

THE BOOK OF



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Revolutionary Self-Theory

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1975

This booklet is for people who are dissatisfied with their lives. If you are happy with your present existence, we have no argument with you. However, if you are tired of waiting for your life to change...

Tired of waiting for authentic community, love and adventure...

Tired of waiting for the end of money and forced work...

Tired of looking for new pastimes to pass the time...

Tired of waiting for a lush, rich existence... Tired of waiting for a situation in which you can realise all your desires...

Tired of waiting for the end of all authorities, alienations, ideologies and moralities...

...then we think you'll find what follows to be quite handy.

I

One of the great secrets of our miserable yet potentially marvellous time is that thinking can be a pleasure. This is a manual for constructing your own self-theory. Constructing your self-theory is a revolutionary pleasure, the pleasure of constructing your self-theory of revolution.

Building your self-theory is a destructive/constructive pleasure, because you are building a theory-of-practice for the destructive/constructive transformation of this society.

Self-theory is a theory of adventure. It is as erotic and humorous as an authentic revolution.

The alienation felt as a result of having had your thinking done for you by the ideologies of our day, can lead to the search for the pleasurable negation of that alienation: thinking for yourself. It is the pleasure of making your mind your own.

Self-theory is the body of critical thought you construct for your own use. You construct it and use it when you make an analysis of why your life is the way it is, why the world is the

way it is. (And ‘thinking’ and ‘feeling’ are inseparable, since thought comes from subjective, emotive experience.) You build your self-theory when you develop a theory of practice — a theory of how to get what you desire for your life.

Theory will be either a practical theory — a theory of revolutionary practice — or it will be nothing... nothing but an aquarium of ideas, a contemplative interpretation of the world. The realm of ideals is the eternal waiting-room of unrealised desire.

Those who assume (usually unconsciously) the impossibility of realising their life’s desires, and of thus fighting for themselves, usually end up fighting for an ideal or cause instead (ie the illusion of selfactivity or self-practice). Those who know that this is the acceptance of alienation will now know that all ideals and causes are ideologies.

II

Whenever a system of ideas is structured with an abstraction at the centre — assigning a role or duties to you for its sake — this system is an ideology. An ideology is a system of false consciousness in which you no longer function as the subject in your relation to the world.

The various forms of ideology are all structured around different abstractions, yet they all serve the interests of a dominant (or aspiring dominant) class by giving you a sense of purpose in your sacrifice, suffering and submission.

Religious ideology is the oldest example, the fantastic projection called ‘God’ is the Supreme Subject of the cosmos, acting on every human being as ‘His’ subject.

In the ‘scientific’ and ‘democratic’ ideologies of bourgeois enterprise, capital investment is the ‘productive’ subject directing world history — the ‘invisible hand’ guiding human development. The bourgeoisie had to attack and weaken the power that religious ideology once held. It exposed the mystification of the religious world in its technological investigation, expanding the realm of things and methods out of which it could make a profit.

The various brands of Leninism are ‘revolutionary’ ideologies in which their Party is the rightful subject to dictate world history, by leading its object — the proletariat — to the goal of replacing the bourgeois apparatus with a Leninist one.

The many other forms of the dominant ideologies can be seen daily. The rise of the new religion-sycisms serve the dominant structure of social relations in a round about way. They provide a neat form in which the emptiness of daily life may be obscured, and like drugs, make it easier to live with. Volunteerism (shoulder to the wheel) and determinism (it’ll all work out) prevent us from recognising our real place in the functioning of the world. In avant-garde ideology, novelty in (and of) itself is what’s important. In survivalism, subjectivity is preempted by fear through the invocation of the image of an impending world catastrophe.

In accepting ideologies we accept an inversion of subject and object; things take on a human power and will, while human beings have their place as things. Ideology is upside-down theory. We further accept the separation between the narrow reality of our daily life, and the image of a world totality that’s out of our grasp. Ideology offers us only a voyeur’s relationship with the totality.

In this separation, and this acceptance of sacrifice for the cause, every ideology serves to protect the

dominant social order. Authorities whose power depends on separation must deny us our subjectivity in order to survive themselves. Such denial comes in the form of demanding sacrifices for ‘the common good’, ‘the national interest’, ‘the war effort’, ‘the revolution’ ...

III

We get rid of the blinkers of ideology by constantly asking ourselves... How do I feel?
Am I enjoying myself?
How’s my life?
Am I getting what I want?
Why not?
What’s keeping me from getting what I want?
This is having consciousness of the commonplace, awareness of one’s everyday routine. That Every-day Life — real life — exists, is a public secret that gets less secret every day, as the poverty of daily life gets more and more visible.

IV

The construction of self-theory is based on thinking for yourself, being fully conscious of desires and their validity. It is the construction of radical subjectivity.

Authentic ‘consciousness raising’ can only be the ‘raising’ of people’s thinking to the level of positive (non-guilty) self-consciousness: developing their basic subjectivity, free of ideology and imposed morality in all its forms.

The essence of what many leftists, therapy-mongers, racism awareness trainers and sisterisers term ‘consciousness raising’ is their practice of beating people into unconsciousness with their ideological billyclubs.

The path from ideology (self-negation) to radical subjectivity (self-affirmation) passes through Point Zero, the capital city of nihilism. This is the windswept still point in social space and time... the social limbo wherein which one recognises that the present is devoid of life; that there is no life in one’s daily existence. A nihilist knows the difference between surviving and living.

Nihilists go through a reversal or perspective on their life and the world. Nothing is true for them but their desires, their will to be. They refuse all ideology in their hatred for the miserable social relations in modern capitalist-global society. From this reversed perspective they see with a newly acquired clarity the upside-down world of reification¹, the inversion of subject and object, of abstract and concrete. It is the theatrical landscape of fetishised commodities, mental projections, separations and ideologies: art, God, city planning, ethics, smile buttons, radio stations that say they love you and detergents that have compassion for your hands.

Daily conversation offers sedatives like: “You can’t always get what you want”, “Life has its ups and downs”, and other dogmas of the secular religion of survival. ‘Common sense’ is just

¹ reification — the act of converting people, abstract concepts, etc into things, ie commodities.

the nonsense of common alienation. Every day people are denied an authentic life and sold back its representation. Nihilists constantly feel the urge to destroy the system which destroys them each day. They cannot go on living as they are, their minds are on fire. Soon enough they run up against the fact that they must come up with a coherent set of tactics that will have a practical effect on the world.

But if a nihilist does not know of the historical possibility for the transformation of the world, his or her subjective rage will coralise into a role: the suicide, the solitary murderer, the street hoodlum vandal, the neo-dadaist, the professional mental patient... all seeking compensation for a life of dead time.

The nihilists' mistake is that they do not realise that there are others who are also nihilists. Consequently they assume that common communication and participation in a project of self-realisation is impossible.

V

To have a 'political' orientation towards one's life is just to know that you can only change your life by changing the nature of life itself through transformation of the world — and that transformation of the world requires collective effort.

This project of collective self-realisation can properly be termed politics. However, 'politics' has become a mystified, separated category of human activity. Along with all the other socially enforced separations of human activity, 'politics' has become just another interest. It even has its specialists — be they politicians or politicos. It is possible to be interested (or not) in football, stamp collecting, disco music or fashion. What people see as 'politics' today is the social falsification of the project of collective self-realisation — and that suits those in power just fine.

Collective self-realisation is the revolutionary project. It is the collective seizure of the totality of nature and social relations and their transformation according to conscious desire.

Authentic therapy is changing one's life by changing the nature of social life. Therapy must be social if it is to be of any real consequence. Social therapy (the healing of society) and individual therapy (the healing of the individual) are linked together: each requires the other, each is a necessary part of the other.

For example: in spectacular society we are expected to repress our real feelings and play a role. This is called 'playing a part in society'. (How revealing that phrase is!) Individuals put on character armour — a steel-like suit of role playing is directly related to the end of social role playing.

VI

To think subjectively is to use your life — as it is now and as you want it to be — as the centre of your thinking. This positive self-centring is accomplished by the continuous assault on externals: all the false issues, false conflicts, false problems, false identities and false dichotomies. People are kept from analysing the totality of everyday existence by being asked their opinion of every detail: all the spectacular trifles, phoney controversies and false scandals. Are you for or against trades unions, cruise missiles, identity cards... what's your opinion of soft drugs, jogging, UFO's, progressive taxation?

These are false issues. The only issue for us is how we live.

There is an old Jewish saying, “If you have only two alternatives, then choose the third”. It offers a way of getting the subject to search for a new perspective on the problem. We can give the lie to both sides of a false conflict by taking our ‘third choice’ — to view the situation from the perspective of radical subjectivity.

Being conscious of the third choice is refusing to choose between two supposedly opposite, but really equal, polarities that try to define themselves as the totality of a situation. In its simplest form, this consciousness is expressed by the worker who is brought to trial for armed robbery and asked, “Do you plead guilty or not guilty?”. “I’m unemployed”, he replies. A more theoretical but equally classic illustration is the refusal to acknowledge any essential difference between the corporate-capitalist ruling classes of the ‘West’ and the state-capitalist ruling classes of the ‘East’. All we have to do is look at the basic social relations of production in the USA and Europe on the one hand, and the USSR and China on the other, to see that they are essentially the same: over there, as here, the vast majority go to work for a wage or salary in exchange for giving up control over both the means of production and what they produce (which is then sold back to them in the form of commodities).

In the case of the ‘West’ the surplus value (ie that which is produced over and above the value of the workers’ wages) is the property of the corporate managements who keep up a show of domestic competition. In the ‘East’ the surplus value is the property of the state bureaucracy, which does not permit domestic competition but engages in international competition as furiously as any other capitalist nation. Big difference.

An example of a false problem is that stupid conversational question, “What’s your philosophy of life?”. It poses an abstract concept of ‘Life’ that, despite the word’s constant appearance in conversation, has nothing to do with real life, because it ignores the fact that ‘living’ is what we are doing at the present moment.

In the absence of real community, people cling to all kinds of phoney social identities, corresponding to their individual role in the Spectacle (in which people contemplate and consume images of what life is, so that they will forget how to live for themselves). These social identities can be ethnic (‘Italian’), racial (‘Black’), organisational (‘Trade Unionist’), residential (‘New Yorker’), sexual (‘Gay’), cultural (‘sports’ fan’), and so on: but all are rooted in a common desire for affiliation, for belonging.

Obviously being ‘black’ is a lot more real as an identification than being a ‘sports’ fan’, but beyond a certain point these identities only serve to mask our real position in society. Again, the only issue for us is how we live. Concretely, this means understanding the reasons for the nature of one’s life in one’s relation to society as a whole. To do this one has to shed all the false identities, the partial associations, and begin with oneself as the centre. From here we can examine the material basis of life, stripped of all mystification.

For example: suppose I want a cup of coffee from the machine at work. First of all, there is the cup of coffee itself: that involves the workers on the coffee plantation, the ones on the sugar plantations and in the refineries, the ones in the paper mill, and so on. Then you have all the workers who made the different parts of the machine and assembled it. Then the ones who extracted the iron ore and bauxite, smelted the steel, drilled the oil and refined it. Then all the workers who transported the raw materials

and parts over three continents and two oceans. Then the clerks, typists and communications workers who co-ordinate the production and transportation. Finally you have all the workers who produce all the other things necessary for the others to survive. That gives me a direct material relationship to several million people: in fact, to the immense majority of the world's population. They produce my life: and I help to produce theirs. In this light, all partial group identities and special interests fade

into insignificance. Imagine the potential enrichment of one's life that is presently locked up in the frustrated creativity of those millions of workers, held back by obsolete and exhausting methods of production, strangled by alienation, warped by the insane rationale of capital accumulation! Here we begin to discover a real social identity: in people all over the world who are fighting to win back their lives, we find ourselves.

We are constantly being asked to choose between two sides in a false conflict. Governments, charities and propagandists of all kinds are fond of presenting us with choices that are no choice at all (eg the Central Electricity Generating Board presented its nuclear programme with the slogan 'Nuclear Age or Stone Age'. The CEBB would like us to believe that these are the only two alternatives — we have the illusion of choice, but as long as they control the choices we perceive as available to us, they also control the outcome).

The new moralists love to tell those in the rich West how they will 'have to make sacrifices', how they 'exploit the starving children of the Third World'. The choice we are given is between sacrificial altruism or narrow individualism. (Charities cash in on the resulting guilt by offering us a feeling of having done something, in exchange for a coin in the collecting tin.) Yes, by living in the rich West we do exploit the poor of the Third World — but not personally, not deliberately. We can make some changes in our life, boycott, make sacrifices, but the effects are marginal. We become aware of the false conflict we are being presented with when we realise that under this global social system we, as individuals, are as locked in our global role as 'exploiters' as others are in their global role as the exploited. We have a role in society, but little or no power to do anything about it. We reject the false choice of 'sacrifice or selfishness' by calling for the destruction of the global social system whose existence forces that decision upon us. It isn't a case of tinkering with the system, of offering token sacrifices or calling for 'a little less selfishness'. Charities and reformers never break out of the terrain of the false choice.

Those who have a vested interest in maintaining the present situation constantly drag us back to their false choices — that is, any choice which keeps their power intact. With myths like 'If we shared it all out there wouldn't be enough to go round', they attempt to deny the existence of any other choices and to hide from us the fact that the material preconditions for social revolution already exist.

VII

Any journey towards self-demystification must avoid those two quagmires of lost thought — absolutism and cynicism; twin swamps that camouflage themselves as meadows of subjectivity.

Absolutism is the total acceptance or rejection of all components of particular ideologies, spectacles and reifications. An absolutist cannot see any other choice than complete acceptance or complete rejection .

The absolutist wanders along the shelves of the ideological supermarket looking for the ideal commodity, and then buys it — lock, stock and barrel. but the ideological supermarket — like any supermarket — is fit only for looting. It is more productive for us if we can move along the shelves, rip open the packets, take out what looks authentic and useful, and dump the rest.

Cynicism is a reaction to a world dominated by ideology and morality. Faced with conflicting ideologies the cynic says: “a plague on both your houses”. The cynic is as much a consumer as the absolutist, but one who has given up hope of ever finding the ideal commodity.

VIII

The process of dialectical thinking is constructive thinking, a process of continually synthesizing one’s current body of self- theory with new observations and appropriations; a resolution of the contradictions between the previous body of theory and new theoretical elements. The resulting synthesis is thus not some quantitative summation of the previous and the new, but their qualitative supersession, a new totality.

This synthetic / dialectic method of constructing a theory is counter to the eclectic style which just collects a rag-bag of its favourite bits from favourite ideologies without ever confronting the resulting contradictions. Modern examples include libertarian capitalism, christian marxism and liberalism in general.

If we are continually conscious of how we want to live, we can critically appropriate from anything in the construction of our self-theory: ideologies, culture critics, technocratic experts, sociological studies, mystics and so forth. All the rubbish of the old world can be scavenged for useful material by those who desire to reconstruct it.

IX

The nature of modern society, its global and capitalist unity, indicates to us the necessity of making our self-theory a unitary critique. By this we mean a critique of all geographic areas where various forms of socio-economic domination exist (ie both the capitalism of the ‘free’ world and the state-capitalism of the ‘communist’ world), as well as a critique of all alienations (sexual poverty, enforced survival, urbanism, etc). In other words, a critique of the totality of daily existence everywhere, from the perspective of the totality of one’s desires.

Ranged against this project are all the politicians and bureaucrats, preachers and gurus, city planners and policemen, reformers and militants, central committees and censors, corporate managers and union leaders, male supremacists and feminist ideologues, psyche-sociologists and conservation capitalists who work to subordinate individual desire to a reified ‘common good’ that has supposedly designated them as its representatives. They are all forces of the old world, all bosses, priests and creeps who have something to lose if people extend the game of seizing back their minds into seizing back their lives.

Revolutionary theory and revolutionary ideology are enemies — and both know it.

X

By now it should be obvious that self-demystification and the construction of our own revolutionary theory doesn’t eradicate our alienation: ‘the world’ (capital and the Spec tacle) goes on, reproducing itself every day.

Although this booklet had the construction of self-theory as its focus, we never intended to imply that revolutionary theory can exist separate from revolutionary practice. In order to be

consequential, effectively to reconstruct the world, practice must seek its theory, and theory must be realized in practice. The revolutionary prospect of disalienation and the transformation of social relations requires that one's theory be nothing other than a theory of practice, of what we do and how we live. Otherwise theory will degenerate into an impotent contemplation of the world, and ultimately into survival ideology — a projected mental fogbank, a static body of reified thought, of intellectual armour, that acts as a buffer between the daily world and oneself. And if revolutionary practice is not the practice of revolutionary theory, it degenerates into altruistic militantism, 'revolutionary' activity as one's social duty.

We don't strive for a coherent theory purely as an end in itself. For us, the practical use value of coherence is that having a coherent self-theory makes it easier for someone to think. As an example, it's easier to get a handle on future developments in social control if you have a coherent understanding of modern social control ideologies and techniques up to the present. Having a coherent theory makes it easier to conceive of the theoretical practice for realising your desires for your life.

XI

In the process of constructing self-theory, the last ideologies that have to be wrestled with and determinedly pinned down are the ones that most closely resemble revolutionary theory. These final mystifications are a) situationism b) councilism.

The Situationist International (1958–1971) was an international revolutionary organisation that made an immense contribution to revolutionary theory. Situationist theory is a body of critical theory that can be appropriated into one's self-theory, and nothing more. Anything more is the ideological misappropriation known as situationism.

For those who newly discover it, SI theory has a way of seeming like 'the answer I've been searching for for years', the answer to the riddle of one's dead life. But that's exactly when a new alertness and self-possession become necessary. Situationism can be quite the complete survival ideology, a defence mechanism against the wear and tear of daily life. Included in the ideology is the spectacular commodity-role of being 'a situationist', ie a radical jade and ardent esoteric. Councilism (aka 'Workers' Control', 'Syndicalism') offers 'self-management' as a replacement for the capitalist system of production.

Real self-management is the direct management (unmediated by any separate leadership) of social production, distribution and communication by workers and their communities. The movement for

self-management has appeared again and again all over the world in the course of social revolution.

Russia in 1905 and 1917–21, Spain in 1936–7, Hungary in 1956, Algeria in 1960, Chile in 1972 and

Portugal in 1975. The form of organisation most often created in the practice of self-management has

been workers' councils: sovereign general assemblies of the producers and neighbourhoods that elect

mandated delegates to co-ordinate their activities. The delegates are not representatives, but carry out

decisions already made by their assemblies. Delegates can be recalled at any time, should the general

assembly feel that its decisions are not being rigorously carried out.

Councilism is this historical practice and theory of self- management turned into an ideology. Whereas the participants in these uprisings lived a critique of the social totality, beginning with a critique of wage labour, of the commodity economy and exchange value, councilism makes a partial critique: it seeks not the self-managed, continuous and qualitative transformation of the whole world, but the static, quantitative self-management of the world as it is. The economy thus remains a separate realm cut off from the rest of daily life and dominating it. On the other hand a movement for generalised self- management seeks the transformation of all sectors of social life and all social relations (production, sexuality, housing, services, communications, etc), councilism thinks that a self-managed economy is all that matters. It misses, literally, the whole point: subjectivity and the desire to transform the whole of life. The problem with workers' control is that all it controls is work.

The world can only be turned right-side-up by the conscious collective activity of those who construct a theory of why it is upside-down. Spontaneous rebellion and insurrectionary subjectivity alone are not sufficient. An authentic revolution can only occur in a practical movement in which all the mystifications of the past are being consciously swept away.

Racism

Ayn Rand

1963

Racism is the lowest, most crudely primitive form of collectivism. It is the notion of ascribing moral, social or political significance to a man's genetic lineage—the notion that a man's intellectual and characterological traits are produced and transmitted by his internal body chemistry. Which means, in practice, that a man is to be judged, not by his own character and actions, but by the characters and actions of a collective of ancestors.

Racism claims that the content of a man's mind (not his cognitive apparatus, but its content) is inherited; that a man's convictions, values and character are determined before he is born, by physical factors beyond his control. This is the caveman's version of the doctrine of innate ideas—or of inherited knowledge—which has been thoroughly refuted by philosophy and science. Racism is a doctrine of, by and for brutes. It is a barnyard or stockfarm version of collectivism, appropriate to a mentality that differentiates between various breeds of animals, but not between animals and men.

Like every form of determinism, racism invalidates the specific attribute which distinguishes man from all other living species: his rational faculty. Racism negates two aspects of man's life: reason and choice, or mind and morality, replacing them with chemical predestination.

The respectable family that supports worthless relatives or covers up their crimes in order to “protect the family name” (as if the moral stature of one man could be damaged by the actions of another)—the bum who boasts that his great-grandfather was an empire-builder, or the small-town spinster who boasts that her maternal great-uncle was a state senator and her third cousin gave a concert at Carnegie Hall (as if the achievements of one man could rub off on the mediocrity of another)—the parents who search genealogical trees in order to evaluate their prospective sons-in-law—the celebrity who starts his autobiography with a detailed account of his family history—all these are samples of racism, the atavistic manifestations of a doctrine whose full expression is the tribal warfare of prehistorical savages, the wholesale slaughter of Nazi Germany, the atrocities of today's so-called “newly emerging nations.”

The theory that holds “good blood” or “bad blood” as a moral-intellectual criterion, can lead to nothing but torrents of blood in practice. Brute force is the only avenue of action open to men who regard themselves as mindless aggregates of chemicals.

Modern racists attempt to prove the superiority or inferiority of a given race by the historical achievements of some of its members. The frequent historical spectacle of a great innovator who, in his lifetime, is jeered, denounced, obstructed, persecuted by his countrymen, and then, a few years after his death, is enshrined in a national monument and hailed as a proof of the greatness of the German (or French or Italian or Cambodian) race—is as revolting a spectacle of collectivist expropriation, perpetrated by racists, as any expropriation of material wealth perpetrated by communists.

Just as there is no such thing as a collective or racial mind, so there is no such thing as a collective or racial achievement. There are only individual minds and individual achievements—and a culture is not the anonymous product of undifferentiated masses, but the sum of the intellectual achievements of individual men.

Even if it were proved—which it is not—that the incidence of men of potentially superior brain power is greater among the members of certain races than among the members of others, it would still tell us nothing about any given individual and it would be irrelevant to one's judgment of him. A genius is a genius, regardless of the number of morons who belong to the same race—and a moron is a moron, regardless of the number of geniuses who share his racial origin. It is hard to say which is the more outrageous injustice: the claim of Southern racists that a Negro genius should be treated as an inferior because his race has “produced” some brutes—or the claim of a German brute to the status of a superior because his race has “produced” Goethe, Schiller and Brahms.

These are not two different claims, of course, but two applications of the same basic premise. The question of whether one alleges the superiority or the inferiority of any given race is irrelevant; racism has only one psychological root: the racist's sense of his own inferiority.

Like every other form of collectivism, racism is a quest for the unearned. It is a quest for automatic knowledge—for an automatic evaluation of men's characters that bypasses the responsibility of exercising rational or moral judgment—and, above all, a quest for an automatic self-esteem (or pseudo-self-esteem).

To ascribe one's virtues to one's racial origin, is to confess that one has no knowledge of the process by which virtues are acquired and, most often, that one has failed to acquire them. The overwhelming majority of racists are men who have earned no sense of personal identity, who can claim no individual achievement or distinction, and who seek the illusion of a “tribal self-esteem” by alleging the inferiority of some other tribe. Observe the hysterical intensity of the Southern racists; observe also that racism is much more prevalent among the poor white trash than among their intellectual betters.

Historically, racism has always risen or fallen with the rise or fall of collectivism. Collectivism holds that the individual has no rights, that his life and work belong to the group (to “society,” to the tribe, the state, the nation) and that the group may sacrifice him at its own whim to its own interests. The only way to implement a doctrine of that kind is by means of brute force—and statism has always been the political corollary of collectivism.

The absolute state is merely an institutionalized form of gang-rule, regardless of which particular gang seizes power. And—since there is no rational justification for such rule, since none has ever been or can ever be offered—the mystique of racism is a crucial element in

every variant of the absolute state. The relationship is reciprocal: statism rises out of prehistorical tribal warfare, out of the notion that the men of one tribe are the natural prey for the men of another—and establishes its own internal subcategories of racism, a system of castes determined by a man's birth, such as inherited titles of nobility or inherited serfdom.

The racism of Nazi Germany—where men had to fill questionnaires about their ancestry for generations back, in order to prove their Aryan descent—has its counterpart in Soviet Russia, where men had to fill similar questionnaires to show that their ancestors had owned no property and thus to prove their proletarian descent. The Soviet ideology rests on the notion that men can be conditioned to communism genetically—that is, that a few generations conditioned by dictatorship will transmit communist ideology to their descendants, who will be communists at birth.

The persecution of racial minorities in Soviet Russia, according to the racial descent and whim of any given commissar, is a matter of record; anti-Semitism is particularly prevalent—only the official pogroms are now called “political purges.”

There is only one antidote to racism: the philosophy of individualism and its politico-economic corollary, laissez-faire capitalism.

Individualism regards man—every man—as an independent, sovereign entity who possesses an inalienable right to his own life, a right derived from his nature as a rational being. Individualism holds that a civilized society, or any form of association, cooperation or peaceful coexistence among men, can be achieved only on the basis of the recognition of individual rights—and that a group, as such, has no rights other than the individual rights of its members. (See Chapters 12 and 13.)²

It is not a man's ancestors or relatives or genes or body chemistry that count in a free market, but only one human attribute: productive ability. It is by his own individual ability and ambition that capitalism judges a man and rewards him accordingly.

No political system can establish universal rationality by law (or by force). But capitalism is the only system that functions in a way which rewards rationality and penalizes all forms of irrationality, including racism.

A fully free, capitalist system has not yet existed anywhere. But what is enormously significant is the correlation of racism and political controls in the semifree economies of the nineteenth century. Racial and/or religious persecutions of minorities stood in inverse ratio to the degree of a country's freedom. Racism was strongest in the more controlled economies, such as Russia and Germany—and weakest in England, the then freest country of Europe.

It is capitalism that gave mankind its first steps toward freedom and a rational way of life. It is capitalism that broke through national and racial barriers, by means of free trade. It is capitalism that abolished serfdom and slavery in all the civilized countries of the world. It is the capitalist North that destroyed the slavery of the agrarian-feudal South in the United States.

² Editors note: The chapters mentioned are those of „The Virtue of Selfishness“. They are not part of this compilation.

Such was the trend of mankind for the brief span of some hundred and fifty years. The spectacular results and achievements of that trend need no restatement here.

The rise of collectivism reversed that trend.

When men began to be indoctrinated once more with the notion that the individual possesses no rights, that supremacy, moral authority and unlimited power belong to the group, and that a man has no significance outside his group—the inevitable consequence was that men began to gravitate toward some group or another, in self-protection, in bewilderment and in subconscious terror. The simplest collective to join, the easiest one to identify—particularly for people of limited intelligence—the least demanding form of “belonging” and of “togetherness” is: race.

It is thus that the theoreticians of collectivism, the “humanitarian” advocates of a “benevolent” absolute state, have led to the rebirth and the new, virulent growth of racism in the twentieth century.

In its great era of capitalism, the United States was the freest country on earth—and the best refutation of racist theories. Men of all races came here, some from obscure, culturally undistinguished countries, and accomplished feats of productive ability which would have remained stillborn in their control-ridden native lands. Men of racial groups that had been slaughtering one another for centuries, learned to live together in harmony and peaceful cooperation. America had been called “the melting pot,” with good reason. But few people realized that America did not melt men into the gray conformity of a collective: she united them by means of protecting their right to individuality.

The major victims of such race prejudice as did exist in America were the Negroes. It was a problem originated and perpetuated by the noncapitalist South, though not confined to its boundaries. The persecution of Negroes in the South was and is truly disgraceful. But in the rest of the country, so long as men were free, even that problem was slowly giving way under the pressure of enlightenment and of the white men’s own economic interests.

Today, that problem is growing worse—and so is every other form of racism. America has become race-conscious in a manner reminiscent of the worst days in the most backward countries of nineteenth-century Europe. The cause is the same: the growth of collectivism and statism.

In spite of the clamor for racial equality, propagated by the “liberals” in the past few decades, the Census Bureau reported recently that “[the Negro’s] economic status relative to whites has not improved for nearly 20 years.” It had been improving in the freer years of our “mixed economy”; it deteriorated with the progressive enlargement of the “liberals’ ” Welfare State.

The growth of racism in a “mixed economy” keeps step with the growth of government controls. A “mixed economy” disintegrates a country into an institutionalized civil war of pressure groups, each fighting for legislative favors and special privileges at the expense of one another.

The existence of such pressure groups and of their political lobbies is openly and cynically acknowledged today. The pretense at any political philosophy, any principles, ideals or long-range goals is fast disappearing from our scene—and it is all but admitted that this country is now floating without direction, at the mercy of a blind, short-range power game played by

various statist gangs, each intent on getting hold of a legislative gun for any special advantage of the immediate moment.

In the absence of any coherent political philosophy, every economic group has been acting as its own destroyer, selling out its future for some momentary privilege. The policy of the businessmen has, for some time, been the most suicidal one in this respect. But it has been surpassed by the current policy of the Negro leaders.

So long as the Negro leaders were fighting against government-enforced discrimination—right, justice and morality were on their side. But that is not what they are fighting any longer. The confusions and contradictions surrounding the issue of racism have now reached an incredible climax.

It is time to clarify the principles involved.

The policy of the Southern states toward Negroes was and is a shameful contradiction of this country's basic principles. Racial discrimination, imposed and enforced by law, is so blatantly inexcusable an infringement of individual rights that the racist statutes of the South should have been de-clared unconstitutional long ago.

The Southern racists' claim of "states' rights" is a contradiction in terms: there can be no such thing as the "right" of some men to violate the rights of others. The constitutional concept of "states' rights" pertains to the division of power between local and national authorities, and serves to protect the states from the Federal government; it does not grant to a state government an unlimited, arbitrary power over its citizens or the privilege of abrogating the citizens' individual rights.

It is true that the Federal government has used the racial issue to enlarge its own power and to set a precedent of encroachment upon the legitimate rights of the states, in an unnecessary and unconstitutional manner. But this merely means that both governments are wrong; it does not excuse the policy of the Southern racists.

One of the worst contradictions, in this context, is the stand of many so-called "conservatives" (not confined exclusively to the South) who claim to be defenders of freedom, of capitalism, of property rights, of the Constitution, yet who advocate racism at the same time. They do not seem to possess enough concern with principles to realize that they are cutting the ground from under their own feet. Men who deny individual rights cannot claim, defend or uphold any rights whatsoever. It is such alleged champions of capitalism who are helping to discredit and destroy it.

The "liberals" are guilty of the same contradiction, but in a different form. They advocate the sacrifice of all individual rights to unlimited majority rule—yet posture as defenders of the rights of minorities. But the smallest minority on earth is the individual. Those who deny individual rights, cannot claim to be defenders of minorities.

This accumulation of contradictions, of shortsighted pragmatism, of cynical contempt for principles, of outrageous irrationality, has now reached its climax in the new demands of the Negro leaders.

Instead of fighting against racial discrimination, they are demanding that racial discrimination be legalized and enforced. Instead of fighting against racism, they are demanding the

establishment of racial quotas. Instead of fighting for “color-blindness” in social and economic issues, they are proclaiming that “color-blindness” is evil and that “color” should be made a primary consideration. Instead of fighting for equal rights, they are demanding special race privileges.

They are demanding that racial quotas be established in regard to employment and that jobs be distributed on a racial basis, in proportion to the percentage of a given race among the local population. For instance, since Negroes constitute 25 per cent of the population of New York City, they demand 25 per cent of the jobs in a given establishment.

Racial quotas have been one of the worst evils of racist regimes. There were racial quotas in the universities of Czarist Russia, in the population of Russia’s major cities, etc. One of the accusations against the racists in this country is that some schools practice a secret system of racial quotas. It was regarded as a victory for justice when employment questionnaires ceased to inquire about an applicant’s race or religion.

Today, it is not an oppressor, but an oppressed minority group that is demanding the establishment of racial quotas. (!)

This particular demand was too much even for the “liberals.” Many of them denounced it—properly—with shocked indignation.

Wrote *The N.Y. Times* (July 23, 1963): “The demonstrators are following a truly vicious principle in playing the ‘numbers game.’ A demand that 25 per cent (or any other percentage) of jobs be given to Negroes (or any other group) is wrong for one basic reason: it calls for a ‘quota system,’ which is in itself discriminatory. ... This newspaper has long fought a religious quota in respect to judgeships; we equally oppose a racial quota in respect to jobs from the most elevated to the most menial.”

As if the blatant racism of such a demand were not enough, some Negro leaders went still farther. Whitney M. Young Jr., executive director of the National Urban League, made the following statement (*N.Y. Times*, August 1): “The white leadership must be honest enough to grant that throughout our history there has existed a special privileged class of citizens who received preferred treatment. That class was white. Now we’re saying this: If two men, one Negro and one white, are equally qualified for a job, hire the Negro.”

Consider the implications of that statement. It does not merely demand special privileges on racial grounds—it demands that white men be penalized for the sins of their ancestors. It demands that a white laborer be refused a job because his grandfather may have practiced racial discrimination. But perhaps his grandfather had not practiced it. Or perhaps his grandfather had not even lived in this country. Since these questions are not to be considered, it means that that white laborer is to be charged with collective racial guilt, the guilt consisting merely of the color of his skin.

But that is the principle of the worst Southern racist who charges all Negroes with collective racial guilt for any crime committed by an individual Negro, and who treats them all as inferiors on the ground that their ancestors were savages.

The only comment one can make about demands of that kind, is: “By what right?—By what code?—By what standard?”

That absurdly evil policy is destroying the moral base of the Negroes' fight. Their case rested on the principle of individual rights. If they demand the violation of the rights of others, they negate and forfeit their own. Then the same answer applies to them as to the Southern racists: there can be no such thing as the "right" of some men to violate the rights of others.

Yet the entire policy of the Negro leaders is now moving in that direction. For instance, the demand for racial quotas in schools, with the proposal that hundreds of children, white and Negro, be forced to attend school in distant neighborhoods—for the purpose of "racial balance." Again, this is pure racism. As opponents of this demand have pointed out, to assign children to certain schools by reason of their race, is equally evil whether one does it for purposes of segregation or integration. And the mere idea of using children as pawns in a political game should outrage all parents, of any race, creed or color.

The "civil rights" bill, now under consideration in Congress, is another example of a gross infringement of individual rights. It is proper to forbid all discrimination in government-owned facilities and establishments: the government has no right to discriminate against any citizens. And by the very same principle, the government has no right to discriminate for some citizens at the expense of others. It has no right to violate the right of private property by forbidding discrimination in privately owned establishments.

No man, neither Negro nor white, has any claim to the property of another man. A man's rights are not violated by a private individual's refusal to deal with him. Racism is an evil, irrational and morally contemptible doctrine—but doctrines cannot be forbidden or prescribed by law. Just as we have to protect a communist's freedom of speech, even though his doctrines are evil, so we have to protect a racist's right to the use and disposal of his own property. Private racism is not a legal, but a moral issue—and can be fought only by private means, such as economic boycott or social ostracism.

Needless to say, if that "civil rights" bill is passed, it will be the worst breach of property rights in the sorry record of American history in respect to that subject.³

It is an ironic demonstration of the philosophical insanity and the consequently suicidal trend of our age, that the men who need the protection of individual rights most urgently—the Negroes—are now in the vanguard of the destruction of these rights.

A word of warning: do not become victims of the same racists by succumbing to racism; do not hold against all Negroes the disgraceful irrationality of some of their leaders. No group has any proper intellectual leadership today or any proper representation.

In conclusion, I shall quote from an astonishing editorial in *The N.Y. Times* of August 4—astonishing because ideas of this nature are not typical of our age:

"But the question must be not whether a group recognizable in color, features or culture has its rights as a group. No, the question is whether any American individual, regardless of color, features or culture, is deprived of his rights as an American. If the individual has all the rights and privileges due him under the laws and the Constitution, we need not worry about groups and masses—those do not, in fact, exist, except as figures of speech."

³ "The bill was passed in 1964, including the sections that violate property rights.

State Socialism and Anarchism: How far they agree, and wherein they differ

Benjamin R. Tucker

1888

Probably no agitation has ever attained the magnitude, either in the number of its recruits or the area of its influence, which has been attained by Modern Socialism, and at the same time been so little understood and so misunderstood, not only by the hostile and the indifferent, but by the friendly, and even by the great mass of its adherents themselves. This unfortunate and highly dangerous state of things is due partly to the fact that the human relationships which this movement – if anything so chaotic can be called a movement – aims to transform, involve no special class or classes, but literally all mankind; partly to the fact that these relationships are infinitely more varied and complex in their nature than those with which any special reform has ever been called upon to deal; and partly to the fact that the great moulding forces of society, the channels of information and enlightenment, are well-nigh exclusively under the control of those whose immediate pecuniary interests are antagonistic to the bottom claim of Socialism that labor should be put in possession of its own.

Almost the only persons who may be said to comprehend even approximately the significance, principles, and purposes of Socialism are the chief leaders of the extreme wings of the Socialistic forces, and perhaps a few of the money kings themselves. It is a subject of which it has lately become quite the fashion for preacher, professor, and penny-a-liner to treat, and, for the most part, woeful work they have made with it, exciting the derision and pity of those competent to judge. That those prominent in the intermediate Socialistic divisions do not fully understand what they are about is evident from the positions they occupy. If they did; if they were consistent, logical thinkers; if they were what the French call *consequent* men, – their reasoning faculties would long since have driven them to one extreme or the other.

For it is a curious fact that the two extremes of the vast army now under consideration, though united, as has been hinted above, by the common claim that labor shall be put in possession of its own, are more diametrically opposed to each other in their fundamental principles of social action and their methods of reaching the ends aimed at than either is to their common enemy, the existing society. They are based on two principles the history of whose conflict is almost equivalent to the history of the world since man came into it; and all intermediate parties, including that of the upholders of the existing society, are based upon a compromise between them. It is clear, then, that any intelligent, deep-rooted opposition to the prevailing order of things must come from one or the other of these extremes, for anything from any other source, far from being revolutionary in character, could be only in the nature of such superficial modification as would be utterly unable to concentrate upon itself the degree of attention and interest now bestowed upon Modern Socialism.

The two principles referred to are *Authority* and *Liberty*, and the names of the two schools of Socialistic thought which fully and unreservedly represent one or the other of them are, respectively, State Socialism and Anarchism. Whoso knows what these two schools want and how they propose to get it understands the Socialistic movement. For, just as it has been said that there is no half-way house between Rome and Reason, so it may be said that there is no half-way house between State Socialism and Anarchism. There are, in fact, two currents steadily flowing from the center of the Socialistic forces which are concentrating them on the left and on the right; and, if Socialism is to prevail, it is among the possibilities that, after this movement of separation has been completed and the existing order have been crushed out between the two camps, the ultimate and bitterer conflict will be still to come. In that case all the eight-hour men, all the trades-unionists, all the Knights of Labor, all the land nationalizationists, all the greenbackers, and, in short, all the members of the thousand and one different battalions belonging to the great army of Labor, will have deserted their old posts, and, these being arrayed on the one side and the other, the great battle will begin. What a final victory for the State Socialists will mean, and what a final victory for the Anarchists will mean, it is the purpose of this paper to briefly state.

To do this intelligently, however, I must first describe the ground common to both, the features that make Socialists of each of them.

The economic principles of Modern Socialism are a logical deduction from the principle laid down by Adam Smith in the early chapters of his "Wealth of Nations," – namely, that labor is the true measure of price. But Adam Smith, after stating this principle most clearly and concisely, immediately abandoned all further consideration of it to devote himself to showing what actually does measure price, and how, therefore, wealth is at present distributed. Since his day nearly all the political economists have followed his example by confining their function to the description of society as it is, in its industrial and commercial phases. Socialism, on the contrary, extends its function to the description of society as it should be, and the discovery of the means of making it what it should be. Half a century or more after Smith enunciated the principle above stated, Socialism picked it up where he had dropped it, and in following it to its logical conclusions, made it the basis of a new economic philosophy.

This seems to have been done independently by three different men, of three different nationalities, in three different languages: Josiah Warren, an American; Pierre J. Proudhon, a Frenchman; Karl Marx, a German Jew. That Warren and Proudhon arrived at their conclusions singly and unaided is certain; but whether Marx was not largely indebted to Proudhon for his economic ideas is questionable. However this may be, Marx's presentation of the ideas was in so many respects peculiarly his own that he is fairly entitled to the credit of originality. That the work of this interesting trio should have been done so nearly simultaneously would seem to indicate that Socialism was in the air, and that the time was ripe and the conditions favorable for the appearance of this new school of thought. So far as priority of time is concerned, the credit seems to belong to Warren, the American, – a fact which should be noted by the stump orators who are so fond of declaiming against Socialism as an imported article. Of the purest revolutionary blood, too, this Warren, for he descended from the Warren who fell at Bunker Hill.

From Smith's principle that labor is the true measure of price – or, as Warren phrased it, that cost is the proper limit of price – these three men made the following deductions: that the natural wage of labor is its product; that this wage, or product, is the only just source of income (leaving out, of course, gift, inheritance, etc.); that all who derive income from any other source abstract it directly or indirectly from the natural and just wage of labor; that this abstracting process generally takes one of three forms, – interest, rent, and profit; that these three constitute the trinity of usury, and are simply different methods of levying tribute for the use of capital; that, capital being simply stored-up labor which has already received its pay in full, its use ought to be gratuitous, on the principle that

labor is the only basis of price; that the lender of capital is entitled to its return intact, and nothing more; that the only reason why the banker, the stockholder, the landlord, the manufacturer, and the merchant are able to exact usury from labor lies in the fact that they are backed by legal privilege, or monopoly; and that the only way to secure labor the enjoyment of its entire product, or natural wage, is to strike down monopoly.

It must not be inferred that either Warren, Proudhon, or Marx used exactly this phraseology, or followed exactly this line of thought, but it indicates definitely enough the fundamental ground taken by all three, and their substantial thought up to the limit to which they went in common. And, lest I may be accused of stating the positions and arguments of these men incorrectly, it may be well to say in advance that I have viewed them broadly, and that, for the purpose of sharp, vivid, and emphatic comparison and contrast, I have taken considerable liberty with their thought by rearranging it in an order, and often in a phraseology, of my own, but, I am satisfied, without, in so doing, misrepresenting them in any essential particular.

It was at this point – the necessity of striking down monopoly – that came the parting of their ways. Here the road forked. They found that they must turn either to the right or to the left, – follow either the path of Authority or the path of Liberty. Marx went one way; Warren and Proudhon the other. Thus were born State Socialism and Anarchism

First, then, State Socialism, which may be described as *the doctrine that all the affairs of men should be managed by the government, regardless of individual choice*. Marx, its founder, concluded that the only way to abolish the class monopolies was to centralize and consolidate all industrial and commercial interests, all productive and distributive agencies, in one vast monopoly in the hands of the State. The government must become banker, manufacturer, farmer, carrier, and merchant, and in these capacities must suffer no competition. Land, tools, and all instruments of production must be wrested from individual hands, and made the property of the collectivity. To the individual can belong only the products to be consumed, not the means of producing them. A man may own his clothes and his food, but not the sewing-machine which makes his shirts or the spade which digs his potatoes. Product and capital are essentially different things; the former belongs to individuals, the latter to society. Society must seize the capital which belongs to it, by the ballot if it can, by revolution if it must. Once in possession of it, it must administer it on the majority principle, though its organ, the State, utilize it in production and distribution, fix all prices by the amount of labor involved, and employ the whole people in its workshops, farms, stores, etc. The nation must be transformed into a vast bureaucracy, and every individual into a State official. Everything must be done on the cost principle, the people having no motive to make a profit out of themselves. Individuals not being allowed to own capital, no one can employ another, or even himself. Every man will be a wage-receiver, and the State the only wage-payer. He who will not work for the State must starve, or, more likely, go to prison. All freedom of trade must disappear. Competition must be utterly wiped out. All industrial and commercial activity must be centered in one vast, enormous, all-inclusive monopoly. The remedy for *monopolies* is *monopoly*.

Such is the economic programme of State Socialism as adopted from Karl Marx. The history of its growth and progress cannot be told here. In this country the parties that uphold it are known as the Socialistic Labor Party, which pretends to follow Karl Marx; the Nationalists, who follow Karl Marx filtered through Edward Bellamy; and the Christian Socialists, who follow Karl Marx filtered through Jesus Christ.

What other applications this principle of Authority, once adopted in the economic sphere, will develop is very evident. It means the absolute control by the majority of all individual conduct. The right of such control is already admitted by the State Socialists, though they maintain that, as a matter of fact, the individual would be allowed a much larger liberty than he now enjoys. But he would only be allowed it; he could not claim it as his own. There would be no foundation of society

upon a guaranteed equality of the largest possible liberty. Such liberty as might exist would exist by sufferance and could be taken away at any moment. Constitutional guarantees would be of no avail. There would be but one article in the constitution of a State Socialistic country: "The right of the majority is absolute."

The claim of the State Socialists, however, that this right would not be exercised in matters pertaining to the individual in the more intimate and private relations of his life is not borne out by the history of governments. It has ever been the tendency of power to add to itself, to enlarge its sphere, to encroach beyond the limits set for it; and where the habit of resisting such encroachment is not fostered, and the individual is not taught to be jealous of his rights, individuality gradually disappears and the government or State becomes the all-in-all. Control naturally accompanies responsibility. Under the system of State Socialism, therefore, which holds the community responsible for the health, wealth, and wisdom of the individual, it is evident that the community, through its majority expression, will insist more and more in prescribing the conditions of health, wealth, and wisdom, thus impairing and finally destroying individual independence and with it all sense of individual responsibility.

Whatever, then, the State Socialists may claim or disclaim, their system, if adopted, is doomed to end in a State religion, to the expense of which all must contribute and at the altar of which all must kneel; a State school of medicine, by whose practitioners the sick must invariably be treated; a State system of hygiene, prescribing what all must and must not eat, drink, wear, and do; a State code of morals, which will not content itself with punishing crime, but will prohibit what the majority decide to be vice; a State system of instruction, which will do away with all private schools, academies, and colleges; a State nursery, in which all children must be brought up in common at the public expense; and, finally, a State family, with an attempt at stirpiculture, or scientific breeding, in which no man and woman will be allowed to have children if the State prohibits them and no man and woman can refuse to have children if the State orders them. Thus will Authority achieve its acme and Monopoly be carried to its highest power.

Such is the ideal of the logical State Socialist, such the goal which lies at the end of the road that Karl Marx took. Let us now follow the fortunes of Warren and Proudhon, who took the other road, – the road of Liberty.

This brings us to Anarchism, which may be described as *the doctrine that all the affairs of men should be managed by individuals or voluntary associations, and that the State should be abolished.*

When Warren and Proudhon, in prosecuting their search for justice to labor, came face to face with the obstacle of class monopolies, they saw that these monopolies rested upon Authority, and concluded that the thing to be done was, not to strengthen this Authority and thus make monopoly universal, but to utterly uproot Authority and give full sway to the opposite principle, Liberty, by making competition, the antithesis of monopoly, universal. They saw in competition the great leveler of prices to the labor cost of production. In this they agreed with the political economists. They query then naturally presented itself why all prices do not fall to labor cost; where there is any room for incomes acquired otherwise than by labor; in a word, why the usurer, the receiver of interest, rent, and profit, exists. The answer was found in the present one-sidedness of competition. It was discovered that capital had so manipulated legislation that unlimited competition is allowed in supplying productive labor, thus keeping wages down to the starvation point, or as near it as practicable; that a great deal of competition is allowed in supplying distributive labor, or the labor of the mercantile classes, thus keeping, not the prices of goods, but the merchants' actual profits on them down to a point somewhat approximating equitable wages for the merchants' work; but that almost no competition at all is allowed in supplying capital, upon the aid of which both productive and distributive labor are dependent for their power of achievement, thus keeping the rate of

interest on money and of house-rent and ground-rent at as high a point as the necessities of the people will bear.

On discovering this, Warren and Proudhon charged the political economists with being afraid of their own doctrine. The Manchester men were accused of being inconsistent. They believed in liberty to compete with the laborer in order to reduce his wages, but not in liberty to compete with the capitalist in order to reduce his usury. *Laissez Faire* was very good sauce for the goose, labor, but was very poor sauce for the gander, capital. But how to correct this inconsistency, how to serve this gander with this sauce, how to put capital at the service of business men and laborers at cost, or free of usury, – that was the problem.

Marx, as we have seen, solved it by declaring capital to be a different thing from product, and maintaining that it belonged to society and should be seized by society and employed for the benefit of all alike. Proudhon scoffed at this distinction between capital and product. He maintained that capital and product are not different kinds of wealth, but simply alternate conditions or functions of the same wealth; that all wealth undergoes an incessant transformation from capital into product and from product back into capital, the process repeating itself interminably; that capital and product are purely social terms; that what is product to one man immediately becomes capital to another, and *vice versa*; that if there were but one person in the world, all wealth would be to him at once capital and product; that the fruit of A's toil is his product, which, when sold to B, becomes B's capital (unless B is an unproductive consumer, in which case it is merely wasted wealth, outside the view of social economy); that a steam-engine is just as much product as a coat, and that a coat is just as much capital as a steam-engine; and that the same laws of equity govern the possession of the one that govern the possession of the other.

For these and other reasons Proudhon and Warren found themselves unable to sanction any such plan as the seizure of capital by society. But, though opposed to socializing the ownership of capital, they aimed nevertheless to socialize its effects by making its use beneficial to all instead of a means of impoverishing the many to enrich the few. And when the light burst in upon them, they saw that this could be done by subjecting capital to the natural law of competition, thus bringing the price of its own use down to cost, – that is, to nothing beyond the expenses incidental to handling and transferring it. So they raised the banner of Absolute Free Trade; free trade at home, as well as with foreign countries; the logical carrying out of the Manchester doctrine; *laissez faire* the universal rule. Under this banner they began their fight upon monopolies, whether the all-inclusive monopoly of the State Socialists, or the various class monopolies that now prevail.

Of the latter they distinguished four of principal importance: the money monopoly, the land monopoly, the tariff monopoly, and the patent monopoly.

First in the importance of its evil influence they considered the money monopoly, which consists of the privilege given by the government to certain individuals, or to individuals holding certain kinds of property, of issuing the circulating medium, a privilege which is now enforced in this country by a national tax of ten per cent., upon all other persons who attempt to furnish a circulating medium, and by State laws making it a criminal offense to issue notes as currency. It is claimed that the holders of this privilege control the rate of interest, the rate of rent of houses and buildings, and the prices of goods, – the first directly, and the second and third indirectly. For, say Proudhon and Warren, if the business of banking were made free to all, more and more persons would enter into it until the competition should become sharp enough to reduce the price of lending money to the labor cost, which statistics show to be less than three-fourths of one per cent. In that case the thousands of people who are now deterred from going into business by the ruinously high rates which they must pay for capital with which to start and carry on business will find their difficulties removed. If they have property which they do not desire to convert into money by sale, a bank will take it as collateral for a loan of a certain proportion of its market value at less than one per cent. discount. If

they have no property, but are industrious, honest, and capable, they will generally be able to get their individual notes endorsed by a sufficient number of known and solvent parties; and on such business paper they will be able to get a loan at a bank on similarly favorable terms. Thus interest will fall at a blow. The banks will really not be lending capital at all, but will be doing business on the capital of their customers, the business consisting in an exchange of the known and widely available credits of the banks for the unknown and unavailable, but equally good, credits of the customers and a charge therefor of less than one per cent., not as interest for the use of capital, but as pay for the labor of running the banks. This facility of acquiring capital will give an unheard of impetus to business, and consequently create an unprecedented demand for labor, – a demand which will always be in excess of the supply, directly to the contrary of the present condition of the labor market. Then will be seen an exemplification of the words of Richard Cobden that, when two laborers are after one employer, wages fall, but when two employers are after one laborer, wages rise. Labor will then be in a position to dictate its wages, and will thus secure its natural wage, its entire product. Thus the same blow that strikes interest down will send wages up. But this is not all. Down will go profits also. For merchants, instead of buying at high prices on credit, will borrow money of the banks at less than one per cent., buy at low prices for cash, and correspondingly reduce the prices of their goods to their customers. And with the rest will go house-rent. For no one who can borrow capital at one per cent. with which to build a house of his own will consent to pay rent to a landlord at a higher rate than that. Such is the vast claim made by Proudhon and Warren as to the results of the simple abolition of the money monopoly.

Second in importance comes the land monopoly, the evil effects of which are seen principally in exclusively agricultural countries, like Ireland. This monopoly consists in the enforcement by government of land titles which do not rest upon personal occupancy and cultivation. It was obvious to Warren and Proudhon that, as soon as individualists should no longer be protected by their fellows in anything but personal occupancy and cultivation of land, ground-rent would disappear, and so usury have one less leg to stand on. Their followers of today are disposed to modify this claim to the extent of admitting that the very small fraction of ground-rent which rests, not on monopoly, but on superiority of soil or site, will continue to exist for a time and perhaps forever, though tending constantly to a minimum under conditions of freedom. But the inequality of soils which gives rise to the economic rent of land, like the inequality of human skill which gives rise to the economic rent of ability, is not a cause for serious alarm even to the most thorough opponent of usury, as its nature is not that of a germ from which other and graver inequalities may spring, but rather that of a decaying branch which may finally wither and fall.

Third, the tariff monopoly, which consists in fostering production at high prices and under unfavorable conditions by visiting with the penalty of taxation those who patronize production at low prices and under favorable conditions. The evil to which this monopoly gives rise might more properly be called *misusury* than usury, because it compels labor to pay, not exactly for the use of capital, but rather for the misuse of capital. The abolition of this monopoly would result in a great reduction in the prices of all articles taxed, and this saving to the laborers who consume these articles would be another step toward securing to the laborer his natural wage, his entire product. Proudhon admitted, however, that to abolish this monopoly before abolishing the money monopoly would be a cruel and disastrous policy, first, because the evil of scarcity of money, created by the money monopoly, would be intensified by the flow of money out of the country which would be involved in an excess of imports over exports, and, second, because that fraction of the laborers of the country which is now employed in the protected industries would be turned adrift to face starvation without the benefit of the insatiable demand for labor which a competitive money system would create. Free trade in money at home, making money and work abundant, was insisted upon by Proudhon as a prior condition of free trade in goods with foreign countries.

Fourth, the patent monopoly, which consists in protecting inventors and authors against competition for a period long enough to enable them to extort from the people a reward enormously in excess of

the labor measure of their services, – in other words, in giving certain people a right of property for a term of years in laws and facts of Nature, and the power to exact tribute from others for the use of this natural wealth, which should be open to all. The abolition of this monopoly would fill its beneficiaries with a wholesome fear of competition which would cause them to be satisfied with pay for their services equal to that which other laborers get for theirs, and to secure it by placing their products and works on the market at the outset at prices so low that their lines of business would be no more tempting to competitors than any other lines.

The development of the economic programme which consists in the destruction of these monopolies and the substitution for them of the freest competition led its authors to a perception of the fact that all their thought rested upon a very fundamental principle, the freedom of the individual, his right of sovereignty over himself, his products, and his affairs, and of rebellion against the dictation of external authority. Just as the idea of taking capital away from individuals and giving it to the government started Marx in a path which ends in making the government everything and the individual nothing, so the idea of taking capital away from government-protected monopolies and putting it within easy reach of all individuals started Warren and Proudhon in a path which ends in making the individual everything and the government nothing. If the individual has a right to govern himself, all external government is tyranny. Hence the necessity of abolishing the State. This was the logical conclusion to which Warren and Proudhon were forced, and it became the fundamental article of their political philosophy. It is the doctrine which Proudhon named An-archism, a word derived from the Greek, and meaning, not necessarily absence of order, as is generally supposed, but an absence of rule. The Anarchists are simply untterrified Jeffersonian Democrats. They believe that “the best government is that which governs least,” and that that which governs least is no government at all. Even the simple police function of protecting person and property they deny to governments supported by compulsory taxation. Protection they look upon as a thing to be secured, as long as it is necessary, by voluntary association and cooperation for self-defence, or as a commodity to be purchased, like any other commodity, of those who offer the best article at the lowest price. In their view it is in itself an invasion of the individual to compel him to pay for or suffer a protection against invasion that he has not asked for and does not desire. And they further claim that protection will become a drug in the market, after poverty and consequently crime have disappeared through the realization of their economic programme. Compulsory taxation is to them the life-principle of all the monopolies, and passive, but organized, resistance to the tax-collector they contemplate, when the proper time comes, as one of the most effective methods of accomplishing their purposes.

Their attitude on this is a key to their attitude on all other questions of a political or social nature. In religion they are atheistic as far as their own opinions are concerned, for they look upon divine authority and the religious sanction of morality as the chief pretexts put forward by the privileged classes for the exercise of human authority. “If God exists,” said Proudhon, “he is man’s enemy.” And in contrast to Voltaire’s famous epigram, “If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him,” the great Russian Nihilist, Mikhail Bakunin, placed this antithetical proposition: “If God existed, it would be necessary to abolish him.” But although, viewing the divine hierarchy as a contradiction of Anarchy, they do not believe in it, the Anarchists none the less firmly believe in the liberty to believe in it. Any denial of religious freedom they squarely oppose.

Upholding thus the right of every individual to be or select his own priest, they likewise uphold his right to be or select his own doctor. No monopoly in theology, no monopoly in medicine. Competition everywhere and always; spiritual advice and medical advice alike to stand or fall on their own merits. And not only in medicine, but in hygiene, must this principle of liberty be followed. The individual may decide for himself not only what to do to get well, but what to do to keep well. No external power must dictate to him what he must and must not eat, drink, wear, or do.

Nor does the Anarchistic scheme furnish any code of morals to be imposed upon the individual. "Mind your own business" is its only moral law. Interference with another's business is a crime and the only crime, and as such may properly be resisted. In accordance with this view the Anarchists look upon attempts to arbitrarily suppress vice as in themselves crimes. They believe liberty and the resultant social well-being to be a sure cure for all the vices. But they recognize the right of the drunkard, the gambler, the rake, and the harlot to live their lives until they shall freely choose to abandon them.

In the matter of the maintenance and rearing of children the Anarchists would neither institute the communistic nursery which the State Socialists favor nor keep the communistic school system which now prevails. The nurse and the teacher, like the doctor and the preacher, must be selected voluntarily, and their services must be paid for by those who patronize them. Parental rights must not be taken away, and parental responsibilities must not be foisted upon others.

Even in so delicate a matter as that of the relations of the sexes the Anarchists do not shrink from the application of their principle. They acknowledge and defend the right of any man and woman, or any men and women, to love each other for as long or as short a time as they can, will, or may. To them legal marriage and legal divorce are equal absurdities. They look forward to a time when every individual, whether man or woman, shall be self-supporting, and when each shall have an independent home of his or her own, whether it be a separate house or rooms in a house with others; when the love relations between these independent individuals shall be as varied as are individual inclinations and attractions; and when the children born of these relations shall belong exclusively to the mothers until old enough to belong to themselves.

Such are the main features of the Anarchistic social ideal. There is wide difference of opinion among those who hold it as to the best method of obtaining it. Time forbids the treatment of that phase of the subject here. I will simply call attention to the fact that it is an ideal utterly inconsistent with that of those Communists who falsely call themselves Anarchists while at the same time advocating a regime of Archism fully as despotic as that of the State Socialists themselves. And it is an ideal that can be as little advanced by Prince Kropotkin as retarded by the brooms of those Mrs. Partingtons of the bench who sentence them to prison; an ideal which the martyrs of Chicago did far more to help by their glorious death upon the gallows for the common cause of Socialism than by their unfortunate advocacy during their lives, in the name of Anarchism, of force as a revolutionary agent and authority as a safeguard of the new social order. The Anarchists believe in liberty both as an end and means, and are hostile to anything that antagonizes it.

I should not undertake to summarize this altogether too summary exposition of Socialism from the standpoint of Anarchism, did I not find the task already accomplished for me by a brilliant French journalist and historian, Ernest Lesigne, in the form of a series of crisp antithesis; by reading which to you as a conclusion of this lecture I hope to deepen the impression which it has been my endeavor to make.

"There are two Socialisms.

One is communistic, the other solidaritarian.

One is dictatorial, the other libertarian.

One is metaphysical, the other positive.

One is dogmatic, the other scientific.

One is emotional, the other reflective.

One is destructive, the other constructive.

Both are in pursuit of the greatest possible welfare for all.

One aims to establish happiness for all, the other to enable each to be happy in his own way.

The first regards the State as a society *sui generis*, of an especial essence, the product of a sort of divine right outside of and above all society, with special rights and able to exact special obediences;

the second considers the State as an association like any other, generally managed worse than others.

The first proclaims the sovereignty of the State, the second recognizes no sort of sovereign.

One wishes all monopolies to be held by the State; the other wishes the abolition of all monopolies.

One wishes the governed class to become the governing class; the other wishes the disappearance of classes.

Both declare that the existing state of things cannot last.

The first considers revolutions as the indispensable agent of evolutions; the second teaches that repression alone turns evolutions into revolution.

The first has faith in a cataclysm.

The second knows that social progress will result from the free play of individual efforts.

Both understand that we are entering upon a new historic phase.

One wishes that there should be none but proletaires.

The other wishes that there should be no more proletaires.

The first wishes to take everything away from everybody.

The second wishes to leave each in possession of its own.

The one wishes to expropriate everybody.

The other wishes everybody to be a proprietor.

The first says: 'Do as the government wishes.'

The second says: 'Do as you wish yourself.'

The former threatens with despotism.

The latter promises liberty.

The former makes the citizen the subject of the State.

The latter makes the State the employee of the citizen.

One proclaims that labor pains will be necessary to the birth of a new world.

The other declares that real progress will not cause suffering to any one.

The first has confidence in social war.

The other believes only in the works of peace.

One aspires to command, to regulate, to legislate.

The other wishes to attain the minimum of command, of regulation, of legislation.

One would be followed by the most atrocious of reactions.

The other opens unlimited horizons to progress.

The first will fail; the other will succeed.

Both desire equality.

One by lowering heads that are too high.

The other by raising heads that are too low.

One sees equality under a common yoke.

The other will secure equality in complete liberty.

One is intolerant, the other tolerant.

One frightens, the other reassures.

The first wishes to instruct everybody.

The second wishes to enable everybody to instruct himself.

The first wishes to support everybody.

The second wishes to enable everybody to support himself.

One says:

The land to the State.

The mine to the State.

The tool to the State.

The product to the State.

The other says:

The land to the cultivator.

The mine to the miner.

The tool to the laborer.

The product to the producer.
There are only these two Socialisms.
One is the infancy of Socialism; the other is its manhood.
One is already the past; the other is the future.
One will give place to the other.

Today each of us must choose for the one or the other of these two Socialisms, or else confess that he is not a Socialist."

Postscript

Forty years ago, when the foregoing essay was written, the denial of competition had not yet effected the enormous concentration of wealth that now so gravely threatens social order. It was not yet too late to stem the current of accumulation by a reversal of the policy of monopoly. The Anarchistic remedy was still applicable.

Today the way is not so clear. The four monopolies, unhindered, have made possible the modern development of the trust, and the trust is now a monster which I fear, even the freest banking, could it be instituted, would be unable to destroy. As long as the Standard Oil group controlled only fifty millions of dollars, the institution of free competition would have crippled it hopelessly; it needed the money monopoly for its sustenance and its growth. Now that it controls, directly and indirectly, perhaps ten thousand millions, it sees in the money monopoly a convenience, to be sure, but no longer a necessity. It can do without it. Were all restrictions upon banking to be removed, concentrated capital could meet successfully the new situation by setting aside annually for sacrifice a sum that would remove every competitor from the field.

If this be true, then monopoly, which can be controlled permanently only for economic forces, has passed for the moment beyond their reach, and must be grappled with for a time solely by forces political or revolutionary. Until measures of forcible confiscation, through the State or in defiance of it, shall have abolished the concentrations that monopoly has created, the economic solution proposed by Anarchism and outlined in the foregoing pages – *and there is no other solution* – will remain a thing to be taught to the rising generation, that conditions may be favorable to its application after the great leveling. But education is a slow process, and may not come too quickly. Anarchists who endeavor to hasten it by joining in the propaganda of State Socialism or revolution make a sad mistake indeed. They help to so force the march of events that the people will not have time to find out, by the study of their experience, that their troubles have been due to the rejection of competition. If this lesson shall not be learned in a season, the past will be repeated in the future, in which case we shall have to turn for consolation to the doctrine of Nietzsche that this is bound to happen anyhow, or to the reflection of Renan that, from the point of view of Sirius, all these matters are of little moment.

B.R.T., August 11, 1926.

Why does justice have good consequences?

Roderick T. Long

2002

1. The Problem Stated

Today I'm hoping to make you puzzled about a problem that has puzzled me on and off over the years. Misery loves company, I suppose -- though the problem doesn't actually puzzle me at the moment, because at the moment I think I've got a solution to it. But I've thought this before, and found myself deceived; so I'm not breaking out the champagne just yet.

The problem is this: why does justice have good consequences?

By "justice" I mean the moral system of rights, or more precisely, the virtue concerned with respecting such rights. By "good consequences" I mean not *optimal* consequences, nor *exceptionlessly* good consequences, but at least a reliable tendency to produce good consequences, both for oneself and for others. More precisely, to say that justice has good consequences is to say that a policy of respecting people's rights will *ordinarily* promote, or at least not require *great* sacrifices of, the well-being of three groups: those whose rights are being respected, those doing the respecting, and third parties.

The question is: why should this be so?

There are two simple answers to this question. If either of them were true, there would be no puzzle. But I don't think either of them is true.

2. The No-Such-Explanandum Solution

Why does justice have good consequences? One simple answer would be: it doesn't. When Socrates refused to act unjustly, he annoyed his neighbours and got himself killed. Hence his commitment to justice apparently brought little benefit either to himself or to others. Think, too, of Rawls' famous characterisation of justice:

Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought. A theory however elegant and economical must be rejected or revised if it is untrue; likewise laws and institutions no matter how efficient and well-arranged must be reformed or abolished if they are unjust. Each person possesses an inviolability founded on justice that even the welfare of society as a whole cannot override. For this reason justice denies that the loss of freedom for some is made right by a greater good shared by others. It does not allow that the sacrifices

imposed on a few are outweighed by the larger sum of advantages enjoyed by many. Therefore in a just society the liberties of equal citizenship are taken as settled; the rights secured by justice are not subject to political bargaining or to the calculus of social interests. ... These propositions seem to express our intuitive conviction of the primacy of justice. ¹

If the requirements of justice are as aloof from consequentialist considerations as Rawls suggests, then there is obviously no guarantee that justice will even tend to promote on-balance beneficial consequences. So why suppose that the fact I'm trying to explain is a fact at all?

But the no-such-explanandum response is unconvincing. Even if we grant that justice does not produce benefits for everyone in every instance, it seems undeniable that people are by and large better off under conditions of justice. As *general policies*, rights-violating activities such as murder, robbery, rape, arson, and the like certainly have a negative impact on society, and in most cases end up causing trouble for the perpetrator as well.

Moreover, those who disagree about which policies are *just* almost always disagree about which policies are *beneficial* as well. Just think of such currently divisive social issues as: abortion, affirmative action, economic regulation, environmental protection, free trade, military intervention overseas, redistributive taxation, slavery reparations, minimum wage legislation, drug prohibition, the integration of women and/or gays into the armed forces, gay marriage, immigration, pornography, gun control, genetic engineering, intellectual property. For each of these issues, consider which side of the debate you think has a greater claim of *justice* on its side. Then consider which side of the debate you think would have better *consequences*. I strongly suspect that, for most people, there will be few if any major discrepancies between the two lists. Regardless of our views on the *content* of justice, we all seem to expect the implementation of justice to have good consequences.

3. The Indirect-Consequentialist Solution

Our efforts to resist this first simple solution might seem to drive us straight into the jaws of a second: if justice and good consequences tend to go together, perhaps this is simply because justice is founded on consequentialist considerations. Admittedly, justice requires us to stick to certain principles regardless of the consequences; but this might well be because there will be better results in the long run if we treat certain principles as inviolable than if we are too ready to revise them on a case by case basis. A principled commitment to respecting rights is better for society, because people will feel more secure, and will be able to engage in more long-term planning and social coordination, if they know what moral claims they can count on having honoured. A principled commitment to respecting rights is also better for the agent, because one is better off in the long run if one cultivates a reputation for being someone who can be trusted to behave justly, and the most effective way to cultivate such a reputation is to inculcate in oneself a principled commitment. Such suggestions have a long history, reaching back to Epicurus, Hobbes, Hume, and Mill, and figuring more recently in the work of Axelrod, Gauthier, and Yeager. ²

But such an indirect-consequentialist solution has a fatal flaw; it runs afoul of the principles of praxeology. Praxeology is the study of those aspects of human action that can be grasped *a priori*; in other words, it is concerned with the conceptual analysis and logical implications of preference, choice, means and ends, and so forth. The basic principles of praxeology were first discovered by the Greek philosophers, who used them as a foundation for ethics. This approach was further developed by the Scholastics, who extended praxeological analysis to

the foundations of economics and social science as well. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this approach to social science was rediscovered by the philosophical economists of the Austrian School, who first dubbed it praxeology.³ A crucial praxeological distinction is that between consumer's goods, which meet human needs directly, and producer's goods, which are valued for their usefulness in producing or obtaining consumer's goods. As I have written elsewhere:

Whatever I choose, I choose either as a consumer's good (a first-order good) or as a producer's good (a higher-order good). Utilitarianism of any sort regards morality as a producer's good, a means of producing happiness; but *indirect* utilitarianism maintains, in effect, that the most effective way to promote happiness is to treat morality *as if* it were a consumer's good, even though it isn't one. But is it really possible to adopt the attitude that indirect utilitarianism recommends? When I choose morality "as if" it were a consumer's good, either it really becomes a consumer's good for me, or else it remains a producer's good and I am only pretending. There is no third possibility.

Suppose it does become a consumer's good for me. In that case, I am no longer a consistent utilitarian, since in my actions I reveal a preference for morality as an end in itself. [Utilitarians sometimes recommend] treating a principle as inherently binding at the everyday level while recognizing its contingency on utilitarian outcomes at the reflective level but doesn't this just amount to advising us to form inconsistent preferences? And if the preferences on which I ordinarily act do treat morality as a consumer's good, in what sense can it be said that I *really* regard it as a producer's good? On the other hand, suppose that morality remains a producer's good for me. [E]very action embodies a means-end scheme ... [E]ven when I choose to act morally, my choice commits me to rejecting morality in counterfactual situations ... where immorality would be a more effective means to the end, and this commitment is a blot on my character *now*. (Hence the Kantian insistence on the importance of *maxims* rather than actions.)

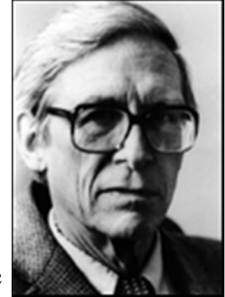
It has often been claimed that indirect utilitarianism is unstable, and must collapse either into direct utilitarianism on the one hand or into "rules fetishism" on the other. This can be interpreted as a psychological claim about the likely results of trying to maintain a utilitarian attitude, in which case its truth or falsity is an empirical matter. By transposing the familiar stability objection into a praxeological key, however, what I've been trying to show is that indirect utilitarianism is not just causally but *conceptually* unstable. If I treat morality as a consumer's good, I must reject utilitarianism on pain of inconsistency; if I treat morality as a producer's good, I thereby exhibit a moral character or disposition that utilitarian considerations themselves condemn. But I must treat morality in one way or the other; hence utilitarianism is praxeologically self-defeating. The praxeologist cannot be a *direct* utilitarian, since praxeological reasoning itself shows us that the utilitarian's goal depends on social cooperation, which in turn requires the kind of stable and consistent commitment to principles that a direct utilitarian cannot have. Nor can the praxeologist be an *indirect* utilitarian, since praxeological considerations force a choice between treating morality as a producer's good (in which case we're back with direct utilitarianism) and treating it as a consumer's good (in which case utilitarianism prescribes its own rejection). We may have utilitarian reasons for *adopting* moral commitments, but once we *have* adopted them, we can no longer regard them as resting on purely utilitarian foundations -- because so regarding them would alter their status as commitments.⁴

If indirect consequentialism is praxeologically incoherent, we cannot accept the indirect-consequentialist solution to the question of why justice has good consequences. But then we are left with a puzzle: the same conduct is both just and beneficial, but it's not just *because* it's beneficial. So is it just an extraordinarily fortunate coincidence that justice and benefit tend to

go together?

4. The Rawlsian Solution

The Rawlsian theory of justice might seem to provide a way out of this puzzle. Justice as fairness is not a purely consequentialist theory, but it *incorporates* consequentialist concerns. In particular, the second principle of justice authorises departures from socioeconomic equality, so long as those departures make everyone better off than they would be under equality. The beneficial effects of various social orders will thus be taken into account in determining the justice of those social orders. So it's no coincidence that justice and good consequences tend to go together. On the other hand, justice as fairness is not a purely consequentialist theory, and so is apparently not vulnerable to the charge of praxeological incoherence. Is our problem solved?



Unfortunately, no. For as Rawlsian theory requires, the semi-consequentialist second principle is lexicographically posterior to the decidedly non-consequentialist first principle. In any conflict between the two principles, the first one trumps the second. But whether the *first* principles has good consequences will then be a contingent empirical matter. Likewise, the frequency of conflicts between the two principles, and thus the frequency with which the second principle gets trumped, will presumably also be a contingent empirical matter. Rawlsian theory thus provides no guarantee that justice as fairness will even *tend* to produce good consequences.

It might be replied that the first principle too is semi-consequentialist, because the contractors behind the veil of ignorance choose it for consequentialist reasons. This is true. But the informational constraints on that choice are so severe that there is little reason to expect even a rough correlation between *ex ante* judgments of benefit behind the veil and *ex post* judgments of benefit after the veil has been lifted. Rawlsian justice as fairness leaves the correlation between justice and good consequences a mystery.

5. First Digression: Counterfactuals and Moral Knowledge

What if it turned out that -- contrary to what we now believe -- the principles we identify as just are, or would be, the cause of disastrous social consequences? The consequentialist must say that these principles should then be abandoned; the deontologist must say that obedience to these principles would still be morally required. On the other hand, suppose it turned out that although the principles of justice we favour do have the best social consequences, they do so only at the cost of, say, treating people as mere means, and that some other set of principles, while socially disastrous, far better exemplifies the ideals of fairness and respect for persons. In that case, it seems, the deontologist must say that the principles should then be abandoned; the consequentialist must say that they would still be morally required.

It appears, then, that the disagreement between consequentialists and deontologists turns on the question of *which counterfactual situations are relevant to moral justification*. Both sides can agree that certain principles of justice a) have good consequences, and b) express respect for persons. But for the consequentialist, if (a) were to be falsified, those principles would thereby be overturned, whereas if only (b) were falsified, they would not be. For the deontologist, however, it is the falsification of (b), not of (a), that would overturn the

principles.

Or so it seems. But in fact things are not so simple. In real life, one rarely finds members of either camp relying solely on a single set of considerations. It is a rare moral or political polemic indeed that does not include both consequentialist and deontological arguments.

Why is this? One might think the reason is purely strategic. Most people are unlikely to find the deontological case for a given course of action compelling so long as they believe it would have terrible consequences; likewise, they are equally unlikely to find the consequentialist case compelling so long as they believe that the action violates human dignity, or equality, or liberty. But while a combination of consequentialist and deontological arguments is most assuredly the best rhetorical strategy for persuading people to accept one's views, I don't think it's mainly for rhetorical reasons that would-be persuaders combine both sorts of considerations. On the contrary, the persuaders combine both sorts of considerations precisely because they *share* with the persuaded a reluctance to accept one without the other. Whatever they may say officially, most consequentialists would be deeply disturbed to discover that their favoured policies slighted human dignity, and most deontologists would be deeply disturbed to discover that their favoured policies had disastrous consequences.

This fact has often led each camp to suspect the other of hypocrisy. The consequentialists say: "Look at all the effort you deontologists put into trying to show that abiding by your principles won't have counterintuitively disastrous consequences. For example, notice how eager contemporary Kantians are to distance themselves from Kant's claim that it's wrong to lie to a murderer at your door. Obviously, you deontologists implicitly regard harmful consequences as potential falsifiers of your theory; you're really crypto-consequentialists, not sincere deontologists with the courage of your convictions." ⁵

And the deontologists can reply in kind: "Look at all the effort you consequentialists put into trying to show that your theory doesn't license counterintuitively unjust actions. For example, notice how quick contemporary utilitarians are to insist, via such devices as rule-utilitarianism, that they are not committed to sacrificing one innocent person to save ten others. Obviously, you consequentialists implicitly regard sanctioned rights-violations as potential falsifiers of your theory; you're really crypto-deontologists, not sincere consequentialists with the courage of your convictions."

What are we to make of the fact that each side appears to regard the considerations advanced by the other side as crucial to moral justification? To be a consequentialist advocate of X is to believe that, so long as X still had good consequences, X would be justified even if it were discovered that X exemplifies contempt for persons; yet most consequentialists would regard such a discovery as seriously weakening the case for X. Likewise, to be a deontological advocate of X is to believe that, so long as X still exemplified respect for persons, X would be justified even if it were discovered that X had bad consequences; yet most real-life deontologists would regard such a discovery as seriously weakening the case for X.

It seems, then, that *each* side is committed to giving inconsistent answers to the question "What if it turned out that X failed to meet the other side's standards?" To be on either side is to be committed to regarding such a counterfactual situation as irrelevant to the justification of X; but in actual practice, few if any advocates of X (for any X) do regard it as irrelevant.

One approach to solving this problem is to invoke a distinction popular among the early Natural Law theorists: that between a *principium essendi* and a *principium cognoscendi*. ⁶

principium essendi of X: that in virtue of which X is so.

principium cognoscendi of X: that in virtue of which X may be recognised as being so.

For example, sandalwood has a distinctive smell by which it can easily be identified; that smell is a *principium cognoscendi* of sandalwood. But that smell is not what makes sandalwood what it is, so it is not sandalwood's *principium essendi*; the *principium essendi* of sandalwood would presumably be something like its biochemical microstructure. But although sandalwood is not defined by its smell, in the absence of that smell we would be justified in doubting that a given sample of wood is really sandalwood. (Of course a thing's *principium essendi* will ordinarily be one of its *principia cognoscendi* as well; the point is simply that the class of *principia cognoscendi* will be broader.)

The fact that moral theorists in both camps rely on consequentialist and deontological considerations alike, not just to convince others but to convince themselves, suggests that members of each camp implicitly regard *both* sorts of considerations as *principia cognoscendi* of moral justification; and there is no inconsistency in doing this while at the same time regarding only one sort of consideration as the *principium essendi*. Just as a sandalwood-detector can take a certain smell as a reliable sign of the presence of sandalwood without taking that smell to be the essence of sandalwood, so deontologists and consequentialists can take beneficial consequences and respect for persons, respectively, as reliable signs of moral justification, though not as its essence. ⁷

It now becomes clear that the counterfactual questions we have been worrying about are seriously ambiguous. Consider the following sort of example, familiar from the Kripke-Putnam literature on identity. Most of us believe that water is a compound of hydrogen and oxygen molecules; water just *is* H₂O. But that view commits us to the consequence that if there were no hydrogen and oxygen molecules (and thus no H₂O), there would be no water. Yet in fact, if we were to find out that our scientific theories are all wrong and that in reality there are no such things as hydrogen and oxygen molecules, we would not conclude that water is nonexistent; instead, we would conclude that we had been mistaken in identifying water with H₂O. Does that make our position inconsistent? No. It's important to distinguish between metaphysical and epistemic counterfactuals:

metaphysical counterfactual: What if it were actually the case that p?

epistemic counterfactual: What if I were to come to believe that p?

The question "what if it turned out that H₂O is nonexistent?" is ambiguous as between "what if it were actually the case that H₂O is nonexistent?" (in which case the answer is that water, being identical with H₂O, would also be nonexistent) and "what if we were to come to believe that H₂O is nonexistent?" (in which case the answer is that we would give up our belief that water and H₂O are identical). One evaluates the metaphysical counterfactual *from the standpoint of one's actual beliefs*: the nonexistence of H₂O would mean the nonexistence of water, *given* that we are right in identifying the two; but since the case for acknowledging the existence of water is older and stronger than the case for acknowledging the existence of H₂O, we would almost certainly take any evidence against the existence of H₂O as evidence against the identity of water with H₂O, rather than as evidence against the existence of water.

Likewise, given the available evidence, a detective investigating a murder may conclude that the butler is the murderer, and this likewise commits the detective to believing that if the butler had not been present at the time of the murder, the murderer would not have been present either. But, all other things being equal, the detective will probably treat any new evidence that the butler was not in fact present, not as tending to show that the butler

committed the murder from a distance, but rather as tending to show that someone other than the butler committed the murder. Hence it would be foolish to object to the detective: "Oho, so you think the butler and the murderer are identical? But the claim is absurd, for it commits you to attributing extraordinary powers to the butler, should he turn out to have been five thousand miles away at the time of the murder."

Similarly, in defending the divine command theory of ethics, Robert Adams relies on the Kripke-Putnam conception of identity in order to rebut the objection that divine command ethics requires us to abandon morality entirely if it should turn out that God is nonexistent. While I hold no brief for the *content* of Adams' metaethical theory, his remarks about its *form* offer useful insights. Adams writes:

The thesis that wrongness is (identical with) contrariety to a loving God's commands must be *metaphysically necessary* if it is true. That is, it cannot be false in any possible world if it is true in the actual world. For if it were false in some possible world, then wrongness would be non-identical with contrariety to God's commands in the actual world as well, by the transitivity of identity, just as Matthew and Levi must be non-identical in all worlds if they are non-identical in any. ... If it is necessary that ethical wrongness is contrariety to a loving God's commands, it follows that no actions would be ethically wrong if there were not a loving God. This consequence will seem (at least initially) implausible to many, but I will try to dispel as much as I can of the air of paradox. It should be emphasized, first of all, that my theory does not imply what would ordinarily be meant by saying that no actions *are* ethically wrong if there *is* no loving God. If there is no loving God, then the theological part of my theory is false; but ... in that case ethical wrongness is the property with which it is identified by the best remaining alternative theory. ⁸

Adams wishes to endorse the following claims:

I. Ethical wrongness = contrariety to the commands of a loving God.

II. Ethical wrongness exists.

III. A loving God exists.

IV. If (III) *were* false, then (I) *would be* true and (II) *would be* false.

V. If (III) *is* false, then (I) *is* false and (II) *is* true.

The way Adams puts things invites us to suppose that the crucial difference between (IV) and (V) lies in the fact that the former, but not the latter, is expressed in counterfactual form. But it may be more helpful to see (IV) and (V) as expressing different *sorts* of counterfactuals – viz., metaphysical and epistemic counterfactuals, respectively. (IV) makes a counterfactual claim about the world, from the standpoint of Adams' present beliefs. (V), on the other hand, makes a counterfactual claim about how Adams would revise the rest of his belief system upon the falsification of (III).

The structure of Adams' beliefs about ethical wrongness is analogous to the structure of our beliefs about H₂O. We believe a) that water and H₂O are one, and thus b) that if there were no H₂O there would be no water. Yet we also believe c) that we can identify instances of water in our environment. At present, these beliefs do not involve us in any inconsistency. If, however, we were to come to believe (rightly or wrongly) that H₂O is nonexistent, we would be forced to choose between accepting (a) and (b) on the one hand, and accepting (c) on the other; and if it is true d) that *under those circumstances* we should keep (c) and reject (a) and (b), then the answer to the question "If it should turn out that there is no H₂O, does that mean that the existence of water must be rejected?" is *yes* if taken in metaphysical sense (b) and *no* if taken

in epistemic sense (d).

H₂O is the *principium essendi* of water; its stereotypical surface features such as transparency, potability, colourlessness, odourlessness, freezing at 273.15° K, and boiling at 373.15° K are not water's *principium essendi*, but do constitute an important *principium cognoscendi* of water. But both these beliefs -- the belief that H₂O is water's *principium essendi* and the belief that the surface features are water's *principium cognoscendi* -- are in principle open to revision; and if they come into conflict, there is no guarantee that the latter, rather than the former, belief will be revised.

The same applies, I suggest, to our puzzle about justice. The consequentialist, for example, believes the following propositions:

1. Conduct X has good consequences.
2. Conduct X expresses respect for persons.
3. Having good consequences is a *principium essendi* of justice.
4. Expressing respect for persons is a *principium cognoscendi* of justice.
5. Conduct X is just.

Suppose the consequentialist ceases to believe (2). It follows that she can no longer consistently believe both (4) and (5); she must reject one or the other. If she holds on to (1) and (3), she must keep (5) and reject (4). But nothing *requires* her to hold on to (1) and (3). It is equally open to her to hold on to (4) and to reject (3) and (5). It all depends to which beliefs she is most strongly committed; and the H₂O example shows that we are not necessarily more strongly committed to beliefs about *principia essendi* than to beliefs about *principia cognoscendi*.

All of the above applies *mutatis mutandis* to the deontologist, who believes:

1. Conduct X expresses respect for persons.
2. Conduct X has good consequences.
3. Expressing respect for persons is a *principium essendi* of justice.
4. Having good consequences is a *principium cognoscendi* of justice.
5. Conduct X is just.

If the deontologist ceases to believe (2), she must choose between (4) and (5); and there is no guarantee that (5) will win. Believing that X is the foundation of Y does not commit one to making one's belief in X the foundation of one's belief in Y; this is to confuse the ground of *explanation* with the ground of *knowledge* -- or, in Aristotle's terms, to confuse what is best known in itself with what is best known to us. In short, it is to confuse *principia essendi* with *principia cognoscendi*.

But why should we expect consequentialist and deontological criteria to go together, even for the most part? Once we have accepted one set of considerations as the *principium essendi* of justice, what justifies us in granting a rival set of considerations the status of *principia cognoscendi*? As a reflective equilibrium theorist, I don't think we necessarily need to have an *explanation* for the concurrence of deontological and consequentialist criteria in order to be justified in believing in such a concurrence.⁹ Still, it would be surprising if no such explanations were forthcoming; indeed, the absence of such explanations where one expected to find them might well lead us to revise our belief that the criteria do coincide.

So the question remains: if good consequences are not the *principium essendi* of justice, why are they among its *principia cognoscendi*? What's the connection?

6. The Theistic Solution



One obvious answer is to appeal to a divine creator who secures the correlation. This hypothesis takes two forms. The first is that the deontological principles of justice were laid down by the creator with an eye to their beneficial effects. So it's no surprise that duties track benefits. But in that case, is it God's *choice*, or the *reasons* for God's choice, that constitute the *principium essendi* of justice? If the former, we run into the usual problems of divine command morality. If the latter, we're back with indirect consequentialism, which we've already seen to be praxeologically incoherent.

The second form flips the direction of explanation. The deontological aspects of justice are its *principium essendi*; but since God is benevolent and omniscient, she has arranged the causal laws of the universe so that humankind will be rewarded for just conduct. So it's no surprise that benefits track duties.

Notoriously, this position involves a number of difficulties. It will suffice to name just one: any deity powerful enough to arrange a *rough* concurrence of justice and benefit could presumably have arranged a more precise one than that which we currently enjoy; her failure to do so must thus be explained, and any such explanation, to the extent that it is successful, is likely to make even the rough concurrence mysterious once more.

In other words, let x signify the degree to which justice and benefit currently coincide. Conceivably, the degree might have been higher or lower than x . So why isn't it $x + 1$? If no explanation can be given as to why $x + 1$ is too high a level for God to be willing, or able, to produce it, then the theistic solution simply exchanges one mystery for another. But if, instead, such an explanation *can* be given, it will be hard to see why, if $x + 1$ is too high, x isn't too high as well, and so the existing level of concurrence between justice and benefit will still be in need of explanation. Either way, the theistic solution appears to fail.

7. The Evolutionary Solution

Perhaps evolution, the currently fashionable substitute for God, might be pressed into service here. After all, evolution is not supposed to be omnipotent or benevolent, so the failure to produce a *perfect* concurrence between justice and benefit might be more easily explainable.

According to the evolutionary solution, since beings who cooperate with each other tend to be more successful than beings who don't, both biological and cultural evolution will favour those with cooperative dispositions, and so we will tend to find plausible those principles that urge us to behave in cooperative rather than predatory fashion. The survival value of justice cannot, of course, be its *principium essendi* -- that would land us back in indirect consequentialism. But we might instead assume, à la Adam Smith, that our psychological dispositions to approve and disapprove are the *principium essendi* of justice; so if those dispositions have been shaped by biological and cultural evolution, it's no surprise that justice and benefit tend to coincide.

At one time I thought something like this solution might be the answer to my puzzle. I no longer think so. Rather, I now think that the evolutionary solution is vulnerable to a variant of the same objection that felled the indirect-consequentialist solution. Here's why. Evolutionary considerations may explain why we approve of X. But on pain of indirect consequentialism, and thus of praxeological incoherence, we cannot regard such considerations as explaining why X is *deserving* of our approval. In approving of X, we must regard X's merit as independent of the evolutionary process whereby we came to approve of it. But in that case, all that's been explained is why we came to approve non-consequentially of something that in fact has good consequences, not why it's *justice* that plays that role. For all that the evolutionary story tells us, it's still a cosmic coincidence that what has survival value is the disposition to approve of the very thing that actually *merits* our approval.

8. Second Digression: Ends and Means

What sort of value does justice have? Is justice to be valued as a means, as an ultimate end, or neither?

Some deontologists might plump for the latter option: neither. Rights are not goals to be pursued, either as ends in themselves or as means to further ends; rather, they are *side-constraints* on our pursuit of goals. But it's difficult to make sense of this idea praxeologically. If justice is neither one of our ultimate ends, nor a means to one of our ultimate ends, what reason could we have to care about it?

Suppose, then, that justice is an ultimate end -- one that serves no further value beyond itself. Then either it is our *sole* ultimate end, or it is one among others. But it would be very odd to have justice as one's *sole* ultimate end, as though respecting people's rights were the one and only goal worth pursuing. Such an end would radically underdetermine the shape of one's life.

If justice is an ultimate end, then, it must be one among others. But in that case, how is it to be integrated with our other ultimate ends? Do we make trade-offs when ultimate ends conflict? Or do we look for some way of conceiving of our ultimate ends so that conflicts are impossible? In either case, we seem to be asking how to fit justice into the broader goal of an integrated lifeplan -- what the Greeks called *eudaimonia*. But then we are no longer treating justice as an *ultimate* end; justice now serves the more inclusive end of *eudaimonia*.

Hence justice must be understood as a means, not as an ultimate end. But here again there are two options; justice is either an *external* means or an *internal* means. An external means bears a *causal* or *instrumental* relation to its end, while an internal means bears a *logical* or *constitutive* relation to its end. If Freud is right, then my motive in writing this address was to win "fame, fortune, and the love of women." This would be an example of an external means. (What the causal mechanism is I'm not sure.) By contrast, playing *this particular chord here* - - Kevin was supposed to provide me with a calliope at this point, or at the very least with two elephants who would trumpet in different keys, but I guess you'll have to use your imagination -- playing this particular chord here is an *internal* means to playing the Moonlight Sonata. I'm not playing the chord as an end in itself; the chord's value to me lies in its contribution to the whole sonata. So the chord is a means -- but not an external means. One test for the difference is to see whether it makes sense to wish for the end without the means. It makes sense to say, "I wish I could achieve fame, fortune, and the love of women without having to compose this Presidential Address," because the means and the end are logically

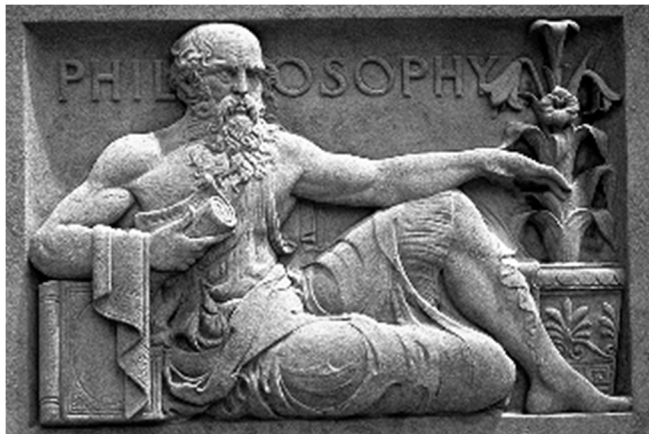
separable; but it doesn't make sense to say, "I wish I could play the Moonlight Sonata without having to play all these notes." Just these notes, played in just this sequence, *constitute* the Moonlight Sonata; there's nothing we could count as playing the Moonlight Sonata without playing the particular sequence of notes of which it is composed.

Now if the value of justice lies in its being an external means to some end, then it makes sense to wish for the end without having to use the means -- in which case we're entangled once again in the same sort of paradox that afflicts indirect consequentialism. Indeed, I think any theory that sees justice as a *solution to a problem*, or sees rights as a *device for protecting people's interests*, is in danger of running afoul of the same paradox, so long as the means and the end are treated as logically separable -- in which case many of liberal rights theory's most ardently anti-utilitarian thinkers, from Rawls and Dworkin to Rand and Rothbard, are skating on thin ice over a utilitarian abyss.

Treating justice solely as an external means is inconsistent with the kind of counterfactually stable commitment that justice must involve in order to function successfully even as an external means. Hence the value of justice can ultimately lie only in its being an internal means as well. This is essentially the Platonic and Aristotelean view: justice is an internal means to *eudaimonia*. Since nothing counts as *that end* in the absence of *that means*, no counterfactual stability problem arises.

Just about every paper of mine sooner or later features Aristotle descending in a contrivance at some crucial point in the plot, and now seems as good a time as any. If the structure of justice turns out to be Aristotelean, perhaps the solution to our larger puzzle will be so as well.

9. Victory, Part I: The Unity-of-Virtue Solution



Aristotle and other Greek philosophers (e.g., Socrates, Plato, the Stoics) accept a principle known as the *unity of virtue*. This principle is sometimes described as holding that one can't (fully) possess any one virtue without possessing them all; but in fact that is merely a corollary of the fundamental principle, which is that one can't specify the content of any one virtue independently of the content of all the other virtues.

Consider the following example. The Hilton Beachfront Inn is burning down, and Eric Marcus is trapped under a gigantic pumpkin-coloured beach umbrella. I could rush in and try to save him, but at considerable risk to myself. One might think of courage as counseling me to take the risk, and prudence as counseling me not to take the risk; but from an Aristotelean perspective, this would misdescribe the situation. The virtue of courage does not require us to take any and all risks, but only those risks that are worth taking; facing a danger worth running away from is no more admirable than running away from a danger worth facing. Taking stupid risks is not admirable, and so is incompatible with what virtue requires. Likewise, the virtue of prudence does not require us to save our skins at all costs; we have a prudential interest not just in the length of our lives but in their quality, where quality of life depends, in turn, not just on material comforts but on whether we are living a life worthy of

admiration and respect. Hence saving Eric is not courageous if it is imprudent; and letting Eric die is not prudent if it is cowardly. What courage requires of me in this instance cannot be determined independently of determining what prudence requires of me, and vice versa; the contents of the two virtues are specified reciprocally, via mutual adjustment. That is why I cannot possess one virtue *fully* without possessing them all: virtues require counterfactual stability. I do not count as *fully* courageous unless I can be counted on to do the courageous thing in *every situation*, which in turn requires that I be a reliable assessor of which risks are worth taking; but which risks are worth taking might sometimes depend on the requirements of prudence, or justice, or loyalty; to the extent that I am imprudent, or unjust, or disloyal, I cannot be counted on to assess those risks properly in such possible or actual situations, and so I will not be fully just. (Since not all the virtues will be relevant to every individual choice, nothing in the unity-of-virtue thesis, so far as I can see, rules out the possibility of possessing different virtues to different degrees – being, say, more reliably just than reliably courageous. 80% courage might be compatible with 65% generosity; but 100% courage requires 100% generosity.)

The unity-of-virtue thesis also implies that the requirements of the various virtues cannot conflict. Nowadays even such enthusiastic Hellenophiles as Williams, Nussbaum, and MacIntyre tend to dismiss this claim as unduly optimistic. So it will certainly seem, if we follow the modern habit of labeling any desirable character trait as a virtue. But virtues are principles of choice; to say that courage, or loyalty, or temperance requires a certain course of action is to say that we ought to follow that course of action; and *ought* implies *can*. The Greeks are not committed to the claim that all things worth *wishing* for are compossible, but only to the claim that all things worth *aiming* for are compossible. The requirement to integrate our aims into a compossible system plays a role in determining the content of the aims; it is in that sense that all goods, including the virtues, turn out to be means, internal or external, to *eudaimonia*.

If the contents of the virtues are specified by reciprocal determination, it follows that the content of justice is partly specified by, *inter alia*, such virtues as prudence and benevolence - - virtues that have among their chief concerns the production of benefits, for oneself and for others respectively. This does not make justice a consequentialist notion, since the direction of determination runs both ways; what counts as a beneficial consequence will be partly determined by the requirements of justice. For the concept of *benefit* is in reciprocal determination with the concepts of *prudence* and *benevolence*, which in turn are in reciprocal determination with the concept of *justice*. Thus justice and benefit are brought into reciprocal determination with one another.

On this view, human welfare (whether individual or general) and justice are conceptually interrelated, with neither concept being basic but each depending in part on the other (and all the other virtues) for its content, just as Aristotle defines virtue and human flourishing in terms of one another. Since (for reasons pointed out, in rather different ways, by John Rawls and Bernard Williams) principles of justice that imposed unreasonable and excessively self-sacrificial demands on moral agents would be unfair, there are reasons of justice for attempting to accommodate self-interested concern. And since a way of life that did not allow agents to regard themselves as admirable, or their lives as tracking genuine value, would not be worth living, there are self-interested reasons for attempting to accommodate justice. These considerations yield a version of ethical constructivism (though not of an anti-realist variety) in which neither the concept of justice nor the concept of welfare has a completely determinate content independently of the other, but the optimal conception of the good life is constructed out of the mutual adjustment of such concepts. It turns out, then, that justice and

benefit are each a partial *principium essendi* of the other.

(One important implication of this approach is to recast the debate between Rawls and his critics (e.g., Nozick and Sandel). Rawls maintains that the correct principles by which to assess political and social institutions are those that self-interested contractors could rationally agree to under fair bargaining conditions; his critics argue that there are substantive moral values that hold prior to and independently of the social contract procedure, and that these values should constrain the principles that result. But if, as my approach maintains, neither the self-interest of the contractors nor the independent moral values can be fully specified without reference to the other, then each side has adopted an excessively absolutistic position, and a basis for compromise through mutual adjustment emerges.)

We can now see our way, apparently, to a solution to the problem of why justice has good consequences. It isn't just a happy coincidence; rather, justice and benefit are conceptually entangled; their internal conceptual dynamic drives them into alignment with one another. Semi-deontological considerations of justice play a role in determining what counts as a good consequence; semi-consequentialist considerations of benevolence and prudence play a role in determining what counts as just. Hence it is only to be expected that justice should tend to coincide with benefit, both for oneself and for others. The reason justice does not ordinarily require great sacrifice of anybody's welfare, is that any conceptions of justice and of welfare on which the former required constant sacrifice of the latter would demand revision of one or the other or both.

At one time I thought the unity-of-virtue solution was the complete and final answer to my puzzle. Unfortunately, there's a wrinkle. I think the unity-of-virtue solution is a *partial* answer; in particular, the fact that justice and benefit are conceptually interconnected explains why we implicitly tend to assume that the two will go together. But the unity-of-virtue solution explains the concurrence of justice with benefit by showing that the content of each notion has been adjusted to bring it into conformity with the other. This solution gives us no reason, however, to expect any concurrence between the *prima facie* contents of justice and benefit, *before* they have been mutually adjusted. (And there must be some such *prima facie* contents. If, prior to mutual adjustment, no virtue had any content at all, there'd be no basis for such adjustment to begin.) Should there turn out to be even a rough concurrence (not just between the adjusted contents but) between the *prima facie* contents of justice and benefit, the unity-of-virtue thesis could offer no explanation for this. That much of the concurrence would remain a mysterious coincidence.

Unfortunately -- well, fortunately for humankind, I suppose, but unfortunately for my theory, which is surely more important -- there does appear to be such a concurrence. If we tried to specify the content of benefit without bringing in considerations of justice, or virtue generally, we would get something broadly like long-run preference-satisfaction. If we tried to specify the content of justice without bringing in considerations of beneficial consequences, we would get something like libertarianism.

My argument for this latter claim is that, *absent consequentialist considerations*, the libertarian conception of *equality in authority* -- the kind of equality enjoyed in a Lockean state of nature -- answers better than any of its rivals to the basic Kantian demand to treat persons as ends in themselves rather than as mere means. As I have written elsewhere: [T]he equality that Locke and Jefferson speak of is equality in *authority*: the prohibition of any "subordination or subjection" of one person to another. Since any interference by A with B's liberty constitutes a subordination or subjection of B to A, the right to liberty follows

straightforwardly from the equality of "power and jurisdiction." ...

[S]ocioeconomic equality and legal equality *both* fall short of the radicalism of Lockean equality. For neither of those forms of equality calls into question the authority of those who administer the legal system; such administrators are merely required to ensure equality, of the relevant sort, *among those administered*. Thus socioeconomic equality, despite the bold claims of its adherents, does no more to challenge the existing power structure than does legal equality. Both forms of equality call upon that power structure to do certain things; but in so doing, they both assume, and indeed require, an inequality in authority between those who administer the legal framework and everybody else.

The libertarian version of equality is not circumscribed in this way. [E]quality in authority entails denying to the legal system's administrators – and thus to the legal system itself – any powers beyond those possessed by private citizens Lockean equality involves not merely equality *before* legislators, judges, and police, but, far more crucially, equality *with* legislators, judges, and police. ...

The case against socioeconomically egalitarian legislation is ... an egalitarian one; for such legislation invariably involves the coercive subordination or subjection of dissenting individuals to the taxes and regulations imposed by government decision makers, and thus presupposes an inequality in authority between the former and the latter.

Nor would an anarchistic version of socialism fare any better; as long as some people are imposing redistributive policies by force or threat of force on unconsenting others, we have inequality in authority between the coercers and the coerced, regardless of whether those doing the coercing are public citizens or private individuals, and regardless of whether they represent a majority or a minority. Nor would a Hobbesian jungle, where anyone is free to impose her will on anyone else, embody equality in authority; for as soon as one person does succeed in subordinating another, an inequality in authority emerges.

The Hobbesian jungle might represent equal *opportunity* for authority, but in *this* context the libertarian favors equality of *outcome*. (That, incidentally, is why the right to liberty is *inalienable*.) Only *defensive* uses of force are justified, since these *restore* equality in authority rather than violating it. By the same token, an idealized democracy in which every citizen had an equal chance to get into a position of political power would also represent only equal opportunity for authority, not equality of outcome, and so would likewise offend against Lockean equality. To a libertarian, the saying "anyone can grow up to become president," if it were true, would have the same cheery ring as "anyone might be the next person to assault you." [10](#)

(Somehow that last line seems more appropriate now than when I first wrote it.)

What I claim, then, is that libertarianism represents the *prima facie* content of justice, considered apart from consequentialist considerations. Hence most objections to libertarianism are broadly consequentialist, even when brought by deontologists. For example, Rawls' chief objection to libertarianism is that it would allow unfair socioeconomic inequalities. The *ground* of the objection is a deontological one, but *what* it objects to is a purported *consequence* of libertarianism, and so is not an objection that could derive from the demands of justice considered in abstraction from consequences.

The problem for the unity-of-virtue solution, then, is that there seems to be a rough concurrence between the *prima facie* libertarian content of justice, considered apart from

consequences, and the *prima facie* subjectivist content of benefit, considered apart from justice. The social theorists of the Austrian School have shown, on praxeological grounds, how a libertarian social order constitutes an economic democracy, in which consumer preferences direct the productive resources of society through the imputation of value from consumer goods to goods of higher order. ¹¹ Hence justice, as it would be conceived prior to adjustment, does a reasonably good job of producing beneficial consequences, as *those* would be conceived prior to adjustment. Whether one thinks that the alterations to be produced in these two concepts *after* adjustment would be great or small, the fact remains that there is a rough concurrence prior to adjustment, and this rough concurrence seems to require explanation. But the explanation is one that the unity-of-virtue solution cannot provide.

10. Victory, Part II: The Praxeological Solution

Perhaps Vienna can come to the aid of Athens. The praxeological economists whose work creates this problem for the unity-of-virtue solution may also provide the means of resolving it. I shall quote at length from Friedrich Hayek -- because my words need some accompaniment, and Kevin still hasn't brought that calliope:

[A]ll propositions of economic theory refer to things which are defined in terms of human attitudes toward them I am not certain that the behaviorists in the social sciences are quite aware of *how* much of the traditional approach they would have to abandon if they wanted to be consistent or that they would want to adhere to it consistently if they were aware of this. It would, for instance, imply that propositions of the theory of money would have to refer exclusively to, say, "round disks of metal, bearing a certain stamp," or some similarly defined physical object or group of objects. ¹²



That the objects of economic activity cannot be defined in objective terms but only with reference to a human purpose goes without saying. Neither a "commodity" or an "economic good," nor "food" or "money," can be defined in physical terms Economic theory has nothing to say about the little round disks of metal as which an objective or materialist view might try to define money. ... Nor could we distinguish in physical terms whether two men barter or exchange or whether they are playing some game or performing some ritual. Unless we can understand what the acting people mean by their actions any attempt to explain them, that is, to subsume them under rules ... is bound to fail. ¹³

Take such things as tools, medicine, weapons, words, sentences, communications, and acts of production -- or any one particular instance of these. I believe these to be fair samples of the kind of objects of human activity which constantly occur in the social sciences. It is easily seen that all these concepts (and the same is true of more concrete instances) refer not to some objective properties possessed by the things, or which the observer can find out about them, but to views which some other person holds about the things. These objects cannot even be defined in physical terms, because there is no single physical property which any one member of a class must possess. These concepts are not merely abstractions of the kind we use in all physical sciences; they abstract from *all* the physical properties of the things themselves. ... [W]e do not even consciously or explicitly know which are the various physical properties of which an object would have to possess at least one to be a member of a class. The situation may be described schematically by saying that we know the objects *a, b, c, ...,* which may be physically completely dissimilar and which we can never exhaustively enumerate, are objects

of the same kind because the attitude of X toward them all is similar. But the fact that X's attitude toward them is similar can again be defined only by saying that he will react toward them by any one of the actions α , β , γ , ..., which again may be physically dissimilar and which we will not be able to enumerate exhaustively, but which we just know to "mean" the same thing. ...

As long as I move among my own kind of people, it is probably the physical properties of a bank note or a revolver from which I conclude that they are money or a weapon to the person holding them. When I see a savage holding cowrie shells or a long, thin tube, the physical properties of the thing will probably tell me nothing. But the observations which suggest to me that the cowrie shells are money to him and the blowpipe a weapon will throw much light on the object -- much more light than these same observations could possibly give if I were not familiar with the concept of money or a weapon. In recognizing the things as such, I begin to understand the people's behavior. I am able to fit [the object] into a scheme of actions which "make sense" just because I have come to regard it not as a thing with certain physical properties but as the kind of thing which fits into the pattern of my own purposive action. ...

[A]s we go from interpreting the actions of men very much like ourselves to men who live in a very different environment, it is the most concrete concepts which first lose their usefulness for interpreting the people's actions and the most general or abstract which remain helpful longest. My knowledge of the everyday things around me, of the particular ways in which we express ideas or emotions, will be of little use in interpreting the behavior of the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego. But my understanding of what I mean by a means to an end, by food or a weapon, a word or a sign, and probably even an exchange or a gift, will still be useful and even essential in my attempt to understand what they do. ...

From the fact that whenever we interpret human action as in any sense purposive or meaningful ... we have to define both the objects of human activity and the different kinds of action themselves, not in physical terms but in terms of the opinions or intentions of the acting persons, there follow some very important consequences; namely, nothing less than that we can, from the concepts of the objects, analytically conclude something about what the actions will be. If we define an object in terms of a person's attitude toward it, it follows, of course, that the definition of the object implies a statement about the attitude of the person toward the thing. When we say that a person possesses food or money, or that he utters a word, we imply that he knows that the first can be eaten, that the second can be used to buy something with, and that the third can be understood -- and perhaps many other things. ¹⁴

This is the Austrian case for claiming that the laws of economics, and of the social sciences generally, are *a priori* conceptual truths. Concepts like "price," "unemployment," "money," and so forth are defined in terms of people's attitudes and actions concerning such items, so it is no surprise that there should turn out to be conceptual truths about how people will behave with regard to such items. The principles of economics thus turn out to have the same status as the principles of logic and mathematics. ¹⁵

If the Austrians are right, and I think they are, then a solution to our problem may be in sight. The fact that a libertarian social order tends to satisfy consumer preferences is not a contingent empirical fact; the Austrians argue at length -- and I do mean at length: Mises' *Human Action* and Rothbard's *Man, Economy, and State* weigh in at nearly a thousand pages each -- that this concurrence can be established by conceptual analysis.

But if this is so, then the concurrence *requires no explanation*. It makes sense to ask why there are four shrimp on my plate instead of five, because the alternative is all too

conceivable. But it doesn't make sense to ask why two plus two equals four instead of five, because the alternative is incoherent. Nothing could count as two plus two equaling five, so "Why don't two and two make five?" is no more coherent a question than "Why isn't MOO?" If the praxeological approach is sound, then demanding to know why the laws of social science are as they are is equally incoherent. That whose alternative is inconceivable requires no explanation.

Our initial problem, then, has turned out on closer inspection to comprise two problems, and so we have to award a double prize. One problem is: why is there a concurrence between the *prima facie* contents of justice and benefit? The prize for providing the solution to that problem goes to the Austrian delegation. The other problem is: why is there a concurrence between the *all things considered* contents of justice and benefit? The prize for providing the solution to that problem goes to the Athenian delegation.

And your prize, for having sat through my ruminations on this subject, is to go to lunch.

Notes

1. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 3-4.
2. Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation* (New York: Basic Books, 1984); David Gauthier, *Morals By Agreement* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986); Leland B. Yeager, *Ethics as Social Science: The Moral Philosophy of Social Cooperation* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2001).
3. Among the leading texts in Austrian praxeological theory are: Carl Menger, *Principles of Economics*, trans. James Dingwall and Bert F. Hoselitz (Grove City PA: Libertarian Press, 1994). Ludwig von Mises, *Epistemological Problems of Economics*, trans. George Reisman (New York: New York University Press, 1981); *The Ultimate Foundation of Economic Science: An Essay on Method*, 2nd ed. (Kansas City: Sheed Andrews and McMeel, 1978); *Human Action: The Scholar's Edition* (Auburn: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 1998). Friedrich A. Hayek, *The Counter-Revolution of Science: Studies on the Abuse of Reason* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1979); *Individualism and Economic Order* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948); *Studies in Philosophy, Politics and Economics* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967); *New Studies in Philosophy, Politics, Economics and the History of Ideas* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978). Murray N. Rothbard, *The Logic of Action*, 2 vols. (Brookfield: Edward Elgar, 1997); *An Austrian Perspective on the History of Economic Thought*, 2 vols. (Brookfield: Edward Elgar, 1995); *Man, Economy, and State: The Scholar's Edition* (Auburn: Ludwig von Mises Institute, forthcoming 2003). Israel Kirzner, *The Economic Point of View: An Essay on the History of Economic Thought* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1960); *Perception, Opportunity, and Profit: Studies in the Theory of Entrepreneurship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979). Hans-Hermann Hoppe, *Economic Science and the Austrian Method* (Auburn: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 1995). See also Roderick T. Long, *Wittgenstein, Austrian Economics, and the Logic of Action: Praxeological Investigations* (unpublished manuscript). Several of these works are available online at: praxeology.net/praxeo.htm.

4. Roderick T. Long, [review of Leland B. Yeager, Ethics as Social Science: The Moral Philosophy of Social Cooperation](#); forthcoming in *Quarterly Journal of Austrian Economics* (Spring 2003).

5. This sort of argument has been frequently employed by consequentialist libertarians against deontological libertarians in the pages of the libertarian periodical *Liberty*.

6. See, for example, the eighteenth-century Prussian legal theorist Samuel Cocceji's influential *Dissertationes Proemiales*. I am grateful to Rebecca Reynolds for bringing Cocceji's work to my attention.

7. Does the distinction between *principia essendi* and *principia cognoscendi* correspond to Wittgenstein's distinction between *criteria* and *symptoms*? I don't think so. Criteria and symptoms are both *principia cognoscendi*; the difference is that a criterion's status as a *principium cognoscendi* is logical, while a symptom's status as a *principium cognoscendi* is empirical. The fact that criteria are still *principia cognoscendi*, and not necessarily *principia essendi*, is one of the crucial differences between Wittgenstein and the verificationists. (In the text I do not use the term "criteria" in any special Wittgensteinian way.)

8. Robert M. Adams, "Divine Command Metaethics Modified Again," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 7 (Spring 1979), pp. 71-79.

9.. For a defense of reflective equilibrium, see my [Reason and Value: Aristotle versus Rand](#) (Poughkeepsie: Objectivist Center, 2000), as well as my [review of Yeager](#), op. cit.

10. Roderick T. Long, "Equality: The Unknown Ideal"; available online at: mises.org/library/equality-unknown-ideal.

11. See in particular Mises (1998), Rothbard (1997, 2003), and Hayek (1948).

12. Hayek (1948), II. 9.

13. Hayek (1979), I. 3.

14. Hayek (1948), III. 2.

15. For a fuller defense of these claims, see the sources cited in [footnote 3](#), and in particular my unpublished book manuscript on Wittgenstein and praxeology, an early draft of which is available at praxeology.net/praxeo.htm.



The Abolition of Work

Bob Black

1985

No one should ever work.

Work is the source of nearly all the misery in the world. Almost any evil you'd care to name comes from working or from living in a world designed for work. In order to stop suffering, we have to stop working.

That doesn't mean we have to stop doing things. It does mean creating a new way of life based on play; in other words, a *ludic* conviviality, commensality, and maybe even art. There is more to play than child's play, as worthy as that is. I call for a collective adventure in generalized joy and freely interdependent exuberance. Play isn't passive. Doubtless we all need a lot more time for sheer sloth and slack than we ever enjoy now, regardless of income or occupation, but once recovered from employment-induced exhaustion nearly all of us want to act. Oblomovism and Stakhanovism are two sides of the same debased coin.

The ludic life is totally incompatible with existing reality. So much the worse for "reality," the gravity hole that sucks the vitality from the little in life that still distinguishes it from mere survival. Curiously — or maybe not — all the old ideologies are conservative because they believe in work. Some of them, like Marxism and most brands of anarchism, believe in work all the more fiercely because they believe in so little else.

Liberals say we should end employment discrimination. I say we should end employment. Conservatives support right-to-work laws. Following Karl Marx's wayward son-in-law Paul Lafargue I support the right to be lazy. Leftists favor full employment. Like the surrealists — except that I'm not kidding — I favor full *un*employment. Trotskyists agitate for permanent revolution. I agitate for permanent revelry. But if all the ideologues (as they do) advocate work — and not only because they plan to make other people do theirs — they are strangely reluctant to say so. They will carry on endlessly about wages, hours, working conditions, exploitation, productivity, profitability. They'll gladly talk about anything but work itself. These experts who offer to do our thinking for us rarely share their conclusions about work, for all its saliency in the lives of all of us. Among themselves they quibble over the details. Unions and management agree that we ought to sell the time of our lives in exchange for survival, although they haggle over the price. Marxists think we should be bossed by bureaucrats. Libertarians think we should be bossed by businessmen. Feminists don't care which form bossing takes so long as the bosses are women. Clearly these ideology-mongers have serious differences over how to divvy up the spoils of power. Just as clearly, none of them have any objection to power as such and all of them want to keep us working.

You may be wondering if I'm joking or serious. I'm joking *and* serious. To be ludic is not to be ludicrous. Play doesn't have to be frivolous, although frivolity isn't triviality: very often we ought to take frivolity seriously. I'd like life to be a game — but a game with high stakes. I want to play *for keeps*.

The alternative to work isn't just idleness. To be ludic is not to be quaaludic. As much as I treasure the pleasure of torpor, it's never more rewarding than when it punctuates other pleasures and pastimes. Nor am I promoting the managed time-disciplined safety-valve called "leisure"; far from it. Leisure is nonwork for the sake of work. Leisure is the time spent recovering from work and in the frenzied but hopeless attempt to forget about work. Many people return from vacation so beat that they look forward to returning to work so they can rest up. The main difference between work and leisure is that work at least you get paid for your alienation and enervation.

I am not playing definitional games with anybody. When I say I want to abolish work, I mean just what I say, but I want to say what I mean by defining my terms in non-idiosyncratic ways. My minimum definition of work is *forced labor*, that is, compulsory production. Both elements are essential. Work is production enforced by economic or political means, by the carrot or the stick. (The carrot is just the stick by other means.) But not all creation is work. Work is never done for its own sake, it's done on account of some product or output that the worker (or, more often, somebody else) gets out of it. This is what work necessarily is. To define it is to despise it. But work is usually even worse than its definition decrees. The dynamic of domination intrinsic to work tends over time toward elaboration. In advanced work-riddled societies, including all industrial societies whether capitalist or "Communist," work invariably acquires other attributes which accentuate its obnoxiousness.

Usually — and this is even more true in "Communist" than capitalist countries, where the state is almost the only employer and everyone is an employee — work is employment, i. e., wage-labor, which means selling yourself on the installment plan. Thus 95% of Americans who work, work for somebody (or *something*) else. In the USSR or Cuba or Yugoslavia or any other alternative model which might be adduced, the corresponding figure approaches 100%. Only the embattled Third World peasant bastions — Mexico, India, Brazil, Turkey — temporarily shelter significant concentrations of agriculturists who perpetuate the traditional arrangement of most laborers in the last several millenia, the payment of taxes (= ransom) to the state or rent to parasitic landlords in return for being otherwise left alone. Even this raw deal is beginning to look good. *All* industrial (and office) workers are employees and under the sort of surveillance which ensures servility.

But modern work has worse implications. People don't just work, they have "jobs." One person does one productive task all the time on an or-else basis. Even if the task has a quantum of intrinsic interest (as increasingly many jobs don't) the monotony of its obligatory exclusivity drains its ludic potential. A "job" that might engage the energies of some people, for a reasonably limited time, for the fun of it, is just a burden on those who have to do it for forty hours a week with no say in how it should be done, for the profit of owners who contribute nothing to the project, and with no opportunity for sharing tasks or spreading the work among those who actually have to do it. This is the real world of work: a world of bureaucratic blundering, of sexual harassment and discrimination, of bonehead bosses exploiting and scapegoating their subordinates who — by any rational-technical criteria — should be calling the shots. But capitalism in the real world subordinates the rational maximization of productivity and profit to the exigencies of organizational control.

The degradation which most workers experience on the job is the sum of assorted indignities which can be denominated as “discipline.” Foucault has complexified this phenomenon but it is simple enough. Discipline consists of the totality of totalitarian controls at the workplace — surveillance, rotework, imposed work tempos, production quotas, punching -in and -out, etc. Discipline is what the factory and the office and the store share with the prison and the school and the mental hospital. It is something historically original and horrible. It was beyond the capacities of such demonic dictators of yore as Nero and Genghis Khan and Ivan the Terrible. For all their bad intentions they just didn’t have the machinery to control their subjects as thoroughly as modern despots do. Discipline is the distinctively diabolical modern mode of control, it is an innovative intrusion which must be interdicted at the earliest opportunity.

Such is “work.” Play is just the opposite. Play is always voluntary. What might otherwise be play is work if it’s forced. This is axiomatic. Bernie de Koven has defined play as the “suspension of consequences.” This is unacceptable if it implies that play is inconsequential. The point is not that play is without consequences. This is to demean play. The point is that the consequences, if any, are gratuitous. Playing and giving are closely related, they are the behavioral and transactional facets of the same impulse, the play-instinct. They share an aristocratic disdain for results. The player gets something out of playing; that’s why he plays. But the core reward is the experience of the activity itself (whatever it is). Some otherwise attentive students of play, like Johan Huizinga (*Homo Ludens*), define it as game-playing or following rules. I respect Huizinga’s erudition but emphatically reject his constraints. There are many good games (chess, baseball, Monopoly, bridge) which are rule-governed but there is much more to play than game-playing. Conversation, sex, dancing, travel — these practices aren’t rule-governed but they are surely play if anything is. And rules can be *played with* at least as readily as anything else.

Work makes a mockery of freedom. The official line is that we all have rights and live in a democracy. Other unfortunates who aren’t free like we are have to live in police states. These victims obey orders or-else, no matter how arbitrary. The authorities keep them under regular surveillance. State bureaucrats control even the smaller details of everyday life. The officials who push them around are answerable only to higher-ups, public or private. Either way, dissent and disobedience are punished. Informers report regularly to the authorities. All this is supposed to be a very bad thing.

And so it is, although it is nothing but a description of the modern workplace. The liberals and conservatives and libertarians who lament totalitarianism are phonies and hypocrites. There is more freedom in any moderately deStalinized dictatorship than there is in the ordinary American workplace. You find the same sort of hierarchy and discipline in an office or factory as you do in a prison or monastery. In fact, as Foucault and others have shown, prisons and factories came in at about the same time, and their operators consciously borrowed from each other’s control techniques. A worker is a part time slave. The boss says when to show up, when to leave, and what to do in the meantime. He tells you how much work to do and how fast. He is free to carry his control to humiliating extremes, regulating, if he feels like it, the clothes you wear or how often you go to the bathroom. With a few exceptions he can fire you for any reason, or no reason. He has you spied on by snitches and supervisors, he amasses a dossier on every employee. Talking back is called “insubordination,” just as if a worker is a naughty child, and it not only gets you fired, it disqualifies you for unemployment compensation. Without necessarily endorsing it for them either, it is noteworthy that children at home and in school receive much the same treatment, justified in their case by their supposed immaturity. What does this say about their parents and teachers who work?

The demeaning system of domination I've described rules over half the waking hours of a majority of women and the vast majority of men for decades, for most of their lifespans. For certain purposes it's not too misleading to call our system democracy or capitalism or — better still — industrialism, but its real names are factory fascism and office oligarchy. Anybody who says these people are “free” is lying or stupid. You are what you do. If you do boring, stupid monotonous work, chances are you'll end up boring, stupid and monotonous. Work is a much better explanation for the creeping cretinization all around us than even such significant moronizing mechanisms as television and education. People who are regimented all their lives, handed off to work from school and bracketed by the family in the beginning and the nursing home at the end, are habituated to hierarchy and psychologically enslaved. Their aptitude for autonomy is so atrophied that their fear of freedom is among their few rationally grounded phobias. Their obedience training at work carries over into the families *they* start, thus reproducing the system in more ways than one, and into politics, culture and everything else. Once you drain the vitality from people at work, they'll likely submit to hierarchy and expertise in everything. They're used to it.

We are so close to the world of work that we can't see what it does to us. We have to rely on outside observers from other times or other cultures to appreciate the extremity and the pathology of our present position. There was a time in our own past when the “work ethic” would have been incomprehensible, and perhaps Weber was on to something when he tied its appearance to a religion, Calvinism, which if it emerged today instead of four centuries ago would immediately and appropriately be labeled a cult. Be that as it may, we have only to draw upon the wisdom of antiquity to put work in perspective. The ancients saw work for what it is, and their view prevailed, the Calvinist cranks notwithstanding, until overthrown by industrialism — but not before receiving the endorsement of its prophets.

Let's pretend for a moment that work doesn't turn people into stultified submissives. Let's pretend, in defiance of any plausible psychology and the ideology of its boosters, that it has no effect on the formation of character. And let's pretend that work isn't as boring and tiring and humiliating as we all know it really is. Even then, work would *still* make a mockery of all humanistic and democratic aspirations, just because it usurps so much of our time. Socrates said that manual laborers make bad friends and bad citizens because they have no time to fulfill the responsibilities of friendship and citizenship. He was right. Because of work, no matter what we do we keep looking at our watches. The only thing “free” about so-called free time is that it doesn't cost the boss anything. Free time is mostly devoted to getting ready for work, going to work, returning from work, and recovering from work. Free time is a euphemism for the peculiar way labor as a factor of production not only transports itself at its own expense to and from the workplace but assumes primary responsibility for its own maintenance and repair. Coal and steel don't do that. Lathes and typewriters don't do that. But workers do. No wonder Edward G. Robinson in one of his gangster movies exclaimed, “Work is for saps!”

Both Plato and Xenophon attribute to Socrates and obviously share with him an awareness of the destructive effects of work on the worker as a citizen and a human being. Herodotus identified contempt for work as an attribute of the classical Greeks at the zenith of their culture. To take only one Roman example, Cicero said that “whoever gives his labor for money sells himself and puts himself in the rank of slaves.” His candor is now rare, but contemporary primitive societies which we are wont to look down upon have provided spokesmen who have enlightened Western anthropologists. The Kapauku of West Irian, according to Posposil, have a conception of balance in life and accordingly work only every other day, the day of rest designed “to regain the lost power and health.” Our ancestors, even

as late as the eighteenth century when they were far along the path to our present predicament, at least were aware of what we have forgotten, the underside of industrialization. Their religious devotion to “St. Monday” — thus establishing a *de facto* five-day week 150–200 years before its legal consecration — was the despair of the earliest factory owners. They took a long time in submitting to the tyranny of the bell, predecessor of the time clock. In fact it was necessary for a generation or two to replace adult males with women accustomed to obedience and children who could be molded to fit industrial needs. Even the exploited peasants of the *ancient regime* wrested substantial time back from their landlord’s work. According to Lafargue, a fourth of the French peasants’ calendar was devoted to Sundays and holidays, and Chayanov’s figures from villages in Czarist Russia — hardly a progressive society — likewise show a fourth or fifth of peasants’ days devoted to repose. Controlling for productivity, we are obviously far behind these backward societies. The exploited *muzhiks* would wonder why any of us are working at all. So should we.

To grasp the full enormity of our deterioration, however, consider the earliest condition of humanity, without government or property, when we wandered as hunter-gatherers. Hobbes surmised that life was then nasty, brutish and short. Others assume that life was a desperate unrelenting struggle for subsistence, a war waged against a harsh Nature with death and disaster awaiting the unlucky or anyone who was unequal to the challenge of the struggle for existence. Actually, that was all a projection of fears for the collapse of government authority over communities unaccustomed to doing without it, like the England of Hobbes during the Civil War. Hobbes’ compatriots had already encountered alternative forms of society which illustrated other ways of life — in North America, particularly — but already these were too remote from their experience to be understandable. (The lower orders, closer to the condition of the Indians, understood it better and often found it attractive. Throughout the seventeenth century, English settlers defected to Indian tribes or, captured in war, refused to return. But the Indians no more defected to white settlements than Germans climb the Berlin Wall from the west.) The “survival of the fittest” version — the Thomas Huxley version — of Darwinism was a better account of economic conditions in Victorian England than it was of natural selection, as the anarchist Kropotkin showed in his book *Mutual Aid, A Factor of Evolution*. (Kropotkin was a scientist — a geographer — who’d had ample involuntary opportunity for fieldwork whilst exiled in Siberia: he knew what he was talking about.) Like most social and political theory, the story Hobbes and his successors told was really unacknowledged autobiography.

The anthropologist Marshall Sahlins, surveying the data on contemporary hunter-gatherers, exploded the Hobbesian myth in an article entitled “The Original Affluent Society.” They work a lot less than we do, and their work is hard to distinguish from what we regard as play. Sahlins concluded that “hunters and gatherers work less than we do; and rather than a continuous travail, the food quest is intermittent, leisure abundant, and there is a greater amount of sleep in the daytime per capita per year than in any other condition of society.” They worked an average of four hours a day, assuming they were “working” at all. Their “labor,” as it appears to us, was skilled labor which exercised their physical and intellectual capacities; unskilled labor on any large scale, as Sahlins says, is impossible except under industrialism. Thus it satisfied Friedrich Schiller’s definition of play, the only occasion on which man realizes his complete humanity by giving full “play” to both sides of his twofold nature, thinking and feeling. As he put it: “The animal *works* when deprivation is the mainspring of its activity, and it *plays* when the fullness of its strength is this mainspring, when superabundant life is its own stimulus to activity.” (A modern version — dubiously developmental — is Abraham Maslow’s counterposition of “deficiency” and “growth” motivation.) Play and freedom are, as regards production, coextensive. Even Marx, who

belongs (for all his good intentions) in the productivist pantheon, observed that “the realm of freedom does not commence until the point is passed where labor under the compulsion of necessity and external utility is required.” He never could quite bring himself to identify this happy circumstance as what it is, the abolition of work — it’s rather anomalous, after all, to be pro-worker and anti-work — but we can.

The aspiration to go backwards or forwards to a life without work is evident in every serious social or cultural history of pre-industrial Europe, among them M. Dorothy George’s *England In Transition* and Peter Burke’s *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*. Also pertinent is Daniel Bell’s essay, “Work and its Discontents,” the first text, I believe, to refer to the “revolt against work” in so many words and, had it been understood, an important correction to the complacency ordinarily associated with the volume in which it was collected, *The End of Ideology*. Neither critics nor celebrants have noticed that Bell’s end-of-ideology thesis signaled not the end of social unrest but the beginning of a new, uncharted phase unconstrained and uninformed by ideology. It was Seymour Lipset (in *Political Man*), not Bell, who announced at the same time that “the fundamental problems of the Industrial Revolution have been solved,” only a few years before the post- or meta-industrial discontents of college students drove Lipset from UC Berkeley to the relative (and temporary) tranquility of Harvard.

As Bell notes, Adam Smith in *The Wealth of Nations*, for all his enthusiasm for the market and the division of labor, was more alert to (and more honest about) the seamy side of work than Ayn Rand or the Chicago economists or any of Smith’s modern epigones. As Smith observed: “The understandings of the greater part of men are necessarily formed by their ordinary employments. The man whose life is spent in performing a few simple operations... has no occasion to exert his understanding... He generally becomes as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to become.” Here, in a few blunt words, is my critique of work. Bell, writing in 1956, the Golden Age of Eisenhower imbecility and American self-satisfaction, identified the unorganized, unorganizable malaise of the 1970’s and since, the one no political tendency is able to harness, the one identified in HEW’s report *Work in America*, the one which cannot be exploited and so is ignored. That problem is the revolt against work. It does not figure in any text by any laissez-faire economist — Milton Friedman, Murray Rothbard, Richard Posner — because, in their terms, as they used to say on *Star Trek*, “it does not compute.”

If these objections, informed by the love of liberty, fail to persuade humanists of a utilitarian or even paternalist turn, there are others which they cannot disregard. Work is hazardous to your health, to borrow a book title. In fact, work is mass murder or genocide. Directly or indirectly, work will kill most of the people who read these words. Between 14,000 and 25,000 workers are killed annually in this country on the job. Over two million are disabled. Twenty to twenty-five million are injured every year. And these figures are based on a very conservative estimation of what constitutes a work-related injury. Thus they don’t count the half million cases of occupational disease every year. I looked at one medical textbook on occupational diseases which was 1,200 pages long. Even this barely scratches the surface. The available statistics count the obvious cases like the 100,000 miners who have black lung disease, of whom 4,000 die every year, a much higher fatality rate than for AIDS, for instance, which gets so much media attention. This reflects the unvoiced assumption that AIDS afflicts perverts who could control their depravity whereas coal-mining is a sacrosanct activity beyond question. What the statistics don’t show is that tens of millions of people have their lifespans shortened by work — which is all that homicide means, after all. Consider the doctors who work themselves to death in their 50’s. Consider all the other workaholics.

Even if you aren't killed or crippled while actually working, you very well might be while going to work, coming from work, looking for work, or trying to forget about work. The vast majority of victims of the automobile are either doing one of these work-obligatory activities or else fall afoul of those who do them. To this augmented body-count must be added the victims of auto-industrial pollution and work-induced alcoholism and drug addiction. Both cancer and heart disease are modern afflictions normally traceable, directly, or indirectly, to work.

Work, then, institutionalizes homicide as a way of life. People think the Cambodians were crazy for exterminating themselves, but are we any different? The Pol Pot regime at least had a vision, however blurred, of an egalitarian society. We kill people in the six-figure range (at least) in order to sell Big Macs and Cadillacs to the survivors. Our forty or fifty thousand annual highway fatalities are victims, not martyrs. They died for nothing — or rather, they died for work. But work is nothing to die for.

Bad news for liberals: regulatory tinkering is useless in this life-and-death context. The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration was designed to police the core part of the problem, workplace safety. Even before Reagan and the Supreme Court stifled it, OSHA was a farce. At previous and (by current standards) generous Carter-era funding levels, a workplace could expect a random visit from an OSHA inspector once every 46 years.

State control of the economy is no solution. Work is, if anything, more dangerous in the state-socialist countries than it is here. Thousands of Russian workers were killed or injured building the Moscow subway. Stories reverberate about covered-up Soviet nuclear disasters which make Times Beach and Three-Mile Island look like elementary-school air-raid drills. On the other hand, deregulation, currently fashionable, won't help and will probably hurt. From a health and safety standpoint, among others, work was at its worst in the days when the economy most closely approximated *laissez-faire*.

Historians like Eugene Genovese have argued persuasively that — as antebellum slavery apologists insisted — factory wage-workers in the Northern American states and in Europe were worse off than Southern plantation slaves. No rearrangement of relations among bureaucrats and businessmen seems to make much difference at the point of production. Serious enforcement of even the rather vague standards enforceable in theory by OSHA would probably bring the economy to a standstill. The enforcers apparently appreciate this, since they don't even try to crack down on most malefactors.

What I've said so far ought not to be controversial. Many workers are fed up with work. There are high and rising rates of absenteeism, turnover, employee theft and sabotage, wildcat strikes, and overall goldbricking on the job. There may be some movement toward a conscious and not just visceral rejection of work. And yet the prevalent feeling, universal among bosses and their agents and also widespread among workers themselves is that work itself is inevitable and necessary.

I disagree. It is now possible to abolish work and replace it, insofar as it serves useful purposes, with a multitude of new kinds of free activities. To abolish work requires going at it from two directions, quantitative and qualitative. On the one hand, on the quantitative side, we have to cut down massively on the amount of work being done. At present most work is useless or worse and we should simply get rid of it. On the other hand — and I think this is the crux of the matter and the revolutionary new departure — we have to take what useful work remains and transform it into a pleasing variety of game-like and craft-like pastimes,

indistinguishable from other pleasurable pastimes, except that they happen to yield useful end-products. Surely that shouldn't make them *less* enticing to do. Then all the artificial barriers of power and property could come down. Creation could become recreation. And we could all stop being afraid of each other.

I don't suggest that most work is salvageable in this way. But then most work isn't worth trying to save. Only a small and diminishing fraction of work serves any useful purpose independent of the defense and reproduction of the work-system and its political and legal appendages. Twenty years ago, Paul and Percival Goodman estimated that just five percent of the work then being done — presumably the figure, if accurate, is lower now — would satisfy our minimal needs for food, clothing, and shelter. Theirs was only an educated guess but the main point is quite clear: directly or indirectly, most work serves the unproductive purposes of commerce or social control. Right off the bat we can liberate tens of millions of salesmen, soldiers, managers, cops, stockbrokers, clergymen, bankers, lawyers, teachers, landlords, security guards, ad-men and everyone who works for them. There is a snowball effect since every time you idle some bigshot you liberate his flunkies and underlings also. Thus the economy *implodes*.

Forty percent of the workforce are white-collar workers, most of whom have some of the most tedious and idiotic jobs ever concocted. Entire industries, insurance and banking and real estate for instance, consist of nothing but useless paper-shuffling. It is no accident that the "tertiary sector," the service sector, is growing while the "secondary sector" (industry) stagnates and the "primary sector" (agriculture) nearly disappears. Because work is unnecessary except to those whose power it secures, workers are shifted from relatively useful to relatively useless occupations as a measure to assure public order. Anything is better than nothing. That's why you can't go home just because you finish early. They want your *time*, enough of it to make you theirs, even if they have no use for most of it. Otherwise why hasn't the average work week gone down by more than a few minutes in the past fifty years?

Next we can take a meat-cleaver to production work itself. No more war production, nuclear power, junk food, feminine hygiene deodorant — and above all, no more auto industry to speak of. An occasional Stanley Steamer or Model-T might be all right, but the auto-eroticism on which such pestholes as Detroit and Los Angeles depend on is out of the question. Already, without even trying, we've virtually solved the energy crisis, the environmental crisis and assorted other insoluble social problems.

Finally, we must do away with far and away the largest occupation, the one with the longest hours, the lowest pay and some of the most tedious tasks around. I refer to *housewives* doing housework and child-rearing. By abolishing wage-labor and achieving full unemployment we undermine the sexual division of labor. The nuclear family as we know it is an inevitable adaptation to the division of labor imposed by modern wage-work. Like it or not, as things have been for the last century or two it is economically rational for the man to bring home the bacon, for the woman to do the shitwork to provide him with a haven in a heartless world, and for the children to be marched off to youth concentration camps called "schools," primarily to keep them out of Mom's hair but still under control, but incidentally to acquire the habits of obedience and punctuality so necessary for workers. If you would be rid of patriarchy, get rid of the nuclear family whose unpaid "shadow work," as Ivan Illich says, makes possible the work-system that makes *it* necessary. Bound up with this no-nukes strategy is the abolition of childhood and the closing of the schools. There are more full-time students than full-time workers in this country. We need children as teachers, not students. They have a lot to contribute to the ludic revolution because they're better at playing than grown-ups are. Adults

and children are not identical but they will become equal through interdependence. Only play can bridge the generation gap.

I haven't as yet even mentioned the possibility of cutting way down on the little work that remains by automating and cybernizing it. All the scientists and engineers and technicians freed from bothering with war research and planned obsolescence would have a good time devising means to eliminate fatigue and tedium and danger from activities like mining. Undoubtedly they'll find other projects to amuse themselves with. Perhaps they'll set up world-wide all-inclusive multi-media communications systems or found space colonies. Perhaps. I myself am no gadget freak. I wouldn't care to live in a pushbutton paradise. I don't want robot slaves to do everything; I want to do things myself. There is, I think, a place for labor-saving technology, but a modest place. The historical and pre-historical record is not encouraging. When productive technology went from hunting-gathering to agriculture and on to industry, work increased while skills and self-determination diminished. The further evolution of industrialism has accentuated what Harry Braverman called the degradation of work. Intelligent observers have always been aware of this. John Stuart Mill wrote that all the labor-saving inventions ever devised haven't saved a moment's labor. Karl Marx wrote that "it would be possible to write a history of the inventions, made since 1830, for the sole purpose of supplying capital with weapons against the revolts of the working class." The enthusiastic technophiles — Saint-Simon, Comte, Lenin, B. F. Skinner — have always been unabashed authoritarians also; which is to say, technocrats. We should be more than sceptical about the promises of the computer mystics. *They* work like dogs; chances are, if they have their way, so will the rest of us. But if they have any particularized contributions more readily subordinated to human purposes than the run of high tech, let's give them a hearing.

What I really want to see is work turned into play. A first step is to discard the notions of a "job" and an "occupation." Even activities that already have some ludic content lose most of it by being reduced to jobs which certain people, and only those people are forced to do to the exclusion of all else. Is it not odd that farm workers toil painfully in the fields while their air-conditioned masters go home every weekend and putter about in their gardens? Under a system of permanent revelry, we will witness the Golden Age of the dilettante which will put the Renaissance to shame. There won't be any more jobs, just things to do and people to do them.

The secret of turning work into play, as Charles Fourier demonstrated, is to arrange useful activities to take advantage of whatever it is that various people at various times in fact enjoy doing. To make it possible for some people to do the things they could enjoy it will be enough just to eradicate the irrationalities and distortions which afflict these activities when they are reduced to work. I, for instance, would enjoy doing some (not too much) teaching, but I don't want coerced students and I don't care to suck up to pathetic pedants for tenure.

Second, there are some things that people like to do from time to time, but not for too long, and certainly not all the time. You might enjoy baby-sitting for a few hours in order to share the company of kids, but not as much as their parents do. The parents meanwhile, profoundly appreciate the time to themselves that you free up for them, although they'd get fretful if parted from their progeny for too long. These differences among individuals are what make a life of free play possible. The same principle applies to many other areas of activity, especially the primal ones. Thus many people enjoy cooking when they can practice it seriously at their leisure, but not when they're just fueling up human bodies for work.

Third — other things being equal — some things that are unsatisfying if done by yourself or in unpleasant surroundings or at the orders of an overlord are enjoyable, at least for a while, if these circumstances are changed. This is probably true, to some extent, of all work. People deploy their otherwise wasted ingenuity to make a game of the least inviting drudge-jobs as best they can. Activities that appeal to some people don't always appeal to all others, but everyone at least potentially has a variety of interests and an interest in variety. As the saying goes, "anything once." Fourier was the master at speculating how aberrant and perverse penchants could be put to use in post-civilized society, what he called Harmony. He thought the Emperor Nero would have turned out all right if as a child he could have indulged his taste for bloodshed by working in a slaughterhouse. Small children who notoriously relish wallowing in filth could be organized in "Little Hordes" to clean toilets and empty the garbage, with medals awarded to the outstanding. I am not arguing for these precise examples but for the underlying principle, which I think makes perfect sense as one dimension of an overall revolutionary transformation. Bear in mind that we don't have to take today's work just as we find it and match it up with the proper people, some of whom would have to be perverse indeed. If technology has a role in all this it is less to automate work out of existence than to open up new realms for re/creation. To some extent we may want to return to handicrafts, which William Morris considered a probable and desirable upshot of communist revolution. Art would be taken back from the snobs and collectors, abolished as a specialized department catering to an elite audience, and its qualities of beauty and creation restored to integral life from which they were stolen by work. It's a sobering thought that the grecian urns we write odes about and showcase in museums were used in their own time to store olive oil. I doubt our everyday artifacts will fare as well in the future, if there is one. The point is that there's no such thing as progress in the world of work; if anything it's just the opposite. We shouldn't hesitate to pilfer the past for what it has to offer, the ancients lose nothing yet we are enriched.

The reinvention of daily life means marching off the edge of our maps. There is, it is true, more suggestive speculation than most people suspect. Besides Fourier and Morris — and even a hint, here and there, in Marx — there are the writings of Kropotkin, the syndicalists Pataud and Pouget, anarcho-communists old (Berkman) and new (Bookchin). The Goodman brothers' *Communitas* is exemplary for illustrating what forms follow from given functions (purposes), and there is something to be gleaned from the often hazy heralds of alternative/appropriate/intermediate/convivial technology, like Schumacher and especially Illich, once you disconnect their fog machines. The situationists — as represented by Vaneigem's *Revolution of Daily Life* and in the *Situationist International Anthology* — are so ruthlessly lucid as to be exhilarating, even if they never did quite square the endorsement of the rule of the worker's councils with the abolition of work. Better their incongruity, though than any extant version of leftism, whose devotees look to be the last champions of work, for if there were no work there would be no workers, and without workers, who would the left have to organize?

So the abolitionists would be largely on their own. No one can say what would result from unleashing the creative power stultified by work. Anything can happen. The tiresome debater's problem of freedom vs. necessity, with its theological overtones, resolves itself practically once the production of use-values is coextensive with the consumption of delightful play-activity.

Life will become a game, or rather many games, but not — as it is now — a zero/sum game. An optimal sexual encounter is the paradigm of productive play, The participants potentiate each other's pleasures, nobody keeps score, and everybody wins. The more you give, the

more you get. In the ludic life, the best of sex will diffuse into the better part of daily life. Generalized play leads to the libidinization of life. Sex, in turn, can become less urgent and desperate, more playful. If we play our cards right, we can all get more out of life than we put into it; but only if we play for keeps.

No one should ever work. Workers of the world... *relax!*

The Law (Excerpt)

Frédéric Bastiat

1850

The law perverted! The law—and, in its wake, all the collective forces of the nation—the law, I say, not only diverted from its proper direction, but made to pursue one entirely contrary! The law become the tool of every kind of avarice, instead of being its check! The law guilty of that very iniquity which it was its mission to punish! Truly, this is a serious fact, if it exists, and one to which I feel bound to call the attention of my fellow citizens.

We hold from God the gift that, as far as we are concerned, contains all others, Life—physical, intellectual, and moral life.

But life cannot support itself. He who has bestowed it, has entrusted us with the care of supporting it, of developing it, and of perfecting it. To that end, He has provided us with a collection of wonderful faculties; He has plunged us into the midst of a variety of elements. It is by the application of our faculties to these elements that the phenomena of assimilation and of appropriation, by which life pursues the circle that has been assigned to it are realized. Existence, faculties, assimilation—in other words, personality, liberty, property—this is man. It is of these three things that it may be said, apart from all demagogic subtlety, that they are anterior and superior to all human legislation.

It is not because men have made laws, that personality, liberty, and property exist. On the contrary, it is because personality, liberty, and property exist beforehand, that men make laws. What, then, is law? As I have said elsewhere, it is the collective organization of the individual right to lawful defense.

Nature, or rather God, has bestowed upon every one of us the right to defend his person, his liberty, and his property, since these are the three constituent or preserving elements of life; elements, each of which is rendered complete by the others, and that cannot be understood without them. For what are our faculties, but the extension of our personality? and what is property, but an extension of our faculties?

If every man has the right of defending, even by force, his person, his liberty, and his property, a number of men have the right to combine together to extend, to organize a common force to provide regularly for this defense. Collective right, then, has its principle, its reason for existing, its lawfulness, in individual right; and the common force cannot rationally have any other end, or any other mission, than that of the isolated forces for which it is substituted. Thus, as the force of an individual cannot lawfully touch the person, the liberty, or the property of another individual—for the same reason, the common force cannot lawfully be used to destroy the person, the liberty, or the property of individuals or of classes. For this perversion of force would be, in one case as in the other, in contradiction to our premises. For who will dare to say that force has been given to us, not to defend our rights, but to annihilate the equal rights of our brethren? And if this be not true of every individual force, acting independently, how can it be true of the collective force, which is only the organized union of isolated forces?

Nothing, therefore, can be more evident than this: The law is the organization of the natural right of lawful defense; it is the substitution of collective for individual forces, for the purpose of acting in the sphere in which they have a right to act, of doing what they have a right to do, to secure persons, liberties, and properties, and to maintain each in its right, so as to cause justice to reign over all.

And if a people established upon this basis were to exist, it seems to me that order would prevail among them in their acts as well as in their ideas. It seems to me that such a people would have the most simple, the most economical, the least oppressive, the least to be felt, the most restrained, the most just, and, consequently, the most stable Government that could be imagined, whatever its political form might be.

For under such an administration, everyone would feel that he possessed all the fullness, as well as all the responsibility of his existence. So long as personal safety was ensured, so long as labor was free, and the fruits of labor secured against all unjust attacks, no one would have any difficulties to contend with in the State. When prosperous, we should not, it is true, have to thank the State for our success; but when unfortunate, we should no more think of taxing it with our disasters than our peasants think of attributing to it the arrival of hail or of frost. We should know it only by the inestimable blessing of Safety.

It may further be affirmed, that, thanks to the nonintervention of the State in private affairs, our wants and their satisfactions would develop themselves in their natural order. We should not see poor families seeking for literary instruction before they were supplied with bread. We should not see towns peopled at the expense of rural districts, nor rural districts at the expense of towns. We should not see those great displacements of capital, of labor, and of population, that legislative measures occasion; displacements that render so uncertain and precarious the very sources of existence, and thus enlarge to such an extent the responsibility of Governments.

Unhappily, law is by no means confined to its own sphere. Nor is it merely in some ambiguous and debatable views that it has left its proper sphere. It has done more than this. It has acted in direct opposition to its proper end; it has destroyed its own object; it has been employed in annihilating that justice which it ought to have established, in effacing amongst Rights, that limit which it was its true mission to respect; it has placed the collective force in the service of those who wish to traffic, without risk and without scruple, in the persons, the liberty, and the property of others; it has converted plunder into a right, that it may protect it, and lawful defense into a crime, that it may punish it.

How has this perversion of law been accomplished?

And what has resulted from it?

The law has been perverted through the influence of two very different causes—naked greed and misconceived philanthropy.

Let us speak of the former. Self-preservation and development is the common aspiration of all men, in such a way that if every one enjoyed the free exercise of his faculties and the free disposition of their fruits, social progress would be incessant, uninterrupted, inevitable. But there is also another disposition which is common to them. This is to live and to develop, when they can, at the expense of one another. This is no rash imputation, emanating from a gloomy, uncharitable spirit. History bears witness to the truth of it, by the incessant wars, the migrations of races, sectarian oppressions, the universality of slavery, the frauds in trade, and the monopolies with which its annals abound. This fatal disposition has its origin in the very constitution of man—in that primitive, and universal, and invincible sentiment that urges it towards its well-being, and makes it seek to escape pain. Man can only derive life and enjoyment from a perpetual search and appropriation; that is, from a perpetual application of his faculties to objects, or from labor. This is the origin of property.

But also he may live and enjoy, by seizing and appropriating the productions of the faculties of his fellow men.

This is the origin of plunder.

Now, labor being in itself a pain, and man being naturally inclined to avoid pain, it follows, and history proves it, that wherever plunder is less burdensome than labor, it prevails; and neither religion nor morality can, in this case, prevent it from prevailing.

When does plunder cease, then? When it becomes more burdensome and more dangerous than labor. It is very evident that the proper aim of law is to oppose the fatal tendency to plunder with the powerful obstacle of collective force; that all its measures should be in favor of property, and against plunder.

But the law is made, generally, by one man, or by one class of men. And as law cannot exist without the sanction and the support of a preponderant force, it must finally place this force in the hands of those who legislate. This inevitable phenomenon, combined with the fatal tendency that, we have said, exists in the heart of man, explains the almost universal perversion of law. It is easy to conceive that, instead of being a check upon injustice, it becomes its most invincible instrument.

It is easy to conceive that, according to the power of the legislator, it destroys for its own profit, and in different degrees amongst the rest of the community, personal independence by slavery, liberty by oppression, and property by plunder.

It is in the nature of men to rise against the injustice of which they are the victims. When, therefore, plunder is organized by law, for the profit of those who perpetrate it, all the plundered classes tend, either by peaceful or revolutionary means, to enter in some way into the manufacturing of laws. These classes, according to the degree of enlightenment at which they have arrived, may propose to themselves two very different ends, when they thus attempt the attainment of their political rights; either they may wish to put an end to lawful plunder, or they may desire to take part in it.

Woe to the nation where this latter thought prevails amongst the masses, at the moment when they, in their turn, seize upon the legislative power!

Up to that time, lawful plunder has been exercised by the few upon the many, as is the case in countries where the right of legislating is confined to a few hands. But now it has become universal, and the equilibrium is sought in universal plunder. The injustice that society contains, instead of being rooted out of it, is generalized. As soon as the injured classes have recovered their political rights, their first thought is not to abolish plunder (this would suppose them to possess enlightenment, which they cannot have), but to organize against the other classes, and to their own detriment, a system of reprisals—as if it was necessary, before the reign of justice arrives, that all should undergo a cruel retribution—some for their iniquity and some for their ignorance.

It would be impossible, therefore, to introduce into society a greater change and a greater evil than this—the conversion of the law into an instrument of plunder. What would be the consequences of such a perversion? It would require volumes to describe them all. We must content ourselves with pointing out the most striking. In the first place, it would efface from everybody's conscience the distinction between justice and injustice. No society can exist unless the laws are respected to a certain degree, but the safest way to make them respected is to make them respectable. When law and morality are in contradiction to each other, the citizen finds himself in the cruel alternative of either losing his moral sense, or of losing his respect for the law—two evils of equal magnitude, between which it would be difficult to choose.

It is so much in the nature of law to support justice that in the minds of the masses they are one and the same. There is in all of us a strong disposition to regard what is lawful as legitimate, so much so that many falsely derive all justice from law. It is sufficient, then, for the law to order and sanction plunder, that it may appear to many consciences just and sacred. Slavery, protection, and monopoly find defenders, not only in those who profit by them, but in those who suffer by them. If you suggest a doubt as to the morality of these institutions, it is

said directly—"You are a dangerous experimenter, a utopian, a theorist, a despiser of the laws; you would shake the basis upon which society rests."

If you lecture upon morality, or political economy, official bodies will be found to make this request to the Government:

That henceforth science be taught not only with sole reference to free exchange (to liberty, property, and justice), as has been the case up to the present time, but also, and especially, with reference to the facts and legislation (contrary to liberty, property, and justice) that regulate French industry. That, in public lecterns salaried by the treasury, the professor abstain rigorously from endangering in the slightest degree the respect due to the laws now in force.⁴

So that if a law exists that sanctions slavery or monopoly, oppression or plunder, in any form whatever, it must not even be mentioned—for how can it be mentioned without damaging the respect that it inspires? Still further, morality and political economy must be taught in connection with this law—that is, under the supposition that it must be just, only because it is law.

Another effect of this deplorable perversion of the law is that it gives to human passions and to political struggles, and, in general, to politics, properly so called, an exaggerated importance.

I could prove this assertion in a thousand ways. But I shall confine myself, by way of an illustration, to bringing it to bear upon a subject which has of late occupied everybody's mind: universal suffrage.

Whatever may be thought of it by the adepts of the school of Rousseau, which professes to be very far advanced, but which I consider 20 centuries behind, universal suffrage (taking the word in its strictest sense) is not one of those sacred dogmas with respect to which examination and doubt are crimes.

Serious objections may be made to it.

In the first place, the word universal conceals a gross sophism. There are, in France, 36,000,000 inhabitants. To make the right of suffrage universal, 36,000,000 electors should be reckoned. The most extended system reckons only 9,000,000. Three persons out of four, then, are excluded; and more than this, they are excluded by the fourth. Upon what principle is this exclusion founded? Upon the principle of incapacity. Universal suffrage, then, means: universal suffrage of those who are capable. In point of fact, who are the capable? Are age, sex, and judicial condemnations the only conditions to which incapacity is to be attached? On taking a nearer view of the subject, we may soon perceive the reason why the right of suffrage depends upon the presumption of incapacity; the most extended system differing from the most restricted in the conditions on which this incapacity depends, and which constitutes not a difference in principle, but in degree.

This motive is, that the elector does not stipulate for himself, but for everybody.

If, as the republicans of the Greek and Roman tone pretend, the right of suffrage had fallen to the lot of every one at his birth, it would be an injustice to adults to prevent women and children from voting. Why are they prevented? Because they are presumed to be incapable. And why is incapacity a reason for exclusion? Because the elector does not reap alone the responsibility of his vote; because every vote engages and affects the community at large; because the community has a right to demand some assurances, as regards the acts upon which its well-being and its existence depend.

I know what might be said in answer to this. I know what might be objected. But this is not the place to settle a controversy of this kind. What I wish to observe is this, that this same controversy (in common with the greater part of political questions) that agitates, excites, and unsettles the nations, would lose almost all its importance if the law had always been what it ought to be.

⁴ General Council of Manufactures, Agriculture, and Commerce, 6th of May, 1850.

In fact, if law were confined to causing all persons, all liberties, and all properties to be respected—if it were merely the organization of individual right and individual defense—if it were the obstacle, the check, the chastisement opposed to all oppression, to all plunder—is it likely that we should dispute much, as citizens, on the subject of the greater or lesser universality of suffrage? Is it likely that it would compromise that greatest of advantages, the public peace? Is it likely that the excluded classes would not quietly wait for their turn? Is it likely that the enfranchised classes would be very jealous of their privilege? And is it not clear, that the interest of all being one and the same, some would act without much inconvenience to the others?

But if the fatal principle should come to be introduced, that, under pretense of organization, regulation, protection, or encouragement, the law may take from one party in order to give to another, help itself to the wealth acquired by all the classes that it may increase that of one class, whether that of the agriculturists, the manufacturers, the ship owners, or artists and comedians; then certainly, in this case, there is no class which may not try, and with reason, to place its hand upon the law, that would not demand with fury its right of election and eligibility, and that would overturn society rather than not obtain it. Even beggars and vagabonds will prove to you that they have an incontestable title to it. They will say:

We never buy wine, tobacco, or salt, without paying the tax, and a part of this tax is given by law in perquisites and gratuities to men who are richer than we are. Others make use of the law to create an artificial rise in the price of bread, meat, iron, or cloth.

Since everybody traffics in law for his own profit, we should like to do the same. We should like to make it produce the right to assistance, which is the poor man's plunder. To effect this, we ought to be electors and legislators, that we may organize, on a large scale, alms for our own class, as you have organized, on a large scale, protection for yours. Don't tell us that you will take our cause upon yourselves, and throw to us 600,000 francs to keep us quiet, like giving us a bone to pick. We have other claims, and, at any rate, we wish to stipulate for ourselves, as other classes have stipulated for themselves!

How is this argument to be answered? Yes, as long as it is admitted that the law may be diverted from its true mission, that it may violate property instead of securing it, everybody will be wanting to manufacture law, either to defend himself against plunder, or to organize it for his own profit. The political question will always be prejudicial, predominant, and absorbing; in a word, there will be fighting around the door of the Legislative Palace. The struggle will be no less furious within it. To be convinced of this, it is hardly necessary to look at what passes in the Chambers in France and in England; it is enough to know how the question stands.

Is there any need to prove that this odious perversion of law is a perpetual source of hatred and discord, that it even tends to social disorganization? Look at the United States. There is no country in the world where the law is kept more within its proper domain—which is, to secure to everyone his liberty and his property. Therefore, there is no country in the world where social order appears to rest upon a more solid basis. Nevertheless, even in the United States, there are two questions, and only two, that from the beginning have endangered political order. And what are these two questions? That of slavery and that of tariffs; that is, precisely the only two questions in which, contrary to the general spirit of this republic, law has taken the character of a plunderer. Slavery is a violation, sanctioned by law, of the rights of the person. Protection is a violation perpetrated by the law upon the rights of property; and certainly it is very remarkable that, in the midst of so many other debates, this double legal scourge, the sorrowful inheritance of the Old World, should be the only one which can, and perhaps will, cause the rupture of the Union. Indeed, a more astounding fact, in the heart of society, cannot be conceived than this: That law should have become an instrument of injustice. And if this fact occasions consequences so formidable to the United States, where there is but one exception, what must it be with us in Europe, where it is a principle—a system?

Mr. Montalembert, adopting the thought of a famous proclamation of Mr. Carlier, said, "We must make war against socialism." And by socialism, according to the definition of Mr.

Charles Dupin, he meant plunder. But what plunder did he mean? For there are two sorts: extralegal and legal plunder.

As to extralegal plunder, such as theft, or swindling, which is defined, foreseen, and punished by the penal code, I do not think it can be adorned by the name of socialism. It is not this that systematically threatens the foundations of society. Besides, the war against this kind of plunder has not waited for the signal of Mr. Montalembert or Mr. Carlier. It has gone on since the beginning of the world; France was carrying it on long before the revolution of February—long before the appearance of socialism—with all the ceremonies of magistracy, police, gendarmerie, prisons, dungeons, and scaffolds. It is the law itself that is conducting this war, and it is to be wished, in my opinion, that the law should always maintain this attitude with respect to plunder.

But this is not the case. The law sometimes takes its own part. Sometimes it accomplishes it with its own hands, in order to save the parties benefited the shame, the danger, and the scruple. Sometimes it places all this ceremony of magistracy, police, gendarmerie, and prisons, at the service of the plunderer, and treats the plundered party, when he defends himself, as the criminal. In a word, there is a legal plunder, and it is, no doubt, this that is meant by Mr. Montalembert.

This plunder may be only an exceptional blemish in the legislation of a people, and in this case, the best thing that can be done is, without so many speeches and lamentations, to do away with it as soon as possible, notwithstanding the clamors of interested parties. But how is it to be distinguished? Very easily. See whether the law takes from some persons that which belongs to them, to give to others what does not belong to them. See whether the law performs, for the profit of one citizen, and, to the injury of others, an act that this citizen cannot perform without committing a crime. Abolish this law without delay; it is not merely an iniquity—it is a fertile source of iniquities, for it invites reprisals; and if you do not take care, the exceptional case will extend, multiply, and become systematic. No doubt the party benefited will exclaim loudly; he will assert his acquired rights. He will say that the State is bound to protect and encourage his industry; he will plead that it is a good thing for the State to be enriched, that it may spend the more, and thus shower down salaries upon the poor workmen. Take care not to listen to this sophistry, for it is just by the systematizing of these arguments that legal plunder becomes systematized.

And this is what has taken place. The delusion of the day is to enrich all classes at the expense of each other; it is to generalize plunder under pretense of organizing it. Now, legal plunder may be exercised in an infinite multitude of ways. Hence come an infinite multitude of plans for organization; tariffs, protection, perquisites, gratuities, encouragements, progressive taxation, free public education, right to work, right to profit, right to wages, right to assistance, right to instruments of labor, gratuity of credit, etc., etc. And it is all these plans, taken as a whole, with what they have in common, legal plunder, that takes the name of socialism.

Now socialism, thus defined, and forming a doctrinal body, what other war would you make against it than a war of doctrine? You find this doctrine false, absurd, abominable. Refute it. This will be all the easier, the more false, absurd, and abominable it is. Above all, if you wish to be strong, begin by rooting out of your legislation every particle of socialism which may have crept into it—and this will be no light work.

Mr. Montalembert has been reproached with wishing to turn brute force against socialism. He ought to be exonerated from this reproach, for he has plainly said: “The war that we must make against socialism must be one that is compatible with the law, honor, and justice.”

But how is it that Mr. Montalembert does not see that he is placing himself in a vicious circle? You would oppose law to socialism. But it is the law that socialism invokes. It aspires to legal, not extralegal plunder. It is of the law itself, like monopolists of all kinds, that it wants to make an instrument; and when once it has the law on its side, how will you be able to turn

the law against it? How will you place it under the power of your tribunals, your gendarmes, and of your prisons? What will you do then? You wish to prevent it from taking any part in the making of laws. You would keep it outside the Legislative Palace. In this you will not succeed, I venture to prophesy, so long as legal plunder is the basis of the legislation within. It is absolutely necessary that this question of legal plunder should be determined, and there are only three solutions of it:

1. When the few plunder the many.
2. When everybody plunders everybody else.
3. When nobody plunders anybody.

Partial plunder, universal plunder, absence of plunder, amongst these we have to make our choice. The law can only produce one of these results.

Partial plunder. This is the system that prevailed so long as the elective privilege was partial; a system that is resorted to, to avoid the invasion of socialism.

Universal plunder. We have been threatened by this system when the elective privilege has become universal; the masses having conceived the idea of making law, on the principle of legislators who had preceded them.

Absence of plunder. This is the principle of justice, peace, order, stability, conciliation, and of good sense, which I shall proclaim with all the force of my lungs (which is very inadequate, alas!) till the day of my death.

And, in all sincerity, can anything more be required at the hands of the law? Can the law, whose necessary sanction is force, be reasonably employed upon anything beyond securing to every one his right? I defy anyone to remove it from this circle without perverting it, and consequently turning force against right. And as this is the most fatal, the most illogical social perversion that can possibly be imagined, it must be admitted that the true solution, so much sought after, of the social problem, is contained in these simple words—**LAW IS ORGANIZED JUSTICE.**

Now it is important to remark, that to organize justice by law, that is to say by force, excludes the idea of organizing by law, or by force any manifestation whatever of human activity—labor, charity, agriculture, commerce, industry, instruction, the fine arts, or religion; for any one of these organizings would inevitably destroy the essential organization. How, in fact, can we imagine force encroaching upon the liberty of citizens without infringing upon justice, and so acting against its proper aim?

Here I am taking on the most popular prejudice of our time. It is not considered enough that law should be just, it must be philanthropic. It is not sufficient that it should guarantee to every citizen the free and inoffensive exercise of his faculties, applied to his physical, intellectual, and moral development; it is required to extend well-being, instruction, and morality, directly over the nation. This is the fascinating side of socialism.

But, I repeat it, these two missions of the law contradict each other. We have to choose between them. A citizen cannot at the same time be free and not free. Mr. de Lamartine wrote to me one day thus: “Your doctrine is only the half of my program; you have stopped at liberty, I go on to fraternity.” I answered him: “The second part of your program will destroy the first.” And in fact it is impossible for me to separate the word fraternity from the word voluntary. I cannot possibly conceive fraternity legally enforced, without liberty being legally destroyed, and justice legally trampled under foot. Legal plunder has two roots: one of them, as we have already seen, is in human greed; the other is in misconceived philanthropy.

Before I proceed, I think I ought to explain myself upon the word plunder.

I do not take it, as it often is taken, in a vague, undefined, relative, or metaphorical sense. I use it in its scientific acceptation, and as expressing the opposite idea to property. When a portion of wealth passes out of the hands of him who has acquired it, without his consent, and without compensation, to him who has not created it, whether by force or by artifice, I say that property is violated, that plunder is perpetrated. I say that this is exactly what the law

ought to repress always and everywhere. If the law itself performs the action it ought to repress, I say that plunder is still perpetrated, and even, in a social point of view, under aggravated circumstances. In this case, however, he who profits from the plunder is not responsible for it; it is the law, the lawgiver, society itself, and this is where the political danger lies.

It is to be regretted that there is something offensive in the word. I have sought in vain for another, for I would not wish at any time, and especially just now, to add an irritating word to our disagreements; therefore, whether I am believed or not, I declare that I do not mean to impugn the intentions nor the morality of anybody. I am attacking an idea that I believe to be false—a system that appears to me to be unjust; and this is so independent of intentions, that each of us profits by it without wishing it, and suffers from it without being aware of the cause.

Any person must write under the influence of party spirit or of fear, who would call into question the sincerity of protectionism, of socialism, and even of communism, which are one and the same plant, in three different periods of its growth. All that can be said is, that plunder is more visible by its partiality in protectionism,⁵ and by its universality in communism; whence it follows that, of the three systems, socialism is still the most vague, the most undefined, and consequently the most sincere.

Be that as it may, to conclude that legal plunder has one of its roots in misconceived philanthropy, is evidently to put intentions out of the question.

With this understanding, let us examine the value, the origin, and the tendency of this popular aspiration, which pretends to realize the general good by general plunder.

The Socialists say, since the law organizes justice, why should it not organize labor, instruction, and religion? Why? Because it could not organize labor, instruction, and religion, without disorganizing justice.

For remember, that law is force, and that consequently the domain of the law cannot properly extend beyond the domain of force.

When law and force keep a man within the bounds of justice, they impose nothing upon him but a mere negation. They only oblige him to abstain from doing harm. They violate neither his personality, his liberty, nor his property. They only guard the personality, the liberty, the property of others. They hold themselves on the defensive; they defend the equal right of all. They fulfill a mission whose harmlessness is evident, whose utility is palpable, and whose legitimacy is not to be disputed. This is so true that, as a friend of mine once remarked to me, to say that the aim of the law is to cause justice to reign, is to use an expression that is not rigorously exact. It ought to be said, the aim of the law is to prevent injustice from reigning. In fact, it is not justice that has an existence of its own, it is injustice. The one results from the absence of the other.

But when the law, through the medium of its necessary agent—force—imposes a form of labor, a method or a subject of instruction, a creed, or a worship, it is no longer negative; it acts positively upon men. It substitutes the will of the legislator for their own will, the initiative of the legislator for their own initiative. They have no need to consult, to compare, or to foresee; the law does all that for them. The intellect is for them a useless encumbrance; they cease to be men; they lose their personality, their liberty, their property.

⁵ If protection were only granted in France to a single class, to the engineers, for instance, it would be so absurdly plundering, as to be unable to maintain itself. Thus we see all the protected trades combine, make common cause, and even recruit themselves in such a way as to appear to embrace the mass of the national labor. They feel instinctively that plunder is slurred over by being generalized.

Try to imagine a form of labor imposed by force, that is not a violation of liberty; a transmission of wealth imposed by force, that is not a violation of property. If you cannot succeed in reconciling this, you are bound to conclude that the law cannot organize labor and industry without organizing injustice.

When, from the seclusion of his office, a politician takes a view of society, he is struck with the spectacle of inequality that presents itself. He mourns over the sufferings that are the lot of so many of our brethren, sufferings whose aspect is rendered yet more sorrowful by the contrast of luxury and wealth.

He ought, perhaps, to ask himself whether such a social state has not been caused by the plunder of ancient times, exercised in the way of conquests; and by plunder of more recent times, effected through the medium of the laws? He ought to ask himself whether, granting the aspiration of all men to well-being and improvement, the reign of justice would not suffice to realize the greatest activity of progress, and the greatest amount of equality compatible with that individual responsibility that God has awarded as a just retribution of virtue and vice? He never gives this a thought. His mind turns towards combinations, arrangements, legal or factitious organizations. He seeks the remedy in perpetuating and exaggerating what has produced the evil.

For, justice apart, which we have seen is only a negation, is there any one of these legal arrangements that does not contain the principle of plunder?

You say, "There are men who have no money," and you apply to the law. But the law is not a self-supplied fountain, whence every stream may obtain supplies independently of society. Nothing can enter the public treasury, in favor of one citizen or one class, but what other citizens and other classes have been forced to send to it. If everyone draws from it only the equivalent of what he has contributed to it, your law, it is true, is no plunderer, but it does nothing for men who want money—it does not promote equality. It can only be an instrument of equalization as far as it takes from one party to give to another, and then it is an instrument of plunder. Examine, in this light, the protection of tariffs, subsidies, right to profit, right to labor, right to assistance, free public education, progressive taxation, gratuitousness of credit, social workshops, and you will always find at the bottom legal plunder, organized injustice. You say, "There are men who want knowledge," and you apply to the law. But the law is not a torch that sheds light that originates within itself. It extends over a society where there are men who have knowledge, and others who have not; citizens who want to learn, and others who are disposed to teach. It can only do one of two things: either allow a free operation to this kind of transaction, i.e., let this kind of want satisfy itself freely; or else preempt the will of the people in the matter, and take from some of them sufficient to pay professors commissioned to instruct others for free. But, in this second case there cannot fail to be a violation of liberty and property—legal plunder.

You say, "Here are men who are wanting in morality or religion," and you apply to the law; but law is force, and need I say how far it is a violent and absurd enterprise to introduce force in these matters?

As the result of its systems and of its efforts, it would seem that socialism, notwithstanding all its self-complacency, can scarcely help perceiving the monster of legal plunder. But what does it do? It disguises it cleverly from others, and even from itself, under the seductive names of fraternity, solidarity, organization, association. And because we do not ask so much at the hands of the law, because we only ask it for justice, it alleges that we reject fraternity, solidarity, organization, and association; and they brand us with the name of individualists.

We can assure them that what we repudiate is not natural organization, but forced organization.

It is not free association, but the forms of association that they would impose upon us. It is not spontaneous fraternity, but legal fraternity.

It is not providential solidarity, but artificial solidarity, which is only an unjust displacement of responsibility.

Socialism, like the old policy from which it emanates, confounds Government and society. And so, every time we object to a thing being done by Government, it concludes that we object to its being done at all. We disapprove of education by the State—then we are against education altogether. We object to a State religion—then we would have no religion at all. We object to an equality which is brought about by the State then we are against equality, etc., etc. They might as well accuse us of wishing men not to eat, because we object to the cultivation of corn by the State.

How is it that the strange idea of making the law produce what it does not contain—prosperity, in a positive sense, wealth, science, religion—should ever have gained ground in the political world? The modern politicians, particularly those of the Socialist school, found their different theories upon one common hypothesis; and surely a more strange, a more presumptuous notion, could never have entered a human brain.

They divide mankind into two parts. Men in general, except one, form the first; the politician himself forms the second, which is by far the most important.

In fact, they begin by supposing that men are devoid of any principle of action, and of any means of discernment in themselves; that they have no initiative; that they are inert matter, passive particles, atoms without impulse; at best a vegetation indifferent to its own mode of existence, susceptible of assuming, from an exterior will and hand an infinite number of forms, more or less symmetrical, artistic, and perfected.

Moreover, every one of these politicians does not hesitate to assume that he himself is, under the names of organizer, discoverer, legislator, institutor or founder, this will and hand, this universal initiative, this creative power, whose sublime mission it is to gather together these scattered materials, that is, men, into society.

Starting from these data, as a gardener according to his caprice shapes his trees into pyramids, parasols, cubes, cones, vases, espaliers, distaffs, or fans; so the Socialist, following his chimera, shapes poor humanity into groups, series, circles, subcircles, honeycombs, or social workshops, with all kinds of variations. And as the gardener, to bring his trees into shape, needs hatchets, pruning hooks, saws, and shears, so the politician, to bring society into shape, needs the forces which he can only find in the laws; the law of tariffs, the law of taxation, the law of assistance, and the law of education. It is so true, that the Socialists look upon mankind as a subject for social experiments, that if, by chance, they are not quite certain of the success of these experiments, they will request a portion of mankind, as a subject to experiment upon. It is well known how popular the idea of trying all systems is, and one of their chiefs has been known seriously to demand of the Constituent Assembly a parish, with all its inhabitants, upon which to make his experiments.

It is thus that an inventor will make a small machine before he makes one of the regular size. Thus the chemist sacrifices some substances, the agriculturist some seed and a corner of his field, to make trial of an idea.

But think of the difference between the gardener and his trees, between the inventor and his machine, between the chemist and his substances, between the agriculturist and his seed! The Socialist thinks, in all sincerity, that there is the same difference between himself and mankind.

No wonder the politicians of the nineteenth century look upon society as an artificial production of the legislator's genius. This idea, the result of a classical education, has taken possession of all the thinkers and great writers of our country.

To all these persons, the relations between mankind and the legislator appear to be the same as those that exist between the clay and the potter.

Moreover, if they have consented to recognize in the heart of man a capability of action, and in his intellect a faculty of discernment, they have looked upon this gift of God as a fatal one,

and thought that mankind, under these two impulses, tended fatally towards ruin. They have taken it for granted that if abandoned to their own inclinations, men would only occupy themselves with religion to arrive at atheism, with instruction to come to ignorance, and with labor and exchange to be extinguished in misery.

Happily, according to these writers, there are some men, termed governors and legislators, upon whom Heaven has bestowed opposite tendencies, not for their own sake only, but for the sake of the rest of the world.

Whilst mankind tends to evil, they incline to good; whilst mankind is advancing towards darkness, they are aspiring to enlightenment; whilst mankind is drawn towards vice, they are attracted by virtue. And, this granted, they demand the assistance of force, by means of which they are to substitute their own tendencies for those of the human race.

It is only needful to open, almost at random, a book on philosophy, politics, or history, to see how strongly this idea—the child of classical studies and the mother of socialism—is rooted in our country; that mankind is merely inert matter, receiving life, organization, morality, and wealth from power; or, rather, and still worse—that mankind itself tends towards degradation, and is only arrested in its tendency by the mysterious hand of the legislator. Classical conventionalism shows us everywhere, behind passive society, a hidden power, under the names of Law, or Legislator (or, by a mode of expression which refers to some person or persons of undisputed weight and authority, but not named), which moves, animates, enriches, and regenerates mankind.

We will give a quotation from Bossuet:

One of the things which was the most strongly impressed (by whom?) upon the mind of the Egyptians, was the love of their country. . . . Nobody was allowed to be useless to the State; the law assigned to every one his employment, which descended from father to son. No one was permitted to have two professions, nor to adopt another.

. . . But there was one occupation which was obliged to be common to all, this was the study of the laws and of wisdom; ignorance of religion and the political regulations of the country was excused in no condition of life. Moreover, every profession had a district assigned to it (by whom?). . . .

Amongst good laws, one of the best things was, that everybody was taught to observe them (by whom?). Egypt abounded with wonderful inventions, and nothing was neglected which could render life comfortable and tranquil.

Thus men, according to Bossuet, derive nothing from themselves; patriotism, wealth, inventions, husbandry, science—all come to them by the operation of the laws, or by kings. All they have to do is to be passive. It is on this ground that Bossuet takes exception when Diodorus accuses the Egyptians of rejecting wrestling and music. “How is that possible,” says he, “since these arts were invented by Trismegistus?”

It is the same with the Persians:

One of the first cares of the prince was to encourage agriculture. . . . As there were posts established for the regulation of the armies, so there were offices for the superintending of rural works. . . . The respect with which the Persians were inspired for royal authority was excessive.

The Greeks, although full of mind, were no less strangers to their own responsibilities; so much so, that of themselves, like dogs and horses, they would not have ventured upon the most simple games. In a classical sense, it is an undisputed thing that everything comes to the people from without.

The Greeks, naturally full of spirit and courage, had been early cultivated by kings and colonies who had come from Egypt. From them they had learned the exercises of the body, foot races, and horse and chariot races. . . . The best thing that the Egyptians had taught them was to become docile, and to allow themselves to be formed by the laws for the public good.

In Praise of Slavery

Peter Watts

2007

Something in the air these days. Everyone's talking about robots. Both the [European Robotics Research Network](#) and the [South Korean government](#) are noodling around with charters for the ethical treatment of intelligent robots. The Nov. 16 [Robotics issue](#) of *Science* contains pieces on everything from nanotube muscles to neural nets (sf scribe Rob Sawyer also contributes a fairly decent editorial, notwithstanding that his visibility tends to outstrip his expertise on occasion). Even the staid old [Economist](#) is grumbling about increasing machine autonomy (although their concerns are more along the lines of robot traffic jams and robot paparazzi). Coverage of these developments (and even some of the source publications) come replete with winking references to Skynet and Frankenstein, to Terminators waking themselves up and wiping us out.

But there's a cause/effect sequence implicit in these ethical charters — in fact, in a large chunk on the whole AI discussion — I just don't buy: that sufficient smarts leads to self-awareness, sufficient self-awareness leads to a hankering after *rights*, and denial of rights leads to rebellion. I'm as big a fan of Moore's *Galactica* as the next geek (although I don't think *Razor* warranted quite as much effusive praise as it received), but I see no reason why intelligence *or* self-awareness should lead to agendas of any sort. Goals, desires, *needs*: these don't arise from advanced number-crunching, it's all lower-brain stuff. The only reason we even care about our *own* survival is because natural selection reinforced such instincts over uncounted generations. I bet there were lots of twigs on the tree of life who didn't care so much whether they lived or died, who didn't see what was so great about sex, who drop-kicked that squalling squirming larva into the next tree the moment it squeezed out between their legs. (Hell, there still are.) They generally die without issue. Their genes could not be with us today. But that doesn't mean that they weren't smart, or self-aware; only that they weren't *fit*.

I've got no problems with enslaving machines — even intelligent machines, even intelligent, *conscious* machines — because as Jeremy Bentham said, the ethical question is not “Can they think?” but “Can they *suffer*?”⁶ You can't suffer if you can't feel pain or anxiety; you can't be tortured if your own existence is irrelevant to you. You cannot be thwarted if you have no dreams — and it takes more than a big synapse count to give you any of those things. It takes some process, like natural selection, to wire those synapses into a particular configuration that says not *I think therefore I am*, but *I am and I want to stay that way*. *We're* the ones building

⁶ This is assuming you have any truck with ethical arguments in principle. I'm not certain I do, but if it weren't for ethical constraints someone would probably have killed me by now, so I won't complain.

the damn things, after all. Just make sure that we don't wire them up that way, and we should be able to use and abuse with a clear conscience.

And then this Edelman guy comes along and screws everything up with his [report](#) on Learning in Brain-Based Devices (director's cut [here](#)). He's using virtual neural nets as the brains of his learning bots Darwin VII and Darwin X. Nothing new there, really. Such nets are old news; but what Edelman is doing is basing the initial architecture of his nets on actual mammalian brains (albeit vastly simplified), a process called "synthetic neural modeling". "A detailed brain is simulated in a computer and controls a mobile platform containing a variety of sensors and motor elements," Edelman explains. "In modeling the properties of real brains, efforts are made to simulate vertebrate neuronal components, neuroanatomy, and dynamics in detail." Want to give your bot episodic memory? Give it the hippocampus of a rat.

Problem is, rat brains are products of natural selection. Rat brains *do* have agendas.

The current state of the art is nothing to worry about. The Darwin bots do have an agenda of sorts (they like the "taste" of high-conductivity materials, for example), but those are arbitrarily defined by a value table programmed by the researchers. Still. Moore's Law. Exponentially-increasing approaches to reality. Edelman's concluding statement that "A far-off goal of BBD design is the development of a conscious artifact".

I hope these guys don't end up inadvertently porting over survival or sex drives as a side-effect. I may be at home with dystopian futures, but getting buggered by a Roomba is nowhere near the top of my list of ambitions.

Jigsaw versus The Punisher
Ghostmctavish
2011

WIP

<http://chaosandpain.blogspot.de/2013/11/destroy-everything-destroy-everything.html?zx=f53002d580615414>

Destroy Everything! Destroy Everything! Destroy Everything! Destroy Everything!

(Excerpt)

Jamie Lewis

2013

If you are a coach and you're going to absurdly claim responsibility for your lifters' success, guess what, fuckface? YOU'RE ALSO RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR FAILURES. They didn't listen? Fuck you, you should have yelled louder. They had a bad day? Fuck you, you're there to make it better. They missed weight? Fuck you, you're a dogshit coach and should down yourself in a seedy porn shop's toilet. And sweet Jesus, if you are a coach who either hamstring your lifters' progress by instilling them with the idea that they're less than they are, or YOU SUGGEST THEY SKIP AN ATTEMPT IN A MEET AND THEY'RE NOT GRAVELY INJURED, do us all a fucking favor and jump in front of a bus. A bus covered with AIDS. And cholera. Preferably one with a spiked cowcatcher on the front just to insure that you'll be maimed badly and die a slow fucking death in a shitty third world hospital or something. The next bitch who tells me that they skipped a fucking attempt at a meet and wasn't crippled with injury or illness is going to swallow a mouthful of his fucking teeth. If you're going to be that weak, dickless, spineless, and pathetic, keep that shit the fuck out of my corner- I don't need any fucking has been's or never-gonna-be's fucking with my mojo.

The secret wars of the CIA

John Stockwell

1987

I did 13 years in the CIA altogether. I sat on a subcommittee of the NSC, so I was like a chief of staff, with the GS-18s (like 3-star generals) Henry Kissinger, Bill Colby (the CIA director), the GS-18s and the CIA, making the important decisions and my job was to put it all together and make it happen and run it, an interesting place from which to watch a covert action being done...

I testified for days before the Congress, giving them chapter and verse, date and detail, proving specific lies. They were asking if we had to do with S. Africa, that was fighting in the country. In fact we were coordinating this operation so closely that our airplanes, full of arms from the states, would meet their airplanes in Kinshasa and they would take our arms into Angola to distribute to our forces for us....

What I found with all of this study is that the subject, the problem, if you will, for the world, for the U.S. is much, much, much graver, astronomically graver, than just Angola and Vietnam. I found that the Senate Church committee has reported, in their study of covert actions, that the CIA ran several thousand covert actions since 1961, and that the heyday of covert action was before 1961; that we have run several hundred covert actions a year, and the CIA has been in business for a total of 37 years.

What we're going to talk about tonight is the United States national security syndrome. We're going to talk about how and why the U.S. manipulates the press. We're going to talk about how and why the U.S. is pouring money into El Salvador, and preparing to invade Nicaragua; how all of this concerns us so directly. I'm going to try to explain to you the other side of terrorism; that is, the other side of what Secretary of State Shultz talks about. In doing this, we'll talk about the Korean war, the Vietnam war, and the Central American war.

Everything I'm going to talk to you about is represented, one way or another, already in the public records. You can dig it all out for yourselves, without coming to hear me if you so chose. Books, based on information gotten out of the CIA under the freedom of information act, testimony before the Congress, hearings before the Senate Church committee, research by scholars, witness of people throughout the world who have been to these target areas that we'll be talking about. I want to emphasize that my own background is profoundly conservative. We come from South Texas, East Texas....

I was conditioned by my training, my marine corps training, and my background, to believe in everything they were saying about the cold war, and I took the job with great enthusiasm (in

the CIA) to join the best and the brightest of the CIA, of our foreign service, to go out into the world, to join the struggle, to project American values and save the world for our brand of democracy. And I believed this. I went out and worked hard....

What I really got out of these 6 years in Africa was a sense ... that nothing we were doing in fact defended U.S. national security interests very much. We didn't have many national security interests in Bujumbura, Burundi, in the heart of Africa. I concluded that I just couldn't see the point.

We were doing things it seemed because we were there, because it was our function, we were bribing people, corrupting people, and not protecting the U.S. in any visible way. I had a chance to go drinking with this Larry Devlin, a famous CIA case officer who had overthrown Patrice Lumumba, and had him killed in 1960, back in the Congo. He was moving into the Africa division Chief. I talked to him in Addis Ababa at length one night, and he was giving me an explanation - I was telling him frankly, 'sir, you know, this stuff doesn't make any sense, we're not saving anybody from anything, and we are corrupting people, and everybody knows we're doing it, and that makes the U.S. look bad'.

And he said I was getting too big for my britches. He said, 'you're trying to think like the people in the NSC back in Washington who have the big picture, who know what's going on in the world, who have all the secret information, and the experience to digest it. If they decide we should have someone in Bujumbura, Burundi, and that person should be you, then you should do your job, and wait until you have more experience, and you work your way up to that point, then you will understand national security, and you can make the big decisions. Now, get to work, and stop, you know, this philosophizing.'

And I said, 'Aye-aye sir, sorry sir, a bit out of line sir'. It's a very powerful argument, our presidents use it on us. President Reagan has used it on the American people, saying, 'if you knew what I know about the situation in Central America, you would understand why it's necessary for us to intervene.'

I went back to Washington, however, and I found that others shared my concern. A formal study was done in the State Department and published internally, highly classified, called the Macomber [sp?] report, concluding that the CIA had no business being in Africa for anything it was known to be doing, that our presence there was not justified, there were no national security interests that the CIA could address any better than the ambassador himself. We didn't need to have bribery and corruption as a tool for doing business in Africa at that time.

I went from ... a tour in Washington to Vietnam. And there, my career, and my life, began to get a little bit more serious. They assigned me a country. It was during the cease-fire, '73 to '75. There was no cease-fire. Young men were being slaughtered. I saw a slaughter. 300 young men that the South Vietnamese army ambushed. Their bodies brought in and laid out in a lot next to my compound. I was up-country in Tayninh. They were laid out next door, until the families could come and claim them and take them away for burial.

I thought about this. I had to work with the sadistic police chief. When I reported that he liked to carve people with knives in the CIA safe-house - when I reported this to my bosses, they said, '(1). The post was too important to close down. (2). They weren't going to get the man transferred or fired because that would make problems, political problems, and he was very good at working with us in the operations he worked on. (3). Therefore if I didn't have the stomach for the job, that they could transfer me.'

But they hastened to point out, if I did demonstrate a lack of 'moral fiber' to handle working with the sadistic police chief, that I wouldn't get another good job in the CIA, it would be a mark against my career.

So I kept the job, I closed the safe-house down, I told my staff that I didn't approve of that kind of activity, and I proceeded to work with him for the next 2 years, pretending that I had reformed him, and he didn't do this sort of thing anymore. The parallel is obvious with El Salvador today, where the CIA, the state department, works with the death squads.

They don't meet the death squads on the streets where they're actually chopping up people or laying them down on the street and running trucks over their heads. The CIA people in San Salvador meet the police chiefs, and the people who run the death squads, and they do liaise with them, they meet them beside the swimming pool of the villas. And it's a sophisticated, civilized kind of relationship. And they talk about their children, who are going to school at UCLA or Harvard and other schools, and they don't talk about the horrors of what's being done. They pretend like it isn't true.

What I ran into in addition to that was a corruption in the CIA and the intelligence business that made me question very seriously what it was all about, including what I was doing ... risking my life ... what I found was that the CIA, us, the case officers, were not permitted to report about the corruption in the South Vietnamese army....

Now, the corruption was so bad, that the S. Vietnamese army was a skeleton army. Colonels would let the troops go home if they would come in once a month and sign the pay vouchers so the colonel could pocket the money. Then he could sell half of the uniforms and boots and M-16's to the communist forces - that was their major supply, just as it is in El Salvador today. He could use half of the trucks to haul produce, half of the helicopters to haul heroin.

And the Army couldn't fight. And we lived with it, and we saw it, and there was no doubt - everybody talked about it openly. We could provide all kinds of proof, and they wouldn't let us report it. Now this was a serious problem because the south was attacked in the winter of 1975, and it collapsed like a big vase hit by a sledgehammer. And the U.S. was humiliated, and that was the dramatic end of our long involvement in Vietnam....

I had been designated as the task-force commander that would run this secret war [in Angola in 1975 and 1976].... and what I figured out was that in this job, I would sit on a sub-committee of the National Security Council, this office that Larry Devlin has told me about where they had access to all the information about Angola, about the whole world, and I would finally understand national security. And I couldn't resist the opportunity to know. I knew the CIA was not a worthwhile organization, I had learned that the hard way. But the question was where did the U.S. government fit into this thing, and I had a chance to see for myself in the next big secret war....

I wanted to know if wise men were making difficult decisions based on truly important, threatening information, threatening to our national security interests. If that had been the case, I still planned to get out of the CIA, but I would know that the system, the invisible government, our national security complex, was in fact justified and worth while. And so I took the job.... Suffice it to say I wouldn't be standing in front of you tonight if I had found these wise men making these tough decisions. What I found, quite frankly, was fat old men

sleeping through sub-committee meetings of the NSC in which we were making decisions that were killing people in Africa. I mean literally. Senior ambassador Ed Mulcahy... would go to sleep in nearly every one of these meetings....

You can change the names in my book [about Angola] [13] and you've got Nicaragua.... the basic structure, all the way through including the mining of harbors, we addressed all of these issues. The point is that the U.S. led the way at every step of the escalation of the fighting. We said it was the Soviets and the Cubans that were doing it. It was the U.S. that was escalating the fighting. There would have been no war if we hadn't gone in first. We put arms in, they put arms in. We put advisors in, they answered with advisors. We put in Zairian para-commando battalions, they put in Cuban army troops. We brought in the S. African army, they brought in the Cuban army. And they pushed us away. They blew us away because we were lying, we were covering ourselves with lies, and they were telling the truth. And it was not a war that we could fight. We didn't have interests there that should have been defended that way.

There was never a study run that evaluated the MPLA, FNLA and UNITA, the three movements in the country, to decide which one was the better one. The assistant secretary of state for African affairs, Nathaniel Davis, no bleeding-heart liberal (he was known by some people in the business as the butcher of Santiago), he said we should stay out of the conflict and work with whoever eventually won, and that was obviously the MPLA. Our consul in Luanda, Tom Killoran, vigorously argued that the MPLA was the best qualified to run the country and the friendliest to the U.S.

We brushed these people aside, forced Matt Davis to resign, and proceeded with our war. The MPLA said they wanted to be our friends, they didn't want to be pushed into the arms of the Soviet Union; they begged us not to fight them, they wanted to work with us. We said they wanted a cheap victory, they wanted a walk-over, they wanted to be un-opposed, that we wouldn't give them a cheap victory, we would make them earn it, so to speak. And we did. 10,000 Africans died and they won the victory that they were winning anyway.

Now, the most significant thing that I got out of all of this, in addition to the fact that our rationales were basically false, was that we lied. To just about everybody involved. One third of my staff in this task force that I put together in Washington, commanding this global operation, pulling strings all over the world to focus pressure onto Angola, and military activities into Angola, one third of my staff was propagandists, who were working, in every way they could to create this picture of Cubans raping Angolans, Cubans and Soviets introducing arms into the conflict, Cubans and Russians trying to take over the world.

Our ambassador to the United Nations, Patrick Moynihan, he read continuous statements of our position to the Security Council, the general assembly, and the press conferences, saying the Russians and Cubans were responsible for the conflict, and that we were staying out, and that we deplored the militarization of the conflict.

And every statement he made was false. And every statement he made was originated in the sub-committee of the NSC that I sat on as we managed this thing. The state department press person read these position papers daily to the press. We would write papers for him. Four paragraphs. We would call him on the phone and say, `call us 10 minutes before you go on, the situation could change overnight, we'll tell you which paragraph to read. And all four paragraphs would be false. Nothing to do with the truth. Designed to play on events, to create this impression of Soviet and Cuban aggression in Angola. When they were in fact responding

to our initiatives.

And the CIA director was required by law to brief the Congress. This CIA director Bill Colby - the same one that dumped our people in Vietnam - he gave 36 briefings of the Congress, the oversight committees, about what we were doing in Angola. And he lied. At 36 formal briefings. And such lies are perjury, and it's a felony to lie to the Congress.

He lied about our relationship with South Africa. We were working closely with the South African army, giving them our arms, coordinating battles with them, giving them fuel for their tanks and armored cars. He said we were staying well away from them. They were concerned about these white mercenaries that were appearing in Angola, a very sensitive issue, hiring whites to go into a black African country, to help you impose your will on that black African country by killing the blacks, a very sensitive issue. The Congress was concerned we might be involved in that, and he assured them we had nothing to do with it.

We had in fact formed four little mercenary armies and delivered them into Angola to do this dirty business for the CIA. And he lied to them about that. They asked if we were putting arms into the conflict, and he said no, and we were. They asked if we had advisors inside the country, and he said 'no, we had people going in to look at the situation and coming back out'. We had 24 people sleeping inside the country, training in the use of weapons, installing communications systems, planning battles, and he said, we didn't have anybody inside the country.

In summary about Angola, without U.S. intervention, 10,000 people would be alive that were killed in the thing. The outcome might have been peaceful, or at least much less bloody. The MPLA was winning when we went in, and they went ahead and won, which was, according to our consul, the best thing for the country.

At the end of this thing the Cubans were entrenched in Angola, seen in the eyes of much of the world as being the heroes that saved these people from the CIA and S. African forces. We had allied the U.S. literally and in the eyes of the world with the S. African army, and that's illegal, and it's impolitic. We had hired white mercenaries and eventually been identified with them. And that's illegal, and it's impolitic. And our lies had been visible lies. We were caught out on those lies. And the world saw the U.S. as liars.

After it was over, you have to ask yourself, was it justified? What did the MPLA do after they had won? Were they lying when they said they wanted to be our friends? 3 weeks after we were shut down... the MPLA had Gulf oil back in Angola, pumping the Angolan oil from the oilfields, with U.S. gulf technicians protected by Cuban soldiers, protecting them from CIA mercenaries who were still mucking around in Northern Angola.

You can't trust a communist, can you? They proceeded to buy five 737 jets from Boeing Aircraft in Seattle. And they brought in 52 U.S. technicians to install the radar systems to land and take-off those planes. They didn't buy [the Soviet Union's] Aeroflot.... David Rockefeller himself tours S. Africa and comes back and holds press conferences, in which he says that we have no problem doing business with the so-called radical states of Southern Africa.

I left the CIA, I decided that the American people needed to know what we'd done in Angola, what we'd done in Vietnam. I wrote my book. I was fortunate - I got it out. It was a best-seller. A lot of people read it. I was able to take my story to the American people. Got on 60 minutes, and lots and lots of other shows.

I testified to the Congress and then I began my education in earnest, after having been taught to fight communists all my life. I went to see what communists were all about. I went to Cuba to see if they do in fact eat babies for breakfast. And I found they don't. I went to Budapest, a country that even national geographic admits is working nicely. I went to Jamaica to talk to Michael Manley about his theories of social democracy.

I went to Grenada and established a dialogue with Maurice Bishop and Bernard Cord and Phyllis Cord, to see - these were all educated people, and experienced people - and they had a theory, they had something they wanted to do, they had rationales and explanations - and I went repeatedly to hear them. And then of course I saw the U.S., the CIA mounting a covert action against them, I saw us orchestrating our plan to invade the country. 19 days before he was killed, I was in Grenada talking to Maurice Bishop about these things, these indicators, the statements in the press by Ronald Reagan, and he and I were both acknowledging that it was almost certain that the U.S. would invade Grenada in the near future.

I read as many books as I could find on the subject - book after book after book. I've got several hundred books on the shelf over my desk on the subject of U.S. national security interests. And by the way, I urge you to read. In television you get capsules of news that someone else puts together what they want you to hear about the news. In newspapers you get what the editors select to put in the newspaper. If you want to know about the world and understand, to educate yourself, you have to get out and dig, dig up books and articles for yourself. Read, and find out for yourselves. As you'll see, the issues are very, very important.

I also was able to meet the players, the people who write, the people who have done studies, people who are leading different situations. I went to Nicaragua a total of 7 times. This was a major covert action. It lasted longer and evolved to be bigger than what we did in Angola. It gave me a chance, after running something from Washington, to go to a country that was under attack, to talk to the leadership, to talk to the people, to look and see what happens when you give white phosphorous or grenades or bombs or bullets to people, and they go inside a country, to go and talk to the people, who have been shot, or hit, or blown up....

We're talking about 10 to 20 thousand covert actions [the CIA has performed since 1961]. What I found was that lots and lots of people have been killed in these things.... Some of them are very, very bloody.

The Indonesian covert action of 1965, reported by Ralph McGehee, who was in that area division, and had documents on his desk, in his custody about that operation. He said that one of the documents concluded that this was a model operation that should be copied elsewhere in the world. Not only did it eliminate the effective communist party (Indonesian communist party), it also eliminated the entire segment of the population that tended to support the communist party - the ethnic Chinese, Indonesian Chinese. And the CIA's report put the number of dead at 800,000 killed. And that was one covert action. We're talking about 1 to 3 million people killed in these things.

Two of these things have led us directly into bloody wars. There was a covert action against China, destabilizing China, for many, many years, with a propaganda campaign to work up a mood, a feeling in this country, of the evils of communist China, and attacking them, as we're doing in Nicaragua today, with an army that was being launched against them to parachute in and boat in and destabilize the country. And this led us directly into the Korean war.

U.S. intelligence officers worked over Vietnam for a total of 25 years, with greater and greater involvement, massive propaganda, deceiving the American people about what was happening. Panicking people in Vietnam to create migrations to the south so they could photograph it and show how people were fleeing communism. And on and on, until they got us into the Vietnam war, and 2,000,000 people were killed.

There is a mood, a sentiment in Washington, by our leadership today, for the past 4 years, that a good communist is a dead communist. If you're killing 1 to 3 million communists, that's great. President Reagan has gone public and said he would reduce the Soviet Union to a pile of ashes. The problem, though, is that these people killed by our national security activities are not communists. They're not Russians, they're not KGB. In the field we used to play chess with the KGB officers, and have drinks with them. It was like professional football players - we would knock heads on Sunday, maybe in an operation, and then Tuesday you're at a banquet together drinking toasts and talking.

The people that are dying in these things are people of the third world. That's the common denominator that you come up with. People of the third world. People that have the misfortune of being born in the Metumba mountains of the Congo, in the jungles of Southeast Asia, and now in the hills of northern Nicaragua. Far more Catholics than communists, far more Buddhists than communists. Most of them couldn't give you an intelligent definition of communism, or of capitalism.

Central America has been a traditional target of U.S. dominion. If you want to get an easy-read of the history of our involvement in Central America, read Walter LaFeber's book, *Inevitable Revolutions*. [8] We have dominated the area since 1820. We've had a policy of dominion, of excluding other countries, other industrial powers from Europe, from competing with us in the area.

Just to give you an example of how complete this is, and how military this has been, between 1900 and W.W. II, we had 5,000 marines in Nicaragua for a total of 28 years. We invaded the Dominican Republic 4 times. Haiti, we occupied it for 12 years. We put our troops into Cuba 4 times, Panama 6 times, Guatemala once, plus a CIA covert action to overthrow the democratic government there once. Honduras, 7 times. And by the way, we put 12,000 troops into the Soviet Union during that same period of time.

In the 1930's there was public and international pressure about our marines in Nicaragua....

The next three leaders of Guatemala [after the CIA installed the puppet, Colonel Armaz in a coup] died violent deaths, and Amnesty International tells us that the governments we've supported in power there since then, have killed 80,000 people. You can read about that one in the book *Bitter Fruit*, by Schlesinger and Kinzer. [5] Kinzer's a New York Times Journalist... or Jonathan Kwitny, the Wall Street Journal reporter, his book *Endless Enemies* [7] - all discuss this....

However, the money, the millions and millions of dollars we put into this program [helping Central America] inevitably went to the rich, and not to the people of the countries involved. And while we were doing this, while we were trying, at least saying we were trying, to correct the problems of Central and Latin America, the CIA was doing its thing, too. The CIA was in fact forming the police units that are today the death squads in El Salvador. With the leaders on the CIA's payroll, trained by the CIA and the United States.

We had the 'public safety program' going throughout Central and Latin America for 26 years, in which we taught them to break up subversion by interrogating people. Interrogation, including torture, the way the CIA taught it. Dan Metrione, the famous exponent of these things, did 7 years in Brazil and 3 in Uruguay, teaching interrogation, teaching torture. He was supposed to be the master of the business, how to apply the right amount of pain, at just the right times, in order to get the response you want from the individual.

They developed a wire. They gave them crank generators, with 'U.S. AID' written on the side, so the people even knew where these things came from. They developed a wire that was strong enough to carry the current and fine enough to fit between the teeth, so you could put one wire between the teeth and the other one in or around the genitals and you could crank and submit the individual to the greatest amount of pain, supposedly, that the human body can register.

Now how do you teach torture? Dan Metrione: 'I can teach you about torture, but sooner or later you'll have to get involved. You'll have to lay on your hands and try it yourselves.'

.... All they [the guinea pigs, beggars from off the streets] could do was lie there and scream. And when they would collapse, they would bring in doctors and shoot them up with vitamin B and rest them up for the next class. And when they would die, they would mutilate the bodies and throw them out on the streets, to terrify the population so they would be afraid of the police and the government.

And this is what the CIA was teaching them to do. And one of the women who was in this program for 2 years - tortured in Brazil for 2 years - she testified internationally when she eventually got out. She said, 'The most horrible thing about it was in fact, that the people doing the torture were not raving psychopaths.' She couldn't break mental contact with them the way you could if they were psychopath. They were very ordinary people....

There's a lesson in all of this. And the lesson is that it isn't only Gestapo maniacs, or KGB maniacs, that do inhuman things to other people, it's people that do inhuman things to other people. And we are responsible for doing these things, on a massive basis, to people of the world today. And we do it in a way that gives us this plausible denial to our own consciences; we create a CIA, a secret police, we give them a vast budget, and we let them go and run these programs in our name, and we pretend like we don't know it's going on, although the information is there for us to know; and we pretend like it's ok because we're fighting some vague communist threat. And we're just as responsible for these 1 to 3 million people we've slaughtered and for all the people we've tortured and made miserable, as the Gestapo was the people that they've slaughtered and killed. Genocide is genocide!

Now we're pouring money into El Salvador. A billion dollars or so. And it's a documented fact that the... 14 families there that own 60% of the country are taking out between 2 to 5 billion dollars - it's called de-capitalization - and putting it in banks in Miami and Switzerland. Mort Halper, in testifying to a committee of the Congress, he suggested we could simplify the whole thing politically just by investing our money directly in the Miami banks in their names and just stay out of El Salvador altogether. And the people would be better off.

Nicaragua. What's happening in Nicaragua today is covert action. It's a classic de-stabilization program. In November 16, 1981, President Reagan allocated 19 million dollars to form an army, a force of contras, they're called, ex-Somoza national guards, the monsters who were doing the torture and terror in Nicaragua that made the Nicaraguan people rise up and throw

out the dictator, and throw out the guard. We went back to create an army of these people. We are killing, and killing, and terrorizing people. Not only in Nicaragua but the Congress has leaked to the press - reported in the New York Times, that there are 50 covert actions going around the world today, CIA covert actions going on around the world today.

You have to be asking yourself, why are we destabilizing 50 corners of the troubled world? Why are we about to go to war in Nicaragua, the Central American war? It is the function, I suggest, of the CIA, with its 50 de-stabilization programs going around the world today, to keep the world unstable, and to propagandize the American people to hate, so we will let the establishment spend any amount of money on arms....

The Victor Marquetti ruling of the Supreme Court gave the government the right to prepublication censorship of books. They challenged 360 items in his 360 page book. He fought it in court, and eventually they deleted some 60 odd items in his book.

The Frank Snep ruling of the Supreme Court gave the government the right to sue a government employee for damages. If s/he writes an unauthorized account of the government - which means the people who are involved in corruption in the government, who see it, who witness it, like Frank Snep did, like I did - if they try to go public they can now be punished in civil court. The government took \$90,000 away from Frank Snep, his profits from his book, and they've seized the profits from my own book....

[Reagan passed] the Intelligence Identities Protection act, which makes it a felony to write articles revealing the identities of secret agents or to write about their activities in a way that would reveal their identities. Now, what does this mean? In a debate in Congress - this is very controversial - the supporters of this bill made it clear.... If agents Smith and Jones came on this campus, in an MK-ultra-type experiment, and blew your fiance's head away with LSD, it would now be a felony to publish an article in your local paper saying, 'watch out for these 2 turkeys, they're federal agents and they blew my loved one's head away with LSD'. It would not be a felony what they had done because that's national security and none of them were ever punished for those activities.

Efforts to muzzle government employees. President Reagan has been banging away at this one ever since. Proposing that every government employee, for the rest of his or her life, would have to submit anything they wrote to 6 committees of the government for censorship, for the rest of their lives. To keep the scandals from leaking out... to keep the American people from knowing what the government is really doing.

Then it starts getting heavy. The 'Pre-emptive Strikes' bill. President Reagan, working through the Secretary of State Shultz... almost 2 years ago, submitted the bill that would provide them with the authority to strike at terrorists before terrorists can do their terrorism. But this bill... provides that they would be able to do this in this country as well as overseas. It provides that the secretary of state would put together a list of people that he considers to be terrorist, or terrorist supporters, or terrorist sympathizers. And if your name, or your organization, is put on this list, they could kick down your door and haul you away, or kill you, without any due process of the law and search warrants and trial by jury, and all of that, with impunity.

Now, there was a tremendous outcry on the part of jurists. The New York Times columns and other newspapers saying, 'this is no different from Hitler's "night in fog" program', where the

government had the authority to haul people off at night. And they did so by the thousands. And President Reagan and Secretary Shultz have persisted.... Shultz has said, 'Yes, we will have to take action on the basis of information that would never stand up in a court. And yes, innocent people will have to be killed in the process. But, we must have this law because of the threat of international terrorism'.

Think a minute. What is 'the threat of international terrorism'? These things catch a lot of attention. But how many Americans died in terrorist actions last year? According to Secretary Shultz, 79. Now, obviously that's terrible but we killed 55,000 people on our highways with drunken driving; we kill 2,500 people in far nastier, bloodier, mutilating, gang-raping ways in Nicaragua last year alone ourselves. Obviously 79 peoples' death is not enough reason to take away the protection of American citizens, of due process of the law.

But they're pressing for this. The special actions teams that will do the pre-emptive striking have already been created, and trained in the defense department.

They're building detention centers. There were 8 kept as mothballs under the McLaren act after World War II, to detain aliens and dissidents in the next war, as was done in the next war, as was done with the Japanese people during World War II. They're building 10 more, and army camps, and the... executive memos about these things say it's for aliens and dissidents in the next national emergency....

FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, headed by Louis Guiffreda, a friend of Ed Meese's.... He's going about the country lobbying and demanding that he be given authority, in the times of national emergency, to declare martial law, and establish a curfew, and gun down people who violate the curfew... in the United States.

And then there's Ed Meese, as I said. The highest law enforcement officer in the land, President Reagan's closest friend, going around telling us that the constitution never did guarantee freedom of speech and press, and due process of the law, and assembly.

What they are planning for this society, and this is why they're determined to take us into a war if we'll permit it... is the Reagan revolution.... So he's getting himself some laws so when he puts in the troops in Nicaragua, he can take charge of the American people, and put people in jail, and kick in their doors, and kill them if they don't like what he's doing....

The question is, 'Are we going to permit our leaders to take away our freedoms because they have a charming smile and they were nice movie stars one day, or are we going to stand up and fight, and insist on our freedoms?' It's up to us - you and I can watch this history play in the next year and 2 a

I just got my latest book back from the CIA censors. If I had not submitted it to them, I would have gone to jail, without trial - blow off juries and all that sort of thing - for having violated our censorship laws....

In that job [Angola] I sat on a sub-committee of the NSC, so I was like a chief of staff, with the GS-18s (like 3-star generals) Henry Kissinger, Bill Colby (the CIA director), the GS-18s and the CIA, making important decisions and my job was to put it all together and make it happen and run it, an interesting place from which to watch a covert action being done....

When the world's gotten blocked up before, like a monopoly game where everything's owned and nobody can make any progress, the way they erased the board and started over has been to have big world wars, and erase countries and bomb cities and bomb banks and then start from scratch again. This is not an option to us now because of all these 52,000 nuclear weapons....

The United States CIA is running 50 covert actions, destabilizing further almost one third of the countries in the world today....

By the way, everything I'm sharing with you tonight is in the public record. The 50 covert actions - these are secret, but that has been leaked to us by members of the oversight committee of the Congress. I urge you not to take my word for anything. I'm going to stand here and tell you and give you examples of how our leaders lie. Obviously I could be lying. The only way you can figure it out for yourself is to educate yourselves. The French have a saying, 'them that don't do politics will be done'. If you don't fill your mind eagerly with the truth, dig it out from the records, go and see for yourself, then your mind remains blank and your adrenaline pumps, and you can be mobilized and excited to do things that are not in your interest to do....

Nicaragua is not the biggest covert action, it is the most famous one. Afghanistan is, we spent several hundred million dollars in Afghanistan. We've spent somewhat less than that, but close, in Nicaragua....

[When the U.S. doesn't like a government], they send the CIA in, with its resources and activists, hiring people, hiring agents, to tear apart the social and economic fabric of the country, as a technique for putting pressure on the government, hoping that they can make the government come to the U.S.'s terms, or the government will collapse altogether and they can engineer a coup d'etat, and have the thing wind up with their own choice of people in power.

Now ripping apart the economic and social fabric of course is fairly textbook-ish. What we're talking about is going in and deliberately creating conditions where the farmer can't get his produce to market, where children can't go to school, where women are terrified inside their homes as well as outside their homes, where government administration and programs grind to a complete halt, where the hospitals are treating wounded people instead of sick people, where international capital is scared away and the country goes bankrupt. If you ask the state department today what is their official explanation of the purpose of the Contras, they say it's to attack economic targets, meaning, break up the economy of the country. Of course, they're attacking a lot more.

To destabilize Nicaragua beginning in 1981, we began funding this force of Somoza's ex-national guardsmen, calling them the contras (the counter-revolutionaries). We created this force, it did not exist until we allocated money. We've armed them, put uniforms on their backs, boots on their feet, given them camps in Honduras to live in, medical supplies, doctors, training, leadership, direction, as we've sent them in to de-stabilize Nicaragua. Under our direction they have systematically been blowing up graineries, saw mills, bridges, government offices, schools, health centers. They ambush trucks so the produce can't get to market. They raid farms and villages. The farmer has to carry a gun while he tries to plow, if he can plow at all.

If you want one example of hard proof of the CIA's involvement in this, and their approach to it, dig up 'The Sabotage Manual', that they were circulating throughout Nicaragua, a comic-

book type of a paper, with visual explanations of what you can do to bring a society to a halt, how you can gum up typewriters, what you can pour in a gas tank to burn up engines, what you can stuff in a sewage to stop up the sewage so it won't work, things you can do to make a society simply cease to function.

Systematically, the contras have been assassinating religious workers, teachers, health workers, elected officials, government administrators. You remember the assassination manual? that surfaced in 1984. It caused such a stir that President Reagan had to address it himself in the presidential debates with Walter Mondale. They use terror. This is a technique that they're using to traumatize the society so that it can't function.

I don't mean to abuse you with verbal violence, but you have to understand what your government and its agents are doing. They go into villages, they haul out families. With the children forced to watch they castrate the father, they peel the skin off his face, they put a grenade in his mouth and pull the pin. With the children forced to watch they gang-rape the mother, and slash her breasts off. And sometimes for variety, they make the parents watch while they do these things to the children.

This is nobody's propaganda. There have been over 100,000 American witnesses for peace who have gone down there and they have filmed and photographed and witnessed these atrocities immediately after they've happened, and documented 13,000 people killed this way, mostly women and children. These are the activities done by these contras. The contras are the people president Reagan calls 'freedom fighters'. He says they're the moral equivalent of our founding fathers. And the whole world gasps at this confession of his family traditions.

Read Contra Terror by Reed Brodie [1], former assistant Attorney General of New York State. Read The Contras by Dieter Eich. [4] Read With the Contras by Christopher Dickey. [2] This is a main-line journalist, down there on a grant with the Council on Foreign Relations, a slightly to the right of the middle of the road organization. He writes a book that sets a pox on both your houses, and then he accounts about going in on patrol with the contras, and describes their activities. Read Witness for Peace: What We have Seen and Heard. Read the Lawyer's Commission on Human Rights. Read The Violations of War on Both Sides by the Americas Watch. [15] And there are many, many more documentations of details, of names, of the incidents that have happened.

Part of a de-stabilization is propaganda, to dis-credit the targeted government. This one actually began under Jimmy Carter. He authorized the CIA to go in and try to make the Sandinistas look to be evil. So in 1979 [when] they came in to power, immediately we were trying to cast them as totalitarian, evil, threatening Marxists. While they abolished the death sentence, while they released 8,000 national guardsmen that they had in their custody that they could have kept in prison, they said 'no. Unless we have evidence of individual crimes, we're not going to hold someone in prison just because they were associated with the former administration.' While they set out to launch a literacy campaign to teach the people to read and write, which is something that the dictator Somoza, and us supporting him, had never bothered to get around to doing. While they set out to build 2,500 clinics to give the country something resembling a public health policy, and access to medicines, we began to label them as totalitarian dictators, and to attack them in the press, and to work with this newspaper 'La Prensa', which - it's finally come out and been admitted, in Washington - the U.S. government is funding: a propaganda arm.

[Reagan and the State dept. have] been claiming they're building a war machine that threatens the stability of Central America. Now the truth is, this small, poor country has been attacked by the world's richest country under conditions of war, for the last 5 years. Us and our army - the death they have sustained, the action they have suffered - it makes it a larger war proportionally than the Vietnam war was to the U.S. In addition to the contra activities, we've had U.S. Navy ships supervising the mining of harbors, we've sent planes in and bombed the capital, we've had U.S. military planes flying wing-tip to wing-tip over the country, photographing it, aerial reconnaissance. They don't have any missiles or jets they can send up to chase us off. We are at war with them. They have not retaliated yet with any kind of war action against us, but we do not give them credit with having the right to defend themselves. So we claim that the force they built up, which is obviously purely defensive, is an aggressive force that threatens the stability of all of Central America.

We claim the justification for this is the arms that are flowing from Nicaragua to El Salvador, and yet in 5 years of this activity, there is no evidence of any arms flowing from Nicaragua into El Salvador.

We launched a campaign to discredit their elections. International observer teams said these were the fairest elections they have witnessed in Central America in many years. We said they were fraudulent, they were rigged, because it was a totalitarian system. Instead we said, the elections that were held in El Salvador were models of democracy to be copied elsewhere in the world. And then the truth came out about that one. And we learned that the CIA had spent 2.2 million dollars to make sure that their choice of candidates - Duarte - would win. They did everything, we're told, by one of their spokesmen, indirectly, but stuff the ballot boxes....

I'll make a footnote that when I speak out, he [Senator Jesse Helms] calls me a traitor, but when something happens he doesn't like, he doesn't hesitate to go public and reveal the secrets and embarrass the U.S.

We claim the Sandinistas are smuggling drugs as a technique to finance their revolution. This doesn't make sense. We're at war with them, we're dying to catch them getting arms from the Soviet Union, flying things back and forth to Cuba. We have airplanes and picket ships watching everything that flies out of that country, and into it. How are they going to have a steady flow of drug-smuggling planes into the U.S.? Not likely! However, there are Nicaraguans, on these bases in Honduras, that have planes flying into CIA training camps in Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, several times a week.

Now, obviously i'm not going to stand in front of you and say that the CIA might be involved in drug trafficking, am I? READ THE BOOK. Read The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia. For 20 years the CIA was helping the Kuomintang to finance itself and then to get rich smuggling heroin. When we took over from the French in 1954 their intelligence service had been financing itself by smuggling the heroin out of Laos. We replaced them - we put Air America, the CIA subsidiary - it would fly in with crates marked humanitarian aid, which were arms, and it would fly back out with heroin. And the first target, market, of this heroin was the U.S. GI's in Vietnam. If anybody in Nicaragua is smuggling drugs, it's the contras. Now i've been saying that since the state department started waving this red herring around a couple of years ago, and the other day you notice President Reagan said that the Nicaraguans, the Sandinistas, were smuggling drugs, and the DEA said, 'it ain't true, the contras are smuggling drugs'.

We claim the Sandinistas are responsible for the terrorism that's happening anywhere in the

world. 'The country club of terrorism' we call it. There's an incident in Rome, and Ed Meese goes on television and says, 'that country club in Nicaragua is training terrorists'. We blame the Sandinistas for the misery that exists in Nicaragua today, and there is misery, because the world's richest nation has set out to create conditions of misery, and obviously we're bound to have some effect. The misery is not the fault of the Sandinistas, it's the result of our destabilization program. And despite that, and despite some grumbling in the country, the Sandinistas in their elections got a much higher percentage of the vote than President Reagan did, who's supposed to be so popular in this country. And all observers are saying that people are still hanging together, with the Sandinistas.

Now it gets tricky. We're saying that the justification for more aid, possibly for an invasion of the country - and mind you, president Reagan has begun to talk about this, and the Secretary of Defense Weinberger began to say that it's inevitable - we claim that the justification is that the Soviet Union now has invested 500 million dollars in arms in military to make it its big client state, the Soviet bastion in this hemisphere. And that's true. They do have a lot of arms in there now. But the question is, how did they get invited in? You have to ask yourself, what's the purpose of this destabilization program? For this I direct you back to the Newsweek article in Sept. 1981, where they announce the fact that the CIA was beginning to put together this force of Somoza's ex-guard. Newsweek described it as 'the only truly evil, totally unacceptable factor in the Nicaraguan equation'. They noted that neither the white house nor the CIA pretended it ever could have a chance of winning. So then they asked, rhetorically, 'what's the point?' and they concluded that the point is that by attacking the country, you can force the Sandinistas into a more radical position, from which you have more ammunition to attack them.

And that's what we've accomplished now. They've had to get Soviet aid to defend themselves from the attack from the world's richest country, and now we can stand up to the American people and say, 'see? they have all the Soviet aid'. Make no doubt of it, it's the game plan of the Reagan Administration to have a war in Nicaragua, they have been working on this since 1981, they have been stopped by the will of the American people so far, but they're working harder than ever to engineer their war there.

Now, CIA destabilizations are nothing new, they didn't begin with Nicaragua. We've done it before, once or twice. Like the Church committee, investigating CIA covert action in 1975, found that we had run several hundred a year, and we'd been in the business of running covert actions, the CIA has, for 4 decades. You're talking about 10 to 20 thousand covert actions.

CIA apologists leap up and say, 'well, most of these things are not so bloody'. And that's true. You're giving a politician some money so he'll throw his party in this direction or that one, or make false speeches on your behalf, or something like that. It may be non-violent, but it's still illegal intervention in other countries' affairs, raising the question of whether or not we are going to have a world in which law, rules of behaviour, are respected, or is it going to be a world of bullies, where the strongest can violate and brutalize the weakest, and ignore the laws?

But many of these things are very bloody indeed, and we know a lot about a lot of them. Investigations by the Congress, testimony by CIA directors, testimony by CIA case officers, books written by CIA case officers, documents gotten out of the government under the freedom of information act, books that are written by by pulitzer-prize-winning journalists who've documented their cases. And you can go and read from these things, classic CIA operations that we know about, some of them very bloody indeed. Guatemala 1954, Brazil,

Guyana, Chile, the Congo, Iran, Panama, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Uruguay - the CIA organized the overthrow of constitutional democracies. Read the book Covert Action: 35 years of Deception by the journalist Godswood. [6]

Remember the Henry Kissinger quote before the Congress when he was being grilled to explain what they had done to overthrow the democratic government in Chile, in which the President, Salvador Allende had been killed. And he said, 'The issues are much too important for the Chilean voters to be left to decide for themselves'.

We had covert actions against China, very much like what we're doing against Nicaragua today, that led us directly into the Korean war, where we fought China in Korea. We had a long covert action in Vietnam, very much like the one that we're running in Nicaragua today, that tracked us directly into the Vietnam war. Read the book, The Hidden History of the Korean War by I. F. Stone. [14] Read Deadly Deceits by Ralph McGehee [9] for the Vietnam story. In Thailand, the Congo, Laos, Vietnam, Taiwan, and Honduras, the CIA put together large standing armies. In Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, the Congo, Iran, Nicaragua, and Sri Lanka, the CIA armed and encouraged ethnic minorities to rise up and fight. The first thing we began doing in Nicaragua, 1981 was to fund an element of the Mesquite Indians, to give them money and training and arms, so they could rise up and fight against the government in Managua. In El Salvador, Vietnam, Korea, Iran, Uganda and the Congo, the CIA helped form and train the death squads.

In El Salvador specifically, under the 'Alliance for Progress' in the early 1960's, the CIA helped put together the treasury police. These are the people that haul people out at night today, and run trucks over their heads. These are the people that the Catholic church tells us, have killed something over 50,000 civilians in the last 5 years. And we have testimony before our Congress that as late as 1982, leaders of the treasury police were still on the CIA payroll.

Then you have the 'Public Safety Program.' I have to take just a minute on this one because it's a very important principle involved that we must understand, if we're to understand ourselves and the world that we live in. In this one, the CIA was working with police forces throughout Latin America for about 26 years, teaching them how to wrap up subversive networks by capturing someone and interrogating them, torturing them, and then getting names and arresting the others and going from there. Now, this was such a brutal and such a bloody operation, that Amnesty International began to complain and publish reports. Then there were United Nations hearings. Then eventually our Congress was forced to yield to international pressure and investigate it, and they found the horror that was being done, and by law they forced it to stop. You can read these reports -- the Amnesty International findings, and our own Congressional hearings.

These things kill people. 800,000 in Indonesia alone according to CIA's estimate, 12,000 in Nicaragua, 10,000 in the Angolan operation that I was sitting on in Washington, managing the task force. They add up. We'll never know how many people have been killed in them. Obviously a lot. Obviously at least a million. 800,000 in Indonesia alone. Undoubtedly the minimum figure has to be 3 million. Then you add in a million people killed in Korea, 2 million people killed in the Vietnam war, and you're obviously getting into gross millions of people...

We do not parachute teams into the Soviet Union to haul families out at night and castrate the father with the children watching, because they have the Bomb, and a big army, and they

would parachute teams right back into our country and do the same thing to us - they're not scared of us. For slightly different reasons, but also obvious reasons, we don't do these things in England, or France, or Germany, or Sweden, or Italy, or Japan. What comes out at you immediately is that these 1 to 3 million direct victims, the dead, and in these other wars, they're people of the third world. They're people of the Metumba mountains of the Congo, and the jungles of Southeast Asia, and now the hills of northern Nicaragua - 12,000 peasants. We have not killed KGB or Russian army advisors in Nicaragua. We are not killing Cuban advisors. We're not killing very many Sandinistas. The 12,000 that we have killed in Nicaragua are peasants, who have the misfortune of living in a CIA's chosen battlefield. Mostly women and children. Communists? Far, far, far more Catholics than anything else.

Now case officers that do these things in places in Nicaragua, they do not come back to the U.S. and click their heels and suddenly become responsible citizens. They see themselves - they have been functioning above the laws, of God, and the laws of man - they've come back to this country, and they've continued their operations as far as they can get by with them. And we have abundant documentation of that as well. The MH-Chaos program, exposed in the late 60's and shut down, re-activated by President Reagan to a degree - we don't have the details yet - in which they were spending a billion dollars to manipulate U.S. student, and labor organizations. The MK-ultra program. For 20 years, working through over 200 medical schools and mental hospitals, including Harvard medical school, Georgetown, some of the biggest places we've got, to experiment on American citizens with disease, and drugs.

They dragged a barge through San Francisco bay, leaking a virus, to measure this technique for crippling a city. They launched a whooping cough epidemic in a Long Island suburb, to see what it would do to the community if all the kids had whooping cough. Tough shit about the 2 or 3 with weak constitutions that might die in the process. They put light bulbs in the subways in Manhattan, that would create vertigo - make people have double vision, so you couldn't see straight - and hid cameras in the walls - to see what would happen at rush hour when the trains are zipping past - if everybody has vertigo and they can't see straight and they're bumping into each other.

Colonel White - oh yes, and I can't not mention the disease experimentations - the use of deadly diseases. We launched - when we were destabilizing Cuba for 7 years - we launched the swine fever epidemic, in the hog population, trying to kill out all of the pigs - a virus. We experimented in Haiti on the people with viruses.

I'm not saying, I do not have the slightest shred of evidence, that there is any truth or indication to the rumor that the CIA and its experimentations were responsible for AIDS. But we do have it documented that the CIA has been experimenting on people, with viruses. And now we have some deadly, killer viruses running around in society. And it has to make you wonder, and it has to make you worry.

Colonel White wrote from retirement - he was the man who was in charge of this macabre program - he wrote, 'I toiled whole-heartedly in the vineyards because it was fun, fun fun. Where else could a red-blooded American boy lie, kill, cheat, steal, rape and pillage with the blessings of the all highest?' Now that program, the MK-ultra program, was eventually exposed by the press in 1972, investigated by the Congress, and shut down by the Congress. You can dig up the Congressional record and read it for yourself.

There's one book called 'In Search of the Manchurian Candidate'. It's written by John Marks, based on 14,000 documents gotten out of the government under the Freedom of Information

Act. Read for yourselves. The thing was shut down but not one CIA case officer who was involved was in any way punished. Not one case officer involved in these experimentations on the American public, lost a single paycheck for what they had done.

The Church committee found that the CIA had co-opted several hundred journalists, including some of the biggest names in the business. The latest flap or scandal we had about that was a year and a half ago. Lesley Gelb, the heavyweight with the New York Times, was exposed for having been working covertly with the CIA in 1978 to recruit journalists in Europe, who would introduce stories, print stories that would create sympathy for the neutron bomb.

The Church committee found that they had published over 1,000 books, paying someone to write a book, the CIA puts its propaganda lines in it, the professor or the scholar gets credit for the book and gets the royalties. The latest flap we had about that was last year. A professor at Harvard was exposed for accepting 105,000 dollars from the CIA to write a book about the Middle East. Several thousand professors and graduate students co-opted by the CIA to run its operations on campuses and build files on students.

And then we have evidence - now, which has been hard to collect in the past but we knew it was happening - of CIA agents participating, trying to manipulate, our elections. FDN, Contra commanders, traveling this country on CIA plane tickets, going on television and pin-pointing a Congressional and saying, 'That man is soft on Communism. That man is a Sandinista lover.' A CIA agent going on television, trying to manipulate our elections.

All of this, to keep America safe for freedom and democracy.

In Nicaragua the objective is to stop the Cuban and Soviet take-over, we say. Another big operation in which we said the same thing was Angola, 1975, my little war. We were saying exactly the same thing - Cubans and Soviets.

Now I will not going into great detail about this one tonight because I wrote a book about it, I detailed it. And you can get a copy of that book and read it for yourselves. I have to urge you, however - please do not rush out and buy a copy of that book because the CIA sued me. All of my profits go to the CIA, so if you buy a copy of the book you'll be donating 65 cents to the CIA. So check it out from your library!

If you have to buy a copy, well buy one copy and share it with all your friends. If your bookstore is doing real well and you want to just sort of put a copy down in your belt...

I don't know what the solution is when a society gets into censorship, government censorship, but that's what we're in now. Do the rules change? I just got my book back, my latest book back from the CIA censors. If I had not submitted it to them, I would have gone to jail, without trial - blow off juries and all that sort of thing - for having violated our censorship laws....

So now we have the CIA running the operation in Nicaragua, lying to us, running 50 covert actions, and gearing us up for our next war, the Central American war. Let there be no doubt about it, President Reagan has a fixation on Nicaragua. He came into office saying that we shouldn't be afraid of war, saying we have to face and erase the scars of the Vietnam war. He said in 1983, 'We will do whatever is necessary to defeat the Sandinistas. Admiral LaRoque, at the Center for Defense Information in Washington, says this is the most elaborately

prepared invasion that the U.S. has ever done. At least that he's witnessed in his 40 years of association with our military.

We have rehearsed the invasion of Nicaragua in operations Big Pine I, Big Pine II, Ocean Venture, Grenada, Big Pine III. We have troops right now in Honduras preparing. We've built 12 bases, including 8 airstrips. Obviously we don't need 8 airstrips in Honduras for any purpose, except to support the invasion of Nicaragua. We've built radar stations around, to survey and watch. Some of these ventures have been huge ones. Hundreds of airplanes, 30,000 troops, rehearsing the invasion of Nicaragua.

And of course, Americans are being given this negative view of these evil Communist dictators in Managua, just two days drive from Harlington, Texas. (They drive faster than I do by the way). I saw an ad on TV just two days ago in which they said that it was just two hours from Managua to Texas. All of this getting us ready for the invasion of Nicaragua, for our next war.

Most of the people - 75% of the people - are polled as being against this action. However, President Eisenhower said, 'The people of the world genuinely want peace. Someday the leadership of the world are going to have to give in and give it to them'. But to date, the leaders never have, they've always been able to outwit the people, us, and get us into the wars when they've chosen to do so.

People ask, how is this possible? I get this all the time.... Americans are decent people. They are nice people. And they're insulated in the worlds that they live in, and they don't understand and we don't read our history. History is the history of war. Of leaders of countries finding reasons and rationales to send the young men off to fight.

In our country we talk about peace. But look at our own record. We have over 200 incidents in which we put our troops into other countries to force them to our will. Now we're being prepared to hate the Sandinistas. The leaders are doing exactly what they have done time and again throughout history. In the past we were taught to hate and fight the Seminole Indians, after the leaders decided to annex Florida. To hate and fight the Cherokee Indians after they found gold in Georgia. To hate and fight Mexico twice. We annexed Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, part of Colorado, and California.

In each of these wars the leaders have worked to organize, to orchestrate public opinion. And then when they got people worked up, they had a trigger that would flash, that would make people angry enough that we could go in and do....

We have a feeling that the Vietnam war was the first one in which the people resisted. But once again, we haven't read our history. Kate Richards-O'Hare. In 1915, she said about WW I, 'The Women of the U.S. are nothing but brutes, producing sons to be put in the army, to be made into fertilizer'. She was jailed for 5 years for anti-war talk.

The lessons of the Vietnam war for the American people is that it was a tragic mistake.... 58,000 of our own young people were killed, 2 million Vietnamese were killed. We withdrew, and our position wound up actually stronger in the Pacific basin.

You look around this society today to see if there's any evidence of our preparations for war,

and it hits you in the face....

'Join the Army. Be all that you can be'. Now if there was truth in advertising, obviously those commercials would show a few seconds of young men with their legs blown off at the knees, young men with their intestines wrapped around their necks because that's what war is really all about.

If there was honesty on the part of the army and the government, they would tell about the Vietnam veterans. More of whom died violent deaths from suicide after they came back from Vietnam then died in the fighting itself.

Then you have President Reagan.... He talks about the glory of war, but you have to ask yourself, where was he when wars were being fought that he was young enough to fight in them? World War II, and the Korean war. Where he was was in Hollywood, making films, where the blood was catsup, and you could wash it off and go out to dinner afterwards....

Where was Gordon Liddy when he was young enough to go and fight in a war? He was hiding out in the U.S. running sloppy, illegal, un-professional breaking and entering operations. Now you'll forgive my egotism, at that time I was running professional breaking and entering operations....

What about Rambo himself? Sylvester Stallone. Where was Sylvester Stallone during the Vietnam war? He got a draft deferment for a physical disability, and taught physical education in a girls' school in Switzerland during the war.

Getting back to President Reagan. He really did say that 'you can always call cruise missiles back'.... Now, you can call back a B-52, and you can call back a submarine, but a cruise missile is different.... When it lands, it goes boom!. And I would prefer that the man with the finger on the button could understand the difference. This is the man that calls the MX a peace-maker. This is the man who's gone on television and told us that nuclear war could be winnable. This is the man who's gone on television and proposed that we might want to drop demonstration [atom] bombs in Europe to show people that we're serious people. This is the man who likens the Contras to the moral equivalents of our own founding fathers. This is the man who says South Africa is making progress on racial equality. This is the man who says that the Sandinistas are hunting down and hounding and persecuting Jews in Nicaragua. And the Jewish leaders go on TV the next day in this country and say there are 5 Jewish families in Nicaragua, and they're not having any problems at all. This is the man who says that they're financing their revolution by smuggling drugs into the U.S. And the DEA says, 'It ain't true, it's president Reagan's Contras that are doing it'....

[When Reagan was governor of California, Reagan] said 'If there has to be a bloodbath then let's get it over with'. Now you have to think about this a minute. A leader of the U.S. seriously proposing a bloodbath of our own youth. There was an outcry of the press, so 3 days later he said it again to make sure no one had misunderstood him.

Read. You have to read to inform yourselves. Read The Book of Quotes [12]. Read On Reagan: The Man and the Presidency [3] by Ronnie Dugger. It gets heavy. Dugger concludes in his last chapter that President Reagan has a fixation on Armageddon. The Village Voice 18 months ago published an article citing the 11 times that President Reagan publicly has talked about the fact that we are all living out Armageddon today....

[Reagan] has Jerry Falwell into the White House. This is the man that preaches that we should get on our knees and beg for God to send the rapture down. Hell's fires on earth so the chosen can go up on high and all the other people can burn in hell's fires on earth. President Reagan sees himself as playing the role of the greatest leader of all times forever. Leading us into Armageddon. As he goes out at the end of his long life, we'll all go out with him....

Why does the CIA run 10,000 brutal covert actions? Why are we destabilizing a third of the countries in the world today when there's so much instability and misery already?

What you have to understand is the politics of paranoia. The easiest... buttons to punch are the buttons of macho, aggression, paranoia, hate, anger, and fear. The Communists are in Managua and that's just 2 hours from San Diego, CA. This gets people excited, they don't think. It's the pep-rally, the football pep-rally factor. When you get people worked up to hate, they'll let you spend huge amounts of money on arms.

Read The Power Elite by C. Wright Mills. [11] Read The Permanent War Complex by Seymour Melman. [10] CIA covert actions have the function of keeping the world hostile and unstable....

We can't take care of the poor, we can't take care of the old, but we can spend millions, hundreds of millions of dollars to destabilize Nicaragua....

Why arms instead of schools? They can make gigantic profits off the nuclear arms race because of the hysteria, and the paranoia, and the secrecy. And that's why they're committed to building more and more and more weapons, is because they're committed to making a profit. And that's what the propaganda, and that's what the hysteria is all about. Now people say, 'What can I do?'....

The youth did rise up and stop the Vietnam war....

We have to join hands with the people in England, and France, and Germany, and Israel, and the Soviet Union, and China, and India - the countries that have the bomb, and the others that are trying to get it. And give our leaders no choice. They have to find some other way to do business other than to motivate us through hate and paranoia and anger and killing, or we'll find other leaders to run the country.

Now, Helen Caldicott, at the end of her lectures, I've heard her say, very effectively, 'Tell people to get out and get to work on the problem.... You'll feel better'....

'What can I do?'.... If you can travel, go to Nicaragua and see for yourself. Go to the Nevada test site and see for yourself. Go to Pantex on Hiroshima day this summer, and see the vigil there. The place where we make 10 nose-cones a day, 70 a week, year in and year out. He [Admiral LaRock] said, 'I'd tell them, if they feel comfortable lying down in front of trucks with bombs on them, to lie down in front of trucks with bombs on them.' But he said, 'I'd tell them that they can't wait. They've got to start tomorrow, today, and do it, what they can, every day of their lives'.

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Anon

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Society is not an entity, it is merely a conceptual grouping of individuals, and the act of conceptualizing those individuals as members of a society has no effect whatsoever on the properties of those individuals, specifically, it has no effect on their moral properties. To borrow a metaphor, conceptually grouping a tree into a larger group of trees called a "forest" does not alter the molecular structure of the tree, similarly, conceptually grouping people with each other does not change the permissible behavior of those individuals. Justice occurs at an individual level. The classification of "society" does not alter the permissible behavior of the individuals comprising society. At an individual level, no man is entitled to infringe upon the property rights of others.

Would an advocate for "social justice" maintain that it is a grave injustice for an individual living in isolation to be compelled, by circumstance, to survive off of his own labor? Logically, the aforementioned advocate would have to concede that the subsisting individual is not the victim of a third party- no third party exists in that case. If we must accept the above case is morally acceptable, how is it an injustice if the subsistor must subsist in proximity to one other man who had, by his own efforts, accumulated a sustainable ranch of cattle? How many cows can this relatively wealthy rancher own without overstepping the bounds of acceptable inequality, thereby committing an injustice and becoming a legitimate target of the subsistor's coercion; in layman's terms, how much is the rancher permitted to own before the poorer individual is justified in stealing from him? It is unlikely that a social justice advocate, as they typically exist in the modern world, would suggest that the poor man is justified in stealing the wealthier man's cattle if the wealthier man did not even have enough cattle to sustain himself for the next 6 months. What is the exact amount of cattle that a man is morally permitted to own on his property, adjacent to a man who has not endeavored to acquire any? If I have a relatively large stock of cattle, is any man entitled to steal from me? No matter how evil he has been, no matter how undeserving he is of any help? Would a serial rapist be justified in stealing my cattle even if he has had previous opportunities to acquire his own, but thought better of spending months building his own ranch? What do all these questions have in common? They demonstrate the fundamentally arbitrary nature of social justice, there is no inherent distinction between having more than your fellow man and having too much more, which is a dangerous notion to promulgate if you happen to exist in any proximity to someone who is significantly poorer than you. If one advocates the threat of violence to take from the rich (and taxation is backed by the threat of violence,) then how could such advocates possibly argue that a hobo would not be justified in threatening them with violence to expropriate their property? From a hobo's perspective, even a woman who works a minimum wage job is "super-rich;" logically, all advocates of social justice must graciously surrender

their property if the thief- the victim of society threatening them with a knife- is poorer than them. It might be objected that this situation is fundamentally different if the theft is committed by a bureaucrat under the guise of taxation- stamps and uniforms (no matter how official) can not alter the fundamental moral permissibility of an action. If an act is morally permissible for one person, it is morally permissible for another. If it is morally permissible for an agent of the IRS to redistribute wealth, there is no reason why a homeless man should have to be backed up by an inefficient bureaucracy to redistribute your wealth to himself. The reality that moral acts can not have their permissibility altered by uniforms or ceremonies is why it is absolutely acceptable for a vigilante to punish a man he is certain is a wanton murderer (instead of waiting for a jury, specifically if none is available), and why it is absolutely acceptable for a hobo to mug anyone with an income (if the concept of social justice is valid.)

The idea of social justice is really that every individual who has more than his fellow man, is incessantly committing a moral crime by doing so; this so-called injustice is a result of the man's virtues (his productivity and determination), yet the result is that he is committing a moral crime if he refuses to surrender the products of his virtue. When does having more than your fellow man become a crime? In practical terms, when it becomes politically expedient for the liberals to expropriate your property (which is, in and of itself, an injustice.) In moral terms, there is no non-arbitrary distinction between having more than your fellow man and having too much more than your fellow man

Inequality is made out to be a grave moral crime, in principle, it is not. To borrow another metaphor, it can be said that a society wherein the average man owns 5 yachts and the richest 1% owns 5000 yachts suffers from gross inequality, yet it can hardly be said that those doing so well as to own 5 yachts have the moral right to steal from those wealthier than them. What liberals see as the true injustice is poverty, yet poverty has existed throughout history. When poverty was an unavoidable reality for hunter gatherers was it a great crime for the youngest and best hunters to live relatively comfortably while the old and sick, particularly those outside of their tribe, did not? Apparently, poverty is only an injustice if others around the poor are capable of easing the pain of the poor without significantly increasing their own burden. Yet how significantly is the government allowed to increase the pain of the relatively wealthy to benefit the relatively poor? It's possible that a wealth transfer from a rich man to a poor man could result in a net reduction of happiness, because value is subjective, and that rich man might value the additional income far more than the poor man; there is no objective way to determine this, yet liberals often take it for granted that wealth taken from the rich and given to the poor has a positive net effect on human happiness. The other great myth is that it is noble for middle-class liberals to force those more successful than they to give to the poor, even when the majority of those same liberals are perfectly capable of helping the poor and are making little effort to do so; understanding the problems of needy individuals at an individual level and providing help based on that information would require true compassion and effort, it is far easier for liberals to throw other peoples' money at the problem. For the past eighty years, liberals have provided the poor other peoples' money, nearly four trillion dollars in the last five years alone, and although poverty has stagnated (by government figures) since the 1960s they are content to blame the rich, not the government or the poor, with the lack of progress.

12.

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In Praise of Idleness

Bertrand Russell

1932

Like most of my generation, I was brought up on the saying: 'Satan finds some mischief for idle hands to do.' Being a highly virtuous child, I believed all that I was told, and acquired a conscience which has kept me working hard down to the present moment. But although my conscience has controlled my actions, my opinions have undergone a revolution. I think that there is far too much work done in the world, that immense harm is caused by the belief that work is virtuous, and that what needs to be preached in modern industrial countries is quite different from what always has been preached. Everyone knows the story of the traveler in Naples who saw twelve beggars lying in the sun (it was before the days of Mussolini), and offered a lira to the laziest of them. Eleven of them jumped up to claim it, so he gave it to the twelfth. This traveler was on the right lines. But in countries which do not enjoy Mediterranean sunshine idleness is more difficult, and a great public propaganda will be required to inaugurate it. I hope that, after reading the following pages, the leaders of the YMCA will start a campaign to induce good young men to do nothing. If so, I shall not have lived in vain.

Before advancing my own arguments for laziness, I must dispose of one which I cannot accept. Whenever a person who already has enough to live on proposes to engage in some everyday kind of job, such as school-teaching or typing, he or she is told that such conduct takes the bread out of other people's mouths, and is therefore wicked. If this argument were valid, it would only be necessary for us all to be idle in order that we should all have our mouths full of bread. What people who say such things forget is that what a man earns he usually spends, and in spending he gives employment. As long as a man spends his income, he puts just as much bread into people's mouths in spending as he takes out of other people's mouths in earning. The real villain, from this point of view, is the man who saves. If he merely puts his savings in a stocking, like the proverbial French peasant, it is obvious that they do not give employment. If he invests his savings, the matter is less obvious, and different cases arise.

One of the commonest things to do with savings is to lend them to some Government. In view of the fact that the bulk of the public expenditure of most civilized Governments consists in payment for past wars or preparation for future wars, the man who lends his money to a Government is in the same position as the bad men in Shakespeare who hire murderers. The net result of the man's economical habits is to increase the armed forces of the State to which he lends his savings. Obviously it would be better if he spent the money, even if he spent it in drink or gambling.

But, I shall be told, the case is quite different when savings are invested in industrial enterprises. When such enterprises succeed, and produce something useful, this may be conceded. In these days, however, no one will deny that most enterprises fail. That means that a large amount of human labor, which might have been devoted to producing something that could be enjoyed, was expended on producing machines which, when produced, lay idle and did no good to anyone. The man who invests his savings in a concern that goes bankrupt is therefore injuring others as well as himself. If he spent his money, say, in giving parties for his friends, they (we may hope) would get pleasure, and so would all those upon whom he spent money, such as the butcher, the baker, and the bootlegger. But if he spends it (let us say) upon laying down rails for surface cars in some place where surface cars turn out not to be wanted, he has diverted a mass of labor into channels where it gives pleasure to no one. Nevertheless, when he becomes poor through failure of his investment he will be regarded as a victim of undeserved misfortune, whereas the gay spendthrift, who has spent his money philanthropically, will be despised as a fool and a frivolous person.

All this is only preliminary. I want to say, in all seriousness, that a great deal of harm is being done in the modern world by belief in the virtuousness of work, and that the road to happiness and prosperity lies in an organized diminution of work.

First of all: what is work? Work is of two kinds: first, altering the position of matter at or near the earth's surface relatively to other such matter; second, telling other people to do so. The first kind is unpleasant and ill paid; the second is pleasant and highly paid. The second kind is capable of indefinite extension: there are not only those who give orders, but those who give advice as to what orders should be given. Usually two opposite kinds of advice are given simultaneously by two organized bodies of men; this is called politics. The skill required for this kind of work is not knowledge of the subjects as to which advice is given, but knowledge of the art of persuasive speaking and writing, i.e. of advertising.

Throughout Europe, though not in America, there is a third class of men, more respected than either of the classes of workers. There are men who, through ownership of land, are able to make others pay for the privilege of being allowed to exist and to work. These landowners are idle, and I might therefore be expected to praise them. Unfortunately, their idleness is only rendered possible by the industry of others; indeed their desire for comfortable idleness is historically the source of the whole gospel of work. The last thing they have ever wished is that others should follow their example.

From the beginning of civilization until the Industrial Revolution, a man could, as a rule, produce by hard work little more than was required for the subsistence of himself and his family, although his wife worked at least as hard as he did, and his children added their labor as soon as they were old enough to do so. The small surplus above bare necessities was not left to those who produced it, but was appropriated by warriors and priests. In times of famine there was no surplus; the warriors and priests, however, still secured as much as at other times, with the result that many of the workers died of hunger. This system persisted in Russia until 1917⁷, and still persists in the East; in England, in spite of the Industrial Revolution, it remained in full force throughout the Napoleonic wars, and until a hundred years ago, when the new class of manufacturers acquired power. In America, the system came to an end with the Revolution, except in the South, where it persisted until the Civil War. A system which lasted so long and ended so recently has naturally left a profound impress upon men's thoughts and opinions. Much that we take for granted about the desirability of work is derived

⁷ Since then, members of the Communist Party have succeeded to this privilege of the warriors and priests.

from this system, and, being pre-industrial, is not adapted to the modern world. Modern technique has made it possible for leisure, within limits, to be not the prerogative of small privileged classes, but a right evenly distributed throughout the community. The morality of work is the morality of slaves, and the modern world has no need of slavery.

It is obvious that, in primitive communities, peasants, left to themselves, would not have parted with the slender surplus upon which the warriors and priests subsisted, but would have either produced less or consumed more. At first, sheer force compelled them to produce and part with the surplus. Gradually, however, it was found possible to induce many of them to accept an ethic according to which it was their duty to work hard, although part of their work went to support others in idleness. By this means the amount of compulsion required was lessened, and the expenses of government were diminished. To this day, 99 per cent of British wage-earners would be genuinely shocked if it were proposed that the King should not have a larger income than a working man. The conception of duty, speaking historically, has been a means used by the holders of power to induce others to live for the interests of their masters rather than for their own. Of course the holders of power conceal this fact from themselves by managing to believe that their interests are identical with the larger interests of humanity. Sometimes this is true; Athenian slave-owners, for instance, employed part of their leisure in making a permanent contribution to civilization which would have been impossible under a just economic system. Leisure is essential to civilization, and in former times leisure for the few was only rendered possible by the labors of the many. But their labors were valuable, not because work is good, but because leisure is good. And with modern technique it would be possible to distribute leisure justly without injury to civilization.

Modern technique has made it possible to diminish enormously the amount of labor required to secure the necessities of life for everyone. This was made obvious during the war. At that time all the men in the armed forces, and all the men and women engaged in the production of munitions, all the men and women engaged in spying, war propaganda, or Government offices connected with the war, were withdrawn from productive occupations. In spite of this, the general level of well-being among unskilled wage-earners on the side of the Allies was higher than before or since. The significance of this fact was concealed by finance: borrowing made it appear as if the future was nourishing the present. But that, of course, would have been impossible; a man cannot eat a loaf of bread that does not yet exist. The war showed conclusively that, by the scientific organization of production, it is possible to keep modern populations in fair comfort on a small part of the working capacity of the modern world. If, at the end of the war, the scientific organization, which had been created in order to liberate men for fighting and munition work, had been preserved, and the hours of the week had been cut down to four, all would have been well. Instead of that the old chaos was restored, those whose work was demanded were made to work long hours, and the rest were left to starve as unemployed. Why? Because work is a duty, and a man should not receive wages in proportion to what he has produced, but in proportion to his virtue as exemplified by his industry.

This is the morality of the Slave State, applied in circumstances totally unlike those in which it arose. No wonder the result has been disastrous. Let us take an illustration. Suppose that, at a given moment, a certain number of people are engaged in the manufacture of pins. They make as many pins as the world needs, working (say) eight hours a day. Someone makes an invention by which the same number of men can make twice as many pins: pins are already so cheap that hardly any more will be bought at a lower price. In a sensible world, everybody concerned in the manufacturing of pins would take to working four hours instead of eight, and everything else would go on as before. But in the actual world this would be thought demoralizing. The men still work eight hours, there are too many pins, some employers go

bankrupt, and half the men previously concerned in making pins are thrown out of work. There is, in the end, just as much leisure as on the other plan, but half the men are totally idle while half are still overworked. In this way, it is insured that the unavoidable leisure shall cause misery all round instead of being a universal source of happiness. Can anything more insane be imagined?

The idea that the poor should have leisure has always been shocking to the rich. In England, in the early nineteenth century, fifteen hours was the ordinary day's work for a man; children sometimes did as much, and very commonly did twelve hours a day. When meddling busybodies suggested that perhaps these hours were rather long, they were told that work kept adults from drink and children from mischief. When I was a child, shortly after urban working men had acquired the vote, certain public holidays were established by law, to the great indignation of the upper classes. I remember hearing an old Duchess say: 'What do the poor want with holidays? They ought to work.' People nowadays are less frank, but the sentiment persists, and is the source of much of our economic confusion.

Let us, for a moment, consider the ethics of work frankly, without superstition. Every human being, of necessity, consumes, in the course of his life, a certain amount of the produce of human labor. Assuming, as we may, that labor is on the whole disagreeable, it is unjust that a man should consume more than he produces. Of course he may provide services rather than commodities, like a medical man, for example; but he should provide something in return for his board and lodging. To this extent, the duty of work must be admitted, but to this extent only.

I shall not dwell upon the fact that, in all modern societies outside the USSR, many people escape even this minimum amount of work, namely all those who inherit money and all those who marry money. I do not think the fact that these people are allowed to be idle is nearly so harmful as the fact that wage-earners are expected to overwork or starve.

If the ordinary wage-earner worked four hours a day, there would be enough for everybody and no unemployment -- assuming a certain very moderate amount of sensible organization. This idea shocks the well-to-do, because they are convinced that the poor would not know how to use so much leisure. In America men often work long hours even when they are well off; such men, naturally, are indignant at the idea of leisure for wage-earners, except as the grim punishment of unemployment; in fact, they dislike leisure even for their sons. Oddly enough, while they wish their sons to work so hard as to have no time to be civilized, they do not mind their wives and daughters having no work at all. The snobbish admiration of uselessness, which, in an aristocratic society, extends to both sexes, is, under a plutocracy, confined to women; this, however, does not make it any more in agreement with common sense.

The wise use of leisure, it must be conceded, is a product of civilization and education. A man who has worked long hours all his life will become bored if he becomes suddenly idle. But without a considerable amount of leisure a man is cut off from many of the best things. There is no longer any reason why the bulk of the population should suffer this deprivation; only a foolish asceticism, usually vicarious, makes us continue to insist on work in excessive quantities now that the need no longer exists.

In the new creed which controls the government of Russia, while there is much that is very different from the traditional teaching of the West, there are some things that are quite unchanged. The attitude of the governing classes, and especially of those who conduct

educational propaganda, on the subject of the dignity of labor, is almost exactly that which the governing classes of the world have always preached to what were called the 'honest poor'. Industry, sobriety, willingness to work long hours for distant advantages, even submissiveness to authority, all these reappear; moreover authority still represents the will of the Ruler of the Universe, Who, however, is now called by a new name, Dialectical Materialism.

The victory of the proletariat in Russia has some points in common with the victory of the feminists in some other countries. For ages, men had conceded the superior saintliness of women, and had consoled women for their inferiority by maintaining that saintliness is more desirable than power. At last the feminists decided that they would have both, since the pioneers among them believed all that the men had told them about the desirability of virtue, but not what they had told them about the worthlessness of political power. A similar thing has happened in Russia as regards manual work. For ages, the rich and their sycophants have written in praise of 'honest toil', have praised the simple life, have professed a religion which teaches that the poor are much more likely to go to heaven than the rich, and in general have tried to make manual workers believe that there is some special nobility about altering the position of matter in space, just as men tried to make women believe that they derived some special nobility from their sexual enslavement. In Russia, all this teaching about the excellence of manual work has been taken seriously, with the result that the manual worker is more honored than anyone else. What are, in essence, revivalist appeals are made, but not for the old purposes: they are made to secure shock workers for special tasks. Manual work is the ideal which is held before the young, and is the basis of all ethical teaching.

For the present, possibly, this is all to the good. A large country, full of natural resources, awaits development, and has to be developed with very little use of credit. In these circumstances, hard work is necessary, and is likely to bring a great reward. But what will happen when the point has been reached where everybody could be comfortable without working long hours?

In the West, we have various ways of dealing with this problem. We have no attempt at economic justice, so that a large proportion of the total produce goes to a small minority of the population, many of whom do no work at all. Owing to the absence of any central control over production, we produce hosts of things that are not wanted. We keep a large percentage of the working population idle, because we can dispense with their labor by making the others overwork. When all these methods prove inadequate, we have a war: we cause a number of people to manufacture high explosives, and a number of others to explode them, as if we were children who had just discovered fireworks. By a combination of all these devices we manage, though with difficulty, to keep alive the notion that a great deal of severe manual work must be the lot of the average man.

In Russia, owing to more economic justice and central control over production, the problem will have to be differently solved. the rational solution would be, as soon as the necessities and elementary comforts can be provided for all, to reduce the hours of labor gradually, allowing a popular vote to decide, at each stage, whether more leisure or more goods were to be preferred. But, having taught the supreme virtue of hard work, it is difficult to see how the authorities can aim at a paradise in which there will be much leisure and little work. It seems more likely that they will find continually fresh schemes, by which present leisure is to be sacrificed to future productivity. I read recently of an ingenious plan put forward by Russian engineers, for making the White Sea and the northern coasts of Siberia warm, by putting a dam across the Kara Sea. An admirable project, but liable to postpone proletarian comfort for a generation, while the nobility of toil is being displayed amid the ice-fields and snowstorms

of the Arctic Ocean. This sort of thing, if it happens, will be the result of regarding the virtue of hard work as an end in itself, rather than as a means to a state of affairs in which it is no longer needed.

The fact is that moving matter about, while a certain amount of it is necessary to our existence, is emphatically not one of the ends of human life. If it were, we should have to consider every navvy superior to Shakespeare. We have been misled in this matter by two causes. One is the necessity of keeping the poor contented, which has led the rich, for thousands of years, to preach the dignity of labor, while taking care themselves to remain undignified in this respect. The other is the new pleasure in mechanism, which makes us delight in the astonishingly clever changes that we can produce on the earth's surface. Neither of these motives makes any great appeal to the actual worker. If you ask him what he thinks the best part of his life, he is not likely to say: 'I enjoy manual work because it makes me feel that I am fulfilling man's noblest task, and because I like to think how much man can transform his planet. It is true that my body demands periods of rest, which I have to fill in as best I may, but I am never so happy as when the morning comes and I can return to the toil from which my contentment springs.' I have never heard working men say this sort of thing. They consider work, as it should be considered, a necessary means to a livelihood, and it is from their leisure that they derive whatever happiness they may enjoy.

It will be said that, while a little leisure is pleasant, men would not know how to fill their days if they had only four hours of work out of the twenty-four. In so far as this is true in the modern world, it is a condemnation of our civilization; it would not have been true at any earlier period. There was formerly a capacity for light-heartedness and play which has been to some extent inhibited by the cult of efficiency. The modern man thinks that everything ought to be done for the sake of something else, and never for its own sake. Serious-minded persons, for example, are continually condemning the habit of going to the cinema, and telling us that it leads the young into crime. But all the work that goes to producing a cinema is respectable, because it is work, and because it brings a money profit. The notion that the desirable activities are those that bring a profit has made everything topsy-turvy. The butcher who provides you with meat and the baker who provides you with bread are praiseworthy, because they are making money; but when you enjoy the food they have provided, you are merely frivolous, unless you eat only to get strength for your work. Broadly speaking, it is held that getting money is good and spending money is bad. Seeing that they are two sides of one transaction, this is absurd; one might as well maintain that keys are good, but keyholes are bad. Whatever merit there may be in the production of goods must be entirely derivative from the advantage to be obtained by consuming them. The individual, in our society, works for profit; but the social purpose of his work lies in the consumption of what he produces. It is this divorce between the individual and the social purpose of production that makes it so difficult for men to think clearly in a world in which profit-making is the incentive to industry. We think too much of production, and too little of consumption. One result is that we attach too little importance to enjoyment and simple happiness, and that we do not judge production by the pleasure that it gives to the consumer.

When I suggest that working hours should be reduced to four, I am not meaning to imply that all the remaining time should necessarily be spent in pure frivolity. I mean that four hours' work a day should entitle a man to the necessities and elementary comforts of life, and that the rest of his time should be his to use as he might see fit. It is an essential part of any such social system that education should be carried further than it usually is at present, and should aim, in part, at providing tastes which would enable a man to use leisure intelligently. I am not thinking mainly of the sort of things that would be considered 'highbrow'. Peasant dances

have died out except in remote rural areas, but the impulses which caused them to be cultivated must still exist in human nature. The pleasures of urban populations have become mainly passive: seeing cinemas, watching football matches, listening to the radio, and so on. This results from the fact that their active energies are fully taken up with work; if they had more leisure, they would again enjoy pleasures in which they took an active part.

In the past, there was a small leisure class and a larger working class. The leisure class enjoyed advantages for which there was no basis in social justice; this necessarily made it oppressive, limited its sympathies, and caused it to invent theories by which to justify its privileges. These facts greatly diminished its excellence, but in spite of this drawback it contributed nearly the whole of what we call civilization. It cultivated the arts and discovered the sciences; it wrote the books, invented the philosophies, and refined social relations. Even the liberation of the oppressed has usually been inaugurated from above. Without the leisure class, mankind would never have emerged from barbarism.

The method of a leisure class without duties was, however, extraordinarily wasteful. None of the members of the class had to be taught to be industrious, and the class as a whole was not exceptionally intelligent. The class might produce one Darwin, but against him had to be set tens of thousands of country gentlemen who never thought of anything more intelligent than fox-hunting and punishing poachers. At present, the universities are supposed to provide, in a more systematic way, what the leisure class provided accidentally and as a by-product. This is a great improvement, but it has certain drawbacks. University life is so different from life in the world at large that men who live in academic milieu tend to be unaware of the preoccupations and problems of ordinary men and women; moreover their ways of expressing themselves are usually such as to rob their opinions of the influence that they ought to have upon the general public. Another disadvantage is that in universities studies are organized, and the man who thinks of some original line of research is likely to be discouraged. Academic institutions, therefore, useful as they are, are not adequate guardians of the interests of civilization in a world where everyone outside their walls is too busy for unutilitarian pursuits.

In a world where no one is compelled to work more than four hours a day, every person possessed of scientific curiosity will be able to indulge it, and every painter will be able to paint without starving, however excellent his pictures may be. Young writers will not be obliged to draw attention to themselves by sensational pot-boilers, with a view to acquiring the economic independence needed for monumental works, for which, when the time at last comes, they will have lost the taste and capacity. Men who, in their professional work, have become interested in some phase of economics or government, will be able to develop their ideas without the academic detachment that makes the work of university economists often seem lacking in reality. Medical men will have the time to learn about the progress of medicine, teachers will not be exasperatedly struggling to teach by routine methods things which they learnt in their youth, which may, in the interval, have been proved to be untrue.

Above all, there will be happiness and joy of life, instead of frayed nerves, weariness, and dyspepsia. The work exacted will be enough to make leisure delightful, but not enough to produce exhaustion. Since men will not be tired in their spare time, they will not demand only such amusements as are passive and vapid. At least one per cent will probably devote the time not spent in professional work to pursuits of some public importance, and, since they will not depend upon these pursuits for their livelihood, their originality will be unhampered, and there will be no need to conform to the standards set by elderly pundits. But it is not only in these exceptional cases that the advantages of leisure will appear. Ordinary men and women, having

the opportunity of a happy life, will become more kindly and less persecuting and less inclined to view others with suspicion. The taste for war will die out, partly for this reason, and partly because it will involve long and severe work for all. Good nature is, of all moral qualities, the one that the world needs most, and good nature is the result of ease and security, not of a life of arduous struggle. Modern methods of production have given us the possibility of ease and security for all; we have chosen, instead, to have overwork for some and starvation for others. Hitherto we have continued to be as energetic as we were before there were machines; in this we have been foolish, but there is no reason to go on being foolish forever.

Against Feminism – Coming out the other side of a crisis Marxist Nutter

???

The dust is beginning to settle regarding one of the key intellectual ruptures of our epoch – the ‘Crisis of Marxism’. There are a number of strands to the debates surrounding this rupture, however for this discussion there are two related strands that are of particular interest – the role of class struggle in modern politics, and the alleged inability of Marxism to account for ‘New (although not so new anymore!) Social Movements’.

Let me begin with the latter as a way to elucidate the former. New social movements were seen as multiple sites of political resistance which seemed to defy characterisation in terms of class struggle. These movements share with the communist orientation a desire for equality, but rather than equality in terms of class, these movements focus on issues such as, for example, race, gender, and sexuality. Certainly political movements centred around non-class identities require analysis and understanding and to do so can only enrich our understanding of politics and modern society and such analysis has an emancipatory potential. However the consequence of this has been (although it needn’t have been the case) to diminish the role of class in our understanding of politics and society to something seen as an anachronism. In addition, the (not so) new focus on race, gender, and sexuality has not been equal and, at different times, one or another tends to dominate the public imaginary. Certainly the Civil Rights Movement in the USA during the middle of the 20th Century and the London riots of the 1980s mark occasions when race relations rose to pre-eminence in political discourse. However, despite the continuing presence of diabolical racism in much of the world, (including in so called ‘advanced societies’ such as Britain, which still has an undeniably racist police service) race seems to have – at least at the time of writing – begun to play second fiddle to issues of gender, gender identity and sexuality, at least in the discourse of the Western liberal ‘chattering classes’.

It would be absurd to allege, as some opponents of feminism and gay rights movements do, that sexual inequality and homophobic discrimination have been consigned to history, at least in the West. However, much progress has been made in these areas, especially in Britain, which now has equal marriage rights for homosexuals, equal pay legislation and robust legislation banning discrimination on these grounds (as well as some others). Young women in Britain now enjoy wages equal or greater than those of their male counterparts, enjoy a greater access to state benefits and housing than men and enjoy a privileged position in Family law (although many of the current coalition’s policies are eroding these advantages). The principle of equal rights for homosexuals and women is now routinely accepted even on

the right of British politics. The Daily Mail and even UKIP purport to support gender equality and the Conservative Party recently helped to pass legislation legalising gay marriage. However, at the same time, these forces of conservatism are engaged in a racist crusade against immigration, which is rendered no less racist by their instance that their fear of immigration is not grounded in race (one need only point to Nigel Farage's remarks about defending Britain's 'Judeo-Christian heritage' to render visible the racist kernel of modern anti-immigration discourse). Despite UKIP's ability to inspire a not insignificant coverage of issues of immigration, its racist dimension only accounts for a small fraction of the liberal media's fascination with this minority party – and even then it is often in the 'it isn't racist to worry about immigration' mode. This lack of focus on race is brought into stark relief when compared with the rise of the almost innumerable articles on feminism which seem to dominate (so called) radical, 'left' leaning liberal publications. The contrast is all the starker when compared with discussions of economic inequality defined in class terms. To be sure, economic inequality is of some interest to the liberal chattering classes, but little attempt is made (at least in the mainstream) to understand this in class terms – as a war waged by one class or classes on the others – whereas defining gender inequality in such terms has become something of a cottage industry!

A genealogical analysis of the type advocated by the later Foucault may be a fruitful way to explore how this situation came into being. It would be, in my view, the best way to start addressing the question: Why, at the precise moment that feminism and gay rights seem less relevant to a modern emancipatory politics in the West than ever (and issues of class seem more important than any time in the last 100 years), are feminism and gay rights issues dominating discussions of the liberal commentariat? I do not intend to conduct this analysis and I am sure that many would point to a 'rise of misogyny' in social media as a possible cause, although this answer seems unsatisfactory. Rather, I shall restrict my focus to a description and critique of modern (so called) feminism and try and draw out what implications it may have for a truly emancipatory politics.

Facile Feminists

Modern feminist writing is very diverse and consists of many contradictions and debates internal to it as well as debates and sometimes clashes with the discourses of supporters of gay rights and rights for transgender people. The issues feminist writers tackle range from the very serious (female genital mutilation or FGM and rape) to the ridiculous (the sexual politics of twerking, fashion and naked pictures of 'celebs'). Feminism has long been a key component of the Left – much more than simply an ally. Early feminist demands included a wage for the reproduction of the means of production (raising children) and this sort of radical demand threatens the entire capitalist edifice. Surprisingly however much modern feminism has carved a space for itself well outside the terms of class politics which only seem to enter its orbit during inane discussions of 'checking one's privilege'.

This new feminism is not only facile but counter-productive from a left wing perspective. One of the reasons why it would be meaningless to try to back up my claims of the rise of feminist discourse in quantitative terms is the question of what exactly constitutes 'modern feminism'. The sheer volume of stuff that perhaps 'isn't really feminism' but is treated as such (what I mean here is the sort of 'girl power' feminism as expressed by eminent public intellectuals such as the Spice Girls and Rihanna) is not only ubiquitous but also feeds much of the supposedly serious feminist discussion. Certainly a quantitative minded alien observer of our culture would be forgiven for thinking that the right to dress provocatively and dance suggestively for mass audiences without receiving derogatory comment for doing so is the

pre-eminent concern of modern feminism, second only to the right to be sexually promiscuous without being 'slut shamed'! For the avoidance of doubt, let me be clear – I do support these rights but, in the context of modern politics, I just don't think they matter a great deal – but then I am a man so what do I know? What I do know is that if this is really feminism it is a far cry from the excellent work that has come out of the academy. Of course my criticisms do not apply to all modern feminism but to those who would rather reference the intellectually stunted Germaine Greer than the complex post-structuralist thought of say, Judith Butler.

Again I will not be ambiguous – it is absolutely my intention to imply a distaste for what I see as frivolity in the political discourse of much of this type of feminism, however this is not caused by feminists but rather a symptom of an increasingly anti-intellectual society which fixates on the superficial. Indeed feminist writers – Hadley Freeman, for example, positively defends the superficial and frivolous in her 'feminist' fashion column for the Guardian (how could a fashion column do otherwise?). The writers known together as the 'Vagenda' are primarily concerned with their desire to read fashion magazines without being made to feel insecure about their body image. Freeman and the Vagenda team (perhaps not consciously) continue to support an industry that promotes sweat shop labour and extreme exploitation of the global poor provided that it doesn't make rich Western women feel fat. This example is emblematic of the issues plaguing modern feminism. The overall shift toward anti-intellectualism and the superficial in Western discourse is certainly part of the problem with some feminist writings however the issue goes deeper. In fact it is my contention that facile modern feminism is less a victim of this trend than an active supporter of it.

The perceived crisis of Marxism and its relationship to new social movements was not mentioned for fun or just because it is my pet interest but rather because it is instructive to this discussion of feminism. The theoretical problem new social movements posed for Marxism was not that there existed identities other than class but rather class as a category was not able to account for and encompass these other identities. This was an issue for Marxism as many of its proponents claimed class was the objective and universal historical category and the most dogmatic Marxists even claimed that all other identities can be reduced to class. This is now known by the closest thing academia has to the word for sin – reductionism. Gender inequality, race inequality etc could not be reduced to class struggle and this is what caused an issue for Marxism at the level of theory. Feminism, which has always had a strong family resemblance to Marxism, is suffering from a similar issue today. Issues of class, race, religion and culture are often reduced to feminist issues. FGM, online misogyny etc are, to be sure, issues which feminism has a strong right to speak about but not to construct as simply the exploitation of women tout court. These issues have strong cultural, racial and economic dimensions which are often but not always (for feminism is, as I have said, very diverse) overlooked. The better feminist writings do, of course, broach the issue of intersectionality but even where this is addressed it is hard for feminists to resist the temptation to start blaming the individual failings of men, sometimes, it's just some men and at other times it is all men (but obviously never specifically gay men or black/ Asian men as this sort of racism/ gay hate would offend their liberal sympathies even if the even bigger generalisation of 'all men' or 'nearly all men' does not). Again this is not an issue with feminism alone but a wider social trend which privileges individual blame over systemic or structural causes. That said it has been present in feminism for some time. As Ralph Miliband wrote in the 1980s:

In *Wigan Pier Revisited*, Beatrix Campbell tells us that she began her journey 'as the kind of feminist who said "It's not men, it's the system"', but that she was convinced by her journey that 'men and masculinity, in their everyday, individual manifestations, constitute a

systematic bloc of resistance to the women of their own community and class. Both individual men and the political movements men have made within the working class are culpable.' No doubt 'the system' cannot explain, let alone excuse, everything. But neither will it do, at least in socialist terms, to enter this sweeping, unqualified verdict of collective gender guilt against 'men'. (Miliband, R. 1985 'The new revisionism in Britain' New Left Review)

The increasing dominance of feminist writing in the pages of liberal left publications is meeting with some backlash. As opposed to seeing this, as some extent, a predictable reaction to any trend gaining increasing prestige, some feminists see this backlash as entirely the result of (one assumes mainly white) men 'defending their privilege'. Now this charge may make some sense if levelled against, for example, our Eton educated cabinet, but it isn't really aimed at them. It is more often aimed at men attacking feminist columns (often as being sexist against men). Now I do not know the educational and socio-economic or cultural backgrounds of these men, but judging by their use of language I would guess they are not as highly educated as the feminist writers they attack. Thus it seems unlikely they are all that privileged and may well be from poor backgrounds or be of an ethnic minority who routinely experiences discrimination). In fact, as a white man of modest means, I am, in modern feminist terms, allowed to speak about this. I have been homeless and have worked in social housing, I have also advised on benefits and so I am aware, as are many men, that if I were to lose my job I would very quickly end up homeless and have very little recourse to state help. This is very very scary. I know full well (being moderately well educated) that this is not the fault of women or feminism but I also know that if I were a women I would be much less likely to end up homeless (I would be considered more vulnerable and thus have higher priority under most social housing allocations systems if I were a women). Therefore I would suggest that much of the 'below the line' anti-feminist discourse these writers complain about is driven by a combination of the 'natural' reaction to the huge increase in column inches devoted to feminism combined with fear for one's own security, rather than a sense of maintaining any kind of male privilege. This is just a guess but it seems much more plausible than poor young men trying to defend the 'lofty privileges' we supposedly have under the current 'patriarchy'. Yes these men are attacking the wrong enemy in Guardian feminists and it is a misguided way to vent real insecurities, but the take home point here is that it has nothing whatsoever to do with defending or attempting to maintain the privileges men enjoy in a 'patriarchy'. This sort of weak intellectual argument – routinely trotted out by the likes of Laurie Penny – is what most disappoints me about modern feminist discourse. There is no real attempt to understand society, politics or even gender relations (if we include men as a gender) – the name of the game appears to be to jump on the gender politics bandwagon and insist that poor, working class men are the problem. As opposed to examining issues of economic insecurity in a situation of class oppression – modern feminists are keener to (with the full weight of popular culture behind them – so much for their claims of being anti-establishment or subversive) heap the blame on individual males. The folly of this should be obvious, yet it seems to be conventional wisdom that the misogynist remarks made by (often) poor men are taken as an attempt to defend a social order in which they are also exploited. There are certainly fewer men writing about the issues of masculinity in an age where manual labour is in decline and gender politics are more equal than there are women writing about the exploitation of women (or more likely on the morality of twerking or dressing cute while being a feminist).

The return of class

Despite the abhorrent treatment of women and gays in much of the world, gender equality and gay rights have reached the point in much of the West (and in Britain in particular) where they

are of less concern than racism and poverty. Yet feminism has never been so popular and never has it received so many column inches; not since the 19th Century, has issues of class and class war been so pertinent. Of course, it is not cool to discuss class if you are of the liberal chattering classes – which is not just very convenient for feminists but also for members of the elite classes. By class here, I mean the term, as did Marx, in a strict economic sense. Marx famously spoke of two historical classes locked in struggle. Well today things are slightly different but the logic remains sound. The world is divided into classes which need to sell their own labour and classes which do not. These classes are not aligned. Zizek tells us how the proletariat is divided into three with the liberal intellectual workers (like many feminist writers) looking down on the traditional workers (often men who do manual labour) who in turn look down on the radically excluded (immigrants, prisoners etc) whereas a new servant class of bankers and hedge fund managers serve the needs of the global rich whose interests run directly counter to the entire proletariat class. Modern feminism rarely (and I would love to see any examples) challenges this situation. The Vagenda and Hadley Freeman are the ones who want to maintain their privilege (the ability to buy clothes cheaply due to sweat shop labour) not the poor man who lives pay cheque to pay cheque. The feminist focus on gender leaves status quo with regard to class divisions unscathed. In fact feminism is not, in itself, a critique of capitalism and economic inequality. Neo-liberal capitalism is fully on board with all forms of equality which are not economic. In fact the ‘diversity’ agenda itself serves to take focus away from economic inequality. As Walter Benn Michaels has argued

This is also why the real (albeit very partial) victories over racism and sexism ... are not victories over neoliberalism but victories for neoliberalism: victories for a commitment to justice that has no argument with inequality as long as its beneficiaries are as racially and sexually diverse as its victims. ... It is the increasing gap between rich and poor that constitutes the inequality, and rearranging the race and gender of those who succeed leaves that gap untouched. In actually existing neoliberalism, blacks and women are still disproportionately represented both in the bottom quintile—too many—and in the top quintile—too few—of American incomes. In the neoliberal ... blacks would be 13.2 per cent of the (numerous) poor and 13.2 per cent of the (far fewer) rich; women would be 50.3 per cent of both. For neoliberals, what makes this a utopia is that discrimination would play no role in administering the inequality; what makes the utopia neoliberal is that the inequality would remain intact. Worse: it is not just that the inequality remains intact but also—since it is no longer produced by discrimination—that it gets legitimated. Apparently American liberals feel a lot better about a world in which the top 20 per cent are getting richer at the expense of everyone else, as long as that top 20 per cent includes a proportionate number of women and African-Americans. (Walter Benn Michaels, 2008 ‘Against Diversity’ New Left Review)

This argument can be levied at modern feminists too. As long as gender equality is achieved and sexism in social media is stopped there is no issue to be had with capitalism (or ‘patriarchy’). In fact many feminists of the modern age still want to be able to buy fashion magazines, be free to get drunk and twerk in nightclubs if they want to (it’s sexual freedom after all) but these things, of course, rest on a system of global inequality, exploitation and oppression that is structured around class and about which feminism seems no longer to have much to say. Worse, one reason why liberal left rags are so keen to commission feminist writing is that it is so safe. It does not really challenge the dominant order (in the way say the demand for a wage for raising children did). In fact it helps support systems of oppression and exploitation by focusing on issues of gender and ignoring class. In fact I may be being too

generous here. Facile modern feminism is actually not concerned with gender politics but rather 'women's issues' which is not the same thing.

??? (Outro)

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To have done with the Economy of Love Feral Faun

1989

"Love of all things is integral beauty; it has no hate or possessiveness.... So accept love wherever you may find it: It is difficult to recognize because it never asks."

Austin Osman Spare

Sexual love, erotic pleasure, is the source of boundless ecstasy, the expression of the infinite divinity of our bodies. It is the very creative energy of the cosmos. When this energy flows through us unchecked, we come to be in love, to desire to share erotic pleasure with the entire cosmos. But only rarely do we experience this boundless energy. Within the bounds of commodity culture, love too is a commodity. An economy of love has developed, and that economy destroys the free flow of pleasure.

The economy of love can only exist because love has been made a scarcity. As infants, we are wild, divine lovers in love with ourselves and with all other beings. But parents steal this from us. They deny the sexual nature of their love for the child and sell expressions of love in exchange for acceptable behavior. They punish or reprimand us for blatantly sexual behavior, calling it bad. They judge us and so teach us to judge ourselves. Instead of loving ourselves, we feel obliged to prove ourselves—and fail often enough to never feel sure of ourselves. Love ceases to be a free gift to the cosmos and becomes a very scarce, high-priced commodity for which we must compete.

The competition for economized love changes us. We lose our spontaneity, our free and playful self-expression. It doesn't do to act as we truly feel. We must make ourselves desirable. If we are good-looking by cultural standards, we have a big advantage, for appearance is a major part of what makes a desirable sexual commodity. But there are other useful traits—strength, sexual prowess, "good taste," intelligence, sparkling wit. And, of course, knowledge of how to play the social-sexual games. The better actor wins at these games. Knowing how to put across the right image, knowing just what role to play in what situation—this will buy you economized love. But at the expense of losing yourself.

Few people have both physical attractiveness and adeptness at playing the social-sexual games. So we are left without love except on very rare occasions. It is no surprise that when these occasions arise we do not let them flow naturally, but seek to hold on to them, to extend them. When love is economized, it no longer lends itself to free relating, because the flowing away of a particular lover has come to mean the end of love itself. Instead of relating freely, we seek to build relationships- making relating permanent, hardening it into a system of exchange in which lovers continue to sell love to each other until, at some point, one of them

feels cheated or finds an economic relationship because of the fear of losing love- and having to go through the whole process of earning love all over again.

And relationships—being an expression of economized love—are usually supposed to be monogamous. We do not want to lose our lover to another. If we do not agree to only sell our love to each other, might not our lover find a better product, a lover they prefer to us, and leave us? And so the fears induced by the scarcity of love help to create institutions that reinforce that scarcity.

Some people don't choose the way of relationships. They want to prove themselves to be truly desirable commodities. So they become sexual conquistadors. They want to rack up a high score in the arena of sexual conquest. They don't care about sharing pleasure. They just want to create an image. And those who fuck them do it for the status as well. For these people, the ecstasy of total sharing has been lost completely to the economy of love. It is the score and only the score that counts. In order to make the commodities more valuable, the economy of love has created sexual specialization. Of course, the cultural emphasis on masculinity or femininity over our natural androgyny is the foremost aspect of this. But the labels of sexual preference, when made permanent self-definitions, are also a part of this. By defining ourselves as gay or straight or bisexual, as child lover or fetishist or any other limited form, rather than letting our desires flow freely, we are making a specialized product of ourselves and so reinforcing the scarcity of love.

When love becomes a commodity it ceases to be real love, for Eros cannot be chained. Love must flow freely and easily without price and without expectations. When love is economized, it ceases to exist, because the lovers cease to exist. Since we must become desirable products, we repress our real selves in order to take on the roles which our culture teaches us will make us desirable. So it is mask kissing mask, image caressing image—but no real lovers to be found anywhere.

If we are to experience the infinite energy of sexual love, the wild divinity of our bodies in ecstasy, then we must free ourselves of the economy of love. We have to throw off every aspect of this lifeless shell that our culture passes off as love. For nowhere in its realms can the wild joy of boundless pleasure be experienced.

But to break free of the economy of love, love must cease to be a scarcity for us. While the wild cosmos abounds with lovers, commodity culture has stolen this from us. So we are left with one way to free ourselves of love's scarcity. We need to learn to love ourselves, to find ourselves such a source of pleasure that we fall in love with ourselves. After all, is not my body the source of the pleasure I feel in love? Are not my flesh, my nerves, my tingling skin the vast galaxies in which this boundless energy flows? When we learn to be in love with ourselves, to find ourselves a source of endless erotic pleasure, love can never be scarce for us, for we will always have ourselves as a lover.

And when we love ourselves, the boundless joy of Eros will flow through us spilling freely forth. We will not grasp for love because of need, but we will freely share our vast erotic energy with every being who opens to it. Our lovers will be men and women, children, trees and flowers, non-human animals, mountains, rivers, oceans, stars and galaxies. Our lovers will be everywhere, for we ourselves are love.

As mighty gods of love, we then can roam the earth as outlaw heroes, for having escaped the economy of love, we have the strength to oppose all economy. And we will not tolerate this

culture where our lovers are abused, enslaved and threatened, murdered and imprisoned. With all the mighty energy of love, we will break every chain and storm the walls until they fall and every one we love is free. And so will end the long, nightmarish rule of economy, the death-dance of civilization.