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ARBEIT MACHT FREIT

“The illusion of the abolition of work”

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Translation of

<https://www.ne.jp/asahi/anarchy/anarchy/data/myth02.html>

A response to “The Abolition of Work and Other Myths” by Neala Schleuning.

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“Everybody hates work”, “The aversion to work surpasses culture and time, and is an eternal trait of mankind.”

Neala Schleuning starts out by saying this and then comes closer to you for a hand shake, so you doubtfully reach out your hand when all of a sudden she says: “All the great religions of the world, for example, admonish the slacker” “Most political thought also either assumes the value of work, or requires it, for the collective good.” and then kicks you in the stomach. If you manage to dodge, she then says “Basic survival is, of course, a given when we think about the necessity for work.” and then pokes you in the eyes. I’m the heel, and that’s embarrassingly dirty.

And then someone babbles this.

<The stuff you work abolitionists say are the completely misguided babbling of children. “I won’t work”, you say. What the hell are you saying? How dare you take such an unproductive, irresponsible and self-centered attitude towards our gracious

lord and savior, Cooperative Society! You damn anti-government nihilists!>

<Your assertions come from within a small minority of fortunate outsiders. Your opinions are the same as those of a dictator.><If you won't work, then how do you expect to continue living?>

<There is no debate about the fact that we need to work. No matter how far technology progresses, work won't disappear. Even if we're released from wage labor, that would only mean that an even greater amount of work will become necessary.>

And yeah, it's pretty much like that. The <> parts are the nuance that I myself have taken from other authors, but it could be said that these individualists have taken seriously polluted air, altered it in their own fashion, and returned it back to the people who first exhaled it that my aggregate of opinions may seem unnecessarily harsh.

Well then, what is it that we must do? Below are some methods that will solve the problem. All of them are political methods and, at the bottom of all this, lies a deeply humanitarian problem. Yeah.

1. To transform work into its more desirable form, a change that permeates the whole social landscape is required.
2. Specifically, we need to create a "dual-layered" regulated economy (The first layer satisfies collective needs, while the second layer satisfies the needs of the individual).
3. As a result of this "dual-layered economy", consumption will be regulated, and work will be reduced to the bare minimum. The wealth will then be split among the population equally.
4. The regulation of technological development is also important. As a result of technological developments, work has be-

come unbearably complicated. (Although I say this, we obviously can't return to the heavy labor of the old world at this point in time.)

5. The development of technology that creates consumption that takes into account the Earth's environment.
6. Self-realization released from consumption.
7. The alienation that results from work will be stopped. (Work abolitionists use the "bad work" that the workers can't control as a criticism of work.)
8. Good work will play the important role of fostering the health of people's minds and the health of collective entities. Meaningful work will provide us with a sense of accomplishment, satisfaction and will be useful in working our imaginations and fostering our intellectual health.
9. It's also possible to reduce working hours using technology.

I'm not liking any of this. You can see the totalitarian oppression everywhere. These are truly the "political methods" that have promised the erasure of the individual. To bring "good work" into existence, you need strong social control.

It shouldn't even be said that the practical existence of such regulation would require a strong authoritative entity. On top of this, if we're to more or less bring anarchism into this, people will start to ask for willful participation. In other words, the inner parts of the individual will have to be transformed through education into believing in a singular type of anarchism.

As a result of "good work", the entirety of society will be regulated, and on top of that, the inside of the individual will have to be monitored. If this isn't seen as hell, then I feel sorry for all of the people that died at the hands of fascism and communism.

If that's the case, then instead of saying "good work", you should just say "good state" or whatever.

"The alienation from work carries over into alienation from one another. If there is good work to do, to refuse to work is to alienate oneself, to say, I will not participate. As human beings, we have the obligation to contribute, at minimum, to collective survival work. No one should have the luxury of refusing to work. To share in this collective survival work is not necessarily oppressive. Doing this for others, for their use, their satisfaction, and knowing and trusting that others will do the same for you is the essence of work. What is oppressive is forced labor, exploitative labor, labor which creates goods and services not to enhance social connections, but to be commodified, to exchange. We need a radical restructuring of work, not its abolition."

Replace "work" with "the state" and it still fits amazingly well.

Here every conceivable "anti-work" notion is completely removed. If you say that "work" is the condition of our existence, then people who can't refuse that work will have their value as "people" taken away from them, and the fact that, naturally, their "existence" won't be allowed to them is self-evident.

The reason why this theorist uses the word "childish" when criticizing anti-work anarchists countless times is because children are free, wild beasts with no connection to work or productivity.

ARBEIT MACHT FREI "Work and you will be free"

Lies!