

# anarchist fortnightly Freedom

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## Just in time..

How nice it would have been for Mrs Thatcher to cross the Atlantic to greet President Reagan with an unblemished record of success.

This would have been especially valuable in view of the relative inexperience of the new-old President in the win-some, lose-some pragmatism which grows rhinoceros hides on experienced political shysters. He would have been so impressed.

Indeed, though Maggie herself has grown up in the cut-and-thrust of Parliamentary juggling in the Mother of Parliaments, she too, is relatively inexperienced in shadow boxing where it really matters: with her class enemies.

This is why she was able to be so dogmatic in sticking to her policies no matter what they cost everybody else. Economy cuts? make people stand on their own two feet. Unemployment? Regrettable necessity. Factory closures? Trimming down to a fighting weight.

What she forgot to ascertain was just what weight she was actually fighting at. She might then have flipped back through the history books a mere seven years to see what was happening in the heavyweight league then, when she would have been reminded of something you would have thought she would never forget: that her immediate predecessor as Tory leader was sent packing by the organised miners in 1974.

Then, Edward Heath, striving to contain the inflation he had helped to create, was foolish enough to try a head-on clash with the miners--always a formidable force and nowadays stronger, better fed, more confident than ever they were in 1926. Heath went down for the count. And out.

That's how Maggie got her chance to make it to the top--first woman to do so in this country. But that made no difference to the power-hunger that provides the drive for the job. Linked with her dogmatism, Maggie was hell-bent on a collision course with the most powerful economic force in the country: that section of the working class which provides the motive fuel for the rest of us.

Never mind your oil; never mind your nuclear power. Britain's economy still depends on coal. And why not? As Aneurin Bevan once said: 'The whole bloody island is built on it.'

If Maggie is to be congratulated on anything in the events of last week, it is that she had the sense to pull back. In one brief flash she saw the light and remembered poor Ted. The miners said, in effect, 'So far and no farther'.

The big question for us is, why don't the miners say 'Hands off' to all the parasites, give a lead to the whole working class and take over the mines--for the benefit of the whole community?



# Squatting in Southampton & London

## THE HOUSING SITUATION IN SOUTHAMPTON

WHILE many people in the city own their houses and many live in Council provided houses, there are a great many who are mostly dependent on the private sector to provide a roof over their heads. In order to do this exorbitant rents have to be paid, extorted from people by greedy house owners counting on the absolute need of individuals to have a roof over their heads to make them pay up. It is now not unusual for rents of £15 pw. to be demanded for the use of one room. £10 pw. is the norm. Though we deplore the constant increases in Council rents it is possible to obtain a house for that kind of money - if you are amongst those that the Council accepts responsibility for housing, and increasing numbers of us are not so fortunate!

## SQUATTING

IN THE light of this situation we make no apologies for our response to the problem of providing ourselves with dwellings. We have moved into premises which have been compulsorily purchased by the Council and left unoccupied for periods up to and over one year. Now, good houses are again providing shelter which is what they were built for. It seems to us that no acceptable justification can be offered by the Council for their criminally wasteful policies on housing provision.

## THE HOUSING SHORTAGE AND DESTRUCTION OF GOOD HOUSES

THE building of council houses has



virtually stopped in Britain. To meet the current need for houses 300,000 must be built each year. In 1980 barely half that number were built. Recently Housing Associations working on the renovation of houses have had their grants curtailed. And yet councils everywhere, including Southampton, in their idiocy, apparently just to make matters worse, insist on the destruction of perfectly habitable houses.

It seems to us reasonable to suggest that while there is a need NO houses should be demolished unless in dangerous condition.

## THE LOCAL SITUATION

EMPRESS and Duke roads are to be bulldozed to make way for light industrial developments. To provide more jobs they say, but what good are jobs to homeless people? It is not unusual for Southampton Council to obtain whole streets of houses which it then leaves empty for up to 2 years before demolition. This happened with Brintons Road - We do not wish to see it happen in this area.

It is already rumoured that given the current economic situation firms may be prevented from making the necessary investments to develop the area. It is important to make sure that the Council does not OK the demolition of dwellings:

- 1) for which there is a proven need
- 2) when there is any doubt about the future of the sites.

### Support and Enquiries

In welcoming any support people feel they can offer, we would like to emphasize that we feel completely justified in the action we have taken. Houses that were becoming vandalised and derelict have taken on a new lease of life and have again become homes for people. Anyone interested to contact us, discuss the situation, can offer help, are in serious housing need, or wish to consider squatting, call or write:

52 Empress Road  
Bevois Valley  
Southampton.

AFTER Kilner House all ended, the campaign against council houses being sold off on the open market became more formal as a group gathered together calling itself Squat Against the Sales -SAS- using such original slogans as 'Dare to struggle, dare to win'. Its latest action is to occupy (they don't seem to like saying 'squat') Sherry's Wharf Estate in Hackney, east London. This estate is a newly built development on the River Lea near Hackney Marshes, built by the GLC - initially with the intention of letting the houses and flats to tenants on the adjacent King's Mead Estate which consists of pre-war blocks in pretty shitty condition.

Halfway through building the GLC changed its mind and ripped out all the special facilities for old people that had been incorporated into the flats such as alarms, waist-high lightswitches etcetera, and decided to let the properties under a high rents system to encourage people to buy them. Rents are £31 a week for a single bedroom flat and £48 for a two bedroom house. To qualify for one of these places prospective tenants have to prove that they have a take home pay of five times the rent. As for the local tenants, they have just been left to rot as usual on a dilapidated estate where they haven't even got adequate rubbish chutes.

The SAS hope to draw attention to this situation with their occupation of the blocks and gain the support of the local tenants and eventually get the flats let to the people at Kingsmead who were promised them in the first place, at the same rents as they are paying now.

DS





# IN BRIEF

## FREE !

NEWS from France (though with no mention in the establishment press) is that Octavio Alberola and the nine others accused of anti-Franco activities have been acquitted following the trial in Paris. Good news, indeed !

## ACTIVITIES IN LYON

NEWS from Lyon is that there will be several Journées Libertiaires there during June, including films, music, debates and discussion. Anyone interested in taking part, write to:

Librairie la Gryffe  
5 rue Sebastien Gryphe  
69007 LYON, France.

We hope to have news, in a not-too-future edition, of their meeting, this month, with Vladimir Borissov, dissident Russian worker, founder of the Soviet free trade union. Further activities in Lyon include a meeting with members of Polish Solidarity and the beginnings of a Campaign against the French Communist Party, which is, in the words of a recent letter from Lyon, 'more racist, fascist, moralist, than the parties of the extreme right.' Now, who would have thought that ? Don't all shout at once !

## SAS HIT LONDON STAGE

ONE particular piece of nastiness being presented as entertainment on stage at the Jeanette Cochrane Theatre this month is a play by Euan Smith called 'No Names...No Medals', sub-titled 'A Story of the SAS' - unsuitable for children. Readers of FREEDOM will not need reminding that these types being lauded as 'heroes' and as defenders of the Land of the Free in fact shot 5 unarmed men in cold blood during the siege at the Iranian Embassy, and their exploits were brought into question at the ensuing Coroner's Court of Enquiry and with a certain amount of press comment. Control of the situation at the Iran Embassy was handed over to the SAS Regiment on May Bank Holiday last year at 6.56 pm. Fourty minutes later 5 men were dead. This suspect play being presented by RADA, apparently dwells at length during the second half on the 'jubilant aftermath of champagne and telegrams'. During the last 20 years, the SAS have been used in support of tyrants, tribal chiefs and disintegrating regimes through the world-usually in total secrecy. Graduates from this arm of state oppression have gone on to serve as mercenaries for racist or fascist administrations, as in Rhodesia. Serving members of the SAS are presently acting as advisers to the American Counter-Insurgency Forces who are at the moment on operations in El Salvador.

Dr. Knapman told the jury at the Coroner's Court that 'it was reasonable to shoot first and ask questions afterwards.' Remember that when next you hear or read the latest piece of state condemnation of violence of other 'terrorists' and remember that it's apparently O.K. and fine by everyone to put

on cosy little plays extolling the virtues of the brand of terrorism that washes whiter than white. There is no honour in repeated and sadistic gunplay of suspect motive. 'He Who Dares' apparently passes into facile and false folklore, graced by the skills of RADA members and a nasty little theatre in Holborn.

Awg

## SPOT THE BALLS

Washington : 'We are going to take whatever measures are necessary ... nothing will be ruled out'

Moscow : 'Let no one doubt our intentions to secure our interests.'

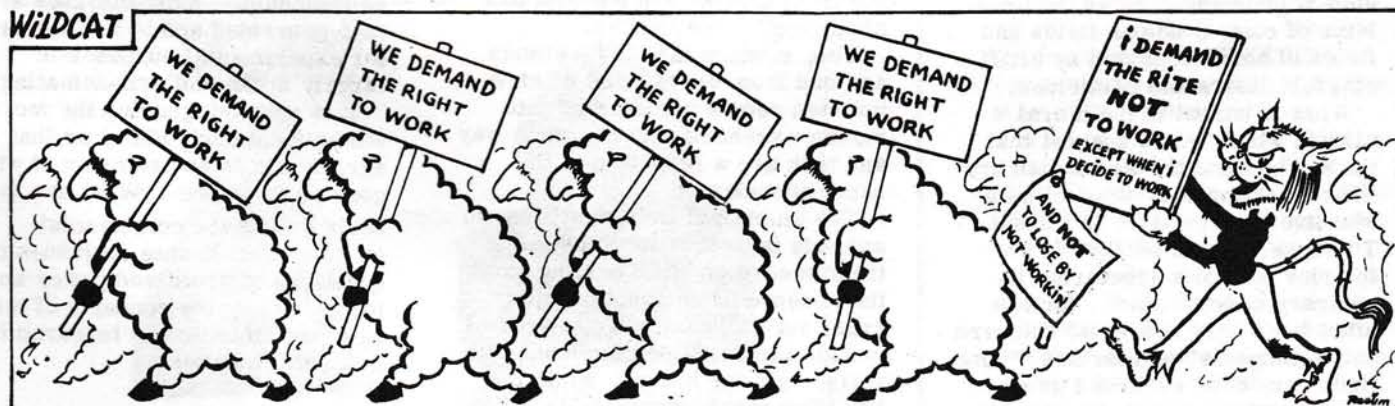
IN a statement issued today from the Kremlin/White House, President Reagan/Brezhnev declared that the USA/USSR would defend its interests in Poland/El Salvador with all the means at his disposal. He said 'we will not remain passive in the face of this Communist/Imperialist challenge.'

He revealed that the cause of unrest in Poland/El Salvador was due to Communist/Imperialist elements seeking to undermine the peace-loving, caring Socialist/Democratic government.

He denied allegations of torture and wilful murder of political opponents; said this was CIA/KGB propaganda designed to unsettle the peaceful workers of El Salvador/Poland.

In a further statement from the Pentagon/Kremlin, Defence Chiefs accused Washington/Moscow of heightening world tension and increasing the arms race in their attempts at Communist/Imperialist Domination.

MAK





# 7,000 Deaths Each Week

WITH a consumption of one rabbit a year per person, France now claims to be the largest 'producer' of this mammal in the world. The trade in more than 200,000 tonnes of rabbit-meat per year is now greater than that of sheep and almost exclusively intensive methods of 'production' are used.

The rabbits are raised primarily for their meat, but increasingly are being used to supply the fur trade with skins. Coats and gloves labelled 'Made in Taiwan', 'Hong Kong' or 'Corée du Sud' are finding their way to the French market, and items have appeared in Marks and Spencers in the UK labelled as rabbit fur. Whatever the label in France, it is known that the rabbit skins have come from the intensive establishments in Brittany, the Auvergne or the abattoirs of Toulouse and Laval. Although recent researches have shown that rabbits raised in non-intensive conditions and fed on hay, carrots

and crusts (killed in winter, when adult) produce a thicker and silkier fur than those raised in abominable intensive conditions and fed on nothing but granules and fattened in cages, these conditions still prevail and whilst there remains a market for the products of this hellish trade then they will continue and worsen. At the moment, a new breed of angora rabbit is being 'studied' whose fur is similar in texture, colour and quality to that of the Silver Fox.

In the abattoirs of Lapalisse (Allier) 7,000 rabbits are killed each week. WHAT an outcry there would be if these figures related to a so-called 'higher' form of life.

The French technocrats, with characteristic managerial priorities, are bemoaning the fact that many skins are exported to areas of cheap labour (Taiwan, the Philippines) where they are finished into marketable products and then returned to France for sale. They bemoan the decreasing number of

apprentices being found for French tanneries and furriers. They cry into their Pernod when shown details of how furriers are sending technicians to China to teach methods of finishing in a new factory established with German capital.

I would be happier to read international news such as this countered on each occasion by Animal Liberation principles, and it is time that such Liberation secured an international footing. If we, as individuals and as internationalists are concerned to survive nuclear and authoritarian threat, then we have to establish right now that the world that we wish to survive is non-specist, with a realisation that because we, as homo sapiens, have the capability to hold the world hostage, we do not have the exclusive right to its space, its resources or its future.

Lyenne

# Biological Realities

THE difficulty of urban life is that it breeds extremism, mainly because it is so divorced from biological realities. Anarchism has nothing to do with extremism of any sort, it is to do with the balance of life - human, vegetable, animal. It is the disturbance of this balance by commercial and power structured society that has caused so much difficulty in the ecological world.

Just as the excessive use of animal products creates the problems of context so can fields and fields of corn supported by artificial fertilisers and pesticides.

What is unreal is the moral elitism which would suggest that the Eskimo and the Red Indian are inferior to those in other climes who live on vegetation in the sun. To suggest that a butcher is an inferior man to a vegetarian is contrary to experience, for one often finds very congenial butchers - and uncongenial vegetarians. One finds very compassionate game-keepers whose knowledge of wild life is phenomenal. The problems

of Indians who come here from the sun as vegetarians and get rickets is well known.

It is quite untrue to say that arable farming is ecologically sound, it is unsound from a biological point of view, as this is not the way nature is. We have all heard of the old saying that 'big fleas have little fleas upon their backs to bite them' and so ad infinitum. What we have now is the segregation of animal farming from arable farming with bad ecological consequences.

Yes, modern farming methods are bad from every point of view, but then people are stacked into human warehouses in the same way and both are a reflection of the same attitudes.

The emotional British attitude to animals is well known, just as is their record on child beating and the absence of unstructured play areas for children. Thousands of pounds can be raised for homes of retirement for horses, while the NCCC gasps for funds. The cities are full of cats and dogs who have

effectively disposed of every small creature that moves, besides fouling the city streets and open spaces.

It is human beings, who have interfered decisively with nature, that for their own good have to achieve some sort of balance with animals and arable agriculture and this has to be done in accordance with the part of the world they live in. The Red Indians and the buffalo lived in a symbiotic relationship. Most diseases are self-generated and to use animals for experimental purposes is largely in the end self-defeating.

It is no good ignoring the fact that animals eat each other, or that agriculture is an extension of what goes on in nature. What has to be dealt with is the commercial attitudes that reduce activities to questions of profit and power and to get back to the concepts of man as a part of nature to be cared for in all its realities.

ALAN ALBON



# NOTE BOOK

NOT long ago, as I travelled on the top deck of a crowded early morning bus, I saw from the steamy window a dead dog lying in the gutter of the road. From some distance I had noticed the shape and had been unable, somehow, to stop looking and to stop being curious. I still re-live the image of that dog, in a fix of slow motion passing, every day. I could imagine then, and can now, the feel of that death-cold, wet, rigid as iron. A dead weight lying in a foul weather morning, seemingly unworthy of anyone's consideration or care, as I, and thousands of other people, made a cold journey from sleeping to working.

As the distant shape had turned from what could have been, to my tired eyes, a small rubbish sack, to dead flesh with legs, a head, and tail, and as the realisation struck with : sadness : horror : anger : powerlessness : that one, lost, life represented in an instant the life of the 'Abyss', our own poor and neglected, children of violence, those who die of malnutrition right next to the million-pound battlefields whilst a well-fed soldiery play out their own death scenes. The dog was and is a victim, in reality and in image. Its small shape remained there, more powerful in its impact than library shelves full of propaganda. A victim, in real terms, of what ? Traffic: frantic and uncaring drivers who wouldn't stop for a drunk ? Hunger: a neglected or unwanted pet or working dog ?



Straying old age: wandering the streets seeking shelter and food ? Violence: from human or animal attack, unbefriended and oppressed as pariah ?

Whatever cause - think for just a moment of that one death in human terms or in higher 'pedigree' animal terms, and if that had applied, imagine the greater concern. OR, imagine that which is perhaps worse in to-day's outlook, imagine the growing tendency to mark as unremarkable and as acceptable the facts that traffic dangers of speed and pollution, hunger, poverty, homelessness, social isolation, violence, are becoming the accepted lot of 'lower' forms of race, class, life, colour, sex, politics. This tendency, which I notice increasing in recent years, I somehow link with the final scenes of the film 'The War Game', where a population hit by nuclear attack, stumbles into an obscene apathy, numbed by horror, shock, suffering and powerlessness in the face of that which can, and is, destroying them. Gone are the last vestiges of what might have been seen as, at least, a solidarity of numbers. Too many people, in this second year of the 80's are governed, taxed, educated, ruled, media de-sensitised, into just this apathy and those few who do rise to destroy it are regarded as aberrations, dangerous, terrorist, insane. They can be, if victimised as example, tortured, imprisoned, murdered.

BUT it is they who are broadcasting the survival seeds, and it is they who would cover a wet, cold and stinking corpse by their own hand and take it to a decent grave. It is they, who find in each death or loss, each momentary failure of tactic or advantage, that fix of realisation and concern which hits as a stimulant to every nerve ending, which causes them to take up arms of pen, action or theatre of propaganda, in the fight for the possibilities of equality of survival for all life, for harmony of human society and the natural world, where each can realise its own potential by its own governing and where the strangling tapes of the pyramid of power are cut for a last time and reduced to ashes.

Ann

## A Project

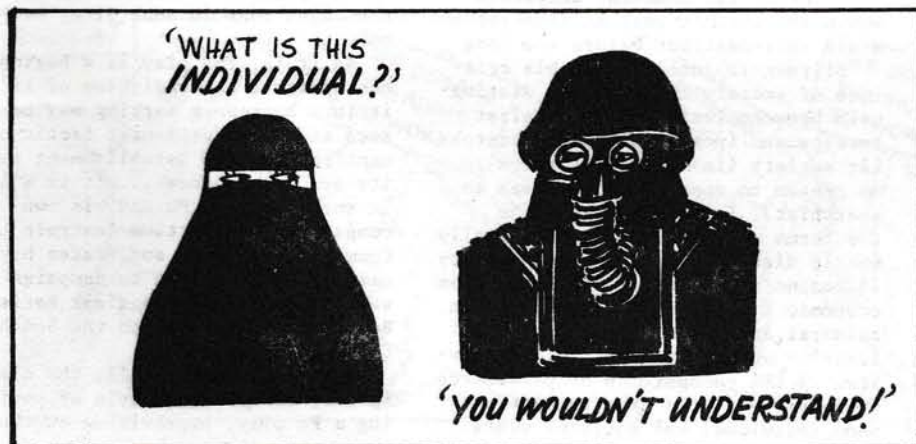
Dear Freedom,

How about an 'Anarchist Projects' section on your 'Contacts' page. This has, I know, been suggested before, and is long overdue - what about doing it - please ! The reasons are self-evident, providing a service for those Anarchist projects in need of help and those readers, regular and irregular (hence the need for it to be a regular feature) who would like to get involved in some down-to-earth Anarchy ! The advantages of a separate heading are that it would draw readers' attention to the possibility of 'doing' as well as talking, encourages more projects to come to light and draw the 'discerning' readers not otherwise concerned with the back page to the availability of 'practical' contacts. If space on the back page isn't available inside will do !

This would be a valuable contribution especially with the new A Distribution to FREEDOM's role as a disseminator of information between anarchists.

With reference to 'Ina l'Orange' article in the February 80 issue of FREEDOM, how about FREEDOM taking the initiative in organising a voluntary levy along the lines of the one in Berlin and Peace News (Defunct ?) Community Levy for A lternative Projects for Anarchists who don't (surprisingly) receive support from the State.

CENTA UR





# LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS

## Lennon

Dear Freedom,

When presented with the spectre of starvation in the Third World the majority of well-fed people come out, like Suzy May, with the stock response 'What will my contribution do? - Very little' - thus providing a neat rationalization for hanging on to their cash.

That Suzy May used this argument to defend John Lennon hanging on to his cash is doubly ludicrous as, if he had decided to give away his last penny, he would have made a substantial contribution to the lives of many (one meal is a substantial contribution when you're starving) - particularly when you consider the massive increase in the amount of his estate following the high world-wide sales of his records after his death.

Suzy May is right when she implies that the responsibility for eliminating starvation belongs to all of us. But at the same time she appears to be blind to the financial value of the contribution that John Lennon could have made. This is finally confirmed in her advice to the editors 'not to get so wrapped in figures and finance of revolution to forget that the most valuable gift that's givable is awareness'.

When you're (as I hope Suzy May will never be) starving; the most valuable gift you can have is food. Whether or not it is the product of a substantial change in awareness of the non-starving world.

Fraternally,

J.D.

Swansea.

## Stirn

Dear FREEDOM

I find your review on Stirner (22 Nov) interesting and provocative.

Unless the Stirnerian becomes a hermit, his philosophy cannot be sincere and practicable at the same time. To live in society, one's philosophy

and practice need to be workable and durable - which is obvious enough. This does not mean one has to make a string of compromises, but rather it is for one's own good to realise common needs and common goals, and the most efficient and constructive ways to realise them - given the society in which one lives.

I know one or two people who come in the 'Stirnerian mould' - outspoken, critical, loud, but whose social-political thoughts have not progressed very far. Most people, admittedly, are attracted to anarchist thought in some form or other through the element of individualism (hence such terms as 'autonomists' and whatnot). If they carry their thoughts further, they will come to the question of social organisation. To arrive at a convivial system of organisation free from authoritarianism, the most efficient and constructive path for one and all would seem to be that of mutual respect and cooperation - stemming largely from the recognition of overlapping self-interests. From there they might then carry their thoughts on to federalism.

But Stirner remains at the starting-post of a pouting adolescent defiance, with no tangible pathways for realising his ideals. It is not Proudhon or Kropotkin or Morris then who is abstract or religious, but Stirner himself who is being fervently utopian, a personalist fundamentalist. What would stop his association of egoists from exploiting one another and everyone else? Would they want to stop themselves from doing so? At any rate, the association of egoists sounds too much like the archetypal joint-stock company to me. It is this element of a rash youthful rebellion, plus an 'I'm allright Jack' attitude, with a dash of superficial existentialism, that in actuality "makes his brand of anarchism the one most congruent to today's situation", as John Carroll puts it. If anything, the association of egoists would be worse than joint-stock capitalism in that it encourages the accumulation of not only material goods, but of non-material goods as well. Indeed, the intrinsic conflict of its members' interests would ensure that such an association would self-destruct before too long.

Stirner is justified in his critique of society if he cannot distinguish between (existing) capitalist society and (post-capitalist) anarchist society (in which case there is no reason to suppose he ever was an anarchist). I would say that the two forms of society are structurally vastly different: capitalist society is rooted in, based on and built upon economic lines; anarchist society on cultural and socioanthropological lines\* - and limited, as a collectivity, by the recognition of parameters expressible as the fine balance between individual and societal wants

and available finite resources.

To consider the horizontal as an 'authority' like the vertical would be to prefer the hermit's way, or to be totally unrealistic. (And as the earth hasn't enough space for everyone to be a hermit, if all want to be, Stirnerianism, where workable, would be an elitist lifestyle anyway).

"But individualism is bourgeois" a Labour councillor once said to me. "Perhaps" I replied, "but anarchist philosophy recognises, as Roszak (Person-Planet) does, the vital distinction between individualism and individuality. Individuality is both acknowledged and encouraged in anarchist society, whereas individualism remains (sometimes only more covertly) the seed of capitalism. Persons who could not see the difference range from Wordsworth to Amis and George-Brown, shunting from left to right like the proverbial drunken driver". To move from a quasi-anarchism through egoism and individualism to a decidedly rightist ethic was also what Mussolini had done, what many in the Futurist art movement had done, and what many in the so-called Libertarian Party in California are doing.\*\* It would be interesting to see whether this wasn't what Stirner would also have done, if he had more time to develop his philosophy (instead of his rhetoric). He certainly seemed to have the potential for developing into the full-fledged right-winger that he vaguely was.

Finally a few points in reply to Gerhard's letter (8 Dec). I can appreciate Gerhard's good intentions in warning potential audiences away from the Wyndham, but I am sure that Belt and Braces are equally well-meaning in their approach to performing Fo's Accidental Death of an Anarchist. If the company had not chosen to perform a Fo play in the West End, there would be even more people - the sort who frequent only theatres in that locale - who would retain their constricted views of anarchists and anarchism. Certainly not many of the city bourgeoisie would without provocation go out of their way to track down an alternative bookshop just to leaf through an anarchist text in some dingy back-room.

As it is, the play is a beginning; the apparent contradiction of siting it in a bourgeois setting may be seen as the situationist tactic of confronting the Establishment with its own irrelevance ... It is also in the spirit of Fo and his own company, Il Collettivo Teatrale La Commune, that Belt and Braces have campaigned or helped to campaign for such causes as Rock against Racism, Rock against Sexism and the Southall Campaign in Britain.

Most important of all, the almost random, spontaneous style of performing a Fo play, improvising on the



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script from day to day is very much as Fo would have it, very much in the way La Commune have been doing it for the past ten years. So the approach adopted by Belt and Braces is all the more Fo-like by keeping to the spirit of the playwright rather than to the letter of the play. The latter method, especially for the performing arts, is too much like dogmatism.

I thoroughly enjoyed the performance at the Wyndham, though I cannot say the same of the even more haute-to-petite-bourgeois atmosphere of another theatre in Leicester, where We Can't Pay, We Won't Pay was performed by another theatre company.

BUNN NAGARA

Anarchist Society  
University of Leicester

\* traditionally erased or buried by economic lines

\*\* for a fuller treatment of this deviance/mystification, wait for my forthcoming (?) vook.

## Stirner

Dear Freedom,

S.E. Parker's inane paeans to Stirner and egoism give me no pleasure (and if I were an egoist that would be the only criticism possible). But besides being boring and banal, Parker's platitudes are replete with falsehoods.

Society is not an abstraction (unless you're a solipsist). Take away from a person all those human qualities that are undeniably acquired through society, such as language culture and morality (all abstractions, or 'spooks', of course), and all that will be left is a dumb animal, incapable of even rising to Parker's level of intelligence. It is the 'individual', the 'I', that is an abstraction. No wonder Parker has given up on doing away with society - he must realize that by doing so he would also eliminate his precious 'self'.

I find egoists calling themselves anarchists a curious thing (and not because I'm a naive social utopian). If all that is important is myself and my desires, why should I oppose all authority? Obviously I won't oppose my Own authority, as I can use my power to make others conform to my will, to satisfy me. And if other authorities work to my advantage the egoistic thing to do would be to support them also. If I were an egoist I would much prefer to be

a master than a slave, but I wouldn't be opposed to slavery. Unless anarchy is to the obvious advantage of the individual at this moment, there would be no reason for an egoist to be an anarchist. It seems that some sort of system based on exploitation and domination of others would be much more to an egoist's liking. May I suggest that Parker and Co. are a little confused over this? They have joined the wrong camp.

GRAHAM BAUGH

North Vancouver.

## Stirnerer

Dear Freedom

To continue the Stirner debate - I'm a bit of a newcomer to the anarchist scene so I can't really comment on the details and niceties involved in Stirner's writings except that I would just like to say that S.E. Parker's conception of the notions of 'sociality' and 'individuality' seem very oversimplified. As in bourgeois thought, where the 'individual' has been deformed into the 'private' and as in reductionist Marxist thought where the 'social' has been deformed into the 'collective', Parker seems to regard the two as totally opposed concepts. It might not be very popular if this letter gets printed, but I'm going to quote Marx: 'It is above all necessary to avoid postulating "society" once more as an abstraction confronting the individual. The individual is a social being. The manifestation of his life - even when it does not appear directly in the form of a social manifestation, accomplished in association with other men - is therefore a manifestation of social life . . . . Though man is a unique individual - and it is just his particularity which makes him an individual a really individual social being - he is equally the whole, the ideal whole the subjective existence of society as thought and experienced.' (Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844)

If you're going to deny the social as a constitutive element of individuality then I think you must be living in the clouds somewhere.

Love and Anarchy

THE GIBBON

## Stirner

Dear Editors

If anyone's ire has been raised S.E. Parker's has (letter, 10). As to the word 'religion', the question is whether it comes from the Latin religare, 'to bind', or 'relegere', 'to gather together'. The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology states that the former derivation is 'more probable'; which implies that the latter - first suggested by Cicero, not me - is possible,

Parker objects that 'to gather together' could apply to a peasant gathering wood for his stove - a fatuous argument: you might as well say that 'to bind' could apply to a peasant tying firewood into bundles. Parker knows as well as I do that the meanings of words evolve from simple root meanings.

Parker produces a few quotations which show that Stirner emphasised his distinct individuality. But I granted that in my previous letter; and such emphasis by no means excludes the psychological state of 'aleness'. Aldous Huxley wrote: "Every individual is biologically unique and unlike all other individuals" - a fact he regarded as very important. Yet he valued such statements as this of Sen T'sen: "When the Ten Thousand things are viewed in their oneness, we return to the Origin and remain where we have always been".

Stirner's whole book is evidence that he was undergoing a radical psychological change. He was moving from the 'normal' mentality of the 'good citizen', with all its anxiety and conflict, to the religious (i.e. integrated) state of liberation.

That means liberation from all ideals, 'worldly' or 'spiritual'; and that is the very essence of Stirner's 'egoism'. To be free of ideals is to live in a new psychological dimension, in which the ego as a separate psychic 'controller' is seen to be non-existent (as Stirner said it was) but the ego as the whole human being flowers naturally and spontaneously, having escaped what Stirner called 'the power of thoughts and ideas, the dominion of theories and principles'.

Then the barrier between oneself and others has gone, and one can say with Stirner: "the feeling of those who feel is mine too". That's what I call true religion. Try it.

Yours sincerely  
FRANCIS ELLINGHAM

Bristol

EDS NOTE We feel this is a good note on which to bring the present bout of exchanges to an end. No doubt the ego and the ire will flare up again in the not-too-distant future.



# FREEDOMCONTACTS

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Libertarian Politics and Alt-  
ernative Life-Styles, 7/355  
Northmore Ave., Lyneham,  
A.C.T. 2602.

New South Wales  
Black Ram, PO Box 238, Dar-  
linghurst, NSW 2010.

Sydney Anarcho-Syndicalists,  
Jura Books Collective,  
417 King Street, Newtown,  
NSW 2042.

Queensland  
Libertarian Socialist Organi-  
sation, PO Box 268, Mount  
Gravatt, Central 4122.  
Self-Management Organisation,  
PO Box 332, North Quay.

Victoria  
La Trobe Libertarian Social-  
ists, c/o SRC, La Trobe Univer-  
sity, Bundoora, Vic. 3083.  
Monash Anarchist Society, c/o  
Monash University, Clayton,  
3168 Melbourne.  
Libertarian Workers for a Self  
Managed Society, PO Box 20,  
Parkville 3052.

Chummy Fleming Bookshop, 26 Reg-  
ent Arcade, 210 Toorak Road, South  
Yarra (Libertarian Workers shop).

Western Australia  
Freedom Collective, PO Box 14,  
Mount Hawthorn 6016.  
Libertarian Resource Centre,  
PO Box 203, Fremantle 6160.

Tasmania  
c/o 34 Kennedy Street,  
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PO Box 22, 607 Christchurch.  
Daybreak Bookshop, PO Box  
5424, Dunedin.

## CANADA

Open Road, Box 6135, Station  
G, Vancouver B.C.

Black Cat Press, Post Office Box  
11261, Edmonton Alberta.

U: S. A.

Arizona  
Malicious Hooligans (anti-  
nuclear), 1110 W 2nd Street,  
Tempe, AZ 85281.

California  
Autonomia, PO Box 1751 San  
Francisco, CA 94101.  
Libertarian Anarchist Coffee-  
house, meets last Sunday each  
month at Cafe Commons, 3161  
Mission St., San Francisco.

Minnesota  
Soil of Liberty, Box 7056 Pow-  
derhorn Station, Minneapolis,  
Minn. 55407.

Missouri  
Columbia Anarchist League,  
PO Box 380, Columbia,  
Missouri 65201.

New York  
Libertarian Book Club, Box  
842, GPO New York, NY 10012.  
SRAF/Freespace Alternative U,  
339 Lafayette St., New York  
City, NY 10012.

Texas  
Houston SRAF, South Post Oak  
Station, PO Box 35255,  
Houston TX 77035.

## WESTERN EUROPE

### Federal Republic of Germany

Schwarzer Gockler (Black Cockerel),  
c/o A Muller, Postfach 4528, 7500  
Karlsruhe.  
Graswurzel (grass roots) c/o W Hertle  
Grozerschippsee 28, 21 Hamburg 90.  
Schwarzer Faden (Black Thread)  
Obere Wiebermarktstr 3, 741 Reutlinge  
Libertad Verlag, 6br Schmuck, Post-  
fach 153, 1000 Berlin 44.

### AUSTRIA

Liberté, Postfach 86, 1033 Wien.  
Monte Verita, Neustiftgasse 33,  
1070 Wien.

### FRANCE

Federation anarchiste franç-  
aise, 3 rue Ternaux, 75011  
Paris. (Groups throughout  
France).

Union Anarchiste, 9 rue de  
l'Ange, 63000 Clermont Ferrand.

### ITALY

Autogestione, Casella Postale  
17127, 1-20100 Milano.

Grupp Hem Day, Giovanni Trapani,  
CP6130, Roma-Prati.

### Belgium

Revolutionair Anarchisties Kollektief  
(RAK) Oudborg 47 9000 Gent.

### Holland

De Vrije Postbus 6103 Groningen.  
Anarchistische Boekhandel Slager-  
zicht (Anarchist Bookshop) Folk-  
ingestraat 10 Groningen.

### Denmark

Aarhus: Regnbuen Anarkist Bog-  
cafe, Mejlgade 48,  
8000 Aarhus.

Rainbow Anarchists of the Free  
City of Christiana, c/o Allan  
Anarchos, Tinghuset, Fristaden  
Christiana, 1407 Copenhagen.

### Norway

ANORG, Høxtvedtv. 31B,  
1431 As. (Publish 'Folke-  
bladet' 4 times a year.)

### Sweden

Syndikalist Forum, Tenstiernas  
Gata 51, 11631 Stockholm.

Syndikalistiskt Forum (anarcho-  
synd. Bookshop), Husagatans 5,  
41302 Gothenburg (tel. 031-  
132504).

## FINLAND

Anarkistiryhmä, c/o Terttu  
Pesonen, Neljas Linja 14 D 83,  
00530 Helsinki 53.

## Meetings

Tuesday 10th March:

### Stuff the 6%

- the Civil Service Fightback.  
London Workers' Group, Public  
Meeting starts 8.15pm in the  
Metropolitan Pub, 95 Farringdon  
Road, London, EC1.  
Farringdon tube.

## Desires

Bookshop/Meeting Place  
open in South London.  
121 Railton Road, Herne Hill,  
London SE24. Tube: Brixton.  
Collective needs new members to  
extend opening hours.  
Visitors welcome.  
Thurs-Fri: 2-6pm  
Sat: 12-6pm.

Hull Libertarian Collective are  
trying to bring pressure to bear  
upon the leaders, (red and blue  
and orange and pink and ...) of  
the university student union to  
allow Ordinary people inside to see,  
touch and use all the facilities  
available, and try therefore to  
remove the intellectual and social  
apartheid engineered by the current  
system. Could we ask that anybody  
with information that will be useful  
write to: 70 Perth Street, HULL,  
particularly of use would be the  
actual legal situation of a licensed  
club and the alcohol laws.

CENTAUR is a Community and  
Youth self-help project situated on  
the Caledonian Road near Kings  
Cross in London, run by anarchists.  
Help needed

1) willing hands to get the premises  
in order  
2) full-time/part-time volunteers.

CRASS - please contact  
CENTAUR urgently 01-837-5408

Mucho Apologies for the appalling  
layout on this page this week but  
some nice person lost the layout  
page.....

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# EDWARD CARPENTER

EDWARD CARPENTER was one of the most attractive and influential people on the left and beyond in this country and elsewhere for more than half a century, though he never held a single high office or wrote a single great book. He also had a significant relationship with libertarian ideas and with the anarchist movement, being one of our most interesting and important fellow-travellers for many years, and still worth reading.

Carpenter was born in Brighton on 29 August 1844, into an upper-middle-class family with strong naval connections. His father was first a sailor and then a lawyer, but retired young to live on a private income and to dabble in romantic literature and radical philosophy. Edward was educated at Brighton College but also in France, Switzerland and Germany, and went to Trinity Hall, Cambridge, in 1864. In 1868 he graduated and became a fellow of his college, and in 1870 he became an Anglican priest. He was influenced by F. D. Maurice, one of the founders of Christian Socialism, but while he became a socialist he ceased to be a Christian, losing his faith both in his class and in his religion, and finally resigning from the ministry and from his fellowship in 1874.

From 1874 to 1881 Carpenter worked as a lecturer for the University Extension Scheme in the North of England, but he gradually rejected all conventional ways of life. He turned from the English romantic poets to the American writers Whitman and Emerson, whom he met on visits to the United States in 1877 and 1884, and he began writing a cycle of Whitmanesque prose poems which he called Towards Democracy and published in instalments from 1883 to 1905. He abandoned meat and alcohol and formal clothes, and adopted manual labour and an open-air life. In 1879 he began staying in a Ruskinian agricultural community near Sheffield, and at the same time began to express his long-suppressed homosexuality.

In 1882 he inherited enough money from his father to buy a smallholding at Millthorpe in north Derbyshire, between Sheffield and Chesterfield. In 1883 he settled there with some friends and began to put his ideas into practice, earning some money by growing food and making sandals, but being more interested in the non-material profits of his new life and fellowship.

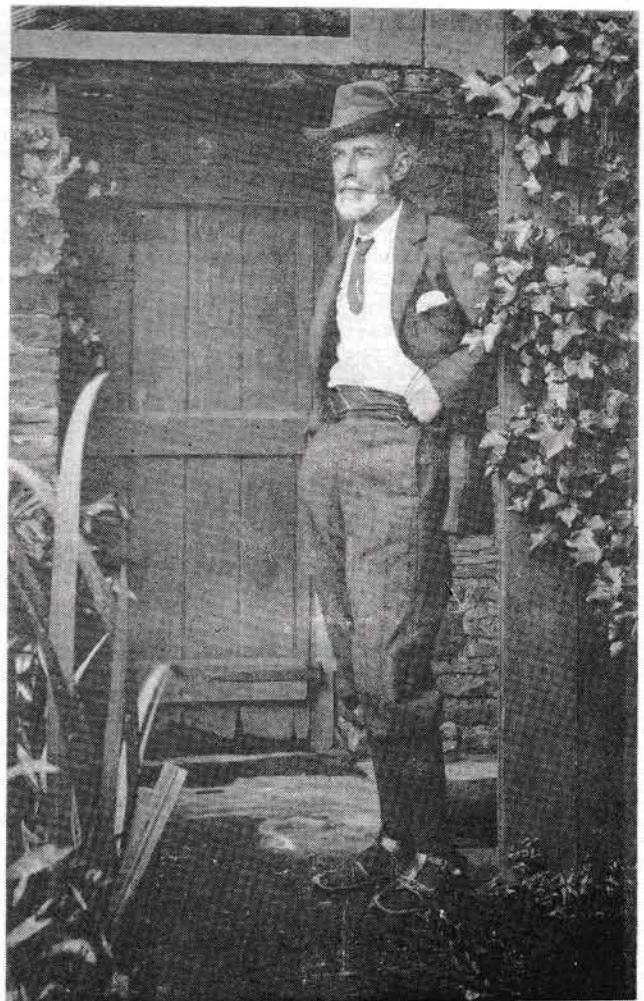
At the same time he became involved in the growing socialist movement. He joined H. M. Hyndman's Democratic Federation in 1883 and helped its paper Justice in 1884; but he joined William Morris's rival Socialist League and helped its paper Commonweal in 1885. He also joined the Fellowship of the New Life, the non-revolutionary semi-utopian organisation which gave birth to the Fabian Society in 1885, and there he met more closely kindred spirits like Havelock Ellis and Olive Schreiner.

In 1886 Carpenter was the main founder of the Sheffield Socialist Society, writing its programme and becoming its chairman, and he had close links with the Bristol Socialist Society too. He was also loosely associated with the Freedom Press from its formation in 1886, occasionally contributing to Freedom and being friendly with Charlotte Wilson and Peter Kropotkin, both of whom spoke to the Sheffield Socialists and stayed at Millthorpe; he later provided some of the material for Kropotkin's book Fields, Factories and Workshops (1899).

In 1886 Carpenter won his greatest fame by writing the words and music of a "Socialist Marching Song"

called England, Arise! which was the most popular anthem on the British left for several decades until it was eventually supplanted by the Internationale and the Red Flag. In 1888 he included it in Chants of Labour, a book of socialist songs he compiled for the movement.

In 1887 he was present at the Bloody Sunday riots in London, and gave evidence for some of the arrested demonstrators. In 1889 he attended the more extremist of the two international socialist congresses in Paris. In 1890-1891 he helped to resist attempts by anarchists to take over the Sheffield Socialist Society, though he insisted that he supported anarchists along with other kinds of socialist, because "we are all travelling along the same road". In 1892 he put these principles into practice by giving evidence and organising support for the Walsall Anarchists when they were caught in a police bomb plot; he even described himself in court as an anarchist.



Edward Carpenter at Millthorpe in 1905.





Edward Carpenter with George Merrill.

In 1893, however, he was involved in the formation of the Independent Labour Party, and he later supported both the parliamentary Labour Party and the revolutionary syndicalist movement. Much later he supported the rank-and-file workers in the General Strike of 1926, but on his eightieth birthday he received personal congratulations from the Labour Cabinet and the Trades Union Congress! Carpenter must have been the most utterly unsectarian person on the left, refusing to become involved or even interested in quarrels between parties or personalities, and always arguing for what he called "larger Socialism". This tended to be so eclectic as to be in danger of becoming non-existent, but at least he always worked for what socialists had in common as the model of the future society.

Carpenter never sought personal prominence on the left or anywhere else, and he gradually became known for his writing and speaking and for the example of his own life. Until the First World War he lectured very frequently and widely, and he produced a large number of articles and books; and Millthorpe became almost a place of pilgrimage for socialists and others.

Carpenter supported many progressive causes far beyond mere socialism -- the rights of women (being associated on equal terms with several prominent women, being committed to a theoretical feminism, and being involved in the suffragette movement as a writer and speaker for the Women's Freedom League in 1908-1910), the rights of children (being involved in the foundation of the progressive school which became Abbotsholme in 1889), the rights of animals (being a founding member of the Humanitarian League in 1891, advocating vegetarianism and attacking vivisection), penal reform (criticising capital punishment and imprisonment, and defending criminals against the legal system both in general and in particular cases), dress reform (being especially identified with the manufacture and use of sandals, which he once threatened to wear to the British Museum Reading Room as propaganda by deed against a ban), clean air (being one of the earliest agitators against industrial pollution), nudism, contraception, peace, racial equality, religious toleration, and distributism (defending smallholdings and cooperatives against pressure for the nationalisation of land and industry), and so on and so on.

Carpenter was also interested in two subjects which seemed to have little to do with politics at all. He

always admired oriental mysticism, and through a Ceylonese friend he was introduced to a Hindu guru, the Gnani Ramaswami, whom he visited in Ceylon in 1890-1891, travelling back through India and writing about his cautious acceptance of Eastern ideas. Above all he was involved and interested in homosexuality, and he became one of its leading propagandists. He first advanced his practical rather than poetic ideas through his friends J. A. Symonds and Havelock Ellis (whose work developed into the multi-volume Studies in the Psychology of Sex), but he later produced his own writings on the subject. These were published as a series of polemical essays printed as pamphlets in 1894 and reprinted as a book called Love's Coming of Age in 1896 and many times since, and also as a series of scholarly studies of what he called "the intermediate sex". His timing was unfortunate -- all homosexual acts were made illegal in 1885, a series of scandals culminated in the Oscar Wilde case in 1895, Havelock Ellis's volume on Sexual Inversion was banned in 1898 -- but his courage never failed him. He avoided any serious trouble, suffering only occasional criticisms and one real crisis in 1908-1909 (when a political opponent abused him at meetings and in pamphlets, but the only effect was the loss of his seat on the local village council). At the end of his life he was probably best known for his work on sexual psychology, and his writings on this subject survived when all the rest were virtually forgotten. It is good to be able to record that Carpenter also achieved personal happiness, a series of lovers who were young and working-class culminating in George Merrill, whom he met in 1890 and openly lived with from 1898 until his death thirty years later.

In 1922 Carpenter left Millthorpe and retired to Guildford, where he continued to write until 1926. Merrill died in 1928, and he himself died on 29 June 1929. He had written his own memoirs several times, the final version being My Days and Dreams (1916), and several biographical studies appeared during his lifetime or soon afterwards, while his papers were preserved in the Sheffield Public Library. But his reputation steadily declined until the centenary of his birth was almost ignored in 1944 and the Edward Carpenter International Memorial Fellowship was at last dissolved in 1962. The revival began during the 1960s, with the revival of interest in libertarian socialism and in sexual politics. Doctoral theses and academic articles began to appear, and specialist studies of his contribution to women's and gay liberation. Last year saw the first full-length biography based on all the papers -- Chushichi Tsuzuki's Edward Carpenter, 1844-1929: Prophet of Human Fellowship (Cambridge University Press, £15).

Tsuzuki mentions that Carpenter was close to and sometimes very close to anarchism. Carpenter himself said in My Days and Dreams that from the early 1880s "I worked definitely along the Socialist line: with a drift, as was natural, towards Anarchism", and that after joining the socialist movement "I have worked for it and the Anarchist ideal consistently", and he concluded that "the general Socialist movement (including therein the Anarchist) has done and is still doing a great and necessary work -- and I am proud to have belonged to it" By socialism he meant what other socialists meant, "until such time as the state, qua state, and all efficient government, are superseded by the voluntary and instinctive consent and mutual helpfulness of the people -- when of course the more especially Anarchist idea would be realised".

Of Carpenter's writings, the one which comes closest to true anarchism is the essay reprinted here. Its first version appeared as "Transitions to Freedom" (the manuscript title being "Transitions to Communism"); it was Carpenter's own contribution to Forecasts of the Coming Century (1897), a symposium of leading socialist writers edited by himself. A much revised version appeared as "Non-Governmental Society", the concluding chapter in his collection of essays Prisons, Police and Punishment (1905); this version was reprinted as a pamphlet called Non-Governmental Society (1911). A slightly revised version appeared as "Non-Governmental Society", a chapter in his collection of essays Towards Industrial Freedom (1917). The final version is now reprinted here for the first time since the book went out of print more than half a century ago.



# Non-Governmental Society

by Edward Carpenter

MOST people agree nowadays in the view that the growth of bureaucracy and officialism in the modern State is a serious evil, and that the extension of Government interference and the multiplication of Laws are a great danger. We all know that the institution of the Law and the Courts actually creates and gives rise to huge masses of evil -- bribery, blackmail, perjury, spying and lying, wrongful accusation, useless and deliberate suffering and cruelty; that it publicly sanctions and organises violence, even in extreme forms; that it quite directly and deliberately supports vast and obvious wrongs in Society -- as for instance land-monopoly; that it is absurd and self-contradictory in much of its theory and practice; that (as Herbert Spencer so frequently insists) it paralyses the folk that submit or trust to it; and finally that it is today for the most part so antiquated and out of date that (even if this were thought desirable) it might well seem impracticable to patch it up for real human use.

Yet in these cases -- though we admit that the things are evil -- our defence is usually that they carry some compensations with them, and that anyhow they are necessary evils, which we cannot dispense with, and without which disorder, violence and social disruption would ensue.

It may be worth while to consider this defence more closely; for curiously enough the history of nations and peoples is, on the whole, to contrary effect. Not only have all the early tribes of the world got on and cohered together in order and social amity without any rigid and ponderous system of laws; but even among the peasant peoples of today -- like the Irish or the Swedes or the Swiss or the Chinese -- where they are still living in moderately primitive conditions, we find the same thing. Governmental law and its operations and institutions occupy but a very small part in their lives. It is true that Custom is strong among all primitive folk, no doubt as a very necessary backbone or framework to their society; but Custom is a very different thing from Law. It is law in its inception -- when it is yet in a tentative, rudimentary condition; and however harsh, rigid, or senseless the customs of many savage tribes may be, they are yet easier to alter than when they have become ossified into written forms, with their huge weight of age and ceremony, and the authority of armed men to enforce them. (1)

That human societies can subsist without a considerable amount of Custom we may well doubt; but that they can subsist and maintain themselves in good order and vitality without written law and its institutions there is no reason at all to doubt. And when Custom, among a reasonable and moderately advanced people, leaving behind the barbarities of the savage age, takes on a gentler form, and while exercising considerable pressure on individuals is itself fairly plastic and adaptable to the general movements of society -- we seem to see in such pressure a force as far superior to Law as life itself is superior to mere mechanism. A vast amount of our social life today in all departments of its activity is ruled by Custom, and some of these customs, like

those of "society" and fashion, have a very powerful sway. There is no law, for instance, for the recovery of betting debts, yet their non-payment is extremely rare.

Of course, accustomed as we are to "call the policeman" on every emergency, we find it hard to imagine life without this institution; and our life being largely founded on it, it is so far necessary, and its removal would cause dislocation. That is, since without the police the present spoliation of the poor would not be possible, and the enormous existing inequalities of wealth and poverty could never have been heaped up -- without them the society founded on these artificial inequalities could not well be maintained. (2) But to say that because a certain institution is necessary to build up and retain society in a certain abnormal and unnatural form, therefore society cannot exist without that institution, is the same as to say that because to a Chinese woman of rank foot-bandages are necessary, therefore women generally cannot exist without foot-bandages. We have to realise that our present social forms are as ugly and inhuman as a club foot; and then we shall begin to realise how little necessary are these institutions, like law and police, whose chief concern and office is to retain and defend these forms.

The chief difficulty, then, which arises in people's minds at the thought of a free non-governmental society does not concern its desirability -- they are agreed as a rule that it would be desirable -- but concerns its practicability. And much of this difficulty is derived from the society of the present. People see, in fact, that an internecine competition for subsistence is the ruling force of life today, and the chief incentive to production, and they infer that without government society would dissolve into a mere chaos of plunder on the one hand, and of laziness on the other. (3) It is this difficulty which has first to be removed.

Though it seems a hard thing to say, the outer life of society today is animated first and foremost by Fear. From the wretched wage-slave, who rises before the break of day, hurries through squalid streets to the dismal sound of the "hummer", engages for nine, ten, or twelve hours, and for a pittance wage, in monotonous work which affords him no interest, no pleasure; who returns home to find his children gone to bed, has his supper, and, worn out and weary, soon retires himself, only to rise again in the morning and pursue the same deadly round; and who leads a life thus monotonous, inhuman, and devoid of all dignity and reality, simply because he is hounded to it by the dread of starvation; -- to the big commercial man, who, knowing that his wealth has come to him through speculation and the turns and twists of the market, fears that it may at any moment take to itself wings by the same means; who feels that the more wealth he has, the more ways there are in which he may lose it, the more cares and anxieties belonging to it; and who to continually make his position secure is, or thinks himself, forced to stoop to all sorts of mean and dirty tricks; -- over the great mass of people the same demon spreads its dusky wings. Feverish

## NOTES

1 Spencer and Gillen, in their late book The Northern Tribes of Australia, say that there are no chiefs even or headmen among these people; but the old men constitute an informal council, which punishes "crime" and the breaking of marriage rules, organises the ceremonies, and from time to time inaugurates reforms.

2 Though, as all more primitive society shows us, small inequalities and such as arise from natural differences of human industry and capacity will always be welcome.

3 Though it must, to be strictly impartial, be pointed out that this difficulty is chiefly felt by those classes who themselves live on interest and in ornamental idleness.



anxiety is the keynote of their lives. There is no room for natural gladness or buoyancy of spirits. You may walk the streets of our great cities, but you will hear no one singing -- except for coppers; hardly a ploughboy today whistles in the furrow, and in almost every factory (this is a fact) if a workman sang at his work he would be "sacked". We are like shipwrecked folk clambering up a cliff. The waves are raging below. Each one clings by handhold or foothold where he may, and in the panic if he push his neighbour from a point of vantage, it is to be regretted certainly, but it cannot be helped.

But such a state of affairs is not normal. Allowing that the struggle for existence in some degree or form is unavoidable, history still, except at rare crises, presents us with no such spectacle of widespread anxiety; the study of native races -- whom we might consider in a state of destitution -- reveals no such dominion of dread. I want the reader to imagine for a moment this burden of fear lifted off the hearts of a whole people; and the result.

Let us imagine for a moment that some good fairy -- some transcendental Chancellor of the Exchequer -- with a stroke of his wand, has assured to us all not only an old-age pension, but a decent provision for all our days of the actual necessities of life (to go no further than that); so that for the future no man could feel any serious or grinding anxiety for his own material safety, or that of his family. What would be the result on our actions?

Perhaps, as many would maintain, nine-tenths of the population would say, "I'm blessed if I'll ever do another stroke of work." Like the organ-grinder who came into a little fortune, and who forthwith picked up an axe and fell upon his organ, shouting as he hacked it to pieces, "You shall neffer play dat tam Alabama Coon any more," we should feel so sick of our present jobs that we should want to turn our backs on them for ever. Very likely, I should say -- and rightly enough too; for "work" in the present day is done under such degrading and miserable conditions by the vast majority of the population that the very best and most manly thing would be to refuse to continue doing it.

But let us suppose, since a bare living has been assured to us, and we are in no danger of actual starvation, that we all take a good long holiday, and abstain religiously from doing anything. Suppose that we simply twirl our thumbs in idleness for two, three, four, or six months. Still, is it not obvious that at the end of that time nine-tenths of the population would find sheer idleness appallingly dreary, and that they would set themselves to work at some thing or other -- to produce comforts or conveniences rising above the level of sheer necessity -- objects of use or beauty, either for themselves, or for their families and neighbours, or even conceivably for society at large; that, in fact, a spontaneous and free production of goods would spring up, followed of course by a spontaneous and free exchange -- a self-supporting society, based not on individual dread and anxiety, but on the common fullness of life and energy?

That people relieved from care do spontaneously set themselves to work is sufficiently shown by the case of the well-to-do classes today. For these people, though having everything provided for them, and not merely the bare necessities which we have supposed, exhibit the most extraordinary and feverish energy in seeking employment. A few decades of years have been quite sufficient to make them feel the utter failure of picnics as an object in life; and now we are flooded with philanthropic and benevolent societies, leagues, charity organisations, art missions to the poor, vigilance crusades, and other activities, which are simply the expression of the natural energies of the human being seeking an outlet in social usefulness. It is, of course, to be regretted that owing to the very imperfect education of this class their ideas and their capacities of social usefulness should be so limited. However, this is a defect which will no doubt be remedied in the future. All that concerns us here is to see that since the rich, though in many ways ill-adapted by training and tradition, do spontaneously take up a life of this kind, there is nothing extravagant in supposing that the average man, surrounded by so many unfulfilled needs, might do the same.



Design by Walter Crane for frontispiece of Edward Carpenter's

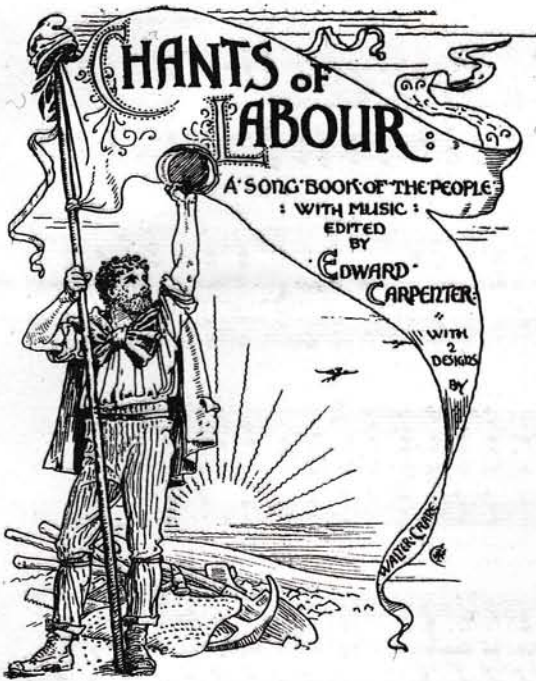
And if any one still doubts let him consider the thousands in our large towns today who would give their ears to be able to get out and work on the land -- not so much from any prospect of making a fortune that way, as from mere love of the life; or who in their spare time cultivate gardens or plots or allotments as a hobby; or the thousands who when the regular day's work is over start some fresh little occupation of their own -- some cabinet-making, wood-turning, ornamental iron-work or what-not; the scores of thousands, in fact, that there are of natural gardeners, cabinet-makers, iron-workers, and so forth; and then think how if they were free these folk would sort themselves spontaneously to the work they delighted in.

Thus it appears to be at least conceivable that a people not hounded on by compulsion nor kept in subjection by sheer authority, would set itself spontaneously to produce the things which it prized. It does not, of course, at once follow that the result would be perfect order and harmony. But there are a few considerations in the positive direction which I may introduce here.

In the first place, each person would be guided in the selection of his occupation by his own taste and skill, or at any rate would be guided by these to a greater extent than he is today; and on the whole would be more likely to find the work for which he was fitted than he is now. The increase in effective output and vitality from this cause alone would be great. While the immense variety of taste and skill in human beings would lead to a corresponding variety of spontaneous products.

In the second place, the work done would be useful. It is certain that no man would freely set himself to dig a hole, only to fill it up again -- though it is equally certain that a vast amount of the work done today is no more useful than that. If a man were a cabinet-maker and made a chest of drawers, either for himself or a neighbour, he would make it so that the drawers would open and shut; but nine-tenths of the chests made on commercial principles are such that the drawers will neither open nor shut. They are not meant to be useful; they are meant to have the semblance of being useful; but they are really made to sell. To sell, and by selling yield a profit. And for that purpose they are better adapted if, appearing useful, they turn out really useless, for then the buyer must come again, and so yield another profit to the manufacturer and the merchant. The waste to the community today arising from causes of this kind is enormous; but it is of no moment as long as there is profit to a certain class.





Chants of Labour (1888)

Work in a free society would be done because it was useful. It is curious, when you come to think of it, that there is no other conceivable reason why work should be done. And of course I here include what is beautiful under the term useful, -- as there is no reason why one should separate what satisfies one human need, like the need of beauty, from another human need, like the need of food. I say the idea of work implies that it is undertaken because the product itself satisfies some human need. But strangely enough in Commerce that is not so. The work is undertaken in order that the product may sell, and so yield a profit; that is all. It is of no moment what the product is, or whether bad or good, as long as it fulfils this one condition. And so the whole spirit of life and industry in the other society would be so utterly different from that of the present, that it is really difficult for us to compare the results. But it is not difficult to see that if on the principles of freedom there was no so much produced in mere quantity, and folk did not (as may indeed be hoped) work so many hours a day as now, still, the goods turned out being sincere and genuine, there would really be far more value shown in a year than on the strictly commercial system.

In the third place, it follows -- as William Morris so constantly maintained -- that "work" in the new sense would be a pleasure -- one of the greatest pleasures undoubtedly of life; and this one fact would transform its whole character. We cannot say that now. How many are there who take real pleasure and satisfaction in their daily labour? Are they, in each township, to be counted on the fingers? But what is the good of life if its chief element, and that which must always be its chief element, is odious? No, the only true economy is to arrange so that your daily labour shall be itself a joy. Then, and then only, are you on the safe side of life. And, your work being such, its product is sure to become beautiful; that painful distinction between the beautiful and the useful dies out, and everything made is an artistic product. Art becomes conterminous with life.

Thus it will be observed that whereas the present society is founded on a law-enforced system of Private Property, in which, almost necessarily, the covetous hard type of man becomes the large proprietor, and (supported by law and government) is enabled to prey upon the small one; and whereas the result of this arrangement is a bitter and continuous struggle for possession, in which the motive to activity is mainly Fear; we, on the contrary, are disentangling a conception of a society in which Private Property is supported by no apparatus of armed authority, but

as far as it exists is a perfectly spontaneous arrangement, in which the main motives to activity are neither Fear nor greed of Gain, but rather Community of life and Interest in life -- in which, in fact, you undertake work because you like the work, because you feel that you can do it, and because you know that the product will be useful, either to yourself or some one else!

How Utopian it all sounds! How absurdly simple and simple-minded -- to work because you like the work and desire the product. How delightful if it could be realised, but, of course, how "unpractical" and impossible.

Yet is it really impossible? From Solomon to Dr Watts we have been advised to go to the Ant and the Bee for instruction, and lo! they are unpractical and Utopian too. Can anything be more foolish than the conduct of these little creatures, any one of whom will at any moment face death in defence of his tribe? while the Bee is absolutely so ignorant and senseless, that instead of storing up the honey that it has gathered in a little cell of its own, with a nice lock and key, it positively puts it in the common cells, and cannot distinguish it from the stores of the others. Foolish little Bee, the day will surely come when you will bitterly rue your "unthrifty" conduct, and you will find yourself starving while your fellow-tribesmen are consuming the fruits of your labour.

And the human body itself, that marvellous epitome and mirror of the universe, how about that? Is it not Utopian too? It is composed of a myriad cells, members, organs, compacted into a living unity. A healthy body is the most perfect society conceivable. What does the hand say when a piece of work is demanded of it? Does it bargain first for what reward it is to receive, and refuse to move until it has secured satisfactory terms, or the foot decline to take us on a journey till it knows what special gain is to accrue to it thereby? Not so; but each limb and cell does the work which is before it to do, and (such is the Utopian law) the fact of its doing the work causes the circulation to flow to it, and it is nourished and fed in proportion to its service. And we have to ask whether the same may not be the law of a healthy human society? Whether the fact of a member doing service (however humble) to the community would not be quite sufficient to ensure his provision by the rest with all that he might need? Whether the community would think of allowing such an one to starve any more than a man would think of allowing his least finger to pine away and die? Whether it is not possible that men would cease to feel any anxiety about the "reward of their labour"; that they would think first of their work and the pleasure they had in doing it, and would not doubt that the reward would follow?

For indeed the instinct to do anything which is obviously before you to do, which is wanted, and which you can do, is very strong in human nature. Even children, those rudimentary savages, are often extremely proud to be "useful", and it is conceivable that we might be sensible enough, instead of urging them as we do now to "get on", to make money, to beat their fellows in the race of life, and by climbing on other folk's heads to ultimately reach a position where they would have to work no longer, -- that we might teach them how when they grew up they would find themselves members of a self-respecting society which, while it provided them gratis with all they might need, would naturally expect them in honour to render some service in return. Even small children could understand that. Is it quite inconceivable that a society of grown men and women might act up to it?

But it is really absurd to argue about the possibility of these things in human society, when we have so many actual examples of them before our eyes. Herman Melville, in that charming book *Typee*, describes the Marquesas Islanders of the Pacific, among whom he lived for some time during the year 1846. He says:

During the time I lived among the Typees no one was ever put upon his trial for any offence against the public. To all appearances there were no courts of law or equity. There was no



municipal police for the purposes of apprehending vagrants or disorderly characters. In short, there were no legal provisions whatever for the well-being and conservation of society, the enlightened end of civilised legislation.

Nevertheless, the whole book is a eulogy of the social arrangements he met with, and with almost a fervour of romance in its tone; and yet, like all his description of the natives of the Pacific Islands, undoubtedly accurate, and well corroborated by the travellers of the period. An easy communism prevailed. When a good haul of fish was made, those who took part in it did not keep the booty to themselves, but parcelled it out, and sent it throughout the tribe, retaining only their proportionate share. When one family required a new cabin, the others would come and help to build it. He describes such an occasion, when

at least a hundred of the natives were bringing materials to the ground, some carrying in their hands one or two of the canes which were to form the sides, others slender rods of hibiscus, strung with palmetto leaves, for the roof. Every one contributed something to the work; and by the united but easy labours of all the entire work was completed before sunset.

Similar communistic habits prevail, of course, through a vast number of savage tribes, and indeed almost anywhere that the distinctively commercial civilisation has not set its mark. They may be found close at home, as in the little primitive island of St Kilda, in the Hebrides, where exactly the same customs of sharing the hauls of fish or the labours of housebuilding exist today, (4) which Melville describes in *Typee*; and they may be found all along the edges of our civilisation in the harvesting and housewarming "bees" of the backwoods and outlying farm-populations. And we may fairly ask, not whether such social habits are possible, but whether they are not in the end the only possible form; for surely it is useless and absurd to call these modern hordes of people, struggling with each other for the means of subsistence, and jammed down by violent and barbaric penal codes into conditions which enforce the struggle, societies; as it would be absurd to call the wretched folk in the Black Hole of Calcutta a society. If any one will only think for a minute of his own inner nature he will see that the only society which would ever really satisfy him would be one in which he was perfectly free, and yet bound by ties of deepest trust to the other members; and if he will think for another minute he will see that the only conditions on which he could be perfectly free (to do as he liked) would be that he should trust and care for his neighbour as well as himself. The conditions are perfectly simple; and since they have been more or less realised by countless primitive tribes of animals and men, it is surely not impossible for civilised man to realise them. If it be argued (which is perfectly true) that modern societies are so much more complex than the primitive ones, we may reply that if modern man, with his science and his school-boards, and his brain cultivated through all these centuries, is not competent to solve a more complex problem than the savage, he had better return to savagery.

But it is getting time to be practical.

Of the possibility of a free communal society there can really, I take it, be no doubt. The question that more definitely presses on us now is one of transition -- by what steps shall we, or can we pass to that land of freedom?

We have supposed a whole people started on its journey by the lifting off of a burden of Fear and anxiety; but in the long, slow ascent of evolution sudden miraculous changes are not to be expected; and for this reason alone it is obvious that we can look for no very swift transformation to the communal form. Peoples that have learnt the lesson of "trade" and competition so thoroughly as the modern nations have -- each man fighting for his own hand -- must take some time to unlearn it. The sentiment of the common life, so long nipped and blighted, must

<sup>4</sup> See Chapter XI of *Poverty and the State*, by H. V. Mills.

## England Arise!

Words and Music by E. CARPENTER.

FOUR-PART SONG (S.A.T.B.)

*f* Eng-land a-rise! the long long night is o-ver, Faint in the east be-  
hold the dawn ap-pear; Out of your e-vil dream of toil and sor-row--  
A-rise, O Eng-land, for the day is here; From your fields and hills,  
Hark! the an-swer swells-- *f* A-rise, O Eng-land, for the day is here!

### Carpenter's once famous song England Arise from

have leisure to grow and expand again; and we acknowledge that -- in order to foster new ideas and new habits -- an intermediate stage of definite industrial organisation may be quite necessary.

When one looks sometimes at the awful residue and dregs which were being left as a legacy to the future by our present commercial system -- the hopeless, helpless, drunken, incapable men and women who drift through London and the country districts from workhouse to workhouse, or the equally incapable and more futile idlers in high places, one feels that possibly only a rather stringent industrial organisation (such as the War has brought upon us) could have enabled society to cope with these burdens. The hand of the nation has already been forced to the development of Farm-colonies, Land-reclamations, Afforestation, Canal-restoration, and other big industrial schemes, and these are leading to a considerable socialisation of land and machinery. At the same time the rolling up of companies into huge and huger trusts is, as we plainly see, making the transference of industries to public control and to public uses, daily more easy to effect.

On the other hand, the Trade Unions and Cooperative Societies by the development of productive as well as distributive industries, and by the interchange of goods with each other on an ever-growing scale, are bringing about a similar result. They are creating a society in which enormous wealth is produced and handled not for the profit of the few, but for the use of the many; a voluntary collectivism working within and parallel with the official collectivism of the State.

As this double collectivism grows and spreads, profit-grinding will more and more cease to be a lucrative profession. Though no doubt great efforts will be made in the commercial world to discountenance the public organisation of the unemployed (because this will cut away the ground of cheap labour on which commercialism is built), yet as we have seen, the necessity of this organisation has reached such a point that it can no longer be denied. And as it comes in more and more, it will more and more react on the conditions of the employed, causing them also to be improved. Besides, we are fain to hope that something else of which we see growing signs on every hand, will also come in -- namely a new sense of social responsibility, a new reading of religion, a healthier public opinion -- which will help on and give genuine life to the changes of which we speak. If so, it might not be so very long before the spread of employment, and the



2.  
By your young children's eyes so red with weeping,  
By their white faces aged with want and fear,  
By the dark cities where your babes are creeping  
Naked of joy and all that makes life dear ;  
From each wretched slum  
Let the loud cry come ;  
Arise, O England, for the day is here !

3.  
People of England ! all your valleys call you,  
High in the rising sun the lark sings clear,  
Will you dream on, let shameful slumber thrall you ?  
Will you disown your native land so dear ?  
Shall it die unheard—  
That sweet pleading word ?  
Arise, O England, for the day is here !

4.  
Over your face a web of lies is woven,  
Laws that are falsehoods pin you to the ground,  
Labour is mocked, its just reward is stolen,  
On its bent back sits Idleness encrowned.  
How long, while you sleep,  
Your harvest shall it reap ?  
Arise, O England, for the day is here !

5.  
Forth, then, ye heroes, patriots, and lovers !  
Comrades of danger, poverty, and scorn !  
Mighty in faith of Freedom your great Mother !  
Giants refreshed in Joy's new-rising morn !  
Come and swell the song,  
Silent now so long :  
England is risen !—and the day is here.

### Chants of Labour.

growing security of decent wages, combined with the continual improvement of productive processes and conditions, would bring about a kind of general affluence -- or at least absence of poverty. The unworthy fear which haunts the hearts of nine-tenths of the population, the anxiety for the beggarly elements of subsistence, would pass away or fade in the background, and with it the mad nightmarish competition and bitter struggle of men with each other. Even the sense of Property itself would be alleviated. Today the institution of Property is like a cast-iron railing against which a human being may be crushed, but which still is retained because it saves us from falling into the gulf. But tomorrow, when the gulf of poverty is practically gone, the indicating line between one person and another need run no harsher than an elastic band. (5) People will wake up with surprise, and rub their eyes to find that they are under no necessity of being other than human.

Simultaneously (i.e. with the lessening of the power of money as an engine of interest and profit-grinding) the huge nightmare which weighs on us today, the monstrous incubus of "business" -- with its endless Sisyphus labours, its searchings for markets, its displacement and destruction of rivals, its travellers, its advertisements, its armies of clerks, its banking and broking, its accounts and checking of accounts -- will fade and lessen in importance; till some day perchance it will collapse, and roll off like a great burden to the ground! Freed from the great strain and waste which all this system creates, the body politic will recover like a man from a disease, and spring to unexpected powers of health.

Meanwhile in the great industrial associations, voluntary and other, folk will have been learning the sentiment of the Common Life -- the habit of acting together for common ends, the habit of feeling together for common interests -- and once this has been learnt, the rest will follow of its own accord.

5 This alleviation indeed is already in some curious ways visible. Forty years ago the few dressed in broadcloth, the masses in fustian; but now that silk is made out of wood-pulp, and everybody can dress and does dress in the latest fashion, it is no distinction to have fine clothes. Similarly with books, travel, and a hundred other things. What is the good of being a millionaire when the man with three pounds a week can make almost as good a show as you?

In the course of these changes, moving always towards a non-governmental and perfectly voluntary society in the end, it is probable that some Property-founded institutions, like the payment of labour by wages, though not exactly ideal in their character, will continue for a long period. It may perhaps be said that in some ways a generous wage-payment convention (as for instance sketched in the last chapter of Carruthers' Commercial and Communal Economy) on a thoroughly democratic basis, gives more freedom than a formless Anarchism in which each one takes "according to his needs", simply because under the first system A could work two hours a day and live on the wage of two, and B could work eight and live on the wage of eight, each with perfect moral freedom -- whereas if there was no wage system, A (however much he might wish to loaf) would feel that he was cheating the community -- and the community would think so too -- unless he gave his eight hours like everybody else. (6)

The great point however to bear in mind in all this matter is that though the Cash nexus may and no doubt will linger on for a long time in various forms of Wages, Purchase, Sale, and so forth, it must inevitably with the changing sentiment and conditions of life lose its cast-iron stringent character, and gradually be converted into the elastic cord, which while it may indicate a line of social custom will yield to pressure when the need arises. Private Property will thus lose its present virulent character, and subside into a matter of mere use or convenience; monetary reckonings and transfers, as time goes on, will seem little more than formalities -- as today between friends.

Finally, Custom alone will remain. The subsidence of the Property feeling will mean the subsidence of brute-force Law, for whose existence Property is mainly responsible. The peoples accustomed to the varied activities of a complex industrial organism, will still -- though not suffering from the compulsion either of hunger or of brute authority -- continue through custom to carry on those activities, their Reason in the main approving.

Custom will remain -- slowly changing. And the form of the Societies of the future will be more vital and organic, and far more truly human, than they have been or could be under the rigid domination of Law.

6 It is difficult also to see how things like railways and the immense modern industries (if these survive) could be carried on without some such system of wage-payment and the definite engagement to fulfil certain work which it carries with it.

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