

The Permanent Universal Rent Strike

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“Rent,” wrote Benjamin R. Tucker succinctly, “is the tribute paid by the non-owning user of land to the non-using owner of land.”

Rent is a claim against you, asserting (implicitly) that you are extra-terrestrial or alien. It is a demand that you pay the real natives of Earth, the “owners,” a certain tribute for residing on “their” planet. Science-fiction writers have never dreamed up anything weirder.

Like most forms of insanity, rent is not recognized as schizo because it is so commonplace. Only the man or woman who invents an original idea – such as demanding tribute from those who breathe, on the basis of a claim that he or she “owns” the air – would be diagnosed correctly as a megalomaniac. The landlord is, like the banker, a man whose delusion has been institutionalized and people really believe he owns what he claims to own.

The most important application of non-violent revolution in America today is a permanent universal rent strike.

Not a fake strike, in which the money is handed over to the courts and the landlords get it later after the strike is over.

A permanent strike. A blunt declaration: “The landlords do not own the planet Earth. Everybody born on the planet has a right to live here. He doesn’t have to pay monthly tribute to ANYONE for living here; it is his home planet.”

Nobody pays a dollar, a penny or a mil thereafter. Nobody asks for “repairs” or “improvements.” Everybody uses his rent money, now and forever after, to repair and improve his own pad as much as it needs. Nobody gives a penny to a lord-of-the-land ever. Everybody announces, “The Feudal Age is over. We recognize no Lords of the Land. The land belongs to those who occupy and use it.”

What Can They Do?

What can the landlords and their government do? Throw us all into the Atlantic, or Pacific? Put us in rockets and shoot us to the moon? And even if they could do that, then what? With all of us gone, who will they collect rent from?

Rent is the tribute paid by the non-owning user of land to the non-using “owner” of land. Such ownership is a legal fiction, and needs only to be resisted to be exposed, discredited and abolished.

The permanent universal rent strike – which is, together with the permanent universal tax strike and the coining of non-governmental money, the triple solution to everything – rests on a firm foundation in chaotic egotism.

These tactics do not require self-sacrifice and they do not involve coercing (or killing) others. Hence, they have not been very popular in Judeo-Christian culture, which is basically sado-masochistic and strongly inclines people to grasp at philosophies which do give people a reason to torment themselves and bully others.

These tactics rest on the assumption that only non-coercive behavior is truly revolutionary and only egoistic behavior is basically reactionary (whatever “revolutionary” excuse is given for it) and all altruistic behavior is basically insane (the body is an egotist and altruism only becomes possible when the head is split from the body, which is a form of schizophrenia.)

YIP is the only part of the Movement which begins to have a clue about what real revolution is.

The permanent universal rent strike is the affirmation, by everybody, of his or her right to live on the planet Earth.

The permanent universal rent strike is the end of Feudalism. The landlord, as his name reminds us, is a Feudal functionary, originally a relative of the king.

Capitalism continues Feudalism by continuing landlordism, although the landlord no longer has to be a relative of the kind. Socialism continues Feudalism by making a spook (“the State” or “the People”) into a new landlord. Since spooks can’t function in the real world, Socialism just means a continuation of the same old eon ... certain individual human beings, proclaiming themselves the the representatives of “the State” or “the People”, will function as landlords.

The permanent universal rent strike is a rejection of Feudalism, Capitalism and Socialism all together.

Eugene V. Debs, although a benighted Socialist, had his moments of insight. In one of them he said (and this should be branded on the behind of every Movement leader with a red-hot iron so they’d never forget it):

If you are looking for a moses to lead you out of the capitalist wilderness you will stay right where you are. i would not lead you into the promised land if i could, because if i could lead you in, someone else could lead you out.

Every landlord on this continent is a receiver of stolen property. The land was stolen from the Indian tribes before it was “legally” acquired by its present owners. The same is true on other continents, but the history is older, more complex and somewhat hidden by time.

Permanent Universal Rent Strike

Figure how much of your monthly pay goes to the landlord, to “buy” from him the “right” to live on the surface of this planet. Think what you could do with that money if you asserted that you already have the right to live on this planet and don’t have to buy that right, in monthly installments, from a Lord-of-the-Land.

Soldiers will shoot at their fellow citizens, after sufficient brainwashing in boot camp. It is especially easy to get them to shoot at their fellows if these people happen to be out in the streets rioting.

It is not so easy to get them to shoot if the citizens are sitting quietly at home and just minding their own business.

Think about it.

If the rent-strike is combined with a tax-strike, both the landlords and their government are threatened.

Think about it.

Individual martyrs to tax refusal accomplish zero, or a quality infinitesimally larger than zero but still hard to perceive.

Collective tax refusal ... well, Benjamin Tucker estimated that only 20% of the population would have to join before the cost of imprisoning them became more than the alleged value to the State of doing so to terrify others.

And meanwhile the other 80% would be calculating, balancing the risk against the advantage, brainwashed “loyalty” against personal integrity, gain versus loss ...

None of this can work, really, until it is put upon an egotistic basis. Asking people to join for altruistic reasons is the chronic error which has ruined most anarchist campaign to organize such mass civil disobedience.

People who have read Ayn Rand and found the solid core of truth in the midst of all er bull are more likely to start this movement rolling than the average Marxist or Tolstoyan-Christian anarchist.

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