

# **The Historical, Philosophical and Economical Bases of Anarchy**

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January 1896

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*The less government we have the better; the fewer laws and the less confided power.*  
Emerson.

# Introduction

Some years ago – I think in 1888 – I read an essay written by our deceased comrade, Dyer D. Lum, in which the central idea of the first part of this thesis – viz., the history of the successive stages of religious, political and economical bases – was set forth. The idea then occurred to me to enlarge and elaborate the thought, to name it *The Historical Basis of Anarchy*, and to add a philosophical and economical bases. I then wrote the thesis in nearly its present form, and delivered it as a lecture several times in Chicago. I make no claim to originality of thought – a gift rare as it is precious – and cheerfully concede to the numerous writers on history, philosophy and economics whom it has been my good fortune to study, whatever credit is due for the ideas contained herein. I have long believed that such a work as this was necessary, and this is my only excuse for undertaking a task which perhaps might have been more meritoriously accomplished by others. I have not undertaken to write a text book on anarchy. I have not even attempted to cover every point which suggested itself to me. I can only hope that what has been written will aid the patient student to an understanding of those deep problems to the solution of which the best efforts of the best men and women in the world are freely given.

If, through the perusal of this little work, my readers are encouraged to proceed further in their search for economic truth, and if their zeal and devotion for the welfare of humanity shall be deepened, I shall be fully rewarded.

THE AUTHOR.

La Veta, Colo.

## Part I. — Historical.

It is said that a very long time ago, one of the arch-angels, becoming dissatisfied with the despotic rule of Jehova, raised an army of fellow-malcontents and headed an insurrection against the authority of the heavenly king. This, I believe, is the first case on record of an anarchistic revolt. Since that time Jehova, the alleged ruler of the universe, has been the emblematical figure of authority, while the idea of revolt might not inappropriately be typified in the person of that old rebel, Satan.

Aside from theological fables, however, we can truthfully say that the history of anarchy, as represented by the history of revolt against spiritual and temporal authority, is as old as the human race. The first slave who freed himself from the chains of a despotic master, the first enthusiast who denied the creed of his spiritual adviser, unconsciously planted the germs of that lofty principle which is destined to emancipate mankind. For the history of anarchy is the history of human revolt. The history of anarchy began with the first struggle against coercive authority; it will end only when invasion shall have ceased. Whatever degree of freedom we now enjoy has been gained only by resistance, first to the authority of the church; second, to the authority of the state and of individuals. The church has never voluntarily granted liberty of thought and conscience, nor the state liberty of action. Winwood Reade, in his "Martyrdom of Man," says:

The anti-slavery movement is merely an episode in that great rebellion against authority which began in the night of the middle ages; which sometimes assumed the form of religious heresy, sometimes of serf-revolt; which gradually established the municipal cities, and raised the slave to the position of the tenant; which gained great victories in the Protestant Reformation, the two English Revolutions, the American Revolution and the French Revolution; which has destroyed the tyranny of governments in Europe, and which will in time destroy the tyranny of religious creeds.

As to economic freedom, every advance toward that desirable goal has been made by forcing concessions from the privileged and ruling classes. "Only by making the ruling few uneasy can the oppressed many obtain a particle of relief," said Jeremy Bentham, and the history of class domination and class struggle attest the truth of this declaration.

Let me here warn the reader not to confound the act of revolt with the methods used. The mere making and throwing of dynamite bombs is not anarchistic revolt; the use of pistol or dagger by an outraged workingman does not constitute him an anarchist; anarchy is not necessarily the taking of human life or the destruction of property. There is a vast difference between riot and revolt. Anarchy, in its historical aspect, is the principle of revolt against divine and human authority. The revolvers may use dynamite; they may use gunpowder or the sword; they may use pitchforks or stones, or other implements of peace, as has been done by the insurgent peasants of Europe; they may only use the tongue, the pen, or the printing press; they may even show their rebellious spirit by simply refusing to obey the commands of their rulers. It matters not

whether the rebels use the most destructive weapons or no weapons at all; the act and fact of revolt are what constitute the principle. It is true the methods have often been harsh. The feet of anarchistic revolt have seldom been shod with velvet. In her march down the centuries her iron tread has crushed gods, dynasties, kings and lordly privileges. Force has always been the method used, and it has been none the less force when unaccompanied with the roar of battle and the clash of arms. But never as an invader has this been done. Revolt is never invasion. Insurgent peasants, rebellious workingmen, iconoclast reformers, revolutionary socialists make war only upon oppressors and tyrants. Without oppression or invasion there could be no resistance and no revolt; but under conditions of oppression the man who will not revolt is a willing slave.

As long as man shall dominate his brother man, as long as there shall remain a government on the face of the earth, as long as one iota of privilege shall continue to exist, so long will the revolt of anarchy bid men be free. Where authority is, there also will be found its antithesis – anarchy. It is a living, active principle in life, searching out and analyzing the individual atoms of the universe; finding its expression in discontent and rebellion. The language of authority is obey and question not; the language of anarchy is rebel and question all things. The former ends in ignorance and slavery; the latter leads to knowledge and freedom. Anarchy has been the redeemer of the past; it will be the saving principle of the future.

The struggle for liberty has three-fold meaning: liberty of conscience, political liberty and economic freedom. It is true that even before the commencement of the Christian era there were many revolts of slaves and the common people against their oppressors, one of the most conspicuous of which was the rebellion of Spartacus, which took place about the year 72 B.C. With eight hundred gladiators and runaway slaves he for a long time kept the Roman legions at bay and defeated the forces sent out to subdue him. But down to near the close of the seventeenth century the struggle was mainly for mental liberty and freedom of worship. Men strove for religious liberty, though their pathway was constantly beset with persecution, torture and death, and millions laid down their lives for the great principle.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the seeds of liberty were broadly scattered as a result of the Crusades. In that time ideas had been born which were fated to shape the destinies of nations. The persecutions of the Albigenses under the direction of Pope Innocent III in the thirteenth century, mark an epoch in anarchistic revolt. They contended for liberty of conscience, and though hundreds of thousands perished in the terrible struggle, the ideas for which they fought and died did not perish, while the spirit of revolt spread abroad and was deeply implanted in the breasts of the common people throughout Europe. This spirit of revolt – rebellion against authority – found expression again in the fourteenth century in the rise of the Jacquerie, or insurgent peasants of France; in the revolt of the Swiss peasants, and in the bold insurrection headed by Wat Tyler, which arose out of opposition to the poll tax and an insult offered to the daughter of a poor blacksmith.

The glory of the fifteenth century was the anarchistic revolt of the men of Kent under their brave leader, Jack Cade. This century also witnessed the work of the bold reform preacher, Wickliffe, and of the devoted Bohemian reformers John Huss and Jerome of Prague. They preached sedition and rebellion against the authority of the Romish church to the common people, by whom they were greatly beloved.

In the middle of the fifteenth century the revolt of thought, which had already crystallized in the reformation under Martin Luther, was still further augmented by the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, and the consequent scattering of an immense number of manuscript volumes

over Europe. These valuable manuscripts – productions of the wisest men of Greece and Rome – were gathered by scholars and thinkers, and did much to assist the progress of the reformation.

The reformation itself, guided by the wonderful little doctor of Wurtemberg and the philosophical Melancthon, was a mighty upheaval of progressive thought, distinctly anarchistic in its scope and tendencies. Luther strove for mental freedom. He waged unceasing warfare against the authority of the Romish church, and was an anarchist to the extent of struggling for religious liberty. During all this time the right of the individual to think and express his thoughts was receiving more and more recognition, and though each step toward mental freedom was marked with the blood of innumerable martyrs and accompanied with all the tortures of the age, the movement continued to grow and spread.

The beginning of the sixteenth century ushered in the retribution for oppression known as the peasants' revolt of Germany. It has been fitly described as "the terrible scream of oppressed humanity," and no other phrase could so nearly reveal its stupendous significance. One hundred and fifty thousand persons were slain. More freedom! More freedom for the individual! Such was the burden of their cry. It was a long and bloody revolt against the authority of priests and nobles. But alas! The powers of church and state were too great to be overcome by unorganized poverty, and the long vehement struggle was finally quenched in the blood of its victims. The anabaptists, the real anarchists of that age, and in particular Thomas Müntzer, who preached doctrines similar to those taught by anarchists of our day, encouraged and excited the peasants to persist in their fearful struggle.

The seventeenth century was one long, continuous fight for mental liberty. In vain the spiritual and temporal powers sought to suppress the rising tide. In England the infamous Jeffries endeavored to maintain "law and order" by wholesale executions unparalleled in history for their fiendish cruelty. But the spirit of mental revolt was now thoroughly awakened, and towards the close of the century religious toleration was practically achieved by the accession to the throne of England of the protestant prince and princess of Orange.

The eighteenth century brought a new question for consideration. In the seventeenth century all great questions of religious. What were those of the eighteenth? Look at the letters of Junius, Rousseau's "Contract Social," Paine's "Rights of Man," the American and French revolutions. They were political. Political liberty was the inquiry and spirit of the age, and the great thinkers of the times were those who caught its meaning and translated it into intelligible speech. Jefferson and Kościuszko in two continents gave it voice.

In France the beating hearts of men long used to repression felt a new thrill. Could force and authority arrest the cause of progress? Would men used to centuries of oppression dare to resist authority sanctioned by divine right? The advancing tide of progress toward liberty could not be checked. The flood came, and the fiction of divine right was swept away. July 14, 1789. It was the opening of a new era. "It is a revolt!" exclaimed the astonished Louis 16<sup>th</sup>. "Sire," answered Lemoignon, "it is a revolution!"<sup>1</sup>

And now we are nearing the close of another century, and still the contest with authority goes on. But it has again taken a new direction. Religious and political liberty has been largely achieved; the struggle of the nineteenth century is mainly for economic freedom. Nearly all will

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<sup>1</sup> This is a quotation from an essay by Dyer D. Lum.

admit this. It found expression in factory legislation in the year 1801 in England. It has been manifested in a hundred different ways: in the anti-corn laws and the Chartist movement in Great Britain; in the revolutionary movements of 1832 and 1848 on the continent of Europe; in the growth of trades-unionism in all countries; in strikes and lockouts; in conflicts between the poor and the rich; in the agitation for shorter hours of labor; in the birth and spread of the International – hope of the oppressed of all countries – ; in the writings of economists and philosophers; in the suggested reforms and radical movements of the day. All these manifestations of unrest and inquiry indicate that a mighty struggle – a revolt before which the revolutions and uprisings of the past sink into insignificance – is impending. Well might Carlyle exclaim:

Will not one revolution suffice, or must there be two? There will be two if needed.  
There will be twenty if needed. There will be just as many as is needed!

All over the civilized world there is a deep-seated feeling of unrest and insecurity. The displacement of human labor by machinery and the consequent increase in the number of unemployed laborers; the rapid growth of monopolies; the increasing poverty and degradation of the people. Can these things go on much longer? Can they outlast the century?

A brief account of the modern movement known as anarchy will end the historical feature of this work. The present movement is divided into two distinct branches or schools, known respectively as anarchist-individualism and anarchist-communism. The former owes its existence principally to the teachings of two men – Josiah Warren, an American, and P. J. Proudhon, a Frenchman. So far as priority of time is concerned the credit seems to belong to Warren, a fact which should be noted by persons who assail anarchism as a doctrine of foreign importation. Pupil and friend of Warren, and an ardent disciple of Proudhon, is Benjamin R. Tucker, of New York, who is publisher and editor of “Liberty,” and now the recognized head of the individualistic school.

The movement known as anarchist-communism was born of revolt. Its founder was a Russian of noble descent – Michael Bakounine – who is also known as the father of nihilism. Bakounine was a delegate to the congress of the International Workingmen’s Association held at the Hague in the year 1872, where, becoming dissatisfied with the authoritarian doctrines of Karl Marx, he, with a few followers, seceded from the main body and proclaimed the doctrine of anarchy. But Bakounine and his friends were collectivists, and rejected alike the authoritarian views of the Marxists or state socialists and the extreme individualist doctrines of Proudhon and Warren. Liberty must be preserved at all hazards. How to harmonize the principle of liberty with the practice of collectivism or communism was the problem to be solved. Their repeated declarations and continual discussions of freedom under communism caused them to be known as anarchist (or free) communists. It was not until several years after Bakounine’s revolt, however, that the doctrine of anarchist-communism was matured, or accepted by any considerable body of the Internationalists. The doctrine of anarchist-communism was accepted by the congress of Internationalists held at Pittsburg, Pa., in October, 1883, at which Albert R. Parsons and August Spies were delegates; and that body issued a manifesto, re-affirming the theories of Bakounine and the European anarchists. At present this school has many able representatives in Europe and America, among whom may be mentioned Kropotkin, whose name is synonymous with goodness and learning, and the eminent French geographer and savant, Elisee Reclus. Two journals in the English language are at present published in the United States by the anarchist-communists:



“The Firebrand,” a weekly, at Portland, Oregon, and “The Rebel,” a monthly magazine issued by the Boston, Mass., group.

## Part II. — Philosophical.

Let us now consider Anarchy from a philosophical standpoint; its *raison d'être*, its nature, possibilities and purposes. To do this intelligently it is necessary to probe deeply into the causes of human conduct and human association. We must get at the very nature of man. What are the motives of human action? What is the purpose of human society? What would be the effect of liberty upon the individual? Within the limits of a small treatise it is not possible to enter into a thorough examination or exposition of these profound problems; our inquiries, therefore, must be based upon the common objections to anarchism, and our investigations deal with those questions which are at all times uppermost in the average mind.

And first it will be well, before entering upon this interesting phase of the subject, to define and analyze the term anarchy, so that the ground may be cleared to the more abstruse questions which follow.

The word anarchy, to most people, is synonymous with disorder, chaos, crime. An anarchist is supposed to be a fiend, constantly seeking to kill and destroy. Timid people are frightened out of their wits by wily politicians and ambitious police officers, who somehow manage to feather their nests by “discovering” anarchist plots and dynamite bombs. But anarchy, *per se*, is not the doctrine of physical violence. It is not the science of making bombs, or the art of throwing them precisely into gatherings of capitalists. It is not a synonym for disorder, chaos and crime. The anarchist does not propose to plunge society into chaotic confusion. It is the very antithesis of invasive force, for it is opposed to all invasion. What, then, is anarchy?

The term is derived from two Greek words, signifying, literally, without rulership, or without a ruler. As there is more than one school of anarchism so there is more than one definition of the term. The difference, however, is so slight as to be almost imperceptible to the common mind. All anarchists agree that it signifies the abolition of the State and invasive authority. The individualists define it as follows:

The doctrine that all the affairs of men should be managed by individuals or voluntary associations and that the State should be abolished.

Anarchist-communists state it nearly the same way. Their definition would be: The doctrine of the abolition of the State, and that all the affairs of men should be managed by voluntary associations. There could be no valid objection to this as a definition of anarchist (or free) communism, but simple anarchy has nothing to do with the management of affairs, it is merely a negation of authority. Anarchy, therefore, may be defined as a condition of society in which invasive government is abolished, and each individual does as he pleases at his own cost. In the Century dictionary – a standard authority – anarchy is defined as

A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal; absolute individual liberty.

The one thing essential is the abolition of the state. And what is the state?

The state is a monster, and we, the people, are its victims. It is none the less an evil because it is sanctioned by the majority. The people for hundreds of years sanctioned and supported feudalism, yet there came a time when it was swept away by the growing intelligence of the masses, in spite of the opposition of a privileged class. So, anarchists believe, it will be with the state; this incubus, said by some to be a “necessary evil” must be rendered unnecessary. The state is responsible for most of the evils which we suffer. It favors the few and discriminates against the many; it sustains monopoly and privilege; it defends usury, and gambling in the necessities of life; it protects the capitalist, and murders the laborer; its army of mercenaries is always on hand to suppress the discontent of the poor and oppressed. It is defended by the soldier, the policeman, the jailer and the hangman, and in its turn supports these parasites on the body politic. Its foundation is force and law is its corner-stone.

Is it desirable that the state should be abolished? Anarchists answer, yes. Would not society become disrupted if the state were abolished? Would not disorder and chaos result? Would not civilization be destroyed? Would not men, without the restraining power of government, seek to gratify their desires and passions by invading the rights of their fellows? A complete answer to any one of these questions would imply an answer to all of them; but for the sake of convenience let us consider them separately, and in the order above set forth.

## **Would not society become disrupted if the state were abolished?**

We have already shown what the state is. Now what is the purpose of human society? It exists solely that man may be enabled the more easily to supply his material wants and to satisfy his desires. Society grows out of the needs of the individual, and exists only for the gratification of those needs. What is this wonderful thing we call society, which we are so fearful of disrupting? Suppose the politicians who comprise the state should awake some fine morning and find their occupation gone. Suppose the offices, from president of this big nation down to constable in one of its smallest villages were abolished. Would men therefore cease to associate to supply their needs? Would the opportunity of organization be gone? Would the earth refuse to yield her plenteous harvests? Would human labor be paralyzed, or any useful institution be destroyed? Says Thomas Paine in his “Common Sense:”

Some writers have so confounded society with government as to leave little or no distinction between them, whereas, they are not only different but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness. The one encourages intercourse; the other creates distinctions. ... Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence.

Government – the state – exists principally to enable a few men to rob the vast majority. It had its origin in the strong arm and the craving for rulership. In the beginning of human association the man whose physical powers were the greatest became chief. His will was expressed in commands or laws, the disobedience of which meant punishment by slavery or death.

Many have read Paine’s splendid arguments against monarchical rule. But Paine did not go far enough. He did not see that the sound logic which he used with such telling effect against kings and lords could be advanced with equal force against all forms of government. Our rulers

are just as much rulers as were the monarchs of old. While they are in power we must obey their will, and one party or another is always in power. Abolish the state, and the individuals who compose society would be free. Free to organize for the purpose of producing, distributing and exchanging wealth; free to associate on terms of equity to increase the sum total of human happiness. Society has not and cannot have other objects than these.

## **Would not disorder and chaos result from the abolition of government?**

Is man inherently invasive and tyrannical? If he is, all our fine-spun theories of social reorganization go for naught. If the deeds of violence daily committed in our midst are the result of man's natural depravity, there is more need of salvation armies and evangelist than of social reformers. But the soul of civilized man revolts from such a doctrine, and our daily experience justifies our horror of it. It is true there are invasive men; men who love power and trample into the dust those who stand in their way. It is true we have mischief makers, property destroyers, thieves and murderers. It is probably true that we are little better than half-developed barbarians. But it is true also that all this is the result of abnormal conditions of life in human society and unscientific regulations of human conduct. Men are the creatures of their surroundings; better conditions would produce better men. A condition of freedom would in time develop freedom loving and freedom respecting individuals. With natural opportunities free – as they would be under anarchism – the incentive to cheat, to rob, to all deeds of violence and disorder, would nearly be gone. Government breeds crime and often protects criminals, by granting special privileges to favored individuals and corporations, and by exalting the rights of property over the rights of man.

The theory that government is not essential to the preservation of order has been defended by some of the world's leading thinkers. Thomas Paine, in "Rights of Man," observes:

A great part of that order which reigns among mankind is not the effect of government. It had its origin in the principles of society and the natural constitution of man. It existed previous to government and would exist if the formality of government were abolished. The mutual dependence and reciprocal interest which man has in man and all the parts of a civilized community upon each other, create that great chain of connection which holds it together.

Continuing, he shows the interdependence of the units of society, how common interest regulates their concerns, and concludes by declaring that "society performs for itself almost everything which is ascribed to government."

The note Unitarian minister, William Elery Channing, in the introduction to his works, written in 1841, supports the same theory in the following words:

Social order is better preserved by liberty than by restraint. ... Liberty would prove the best peace officer. The social order of New England, without a soldier and almost without a police, bears loud witness to this truth.

What the noted divine could not fail to notice was seen even more clearly by the famous philosopher, Ralph Waldo Emerson. In his “Miscellanies” (Speech on Affairs in Kansas) he boldly declares:

I am glad to see that the terror at disunion and anarchy is disappearing. Massachusetts, in its heroic days, had no government – was an anarchy. Every man stood on his own feet, was his own governor, and there was no breach of peace from Cape Cod to Mount Hoosac. ... The Saxon man, when he is well awake, is not a pirate but a citizen, all made of hooks and eyes, and links himself naturally to his brothers as bees hook themselves together in a loyal swarm.

Another distinguished American writer, Washington Irving, strengthens the same theory. In his “Knickerbocker’s History of New York,” he makes the quaint old Dutchman say:

For my part I have not so bad an opinion of mankind as many of my brother philosophers. I do not think poor, human nature so sorry a piece of workmanship as they would make it out to be; and so far as I have observed I am fully satisfied that man, if left to himself, would about as readily go right as wrong. It is only this eternally sounding in his ears that it is his duty to go right that makes him go the very reverse. The noble independence of his nature revolts at the intolerable tyranny of law and the perpetual interference of officious morality which is ever besetting his path with finger posts and directions to keep to the right as the law directs; and like a spirited urchin he turns directly contrary, and gallops through mud and mire, over hedges and ditches, merely to show that he is a lad of spirit and out of his leading strings. And these opinions are amply substantiated by what I have above said of our worthy ancestors, who, never being be-preached and be-lectured, and guided and governed by statutes and by-laws, as are their more enlightened descendants, did one and all demean themselves honestly and peaceably.

What strong arraignment against government can we have than this, that it forces people to be disorderly and dishonest?

## **Would not civilization be destroyed if government were abolished?**

When we look about us and behold the wretchedness, want and suffering of our fellows in this highly civilized country, and when we realize that like misery is the concomitant of civilization everywhere, we may be pardoned if we show little concern for its preservation. But whatever strictures we may deservedly make upon the civilization of the past and present, we have an ideal conception of a higher civilization which will be realized under anarchy: the civilization of justice and solidarity. What is civilization? Does it mean great cities, enormous buildings, costly jewels, rich apparel, magnificent equipages, the power to filch from labor under protection of the law? Are venal legislators, a corrupt judiciary, a subsidized press, the existence of soulless, grinding monopolies, an idle, extravagant rich class and a slavish, wretched poor class proper manifestations of civilization? Surely not. And yet, these are almost the only visible evidences

of that exalted state of civilization which is so highly praised and which we are said to enjoy. Without these what would remain? Why books, the arts and sciences, learning, honor, the charity "which suffereth long and is kind," the power to organize, to create and to distribute. These we would still have, and they are about all that is worth saving in our present state of "civilization." And with the abolition of privileges, with opportunities and raw material free, there would be an abundance for all; there would be peace; there would be general happiness. This would be true civilization. The state (government) destroys equality, subverts liberty, prostitutes justice. Abolish the state and all these may be enjoyed without stint. Buckle, in his great work, "History of Civilization," says:

The great enemy of civilization is the protective spirit, by which I mean the notion that society cannot prosper unless the affairs of life are watched over and protected at nearly every turn by the state and church, the state teaching men what they are to do, and the church what they are to believe.

### **Would not men, without the restraining power of government, seek to gratify their desires and passions by invading the rights of their fellows?**

Since it is admitted that we are little better than half developed barbarians, this objection seems a formidable one; but after considering all the conditions which enter into a state of freedom the objection vanishes like mist under the influence of a summer sun.

It is said that the state exists to suppress crime, and some people maintain that the only reason for the existence of the state is the presence of crime. But what is crime? According to Walker (American Law)

A crime, in its legal acceptance, signifies any act to which the law attaches a penalty or punishment, without any reference to its moral turpitude.

There are crimes affecting the public welfare, crimes affecting private persons, and crimes affecting private property. Of all these it may be said that nine-tenths directly or indirectly affect, and are in some manner caused by, the institution of private property. Why are crimes committed against private property? Because of its monopolization and the special privileges which surround it. The poor are denied equal opportunities to create and exchange wealth. They are made desperate; and poverty and desperation breed crime. Nine-tenths of all the crimes enumerated in our statutes are caused by inequalities sanctioned by the common law! Abolish poverty, therefore, by abolishing the state, and nine-tenths of the crimes now committed will cease. Of the other one-tenth, comprising crimes against the person and against the public welfare, such as homicide, rape, perjury, etc., the records of criminal trials will show fully one-half to have been directly or indirectly caused by our unjust property relations. Now if these facts are admitted – and they cannot be successfully controverted – any condition of society which will cause poverty to disappear will tend to abolish nearly all crime. But this is not all. It will be remembered that only those acts are considered criminal, in a legal sense, which the law designates as criminal, without any reference to their moral turpitude. When the Standard Oil Company, by reason of the

special privileges which it has from the government, ruins a rival concern and drives its owner into bankruptcy and to a suicide's grave, *that* is not criminal in the eyes of the law, although, morally, the offenses of robbery and murder have been committed. Nor is it considered criminal for a rich employer to pay such low wages to his female employees that they are compelled to live by selling their bodies on the public streets. Abolish poverty and the fear of want, extirpate rent, interest, profit and taxes by doing away with the state, and there will be no more crime, legal or otherwise. How this can be done will be shown in the third part of this work.

You cannot force men to be good or non-invasive any more that you can force them to be learned, or pious, or sensible. Coercion never did nor never will produce happy results. Says Herbert Spencer in his "Social Statics:"

By no process can coercion be made equitable. The freest form of government is only the least objectionable form. The rule of the many by the few we call tyranny. The rule of the few by the many is tyranny also, only of a less intense kind.

Put a uniform upon a man, given him a club and clothe him with a little brief authority, and you have made him an autocrat. He feels that he is expected to do something to show his zeal for good government, and some poor wretch locked up with a broken head is the result. The exercise of authority tends to make men arrogant, domineering, brutal. Of the passion for power Spencer says:

Christianity has joined with all history in inspiring me with a peculiar dread and abhorrence of the passion for power, for dominion over men, ... It is the most satanic of all human passions, and has inflicted more terrible evils on the human family than all others. It has made the names of king and priest the most appalling in history.

There are people who contend that a highly centralized form of government is necessary to progress, and that decentralization (and anarchy is the very essence of decentralization) would surely lead to barbarism and savagery, if not total extinction. Those who thus argue have studied to little purpose the trend of human progress. Not in the direction of militarism must we look for the advancement of the race, but along the clear pathway leading to free contract. Spencer has shown that the law of all progress is "from the simple to the complex, through successive differentiations," that even the climates of the earth are subject to these changes. In his essay on "Progress: Its Law and Cause," he says:

On passing from humanity under its individual form to humanity as socially embodied, we find the general law still more variously exemplified. The change from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous is displayed equally in the progress of civilization as a whole, and in the progress of every tribe or nation; and is still going on with increasing rapidity.

Kropotkin, the noble Russian anarchist, brings out the same idea in these words:

As to the system of philosophy which saw in the state a leader to progress, it was more and more shaken as it became evident that progress is the more effective when it is not checked by state interference. It thus became obvious that a further advancement in social life does not lie in a further concentration of power and regulative functions in the hands of a governing body, but in the direction of decentralization.

I have endeavored to show that anarchy, as a philosophical theory, is based on a well known law of progress; that its universal acceptance and adoption, far from plunging society into confusion, crime and misery, would lead us into the perpetual sunshine of Liberty, Peace and Plenty.

We now have to consider that portion of our inquiry which deals with the Economical Basis of Anarchy.



## Part III. — Economical.

It is not my purpose, in this essay, to enter into an extended inquiry or explanation concerning economic science. I shall take it for granted at the outset that the reader is tolerably familiar with the laws which regulate the production, distribution and exchange of wealth. It is generally conceded, even by orthodox political economists, that all wealth is the product of labor. This being granted, it follows as a logical sequence that all wealth should, in the first instance, belong to labor; that whoever derives income from any other source, unless by gift or free contract, abstracts it, directly or indirectly from labor, and thus robs the laborer of his just due. We know that the laborer is thus robbed, and by a simple process of elimination we discovered that this fleecing is done through rent, interest, profit and taxes. Rent is the tribute levied upon labor by the landlord; interest and profit represent the tribute which the merchant, the manufacturer, the banker and the stockholder are enabled to levy upon labor because of privilege; taxes, the tribute exacted from labor to support the politician and government. Now rent, interest and profit are made possible only through legal privilege or monopoly. The law protects the landlord, the manufacturer, the merchant and the broker in levying blackmail on labor, and those representatives of a class interest are thus enabled to live and grow rich without themselves producing wealth. Therefore, say the anarchists, abolish monopoly and privilege by destroying the state, and, opportunities then being equal, the wealth created by labor will flow into natural channels enriching those who are in equity entitled to it.

But the objection may here arise that capital, being one of the factors in the production of wealth, is entitled to a share in the product; that the merchant, manufacturer, etc., are the representatives of capital, and justly receive their share in the form of interest and profit; while the landlord, being the owner of lands and tenements, is entitled to rent for the use thereof. Capital, however, is a mere tool, a senseless bit of metal or wood, itself the product of labor, and used to aid in the production of wealth. Being produced by labor, conjointly with the other element of production, land, it should have no other representative but the laborer. In other words capital is of itself but a secondary factor in wealth production, is a product conjointly of labor and land, (meaning by land all the raw materials of the earth in a state of nature) and should be owned and controlled solely by the intelligent representative of labor – the laborer.

All anarchists agree that the state must be abolished ere equal liberty can be achieved. Those of the individualistic school, seeing the dangers to individual liberty which lurk under a regime of state control, fly to the other extreme and advocate universal free competition; while anarchist-communists, recognizing the great principle of human fraternity and solidarity, plead for the communal group form of society. Competition, maintain the individualists, would free credit, and enhance its organization. This would in turn bring down the price of capital to its cost and abolish monopoly in all its forms.

According to this school there are four forms of monopoly: Money monopoly, land monopoly, tariff monopoly and patent monopoly. The monopoly of money is to be abolished by repealing the 10 per cent tax upon the issuance of money by other agencies except the government; thus,

by making the business of banking free to all, competition would reduce the price of issuing money to the labor cost, which, it is estimated, would be less than one per cent. Thus interest, which depends upon the monopoly of money, would fall at a blow.

Next in importance, say the individualists, is the monopoly of land. This consists in the privilege granted by government to persons who hold land out of occupancy and use. Abolish all titles to unoccupied land; this would raise the margin of cultivation so high that ground rent would disappear. According to some of the thinkers of this school, there are two forms of rent: Monopolistic rent, which arises from the power granted by government to holders of unused land, and economic or natural rent, which arises from superiority of location or other advantage for carrying on industrial occupations.

Third is tariff monopoly. This is a form of taxation placed by the government upon the individual for the privilege of purchasing goods in the cheapest market. The abolition of tariff monopoly would reduce the prices of all articles taxed, and thus enable laborers to more nearly secure the product of their labor.

Patent monopoly is the fourth and last form we have to consider. This enables the owners of patents and copyrights to exact a reward enormously in excess of the just measure of their services. No one has a right to put a price upon an idea, which may perhaps have occurred to one or more other persons at the same time. Too often the real inventor is prevented by circumstances from benefiting by his discovery, while the shrewd cunning and unscrupulous reap a stolen reward. The absence of this monopoly and the exercise of free competition would stimulate invention and greatly decrease the number of worthless process and contrivances.

The right of the individual to freedom is supreme. Secession and rebellion are inalienable rights. The right of the individual to his own product is as great as his sovereignty over his own person. Under anarchy all the relations of life are to be entered into by free contract. Voluntary association will take the place of the organized state.

Anarchists formulate a law for each of the factors or elements of distribution, rent, interest, wages, profit and taxes. Profit being that portion of wealth going to exchange because of privilege, will disappear with the abolition of the state. Rent, interest and taxes will also be reduced to minimum quantities, and wages will absorb more. All that is saved through the abolition of monopoly will, in fact, go to wages, and laborers thus receive the full value of their product.

Such is, in brief, the economical basis of anarchy. So far as we have gone there can be little if any difference between the views expressed by the exponents of the two schools. Both would extirpate rent, interest, profit and compulsory taxation, and thus secure to the producer the entire fruit of his toil. Both would abolish the state, leaving the individual free to choose whatever form of voluntary association he preferred. It is in the choice of organization, and therefore in the constructive theories which are to result from freedom, that the difference exists between anarchists of the Liberty school and anarchist-communists. Although these differences, or the doctrines relating to constructive socialism, have nothing whatever to do with the economical basis of anarchy, they yet constitute such an important part of the whole subject that a work of this kind would scarcely be complete without at least a partial examination and analysis of them. I will, therefore, as briefly as possible attempt to explain the doctrine of individualism, as laid down by its chief advocates, and that of communism as understood by those who teach it intelligently.

# Individualism vs. Communism

I have chosen the above caption for this part of my thesis, not because I believe there is, or can be, any antagonism between individualism and (free) communism, but simply out of deference to the opinion of those adherents of the two schools who do; because I recognize that they greatly outnumber those who are of my belief. To me there can be no greater absurdity than to suppose my sovereignty as an individual must be relinquished because I choose to associate myself with others to hold our goods in common. And yet, perhaps because of the empirical nature of these theories, I recognize that there must be differences of opinion; although I will endeavor, in what follows, to give only those views which may be indorsed by the respective followers of both schools.

Freedom being secured by the abolition of the state, the individualists would set to work to organize industry, issue money, establish commerce, and provide insurance against risk by fire, flood, tempest or the invasions of other individuals. Competition, both in production and distribution, would be the basis of their constructive plans. Industry would be organized on a co-operative basis, leaving individuals free to compete with one another. Free competition, it is asserted, would free capital, and bring the price of its use down to cost. Rent, interest and profit being abolished, the only other factors in distribution would be wages and insurance. The latter being reduced to cost by competition, wages would receive its full reward.

Free commerce and industry would be accompanied by free money. This would be accomplished by establishing mutual banks, which would issue notes against the deposit, as collateral, of useful products by those who wished to loan. Free competition in banking, it is claimed, would reduce the cost to less than one per cent. Thus interest would fall, and would create a great demand for labor, resulting in an unprecedented impetus to business of all kinds.

Insurance would be organized on a similar competitive basis. This would not only embrace the ordinary kinds of compensation for risk in case of fire, accident, etc., but would include organizations for the restraint and punishment of crime and other invasive actions. Private property being cherished as a necessary institution under individualism, it is inferred, and feared, that there will be thieves, murderers and other criminals; this will necessitate the organization of a police system, jails, courts, and, perhaps, hangmen. Persons who did not choose to pay for protection against invaders, would, of course, be compelled to remain unprotected. Taxation would be voluntary. All land titles being destroyed, the present system of land ownership would be succeeded by the holding of land for occupancy and use, though it is not clear how apportionment, boundaries, etc., are to be adjusted.

Such is to be the programme of constructive society under private property and free competition, as laid down by the exponents of anarchist-individualism.

Time was when the doctrine of anarchist-communism was ridiculed as an absurdity; a contradiction in terms; as impossible, as an individualistic writer declared, as a white black-man. Time was, also, when many communists, by making irrational statements, invited that ridicule, and injured the cause of anarchist-communism. Let us hope that reflection and study has aided both

sides to see their error. If communism is not possible under anarchy, then the mutual bank, or organization for defense are not possible either. But what do anarchist-communists propose?

On the achievement of freedom, the organization of industry, and plans for the welfare and happiness of each member of the community, must be put into operation. Persons having common tastes and common desires would be drawn together by the law of natural selection. As those tastes and desires vary in different individuals, and as such locations would naturally be chosen as would be best adapted to further the ends proposed, various forms of industry and social life would be organized. In some such way as this the group system would be constructed. Each individual would have the absolute right to withdraw from any group organization at pleasure, thus securing to each absolute sovereignty, and freedom of action. Production would be carried on co-operatively, all factories, workshops, machinery, storehouses, etc., in each group being owned in common by the members of that group. Each group would regulate the distribution and exchange of its own product among its own members according to plans agreed upon, which, of course would be without interest or profit. The autonomous groups would exchange products in like manner; thus establishing a system of equitable commerce between the different groups. Land, and all the raw materials of the earth, would be held in common. The fundamental principle of communism being, "From each according to his ability; to each according to his needs;" every member of the communal home or group would be assured a living, not as a duty owed him by the others, but as a right because of his existence. Commerce, as we understand it, would not be used, but instead, a friendly interchange of commodities based upon reciprocity would be established. There would be no anxiety concerning difference of accounts, hours of work, quantity of material used, for there would be no accounts, and enough and more than enough would be provided for all. This latter assumption is based upon the well known fact that the productive capacity of society is far in excess of the consumptive capacity. It is therefore almost a matter of certainty that a very few hours devoted to labor would supply the needs of the community. No money would be used, or needed, either to effect exchanges between members of the same group, or to facilitate those between the different communal groups; although money might be necessary to assist in effecting exchanges with the rest of the world.

The model of the group-home would be the well-regulated, orderly, harmonious family. Delinquent members would be advised, shamed, and, if necessary, boycotted into a sense of duty. No offense, however heinous, would subject a transgressor to a death penalty, or other excessive punishment. If it is reasonable to suppose, however, that in a community where the necessities of life would be as free as the air, invaders would be exceedingly rare.

Co-operation would take the place of competition. The former is ennobling to the individual, bringing into active operation every humane and generous faculty of mind and heart. The latter is based upon selfishness, which experience has shown is liable to degenerate into sordidness and greed.

The desire for private property is an unnatural propensity, bred in human beings by fear of want and its attendant evils. Its possession stimulates pride, arrogance and greedy ambition. Universal prosperity and abundance would tend to eradicate this desire, as it would make the possession of private property unnecessary and cumbersome.

Not only would private property, under anarchy, be inexpedient; it would also be unjust. It is impossible for a person to prove exclusive ownership in a thing. Scores, perhaps hundreds of people have contributed time, labor, skill and material in the manufacture of the smallest article

– even a pin. I cannot do better here than to quote from an address issued by the Internationals of France, in 1873:

All accumulated wealth is the product of the toil of all – of all the existing generation and of all the generations that have preceded it. The house in which we are now met together owes its value to its being situated in Paris; this superb city upon which twenty generations have spent their labor. Transport it to the snows of Siberia, and its value would be next to nothing. That machine you have invented and patented has in it the intelligence of five or six generations; it is valuable only as a part of that immense whole that we call the industry of the nineteenth century. Transport your lace-making machine to the pampas of New Guinea, and there its value will be nothing. Finally, this book, this work of genius you have composed – we defy you, genius of our century are you are, to point out the precise part of your superb deductions that is due to your intelligence! Things tangible? A whole generation has toiled to accumulate them. Ideas? It is perhaps the locomotive furrowing the fields that has suggested them to you. The beauty of form? It is by admiring the Venus of Milo or the work of Murillo that you have discovered it. And if your book has any influence over us it is due to the general effects of our civilization. All belongs to all! And we defy any man to tell use the exact part that each has a right to claim in the social wealth. Here is an immense plant that the nineteenth century has created; here are millions of the iron slaves that we call machines, which plane and saw, weave and spin for us, which decompose and recombine the raw material and make the fabrics that are the marvels of our age. No one has any right to seize upon one of these machines and say to others: “This is mine; if you wish to use this machine for productive purposes you must pay me tribute on everything that you produce” – ; no more right than had the seigneur of the middle ages to say to his cultivator: “This hill, this meadow is mine, and you must pay me tribute on every sheaf of wheat you garner, on every rick of hay you put up.”

# Conclusion

The task which I set out to perform is complete, and I hasten to conclude.

There is no hope for present or future generations except through revolt to liberty. Monopoly, entrenched in legal privilege, controls the nation. We are in the grasp of a giant octopus. Every attempt to release ourselves from its deadly embrace is followed by an answering pressure. The coils about our bodies only slightly relax their tension when we cease to struggle. Yet year by year, through our supineness and folly we find the encircling folds multiplied. To submit is to court the existence of beasts; to resist is to win freedom for ourselves and posterity. As men worthy of freedom we must struggle unremittingly against this monster. There must be no weakness; no temporizing. We must release ourselves from its envenomed folds.

I care not what means are employed to overthrow existing oppression. To me all means are justifiable in a noble cause. The methods and weapons of one individual may be the sport or execration of another; what matters the means, if tyranny is driven to bay? Vain alike to us should be the plaudits and imprecations of a senseless multitude! Our reward will be the satisfaction of a fight well fought.

Well may we be proud to walk in the footsteps of those undying martyrs who risked all, gave all for liberty! Back in the gloom of the dark ages, amid the bloody carnage of the field and the torture of the dungeon, they saw a tiny crystal stream. In the name of sweet religion they bathed in its clear waters. Again and again, as time went on, the stream was seen and embraced, bathed therein. And now the tiny stream has become a broad, swift-flowing state. Yet now, as of old, those who clear the way for its advance risk all, give all they have. Vain, vain are the mighty obstructions which foolish men place in its path. The rising waters – fed by the tears and blood of innumerable martyrs – will not recede. The dams will break and be swept away, and with them every vestige of divine and human authority over the lives and liberties of men.

“Tyranny oft in days of yore  
Hath stained its victims racked and bleeding;  
Yet freedom;s river swells the more  
Amid oppression, interceding  
For thirsty souls and hungry hearts;  
Till strength to muscle thought imparts  
To act, instead of idly pleading.”

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William Holmes  
The Historical, Philosophical and Economical Bases of Anarchy  
January 1896

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