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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*

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Six Pence

**MINUS  
ONE**

No. Thirteen-

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1966



John Campion

- Comme elles sont nymphétiques L..

(How nymph-like!)

## A BRACE OF MORALISTS

S.E.Parker

The moralists are always with us. Even when their doctrines are clothed in "secular humanism" or "individualism" and sprinkled with anarchic phrases, "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not" are never far away, nor, by the logic of their position, the desire for authority to enforce them. A typical brace of these moralists are Ronald Fletcher, Professor of Sociology at the University of York, and Robert LeFevre, Dean of Rampart College, Colorado.

In his booklet "Ten Non-Commandments" (Pioneer Press, 1964), Ronald Fletcher has a few pertinent things to say. He points out that this age is no more "degenerate" than former ages. He sees no good reason why people should not enjoy sex before and outside of marriage. He is for tolerance towards sexual "deviants" and argues that "natural" - i.e. heterosexual - relations may sometimes be more "immoral" than "unnatural" - i.e. homosexual - relations: "The fact that one kind of sexual impulse is repugnant to you is not a matter of ethics, but of taste only."

However, he does not stay this anarchic course for long. His first "non-commandment" cries out: NEVER ACCEPT AUTHORITY, but his eighth and ninth exhort us to KEEP THE LAW and COMMIT YOURSELF TO ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP. One might have guessed that somewhere there would be a nigger in the woodpile.

The reason he gives for keeping the law is so naive that one can hardly believe he is a professor of sociology. "The law exists," he says, "for positive reasons: to ensure the social order which is necessary for a maximum degree of liberty and personal fulfillment. If you find it sadly lacking in many ways (which it is), then try to improve it, and everyone will be on your side." Oh yeah?

Mr. Fletcher cannot have it both ways. If we should "never accept authority...unless, in your own seriously considered view, there are good grounds for it," "if you, in the last analysis, are the only judge of what seems right and feasible to you..." then how can we "keep the law"? Law is the codified will of those in authority and reflects the coercive attitudes of the crowd. Its existence depends on the acceptance of authority, not its non-acceptance.

To accept Mr. Fletcher's first "non-commandment" means cutting away the foundations of all laws outside the individual's own "self-given laws". Like so many liberals who say they believe in the supremacy of the individual "conscience", however, he flinches away from the logic of his own belief and lets authority in at the back door after having thrown it out of the front.

It is not surprising, therefore, that he equates law-breaking with anti-individual behaviour, nor that he asserts that the realization of individualism and the achievement of a rich inward personal life....can only be made possible and sustained by

commitment to full citizenship," which he defines as "a continual responsible concern...for the tasks of government."

But it is precisely because I am an individualist, and want to achieve a rich inward life, that I reject law as a denial of my selfhood. And the same goes for the "cocern" for government that Mr. Fletcher wants to make a moral duty. If I am indeed "the only judge of what seem right and feasible" to me, then I challenge him to show by what "right" he justifies his wish to impose his "non-commandments" on me, for that is the upshot of his "keeping of the law" and "full citizenship".

On another page Kerry Thornley states that Robert LeFevre is "anarchistic in the tradition of Lysander Spooner". If he is the anarchistic tradition has suffered degeneration, for in his pamphlet "Autarchy versus Anarchy" (Pine Tree Press, 1965) LeFevre goes to great and often confused lengths to disassociate himself from the imputation of anarchism. Not only does he reveal himself as limping way behind Spooner's pioneering work, but also as another moralist in "individualist" clothing. Although he has some good words for Spooner and awards him the dubious honour of being the "father" of "autarchy", he thinks that Spooner suffered from being influenced by "anarchistic reasoning about economics" and was in this sphere a fellow-traveller of such terrible "economic interventionists" as Josiah Warren and Benjamin Tucker. (These two are usually denounced by socialists as being neo-capitalists. Now they are denounced as neo-socialists. There's no pleasing some people!)  
interest. paten

How Warren and Tucker, who wanted to abolish monopoly by free competition and were out-and-out voluntarists, can be accused of "economic interventionism" I don't know, but it is not my concern here. What is my concern is that Mr. LeFevre, like other "right-wing individualists", believes in private property as a "total concept" and implies that any criticism of this concept is tantamount to "immorality".

? What his argument boils down to after the verbiage has been cleared away is a moralism as threatening to the individual as the collectivism he attacks.

? From Mr. LeFevre's standpoint individualism is seen as a means to the end of a particular economic system - a laissez-faire capitalism based on the "total concept" of private property. Which means: the individual exists to serve the concept which is total and moral. Just as collectivism denies freedom of choice to the individual by making the "social" total, so does LeFevre by making private property total and untouchable. Both tie the individual to one form of economic relationship and are thus authoritarian. (A veteran American individualist anarchist recently wrote to me that "individualists" like LeFevre "far from advocating any change in the prevailing system of land tenure, with absentee landlordism and the monopolistic holding of valuable sites by a handful of a population...lean over backwards in validating the status quo.")

The individualist anarchist position is quite different. From this standpoint an economic relationship is seen as a means to the end of individualism. Which means: private property is only an expedient which exists to serve individuals. It is not "total", it is not a sacro-sanct "implicit right", and it can be used or discarded according to whether or not it is suitable to these ends. Such a view indeed, in LeFevre's words, "would permit nothing to be valued above the individual's own ego". It is therefore as much opposed to a moralism that would make private property an absolute value as it is to a moralism that would make the collective an absolute value. It is above all pluralist and pragmatic, a tool of the individual.

The moralists are always with us. But so, fortunately, are the "nihilists" - those who believe in nothing on authority.

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### ON COMPETITION

Laurence Labadie

Most people cannot see any further than their noses. Every individual person may be looked upon as one of many caught in an avalanche, each trying to make comfortable his immediate surroundings and oblivious of the general movement. Whole civilizations have lived in misery without knowing it, for how could they if there were nothing to compare their condition with?

People can suffer almost anything as long as they see that the other fellow is suffering the same ills. But would the ills be considered ills? The phenomenon is called gregariousness or togetherness.

Some people are averse to competition and allow the words "co-operation" and "humanism" to drool from their mouths, apparently meaning thereby a large blob of protoplasmic homogeneity that lacks all individuality. It is not individuals and their liberty that concerns them, but rather some sort of well greased squirming mass that would seem to be analogous to the brains from which such amorphous "ideas" emanate.

But if there be no competition, then there can be neither comparison nor any real standard of evaluation. Competition is but a synonym for individuality. If there were no individuality, that is no difference between humans, then for certain there would be no competition.

But does individuality imply conflict? It does only to the lackwit who aspires for togetherness in co-operation. And the reason for this lies in the fact that the combination of differences inevitably causes conflict or suppression of individuality.

The truth is that harmony, or at least lack of discord, comes from disassociation, and the opportunity for independence.

## BEAUTY..

Pat Parker

We live in an age which is obsessed with physical perfection.

Looks are not a virtue. Beauty is not merely physical perfection - it is an emotion, it is aliveness, it is response. Beauty is that which unifies, that which is fully expressed, free. Desire is after beauty.

Physical perfection is pleasing to the eye. All that most people seem to ask is that you should be good to look at. A man wants a woman who will be admired, desired, and envied by others. Therein lies her attraction and desirability - she is a possession. It is not the woman whom the man cares about most, but the approval of other people. It is what they think of him because he owns a desirable woman that is important.

It is cruel that so many people never blossom into real beauty because they are inhibited by people who disapprove of them for not measuring up to the standard of physical perfection of the age in which they live.

Looks are not a virtue. They are an accident of birth. We should never be made to feel guilty because we do not have the kind of face or figure that happens to be in vogue.

Disapproval and fear of ridicule thwart growth and create inhibitions, which is why so-called plain people are often defensive and aggressive. Their sensitivity to criticism creates a vicious circle. In cartoons, novels and films the plain woman is the battle-axe who nags, whereas the good-looking woman is sweet, feminine, loaded with sex-appeal and talks little.

We live in an age which is obsessed with physical perfection.

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## THE SLAVE - James Oppenheim

They set the slave free, striking off his chains...  
Then he was as much of a slave as ever.

(From "An  
Anthology  
of Revolu-  
tionary  
Poetry")

He was still chained to servility,  
He was still manacled to indolence and sloth,  
He was still bound by fear and superstition,  
By ignorance, suspicion, and savagery....  
His slavery was not in his chains,  
But in himself....

They can only set free men free....  
And there is no need of that;  
Free men set themselves free.

## LEFT, RIGHT AND CENTRE

The longitudinal polarization of the U.S. political spectrum is a little-understood development. Yet it accounts for much that has happened here within the decade (including the "Conservative student revival" of the 1950s and the "New Left movement" of late).

Briefly the situation is:

**LEFT**— There is a totalitarian Left, a coalition of State socialists of the FDR style, that has been around since the early days of the New Deal. These people form the loyal opposition to the LBJ foreign policy, favour increased centralization of State power at home, and oppose all brands of anarchism. Vice President Hubert Humphrey is a spokesman. This group is known as the Old Left.

**RIGHT**— There is also, of course, a totalitarian Right, an alliance of police statistes who came into peak power under the leadership of McCarthy. This group supports the general direction of the Administration foreign policy to the degree that it tends towards escalation of the war. Barry Goldwater is a spokesman. This is the New Right and it serves as loyal opposition to the LBJ domestic policy of welfare legislation.

**CENTRE**— The totalitarian middle is represented by the rule-by-consensus of the present Administration. It is a manifestation of the wishes of most average Americans. It supports the Viet Nam war and the domestic welfare policy as well. It tends to be increasingly intolerant of dissent. This group favours, and has legalized to some degree, suppression of "extremist" opinion on both Left and Right. Those who have a vested interest in maintaining this so-called Middle-of-the-road milieu are often referred to, by both Left and Right, collectively, as the Establishment. It is a moot point whether the Establishment controls the voters or the voters create the Establishment.

In addition there exists the following "parallel spectrum":

**LEFT**— The libertarian Left, known as the New Left, made its first successful challenge to State power as the Free Speech Movement at the University of California. It is a neoanarchist revolutionary alliance made up of civil rights workers, peace activists, Old Left civil libertarians, Old Left Utopians, and - lately - a handful of Old Right economic theoreticians such as Murray N. Rothbard, Ph.D., author of "Man, Economy and State (Van Nostrand, New Jersey, U.S.A.). A prominent spokesman is Mario Savio. The New Left represents a radical opposition to the present U.S. foreign policy and takes a sceptical, often hostile view of the domestic welfare state.

**RIGHT**— The Old or libertarian Right was last politically represented by Senator Robert Taft. It lost power after his defeat

within the Republican Party by Eisenhower. Today it is a small but steady group of laissez faire economists, isolationist pacifists, and individualistic Conservative intellectuals (as opposed to God, Mother, and Country types of the New Right, such as William F. Buckley, Jr.) One effective spokesman is Robert Lefevre of Rampart College, Colorado, whose efforts are primarily responsible for an Old Right resurgence in growth during the last five or so years. (Lefevre and some other modern Old Rightists are anarchistic in the tradition of Lysander Spooner.)

**CENTRE--** There has not been much of a libertarian Middle until recently. But one has sprung into existence and is growing rapidly, establishing lines of communication between New Left and Old Right. This group consists at present almost entirely of former students of Ayn Rand. (Rand forms a sort of two-way bridge, politically, between New and Old Right.) Most have defected from Rand and associates due to excessive demands this group makes for intellectual conformity (in practice). The specific point of departure has often been at Rand's continued flirtation with the New Right or, equally often, over her insistence on limited government (which some of her principles contradict) rather than egoistic anarchism.

Today the Old Left is losing ground both to the New Left and the Middle. (Note the defection of Humphrey and other Liberals to the Administration over Viet Nam) It is breaking in two, perhaps. The New Right was nearly devastated by the 1964 Goldwater defeat; its more powerful members are now compromising with the Middle. And the Middle, since 1952, has gained more and more control of the State apparatus - and could well be on its way to becoming the most powerful single political ruling class in world history, which could mean that the United States will become the next Nazi Germany (as many observers on the libertarian Left and Right predict) with facistsocialism at home and aggressive imperialism abroad.

The New Left is at the moment the most effective and popular radical opposition to this Establishment power structure. Its main weakness continues to be lack of long-range programme. The Old Right, on the other hand, is strong on theory but feeble on action - it continues to be largely an ivory tower for disestablished economists, and passive pacifists, full of far-sighted plans for the dismantling of the State, but with no idea of how to take the first step. If the New Middle can unite these two, a genuine and lasting resistance to the American State will emerge - and there are indications that its stripe will be individualist anarchist.

That, at least, is how it looks at the moment from here.

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One great lesson that life teaches us is that while it is never singular to be wicked, it is usually wicked to be singular.

Chapman Cohen.

## THE BONNOT GANG

## A Reminiscence

E. Bertran

Round about 1910 the people of France were greatly startled by the appearance of a form of "banditisme" apparently inspired by theories proposed and defended by the anarchist movement. A few young anarchist militants seemed to have gathered around a certain Jules Bonnot, himself an anarchist wanted by the police and depicted as particularly dangerous.

Bonnot had declared war on Society, his own war, and was causing enough trouble to call attention on himself. He had been compelled to go on the run in order to avoid arrest for offenses which he considered as being caused by unjust social conditions.

Seeking contact and shelter with friends and comrades he knew, shifting from one to the other, he unwillingly compromised a lot of people who had nothing to do with his private activities and law-breaking. As a result, the police were easily able to arrest many of these and eventually to implicate a large number in an alleged criminal conspiracy. In particular, they framed a certain Dieudonne and obtained a death sentence for him.

I might mention that at this time the anarchist movement was in a state of fermentation. The first world war was in preparation and the anarchists were evolving, seeking a kind of maturity, adopting new positions and notions, especially after the translation of Stirner's book "The Ego and His Own".

Although the arrested anarchists were treated as an organized gang, in reality there was no gang at all, no instituted organization, only individuals who had analogous opinions. They had no chief, no animators - their only point of contact was through their anarchist views. Bonnot and Garnier, with some of their friends, were united and agreed on certain points as to their attitude and became suspect to the police, but to accuse the anarchist philosophy of being responsible for the crimes committed by them is both absurd and silly. All political parties that have ever existed have practiced violence and organized "extremism"; most Christian sects have and royalists, republicans, socialists, communists, etc., have followed the same tradition.

The particular "doctrine" of "illegalism" that Bonnot and his friends followed was nothing new. Before 1900 there had appeared quite a number of "illegalists" pretending to snatch from the bourgeoisie some of their superfluous property. But, of course, these "illegalists" had professed pure motives and limited themselves to preying on the enemies of the "people". I might mention some quite picturesque one like Pink, Duval, Ravachol and, especially, Jacob, who was caught after a number of typically romantic operations. (Although a death had resulted from a shot at a policeman, he did not receive a death sentence but was sent to French

Guiana for life. He was released after being there 25 years.)

I would like to write a bit about Stirner, the real apostle of individualism as I conceive it, but I can't possibly do it here, now. Stirner supplied the Bonnot Gang with some strong arguments. Nothing is prohibited to his individual, his "I". I quote: "The world on one side and me on the other....I'll show it what I can do." And so on. "I am not an "I" by the side of another "I", I am the only One, the "unique"...I can do what I please, it is "I" who live, who develops myself, forms myself, etc.," Thus, the ideas of illegalism took root and the boys found new grounds for discussion.

Well, they discussed and decided they would try. Why should we be surprised? That is human and they proved it by remaining men all the time.

The Bonnot affair began on November 11th. 1911, when two men got out of a motor car, assaulted a bank collector on the open street in Paris, snatched his money-bag and shot him when he resisted them. The man was badly wounded and his assailants got away.

By means of denunciations and photographs the man who shot the collector was identified as Garnier, a mate of Bonnot. The police ~~knew~~ the bank robbers were anarchists. They remembered the Jacob Gang of 12 years before. It therefore became easy for them to round up and arrest all persons who had dealings with the Bonnot Gang.

At this point there appears the case of Dieudonne, an innocent man who had nothing to do with the business, but who was sent to prison for life after having been sentenced to the guillotine. In his case all the police had to do was frame him and induce the victims to recognize him. Very simple, but not so clever since they did not have the cheek to carry out the sentence. Dieudonne was finally released from French Guiana 12 years later.

All who took part in the Bonnot Gang were clearly anarchists and <sup>2</sup> hundreds of those who were not actually arrested were persecuted. Some of them had helped Bonnot and when the trial was held on February 3rd., 1913, 23 people appeared at the Assizes in Paris.

It was quite true that a few of these had helped Bonnot and Garnier to commit certain robberies. They took the field with them. It was "direct action" and seemed to be justified. Besides, as one of them claimed, they wanted to "live their lives", to get some "pep", some sensation out of it. And they wanted money, too. Well, you <sup>?</sup> see, many excuses, God bless their souls! As if forcefully taking what belongs to others were not the essence of anarchism! J.Z. 11.8.97

Anyway, 23 alleged accomplices, 3 women among them, struggled with the judges for 3 weeks, from February 3rd. to 27th. Four of these were acquitted, the writer and the three women. The writer was then remanded to another court on another count and spent eight years in penal servitude. He then escaped from French Guiana and is still living, healthy, satisfied and happily free.

As for the rest, four were sentenced to death, three of whom

were guillotined and one reprieved to a life sentence. Of the rest, four received a life sentence and the remainder sentences of various lengths.

Amongst those not arrested, a few disappeared and were never heard of again. Bonnot, Garnier, and two others, Valet and Dubois, were killed in battle, dying with guns in their hands. After a year of being hunted, Bonnot and Dubois were besieged in a house and were killed there. Garnier and Valet did not surrender either. Like Bonnot they courageously withstood a siege, wounding a number of the police and soldiers who surrounded them before they died.

(what?)

I have no room left to detail all these men did. I cannot decide whether they were right or wrong and I don't want to. The Bonnot Gang may have been a failure. That does not matter to me. These men lived their lives; they stood their ground and defied death. They died valiantly, shooting it out with the police and the army, or walking to the guillotine with a smile.

(From a talk given to the Foyer Individualiste d'Etudes Sociales,  
Paris)

*\* AND forcefully took all ~~too~~ much of the lives of others,  
shedding blood in the process! J.Z. 118. 1897*

#### THE REHABILITATION OF JUDAS

Domenico Pastorello

Fulvio Provasi, in his latest book, makes a new defence of Judas. According to the legend, Judas betrayed Jesus to the Roman soldiers by giving him a kiss. Did Judas betray him for money? Not at all, like a modern freethinker he was looking for the truth.

Was this man in fact the Son of God, as he declared? Or was this declaration only a gimmick to obtain followers? If he really is the Son of God, Judas thought, he will be able to annihilate his enemies with a simple gesture. "I have never seen a true miracle," says Judas to the other apostles, "it must be his sweetheart, Magdalene, who has told these stories in order to exalt her lover. I have never seen him put into place a new arm or a new leg. On the contrary, I have seen you, treacherous Jews, leaving your families, that is forbidden by our law, abandoning wives and children to their fate in order to follow a man! Is he a man or the Son of God? We shall see! If he will give us all indisputable proof of his divinity, we shall praise him through eternity."

"Only," Judas added pensively, "I have a doubt. If Jesus is only a common man, I will have forever the remorse of having handed him over to the Romans, to perhaps have sent him to death. Perhaps he is a good man bewitched by his dream of liberty." And after the tragedy he concluded: "I have the truth, but history has its victim". So he hanged himself.

Fulvio Provasi adds, and I agree with him, Is not all our life an interrupted search for truth often paid for by innocent victims? Was not Judas the first, undervalued freethinker?

## PROLEGOMENA TO AN ANARCHIST PHILOSOPHY

J-P.S.

## 3- Politics

"For the State it is indispensable that nobody have an own will. If one had, the State would have to exclude this one. If all had, they would do away with the State."

(Max Stirner - The Ego and His Own)

## Anarchist Politics?

To speak of an anarchist politics is a contradiction in terms. Politics is the science of how to organize a society, a collectivity (or town - polis) and anarchism is by nature anti-collectivist.

Anarchism, unlike other "isms" (communism, capitalism, fascism etc.) is not a politico-economic system putting forward plans for the present or for some utopian society of the future. Such systems assume the possibility of a day when everybody will be a fascist or a communist (the solidarist myth). This, we know is an impossibility (Even in the USSR communists are a small minority). We might just as well ask: What if all men became poets?

Apart from a few pseudo-anarchists (libertarian communists, anarchosyndicalists etc.) anarchists do not await the Second Coming - they are anarchists here and now.

Anarchism = Individualism.

Anarchism is an individual attitude, a rebellion against what is, a declaration of what should not be, but not of what should be.

Do not ask the anarchist what would happen in the State disappeared. He doesn't know, nor does he care. The State, Society are not his affair - in fact he has set his affair on nothing. (Goethe: "Ich hab mein sach auf nichts gestellt")

## State Coercion and Social Coercion.

"The Law is only the abstract expression, bleached and intellectualized, of collective influences."

(G. Palante - The Fight for the Individual)

"....and this popular rage for the moral protects the police institution more than the government could in any way protect it."

(Max Stirner - Ibid.)

In the same way as "primitive" trade-unionists used to break the machines, "primitive" anarchists used to throw bombs at monarchs. Both rebellious acts were directed at the superstructure and were

thus unavailing - new machines were built, new monarchs stepped in! And we were back where we started.

This erroneous thinking - though a valid rebellion - was due to a misunderstanding of mass psychology. Our terrorists assumed that potentates were there against the will of the people - there were not, they are not. Despite what they might say, most people are quite happy to be led and governed and it is therefore quite useless to change (or canvass, march or picket for the changing of) laws or institutions if public opinion hasn't changed. *A change-over to personal law or extraterritorial autonomy would permit even small minorities to do their k*

The coercion of the law is not to be underestimated, but far greater is that of public opinion. To reform the law on homosexuality will certainly be an improvement, but will this make any difference to ignorant people's (or should I say most people's?) attitude to so-called sexual perversions?

? Social coercion is certainly far stronger than State coercion - it is sometimes possible to avoid the former, but the latter is implacable!

\* Things to do for themselves, at their own expense & risk. *POT, J.E. 11. 8. 97.*  
Revolution and Insurrection.

"Revolution plans for the future, insurrection doesn't. Revolution is a means, insurrection is an end. It is the normal exertion of the self, the ultimate aim for the energy of the Unique." <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>

(Max Stirner - Ibid.)

Revolution implies a belief in the natural harmony of social life, and the original goodness of man (Rousseau, Proudhon, etc.) A revolution is not against institutions, it only seeks new ones.

"Socialism requires the most submissive prostration of all citizens before the absolute State as has never yet been realized."

*Voluntary or cooperative soc. doesn't!* J.E. (Nietzsche - Human, All Too Human)

? "Communism rightly revolts against the pressure I experience from individual proprietors, but more horrible is the might it puts into the hands of the collectivity."

(Max Stirner - Ibid.)

Unlike the "Revolution" (or the General Strike) placed by political seers and demagogues in an ever-postponed future, insurrection takes place now.

It is the protest of the individual who refuses to yield to social or state pressure.

Abstention.

"It is clear that the abundance of political parties flatters the vanity of the imbecile - it gives him the

illusion of a choice."

(G. Bernanos)

"If I abandon what exists, it dies and starts rotting."

(Max Stirner - Ibid.)

*There are other consumers with other tastes! J.Z.*

Politically (taking the word politics in its narrow sense) insurrection can take the form of abstention: refusing to co-operate with the State, opting out.

However, to what extent will the anarchist rebel? Will he refuse to answer when questioned by a judge? Will he ignore a subpoena and go to jail for contempt of court? Yes, if he is a masochist and enjoys being a martyr for the Cause.

Anarchism is not Idealism.

If he is not a masochist, he will stoop. As the anarchist is not an idealist, his rebellion is an expression of his will to live. It is spontaneous and he never feels under any obligation to rebel. He chooses when and how to rebel - he pleases himself. Rebellion is made for man, not man for rebellion.

Desert Island?

He pleases himself, and should he be a contemplative he might decide to go and live on a desert island (he would be what Georges Palante calls a social dilettante) But this will be a very rare occurrence as man is generally a sociable creature. He requires the presence of other men to fulfil certain of his appetites: sex, intellectual stimulus, or simply company.

It is a mistake to think that individualism means anchorism. The individualist needs other men, but he wishes to choose who, when and how.

Verein und Gesellschaft (Association and Society).

"The association doesn't own you, you own the association."  
(Max Stirner - Ibid.)

Individualists may choose to co-operate with other men, but their co-operation will be voluntary and temporary, an association of egoists.

2 Stirner defined "Society" as a permanent and involuntary institution - we are born into a particular country (or society) to which we owe a permanent allegiance - and "association" as a voluntary and temporary agreement which the individual can cancel at any time, should the association cease to suit his purpose.

"As soon as an association has crystallized into a society, it ceases to be an association." (Stirner) *State ≠ Society or Societies. JZ.*

## The Criminal Fringe.

"In crime the egoist has hitherto asserted himself and mocked at the sacred. The break with the sacred or rather of the sacred, may become general. A revolution never returns, but a mighty, reckless, shameless, conscienceless, proud - crime, does it not rumble in distant thunders, and do you not see how the sky grows presciently silent and gloomy?"

Nazis as heroes

(Max Stirner - Ibid.)

or robbers, child molesters, rapists, murderers & muggers ??? J.Z.

Neither the Lord nor our humanitarians and socialists (Rousseau, Proudhon, Marx, Camus etc.) provide for the lazy and the criminal - anarchism does. - *At the expense of the industrious & innocents & peaceful!* J.Z.

Neither Camus, who only devoted four lines of his "The Rebel" to Stirner, nor Marx, who allotted two thirds of his "The German Ideology" to a "refutation" of "The Ego and His Own", have found a place (Siberia excepted) in their little Utopias for he who doesn't wish to work. *Let hunger, thirst & exposure to the elements teach them the lessons they need - unless they are satisfied as beachcombers or beggars.* J.Z.

The criminal is the (an)archist "par excellence" (%) Anarchists might object to a particular crime if they, or people who are dear to them, find their freedom or enjoyment jeopardized, but they do not object to crime as such, as crime is merely a convention of society - society which they do not recognize. *No rational & just anarchist or individualist would advocate or engage in aggressive crimes, i.e. crimes with victims.* J.Z. 11.8.97.

The individualist is the captain of his own soul. He alone decides on the extent of his relationship with other men, he alone decides when and how to put an end to it, if his interest no longer coincides with theirs - as nothing to him is more than himself (Mir geht nichts über mich - Max Stirner)

Logic

(Next issue "Logics and Epistemology")

((%)I have never found ordinary "criminals" more anarchist or more attractive than other individuals. Anarchists are certainly anti-legalists, and sometimes il-legalists, but it does not follow that every law-breaker is therefore an anarchist. If J-P.S. had written "The anarchist is the criminal "par excellence" - using the term "criminal" in the sense that Stirner does as the mocker of the "sacred" - then I would agree with him. As his statement stands, however, it reminds me of the romantic tosh that used to be written about our "comrades the thieves" by anarcho-communists in the 1880's and 1890's. The ordinary criminal is simply the other side of the coin of the law. They stand and fall together. I would not, however, bracket the criminal with the lazy. "Crime" can often be hard and skilfull "work".

S.E.P.)

Politicians are so fond of the common man that all their efforts are calculated to keep him common.

Paul Eldridge.

## LETTERS....

In his letter in your last issue, Mr. Pastorello accuses me of poking my nose into his business.

That is presumably because, in my previous attempt to reason with him, I tried to explain how Stirner's doctrine, if true, would affect Mr. Pastorello personally. But the same explanation would, of course, apply equally to anyone else, and therefore any suggestion that I am meddling in Mr. Pastorello's private business is obviously absurd.

I naturally regret the fact that Mr. Pastorello either cannot or will not see eye to eye with me, but I have no desire to force my views on him, or to interfere with his life in any way whatsoever. All I ask is that critics, before they rake it upon themselves to describe a man's work as "cloudy mysticism", "smelly metaphysical superstition", and the like, might at least be kind enough to read it.

27.2.66.

Francis Ellingham.

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Oh dear! I am sorry. I am afraid I never realised "OSWALD" was a "critique of the philosophy/psychology of Lee Harvey Oswald written by a philosophical egoist...."; demonstrating "that it was Oswald's humanitarian sentiments that turned him into an irrational destroyer."

Anyway I don't believe the book, which I have read, does anything of the kind, or that any book could. I don't believe people kill each other because they are altruists, egoists or Manichean dualists. They do it because they are off their heads.

Some have killed, the French "illegalists" for example, claiming they did it for egoistic reasons. But, since few people have ever heard of Conscious Egoism, most people say they do it for altruistic reasons. In fact I believe they do it because, as a result of some catastrophe in early childhood, they have not developed normally, even by the standards of our society.

In other words, their philosophy is so much window-dressing. If Oswald had lived in Paris in the early 1900's he would have proclaimed himself a Stirnerite most probably.

What seemed tragic to me was the wastage, Both Oswald and his victim wasted their lives, in my opinion.\* One feels that Oswald had abilities. He was intelligent and read books. But he was too mixed up inside to apply himself to anything definite for long. So in the end he virtually committed a form of spectacular suicide.

I don't doubt the "OSWALD" is a good tool for converting people to Conscious Egoism. However, I am not myself a Conscious Egoist. I am very dubious about all these philosophical categories. Do they really mean anything? \* They had the right to waste their own lives - & those of their followers - but not those of others, who are not aggressors. J.2.11.8 47.

I should add that I don't speak for MINUS ONE, or for the Individualist Movement, if there is one. I would not even call myself an individualist. My remarks about OSWALD were entirely my own responsibility.  
13.3.66.

Arthur W. Uloth.

(I will leave Kerry Thornley to answer these further criticisms of his book. I must say, however, that I think Arthur Uloth has no basis for his assumption that Oswald would have probably identified himself with the "Stirnerites" had he lived in Paris in the early 1900's. There were still plenty of idealistic believers in the "attentat" around he would have felt more at home with. The illegalists, whom I presume Arthur Uloth is referring, were quite apart in their attitude to the Vaillants and the Ravachols who believed they were acting for a future anarchist humanity and at the time of their execution made stirring moral exhortations to their comrades to <sup>before</sup> fight for the same ideal. When the illegalists of the "Bonnot Gang" went to the guillotine there were no exhortations. Soudy, after remarking that he was out of luck again because he could get no coffee with cream for his last breakfast, only said how cold it was; Callemine remarked caustically to those around the guillotine: "Fine site; isn't it, the death of a man!"; and Monet said: "Good-bye, gentlemen, and Society also." They had fought without illusions and died in the same way. Whatever one may think about "banditisme" it is clear that these illegalists were not in the same category as those who, like Oswald, believe "Happiness is not based on oneself" and search frantically for a "Cause" in which they can extinguish their selves. - S.E.P. )

x sight?

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Rather surprisingly I agree with much of J-P. S's article on ethics in MINUS ONE No. 12. Indeed, his premises are not unorthodox. He demolishes metaphysics and the naturalistic fallacy, i.e., the idea that the non-natural, values, can be derived from the natural, material events. As far as I know this is accepted ground in English philosophy.

However, to recognize that value judgements are different linguistically from statements of fact does not logically imply nihilism. It does imply a recognition of the relative nature of value judgements and a recognition that one can merely disagree with someone who holds different values and not prove him in any sense mistaken unless he is inconsistent. If he is inconsistent he will be holding two values that logically conflict. Value judgements can only be asserted, not empirically verified or logically proved. Now, the values people assert verbally are not necessarily those they assert by their actions. The latter are perhaps more important since it is possible to verify by observation that even J-P.S. acts according to certain values. If it is to be objected that one day he might act differently there are accepted statistical criteria for testing hypotheses.

As to human nature - or, more particularly, the concept of an instinct to violence, cruelty, selfishness, etc. - this is a



RIGHT WING INDIVIDUALISM IN THE UNITED STATES - 2 (Cont.)

Lyman Tower Sargent

At this point, one might ask the right wing what it proposes as alternatives to the philosophy of their opponents. Unfortunately, many of the individuals and organizations have no answer. One could almost go so far as to contend that the predominate answer is still put in the negative. The radical right tends to be in favour of all those things they think are opposed by the other side.

Fortunately, the above comment is not completely true, and it is possible to deduce a fragmentary political philosophy from the writings of the right wing organizations. For example, the paramilitary and anti-semitic American Nazi Party puts forth its positive programme as follows:

"National Socialism is, above all, the doctrine that there is no artificial line between the rest of the universe, both animate and inanimate - and man. Nazis believe that men vary in QUALITY - not only as individuals - but also by BREED, just as do all the rest of living things.

"We are also "TRIBALISTS"; we believe that society functions best only when it maintains the basic functions of all ORGANISMS, when it maintains the same ORDER as is necessary for every living thing with differentiated cell functions.

"...National Socialism recognizes that the ONLY motivation for productive activity in all of Nature is private gain and private property, so that we believe in FREE ENTERPRISE."  
(1)

Although this position is basically the same as Hitler's "Mein Kampf", it will be interesting to discover the similarities and differences between the American Nazi Party and other groups of the radical right.

All right wing organizations are staunch defenders of the free enterprise system. George S. Benson, head of the National Education Campaign, said: "The American Way of Life has two principle foundations: Christian morality and a free enterprise system"(2), and the American Council of Christian Laymen distributed a leaflet entitled "Jesus: A Capitalist."(3) Finally, the National Committee for Economic Freedom is attempting, with some success, to have the following amendment to the U.S. Constitution adopted:

"Sec. 1. The Government of the United States shall not engage in any business, professional, commercial, financial, or industrial enterprise except as specified in the Constitution.

"Sec.4. Three years after the ratification of this amendment the sixteenth article of amendments to the Constitution of

the United States shall stand repealed and thereafter Congress shall not levy taxes on personal incomes, estates, and/or gifts." (4)

Perhaps the most interesting point in the above is the connection drawn between Christianity and capitalism. With very few exceptions, a constant theme of the right wing is that fundamentalist Christianity proves the correctness of their position. Although the liberal churches may become Communist infested, the true, uncorrupted faith of the fundamentalists is a strong bastion of support for the radical right.

As viewed from the right wing, free enterprise is a peculiarly American system and is therefore an integral part of their nationalism. Although America is seen as peculiarly gifted and all things American are worthy of reverence if not actual worship, nationalist movements in other countries are seen as part of the Communist conspiracy. The rightist is surprised to find that not everyone loves the United States as he does. This would seem to be the basis for the feeling that if you aren't totally for us you must be totally against us and should be treated accordingly. Therefore, anything that is remotely international is suspect, unless it is completely controlled from the United States or is otherwise above reproach, such as Chiang Kai-shek.

Second only to free enterprise in the belief system of the right is states rights. The federal system in the United States has led many to advocate a shift of power from the national to the state level of government. It is believed that this will ensure the collapse of the Communist conspiracy by ensuring that there will always be governments which will be free from its control. Also, it is believed that decentralized government will guarantee the representation of their point of view since state governments have tended to be more conservative.

There will still be government. As a matter of fact there will be, in the case of the U.S., fifty-one weak governments as opposed to fifty weak and one strong. Perhaps this would be an improvement. The argument concerning government is put forth admirably by Welch:

- "1. First, government is necessary - some degree of government - in any civilised society.
2. Second, while government is necessary, it is basically a non-productive expense.....
3. Third, government is frequently evil.
4. Fourth, government is always and inevitably an enemy of individual freedom.
5. Whatever must be done by government will always cost more than if it could be done by individuals or smaller groups.

6. Government, by its size, its momentum, and its authority, will not only perpetuate errors of doctrine or of policy, but it will multiply this on a geometric scale....

7. As any society becomes reasonably settled, and shakes down into a semi-permanent pattern of economic and political life, and as some degree of leisure on the part of its citizens becomes both possible and visible, the drive always begins to have government the management of the social enterprise rather than merely its agent for certain clear purposes.

8. As the government increases in power, and as a means of increasing its power, it always tends to squeeze out the middle class; to destroy or weaken the middle class for the benefit of the top and bottom.

9. The form of government is not nearly so important as the quality.

10. ....that government is best which governs least.(5)

Welch's comments on government raise a very important problem. Since all his remarks, with the exception of the point concerning the middle class, could be accepted by most anarchists, how can he say\* a few pages further on, "The John Birch Society will operate under completely authoritative control at all levels."(6) At this point the "Founder" (7) becomes a totalitarian leader. As he says, "The John Birch Society is to be a monolithic body. There are many reasons why, in the immediately ahead, we cannot stop for parliamentary procedures or a lot of arguments among ourselves."(8) Later Welch refers with favour to Lenin's idea of the Party.(9) Finally, it should be noted that the "Application for Membership" says, "If my application is accepted, I agree that my membership may be revoked at anytime, by a duly appointed officer of the Society, without the reason being stated...."(10). *They fear conspiracies!*

\* Such groups are afraid of being taken over by infiltrators, Fabians, Communists etc. J.E.

Most of the other organizations of the right wing are similar to the John Birch Society in that they tend to be authoritarian in outlook while espousing individualism. It would seem that the only possible explanation for this phenomenon is to be found in the free enterprise ideal. The ideal of capitalism in the nineteenth century was of tycoons struggling with each other for the control of wealth. Here you have the concept of rugged individualism; any man could make it to the top if he was good enough and had the guts. At the same time, these men were expected to be, and were, ruthlessly authoritarian in the running of their businesses. This analogy might be carried a step further in that it provides a commentary on the belief that the world is divided into those that are capable of using freedom and those that are not. Thus, you have as a part of the American ideology the idea, finding its justification in Social Darwinism, that there is a natural aristocracy of talent, in this case talent in business, that should rule. This might also explain the ties that the right wing sees between free enterprise

and the "American Way of Life".

In conclusion, it might be interesting to draw a few comparisons between the organizations of the right wing and anarchism. In the first place, it should be stressed that anarchists, particularly individualist anarchists, are not particularly fond of organizations. This immediately indicates a fundamental and extremely significant difference between the two groups; one emphasises freedom for the few, the other for the many.

On the other hand, there are a couple of interesting similarities. Sometimes it seems that anarchists also stress the negative side of their thought. They are anti-state and anti-government and generally anti-establishment without really being pro-anything. Secondly, many anarchists seem to believe that the people, in this case the workers, are with them. This point is the more serious of the two because it indicates an acceptance of the same ideology as the right wing. The workers will not be corrupted. In fairness, it should be pointed out that some anarchists have recognized this problem.

Finally, no one can fail to notice that the radical right and the anarchists are quite similar in those things they oppose, but when they come to their positive philosophies and particularly their definitions of individualism, they are widely separated.

- o o o
- (1) George Lincoln Rockwell, "Nazis Reply to N.Y. Times Blast". "The Rockwell Report", 2 (December 15, 1962) 6-7. Original emphases.
  - (2) Summary from: Cabell Phillips, "Wide Anti-Red Drive Directed From Small Town in Arkansas", "The New York Times" (May 18, 1961), 26.
  - (3) It should perhaps be noted that many right wing groups believe that most Protestant churches have been taken over by the Communist conspiracy. Cf., for example, Billy James Hargis and Julian Williams, "The Facts About Communism and Our Churches" - Tulsa, Oklahoma, Christian Crusade, 1964.
  - (4) National Committee for Economic Freedom, "Progress Report" Jan. to July, 1961, 1.
  - (5) Welch, "The Blue Book", 129-35.
  - (6) Ibid. 159.
  - (7) Founder is always capitalized in the society's publications.
  - (8) Ibid., 158, 160.
  - (9) Ibid., 166.
  - (10) Appended as last page of "The Blue Book."

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Egoism is not merely an idea. It is a fact - the force of a man untrammelled by superstition. He may be more or less generous or ungenerous; thus he may be called selfish or unselfish in the common speech. He may be more or less impulsive, more or less deliberate and reflecting. He may so feel and act as to be called very dutiful, but the egoist relation to all objects is conditioned quite differently from that of the mentally unfree man. If he cares for others it is not because he is taught that it is his "duty" - a teaching which puts a fetter in the place of attraction; but because he is built that way, and this he knows.

James L. Walker.

## WILL SOMEBODY PLEASE NOTE

Jeff Robinson

David Sutch, better known as "Screaming Lord Sutch", is a long-haired, eccentric exhibitionist who often appears in public wearing a Victorian frock-coat or Viking costume. He made quite a lot of money as a teenage entertainer, his "act" consisting of standing on the stage and screaming at the top of his voice at the adoring fans. With this money he has been able to indulge his eccentricities and for a giggle stood as the "National Independent Teenage Party" candidate at the Prime Minister's Lancashire constituency in the General Election. He had no policy, no serious ideas and mounted no serious campaign. He got 585 votes - not from teenagers either as the voting age is 21 in Britain.

So what, you say? Well, listen to this. Down in Fulham Pat Arrowsmith, for the humanitarian, pacifistic Radical Alliance, received 163 votes ( 1 elector in every 360 voted for her ). Up in intellectual Hampstead the Socialist Party of Great Britain candidate ( a party of Marxist purity ) received 211 votes. At Leyton, the Independent Labour Party candidate received 441 votes. While in a bye-election at Hull, Richard Gott, of the Radical Alliance, campaigning on the issue of peace in Vietnam got 230 votes.

In other words, twice as many people cast votes for a crazy stunt man like "Screaming Lord" Sutch than for dedicated idealists like Pat Arrowsmith, Richard Gott, etc. The fact that individualists are not very keen on "dedicated idealists" is beside the point - the electors are not individualists. Yet one still reads articles in the anarchist press discussing, advocating, urging, prophesying "mass revolutions" leading to "free societies" based on "workers' control". The next time I read such an article I'll scream. The masses have never listened to anarchist propaganda and never will. When will more anarchists face this fact?

When I spoke along the above lines to some anarchist-communist friends recently they looked very knowing and said: "Ah, yes. But you can't have a revolution without the workers." If by "revolution" they mean "successful social revolution" then it's quite true what they say. But observe their absurd reasoning. Because there cannot be a successful social revolution without the workers it automatically follows ( in their minds ) that there WILL, or most likely will, be a social revolution. If they don't think there probably will, or definitely will, be a social revolution, why do they make propaganda directed at the workers?

It's all very odd.

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

Georges Palante.

# MINUS ONE

an individualist anarchist  
review

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MAXIMS.... ? MIXUPS

Pat Parker

*the State!*

?

The chief function of the individual is to drill society full of holes - to separate, to inspire hatred, to break up complacency and stupidity.

Moral codes, rules and regulations are most necessary. We need them because we have a fundamental urge to break them. We must create a don't in order to do.

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## THE LONDON INDIVIDUALIST ANARCHISTS

meet the second Sunday of each month at 7.30 p.m. at 10 Churton St.,  
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May 8th: To Be Announced  
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A reader living in Uruguay wishes to exchange a copy of Nicolai's  
"La Biologia de la Guerra" or the same author's "La Miseria de la  
Dialectica" for a copy of the English version of "The Ego and His  
Own" by Max Stirner. Anyone interested please contact this review.

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Available on bookstalls is Paul Herr's novel "Journey Not To End"  
(Panther Books - 3/6) A well-written, picaresque story of a  
contemporary "outsider", it contains some pithy reflections.  
Example: "A State is a State is a State. Even Revolution, which  
promises to change All, changes only the personel., not the System -  
the guards and prisoners exchange status, as in a children's game  
of musical chairs./ A man can only liberate himself by himself and  
for himself. There is no other way - all else is madness or  
collaboration."