- (c) an amoralist
- (d) a conscious egoist
- (e) a nihilist
- (f) a conscious schizophrenist

In his essay "Ethics" J-P. S. states: "In fact right and wrong, good and evil, are not part of our vocabulary - we are beyond right and wrong, good and evil."

He does not indicate which one of the people listed above this statement applies to. If we accept his statement at its face value then the author would be in the happy state of the observer on the mountain-top smiling down on the rest of us poor, mixed-up, illogical, vice-and-virtue-ridden, contradictory mortals. But as the rest of the pamphlet emphatically proves - he is very much 'one of us'.

From the same essay, under the heading of "Conscious Egoism", we have: "selfishness, violence, cruelty, untruth, prejudice (and anarcho-syndicalists, communists, humanists, capitalists, fascists, blacks, gypsies, politicians, the working class, the State, prisons, capital punishment, etc. P.P.) are neither right nor wrong, they are all part of human nature and as such we accept them as we must accept our skin whether it be white or black."

We have not yet widely accepted them as patriarchistically realized competing societies or communities of volunteers! J.E.

The examples are added in order to enlarge upon the theme which J-P. S. has set out on. I take it that "beyond good and evil" acceptance would cover everything that one has knowledge of, and I do not think that even J-P. S. would disagree that selfishness, violence, etc. are not in anyway confined to one section of society, nor in anyway lacking in the people or institutions I have listed above. I assume that they are to be accepted in the true "beyond good and evil" fashion about which he is so adamant. Yes indeed, for in the chapter on "Psychology" we have a quotation from Terence which says that "Nothing human is alien to me" and he again emphasizes that this includes "selfishness, cruelty, violence and other anti-social tendencies". Also, an "anarchist psychology, being concerned primarily with the individual should acknowledge all human instincts, inclinations (or urges) irrespective of their social value."

Now we come to the individualist anarchist.

In "Anarchic Realism" he states "The individualist is aware of all human urges - and he ACCEPTS them....he knows that it is quite useless and harmful to try and suppress or eradicate psychological inclinations which are as inherent in Man as the branches 2 in a tree." Why, then, protest against anything?

In "Politics" we have a definition of individualist anarchism:

".....a rebellion against what IS, a declaration of what SHOULD NOT BE, but not of what SHOULD BE.....as anarchists we reject responsibility, as we reject all forms of coercion, whether it be external or internal."

So, up to the present, we are in the uncomfortable position of being "beyond good and evil", accepting all the vices of human nature (other people), and all that entails, as well as rejecting practically everything that is.

I think that J-P. S. would do well to take the advice of Max Stirner, whom he quotes, "If I abandon what exists, it dies and starts rotting." If one abandoned, ignored, left alone the people and institutions one disapproves of, dislikes, hates, they would probably do just that. But fortunately for all of the people and institutions of which J-P. S. disapproves he does not abandon them, he rejects them, he very definitely calls attention to them, as he does the anarcho-communists and all the other pseudos and collectivists. He criticises and condemns, thus ensuring their continued existence, for dispute and conflict are indispensable if anything is to remain alive and kicking. remain

In "Politics" things are further complicated by the fact that "anarchism is not idealism." "It (anarcho-individualism) is spontaneous" and he (anarcho-individualist) never feels under any obligation to rebel. He chooses when and how to rebel - he pleases himself. Rebellion was made for man, not man for rebellion."

I take it that this is philosophical wishful-thinking, thought up under the influence of alcohol or during some other spiritual or mystical moment when J-P. S., a modern Prospero, could conjure up the State, humanists, pseudo-anarchists, at will, and then, when the whim moved him, could dissolve them.

Now for nihilism.

The Little Oxford Dictionary defines nihilism as: "Philosophic doctrine that nothing has real existence; a form of scepticism; views of Russian revolutionaries opposed to all constituted authority."

To quote J-P. S.: "...and if nihilism is the negation of moral values then we are nihilists." And why not dustmen, bookies, bricklayers, professional wrestlers?

So here he is, an anarcho-individualist-amoral-conscious-egoist-beyond-good-and-evil-nihilist. The glue which is going to stick this poor, illogical, nonsensical, irrational creature together is - labelled "conscious schizophrenia", and pretty thin stuff it is, too. It is my belief he is in need of something stronger.

He declares that all men are, in fact, schizophrenists - the individualist alone is fully conscious of it!!! Men have probably been conscious of their duality since the year dot and it is most certainly a dilemma which every creative and aware individual has to face. But no such small consideration would deter J-P. S.. Pity the poor, ignorant, unenlightened, undualist, mono, simple-minded rest of us!

"Due to the rationalist 'fashion' many people today try to find some intellectual backing to support their emotional volitions, attempting, as it were, to 'rationalize the irrational'."

From all that he has written I think that J-P. S. ought to number himself among these many people, but he insists that the anarcho-individualist makes no such attempt! "He simply accepts the duality (sexuality?) of his personality. He deliberately operates a dichotomy between his reason and his emotions - and adopts an attitude of conscious schizophrenia."

Oh boy! Some call it conscious schizophrenia, a spiritual or mystical activity, rationalizing - and others call it God.

I am all eyes to learn which parts of the creature 0 Idies are And when the anarcho-individualist and conscious egoist is in need of moral support, and intellectual and social exchange, he has, so we are told, an association of egoists to turn to.

the product of J.P.S.'s reason and which of his emotions. As he As a simple matter of fact no such association exists as far as London is concerned. Nevertheless, this association is a "voluntary and temporary agreement which the individual can cancel at any time, should the association cease to suit his purpose."

Here then is the 'pipe dream' of the conscious egoist; this is what he would dearly love to be a part of, but due to the inherent schizoid tendencies and contradictions in his ideas, and his individual psychological makeup, it is in all probability an impossibility. A 'pie in the sky' such as the anarcho-communists and syndicalists supposedly suffer from. There is no more merit in declaring oneself an anarcho-individualist and conscious egoist, than in declaring one's anarcho-communist or syndicalist sympathies.

"Man is dowered with the gift of conceiving himself as he is NOT, from which flow all the tragedies of history and of individual life."
/and comedies

"Life, this universe in which I live, is futile, perfect, evil, joyous and beautiful, simultaneously."

? "I do not believe there is any such thing as Object. All is Subject. All is I. All is Presence. All is One. There is nothing else but the Absolute.

(Benjamin de Casseres on Jules de Gaultier)

PAT PARKER.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE I.T.

Having been an almost consistent reader of the International Times for quite a while, I must take this opportunity of congratulating Peter Stansville on his article in I.T. No. 39 entitled "Consciousness Is Our Country".

As far as I can remember this is the first article in any of the "hip" papers to contemplate an alternative to all "systems". Perhaps we shall have no more of 'his revolutionary nonsense, whether it be in the guise of Fascism, Communism, Syndicalism and all the other institutional formulas that continually bombard our minds.

Why must the swing be away from revolution? Simply because revolution seeks to change one system for another, and as such can only be a political or social act, not a personal one. It amounts to asking: Who should rule me? Instead of: Why should I be ruled? When this happens one ceases to be a revolutionary and becomes an insurrectionary. Don't kid yourselves that this is a play on words. It isn't. It is sufficient for the reader to examine the meaning of the above questions.

Okay! Let's put the whole drama of 'Man' into perspective. Up until now "Man" has been a social animal, that is he prefers to confine his activities within society. At this point I would like to give a basic definition of society:

"A society is a group who live and work together, regarding themselves as members of the group, and feeling towards it an emotion best described as belonging." (Pears Cyclopaedia)

I can remember a particular programme on T.V. that brought the deliberately operates the dichotomy - i.e. is in complete control - he should be able to answer without hesitation.

MINUS ONE is edited and published by S.E.Parker, 2 Oresett Terrace, London, W.2. Subscription to six issues is now 6/6 (God bless the G.P.O.!) U.S.A. 1 dollar.

whole issue of society to light, It was one of Malcolm Muggeridge's renderings and was entitled "Why Law and Order?" Out of the mish-mash of personality-slurs and petty accusations by both anarchists and police, the one clear point that emerged was that in any society there will be 'norms', and the institutions to carry them out.

So Peter Stansill we come to the crux of the matter. You seek an alternative to all "systems". Very well, there is only one alternative and that is for you to determine your actions from your own motives. Indeed your actions will affect even the oldest of the authoritarian bodies: the family - as it will affect your relationship with every institution. But this is your problem, and only you can decide it. The only help I can give you is to say that if you have the will to determine your existence then a major obstacle has been cleared.

As an ending to this letter, may I recommend a book that may give you a clearer understanding of the points I have made. It is by Max Stirner and is called "The Ego and His Own". It is published by the Libertarian Book Club, New York.

I.A.

ENDPIECES.....

The reader of "Six Into One Won't Go" is advised to re-read, beg, borrow, steal or approach the author for a copy of "O IDIOS"

Pat Parker

Les Amis de Jules Bonnot, an individualist anarchist group, can be met every Sunday night at the Marquis of Granby, Cambridge Circus, W.C.2. 7.30 p.m. onwards....

Hem Day has recently published a book devoted to Zo D'Axa (Joseph Gallard) 1864-1930.

Editor of "L'Endehors" and "Feuille", author of "De Mazas a Jerusalem" he was an individualist par excellence, an "anarchist outside anarchy" as Adolph Rette described him.

This vitriolic writer was also a wit. One of his stunts was to announce that he was putting up a donkey as a candidate for the French Chamber of Deputies. He led the donkey through the streets of Paris. When the police intervened, he promptly abandoned the donkey and announced "It is no longer of importance, it is now an official candidate."

On another occasion he was deported from Jaffa to Marseilles by ship. Being a "dangerous person" he was put in chains. When some of his fellow-passengers asked him what was the matter, he replied: "I cut up an old woman into thirty pieces and it has given me a headache."

"Zo D'Axa: mousquetaire-patricien de l'an-archie" is obtainable from Hem Day, Boite postale 4, Brussels 29, Belgium. Price 80 Belgian francs.