

The Simplicity of Anarchism

THE most frightening aspect of anarchism, to the regimented mind, is the simplicity of the truths it contains. Whilst society is quite prepared to accept the feasibility of planetary flight, alchemy and other things within, and beyond, the realms of logic, the simple possibility of man being self-governing and capable of standing on his own feet—without the aid of political and legal crutches—is regarded as something akin to lunacy; or dangerously fanatic to say the least.

The potential horrors of atomic-warfare and the possible obliteration of the human race, although here and there invoking a sundry voice of protestation, is presumably nowhere near as terrifying as the prospect of society being freed from political bondage, and given independence to organise its own economy by mutual-aid and co-operation.

Government provides its own indictment when it so brazenly presumes the helpless imbecility of its subjects, which it regards as a mass of potential lunatics restrained only by the leash of politics and law. It would seem that without the saving grace of politicians Bedlam itself would be let loose, and that arson, rape, murder and loot would be the order of the day!

One might be impertinent enough to ask why, then, if men are so incapable of self-restraint they should be deemed sufficiently sane to elect others to control them? Why, for instance, do politicians shout, manoeuvre and contrive to get elected by large majorities, if those majorities are such potential lunatics?

The anarchist believes that freedom is what its name implies, and he can't conceive how it is possible to be free and at the same time be governed by others; nor can he see how it is possible to help others to be free by sticking bayonets in their bodies or dropping atom-bombs on their homes. He considers himself capable of goodness without religion, and of dignity without the aid of Law; and whilst he is prepared to give freely and of his best in co-operation with

others for the commonweal, he takes exception to administering to the selfishness of drones.

He has no faith in the infallibility of politicians, nor in the wisdom of kings. Whilst he repudiates the necessity of law, he concedes the necessity for order: not the kind of order decreed by politicians and enforced by threats, but natural order resulting from the harmonious development of mutual-respect within society, when once freed from political bondage.

There is something radically wrong, he declares, in a system of society that functions, and maintains its existence, by the impetus of violence and force. He sees nothing praiseworthy in political society which has recourse to periodic wars, or the need of jails, gallows and bludgeons; and it is because he is aware that these brutal weapons are the instruments of every government and State, that he works for their destruction.

To him, freedom is something more than mere political clap-trap; it is the quintessence of being and living. It gives focus to the ego's expanding universe, and eclipses the power of ignorance and fear. Given the freedom to assert its inherent qualities, he believes humanity capable of solving its own social problems by the simple application of equity and mutual aid.

Unlike the politician, he does not regard dishonesty, brutality and avariciousness as natural characteristics of human nature, but as the inevitable consequences of coercion and frustration engendered by artificial law, and he believes that these social evils are best eradicated not by greater penalties and further legislation, but by the free development of the latent forces of solidarity and sympathetic understanding which government and law so ruthlessly suppress.

Freedom will be possible when people understand and desire it; for man can only rule where others subserviently obey. Where none obey, none has power to rule. GEORGE NICHOLSON.

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