

OUR TASKS

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Radical libertarianism has existed in North America for over three centuries. Rhode Island, or "Rogue's Land" as it was called by the theocratically communist Puritan tyrants of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, was the site of the first historically recorded quasi-anarchist movement.¹ The original settlement of Rhode Island, pioneered by the scrupulously libertarian Roger Williams, was largely populated by refugees escaping the proto-Orwellian madness of the mainland. In time, however, the freedom-loving settlers faced a local theocratic tyrant -- a wealthy merchant named William Coddington who issued decrees and rulings as based on the "word of God". He had determined opposition in the person of Anne Hutchinson, who, although not an anarchist at first, ultimately concluded that government was immoral and unlawful. Thus, it is instructive to recall that a movement of "Baptist anarchists" was flourishing on the continent in the 1640's.

The basic conclusion of anarcho-capitalism, i.e., the idea that the individual has an absolute right to his own life and justifiably acquired property is a radical idea to be sure but it is one which grows like a persistent weed in any warm climate of freedom. We can be sure that anarchist scholars will discover "anarchoid" personalities and groups going back to the dawn of recorded history. Those tendencies are difficult to mask, even by the distorted and bureaucratic scholarship of state lackey historians. In China, for instance, there is the Taoist movement going back at least five centuries before Christ and in India there is the Chakravarti philosophical school which has been studiously avoided by modern collective-statist historians. Not surprisingly, academic scholarship fostered by altruist-collectivism and operated by government educational bureaucracies has concealed, misrepresented, and often unwittingly misinterpreted events and ideas. Our history, the history of our philosophical predecessors is not generally available to us.

The first argument always employed against anarcho-capitalism is that it has never succeeded and, thus, never will. At one time, most respectable white folk in this country really believed that blacks were subhuman and, thus, destined by fate to be slaves. Anarchists are burdened with an even greater conceptual task than black slaves in proving their ideals in the real world. For blacks, it was a matter of slaves escaping and succeeding in places where traditional slavery did not exist. The anarcho-capitalist is asked to prove the truth and workability of his ideals in a world which is totally rigged against him. Being asked to demonstrate, even on a scholarly level, the efficacy of anarcho-capitalist premises in a statist context is much like being asked by a thieving murderer who has just plundered your stock, raped your wife and butchered your children to prove to him, and his gang of psychotic lackeys, and to all of your cowering and collaborating neighbors, that living in peace and freedom is entirely feasible and desirable.

This kind of situation has resulted in the politically impotent, philosophically arcane, and ideologically irrelevant libertarian movement which we see momentarily flourishing like so many fragile wildflowers along the muddy-bloody path of collective-statism. Most so-called libertarians are nothing more than liberalized conservatives. By this it is meant, they barely understand the radical propositions that they mouth with such eloquent earnestness. They are a class of people who exist almost naked, and totally unarmed. Libertarians, even most radical libertarians, i.e., those who are "philosophical anarchists" (a term undoubtedly concocted by some slavish bureaucrat to denote the meek little housenigger who confines his anti-statist activities to parlorroom oratory and underground journals of a purely "educational" character) are intellectually disarmed by the lack of serious historical investigation elaborating

our theory of history. More than this, the only historical exemplars of physical courage and martial achievement against existing orders, are those of the pseudo "anarchists", such as anarcho-communists in tsarist Russia and the anarcho-syndicalists in Catalonia during the Spanish Civil War. Whenever a libertarian speaks of revolution with pride, it's about the American Revolution of two centuries ago.

Very few libertarians, perhaps only a handful, actually think it is possible to transform the U.S. of A. into a successful anarcho-capitalist society in this generation. Most Libertarians are thoroughly permeated by the attitudes of their bureaucratic masters. This is reflected in the literature which utters not a word about organizing a revolutionary movement. In letters and articles written in libertarian journals, revolution is universally decried as unquestionably evil. The statements are always casual mentions with no more argument than the assertion that revolution would necessitate the violation of the rights of innocent people. These so-called libertarians are like pathetic bleating sheep being led to slaughter.

Anarcho-capitalism which of its own logical consistency will become THE doctrine of the libertarian movement and the capitalist world, is by necessity a revolutionary ideology. One cannot seriously propose that the State which exists through massive coercion and slavery and which perpetuates extensive vested interests will quietly fold its tent and leave the field of battle as a result of logical suasion. And yet, one prominent anarchist who has been imprisoned for his tax resistance believes that. He thinks that a libertarian renaissance and lots of love will somehow melt the statist meanies and their hordes of constituents into sweet reasonableness. He represents, one is afraid to say, a kind of pollyanna madness which at times afflicts political visionaries. It's akin to a kind of spiritual faith-healing. Once the truth be known, then, the world will bask in new found enlightenment and reflect kindness, or so goes the feeling of, and I quote, an "emotional libertarian" as this anarchist describes himself and those he sees manning the Libber's Renaissance. Yes, and Fourier claimed that Socialism would turn the seas into lemonade!

The only active opposition to the government advocated by radical libertarians has been tax rebellion. Undoubtedly withholding payment of taxes to the government is morally justified and can be, within the proper political context, a powerful weapon to bring down the State. What traditional libertarian thinkers have ignored, however, is that tax revolt by itself achieves no significant political victory. Assuming that a widespread tax rebellion could be organized, which in itself is highly doubtful, it would still leave the basic assumptions of government and the legitimacy of coercive institutions intact. Rebellion is not revolution. It does not lead to a fundamental change in the mentality of the intelligentsia and the masses. Tax rebellion is more likely to lead to temporary concessions by the government followed later by harsh penalties against the leaders.

Thus far, I have talked only about anarchists and libertarians. The anti-statist movement, however, is much larger. It includes diverse elements such as the classical liberal conservatives, the John Birchers, the Posse Comitatus, elements of the New Left, the Reaganites, Wallace-ites, Bukley-ites and many others. All of these groups, except perhaps for the Posse, which appears to be a form of grass-roots anarchism, suffers from contradictory premises. They are prone to support government intervention for various reasons. All of this is well known, but they share with us a growing sense of alarm, and opposition against the growth of State power. Unfortunately, in its present fragmented condition the anti-statist movement stands very little chance of substantially modifying government or of stemming its growth.

Libertarians have traditionally been opposed to radical mass politics for fear of creating something worse.² This inhibition has stultified the entire anti-statist

movement. Instead of providing intellectual and ideological leadership to a coherent anti-statist movement, radical libertarians have reduced their impact to the point of invisibility. As a result, the anti-statist movement, if one can call it a movement, has no ideology and no plan of action. Thus, the first task for radical anarcho-capitalists is to establish a coherent program within existing conditions which can bring about radical political change in this country. Its objective must be the abolition of the State. This objective can and must be achieved in our generation.

This program for the abolition of the State rests on the following basic assumptions. The first being that it is morally right for individuals to organize in groups to physically fight back against the State and to employ every means including the power of the State against the State. This is the doctrine of retaliatory recapture. Although it is true that nearly all of the material means of state power have been stolen from individuals (many of whom support government voluntarily out of a sense of duty, patriotism and even from a misguided sense of self-interest); those who choose to actively defend themselves against statist coercion have the ethical right to employ any physical means controlled by the State to contravene its power. Most libertarians are under the misconception that any use of stolen property automatically renders one an accomplice to theft. It does not. There is no rational obligation to the original owner on the part of a victim who is suffering the consequences of the stolen goods in the hands of government officials. Anyone who permits the use of his or her property by a thief or anyone else for that matter, in the abuse of others has no ethical claim against them if these victims wrest control over that property to terminate the continuing threat of abuse or in restitution for damages already caused. The original owner may, of course, lay claim to his stolen property but he must direct himself to the thief proper for restoration or restitution. One may not demand others to sacrifice their own defense in deference to one's stolen property -- especially when one is making no effort to retrieve that property.

In practical terms, this means that an anarcho-capitalist political movement should seek to gain control over every means of state power. The State is a functioning machine -- every element of which contributes to its maintenance of power and coercion -- one cannot artificially divide (as many libertarians are prone to do) between the obviously coercive parts such as the IRS and the "relatively legitimate" aspects such as the courts and military. We must be willing and able to take control of any and all parts of the functioning apparatus of the State for our own long-term use. The defeat of statism is a long process. We cannot hope to win unless we can divert money, supplies and position from the State. We must stop being productive slaves and become constantly transformative of state power, in part, by siphoning government resources into anti-government activities.

The second basic assumption is that we must have a radical ideology which translates basic abstract philosophical premises into concrete political doctrine. Anarcho-capitalist ideology must specifically address every oppressed group which is in some way suffering its own particular problem with the State. Although the entire format of our philosophy should always serve as background for our special interest group approach, we must concentrate on the gut issues. Every actual and potential conflict by various interests must be exploited with specific interpretations of the problem placing it within the context of an overall analysis of the world situation. The major components of our ideological format should be:

1. The anarcho-capitalist interpretation of history with a particular emphasis on events since Renaissance times and the colonization of the New World. The scholarship of such revisionist historians such as James Martin and Murray Rothbard must be reduced into a concise and integrated historical world view which relates the events of America's part with present conditions. Our history must be readily understand-

able to the masses and appealing to the young.

2. It should provide an integrated strategic and tactical intellectual format for world revolution and for overcoming all major problems in readily appreciable terms. We must explain in detail how we intend to resolve unemployment, inflation, crime in the streets, education, area defense, world peace, health problems, management of environment-ecology. Anarcho-capitalist ideology must provide the basis for specific platforms for national revolutionary parties.

3. The third major ideological component must be a link between science and politics. We must demonstrate the scientific coherence of our humanistic statements with the basic principles of science. This link must be readily understandable to the masses. Our propaganda must build confidence in the capacity of a revolutionary anarcho-capitalist leadership to bring about a better and more secure future.

4. Radical anarcho-capitalist ideology must provide a basis for dealing with emotional and psychodynamic problems so prevalent in authoritarian societies. Not only must we deal with this theoretically and therapeutically as is being done by Nathaniel Branden now, but we must employ mass culture media to therapize on the most primitive levels. We should be providing role-models and advice to the lovelorn. Sex, romance, and family -- these are what count to most people.

Having outlined the major components of an anarcho-capitalist ideology we can proceed to the last major assumption necessary for the abolition of the State: the development of a professional revolutionary cadre. There is no substitute for total professional dedication. Undoubtedly, we must have the active support of large numbers of part-timers and the passive "moral" support of the masses, but without a militant vanguard we cannot confront and defeat our enemies. Until we are ready to do so, we will lack credibility, we will as a movement lack the hard nucleus around which to organize, and our propagation will remain weak, diffuse and ultimately ineffective. It is instructive to note what has happened in country after country which has lost to the collective-statists. In Cambodia for example, several million people may have been slaughtered, in the Soviet Union between fifty and a hundred million have been sent to slave labor camps, in China forty million were purged in the first decade and the list goes on and on. This madness comes of a natural progression of collective-statism -- it happened in Germany, and in the U.S. of A. our government interned the Japanese. We must begin organizing a political army.

The last major assumption necessary to accomplishing the abolition of the State is the organizing of parallel institutions which not only permit us to handle the problems of underground organization but which will provide the transitional mechanisms to forming an anarcho-capitalist society. We must begin building anarchy now by developing underground courts, police and military systems. Libertarians, and all anti-statists must understand that there is no effective way to achieve liberty in a real sense that does not involve breaking the law. I.e. if you want to be a real anarcho-capitalist and not merely an "philosophical anarchist" token statist house-nigger, you have to be a lawbreaker. The statist law is constructed in such a manner as to make lawful institutional change impossible in any practicable sense.

With these points in mind we can broach the subject of formulating the present tasks for the anti-statist movement. First of all, we must realize that the only true anti-statist movement is Radical Anarcho-capitalism. An objectively integrated, real world philosophy does not permit mere abstract pronouncements which are not linked to activities ultimately sufficient to resolve an ethical problem.

This is the problem with the U.S. Libertarian Party. Its platform and principles sort of add up to a minimal state with strong hints that this is only transitional to

a no-state condition. The LP has no workable ideology, no program of transitional mechanics, its leadership is composed of comfortably ensconced academics and liberalized conservative business administrators. The Party's rank and file are largely made up of young middle class careerist professionals momentarily sowing their wild political oats before settling down with a family and a status position in the Republican Party. The intellectual base of the LP is a failure because it has provided no direction for these momentarily liberalized conservatives. The Party has no strategy. Its tactical repertoire is a faint reflection of the major parties. Predictably, the LP will fail in this country unless it is radicalized and disciplined. Its crucial failure at this time, however, is its lack of strong moral leadership and disciplined tactical planning.

Having said this, it must be admitted that the LP is politically the only large-scale organization with a quasi-anarcho-capitalist philosophy. Even its weak example has been sufficient to enthuse the formation of libertarian parties in Canada, Australia and New Zealand. It must be understood, however, that if the example of the U.S. of A. party holds true for all, that these parties will fail. And this should not disturb us as these organizations represent a phase in the development of the Radical Anarcho-capitalist movement.

It is within this frame of considerations that the near-term tasks of the radical anti-statist movement becomes apparent. The first task is the refinement and propagation of our revolutionary viewpoint to other anti-statist elements who could lean our way. We must fleshout and extend our ranks. Thus, our most immediate task is the construction and propagation of a new goal horizon for the anti-statist movement and the simultaneous induction of the "charter" membership. This is the reason, by the way, for the Conference to get some geographical spread in preparation for an international organization.

The second task is the organization of a committed core group. Preferably this group would be composed of full-time organizers residing in different states and capable of attracting nuclei of committed part-timers. The first objective is to establish a rudimentary economic base for political activities. Each core member should have a highly sympathetic woman or man friend willing and able to contribute economic support indefinitely. Core organizers should also seek to supplement their income base with welfare, unemployment, food stamps, or an easy government bureaucratic or menial positions. A government job can be the source of almost endless supplies, needed material as well as important information.

The third task is infiltrating "friendly" organizations and gaining influence. This can only be carried out under circumstances where the level of participation required is minimal. Good opportunities exist in the Republican Party. Every effort should be made to be selected as delegates to state and national conventions. All political organizations have their disenchanting minorities and fringe elements. With proper tactics it is easy to amplify our position with this support through radical planks. We can move large but tactically weak political organizations by forming a well disciplined minority within each party. We must split and destabilize counter-revolutionary conservative and reformist forces while continuously moving the "center-moderate" position ever more closely to the radical position. We must speak continuously on the floor of deliberative bodies, we must drown out our opponents. Three or four of us can and must be of equal impact to a convention of hundreds.

The fourth task must involve a direct approach to youth and to underage minors. The young form the numerically greatest category of oppressed in the world and in our country. They suffer the greatest physical pain, humiliation, degradation and divestiture of legal rights. They constitute the category with the least invested in the present system. We must study the problems of youth and we must develop our

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capacities to work with them. Demographically, politically and militarily we stand no chance of victory unless we can appeal to youth. As part of this we must work to bring about the abolition of public education. The PS system, not the postal service, must be our prime institutional point of attack. This is their achilles heel and our greatest opportunity.

The last of the near-term tasks which should be accomplished within two years is the convening of an international radical anti-statist conference to begin organizing a world revolutionary movement. At this point we can begin the development of an international court of justice and an intelligence network.

- Richard R. Slomon

FOOTNOTES

1. Murray N. Rothbard, "Individualist Anarchism in the United States: The Origins", Libertarian Analysis, Vol. 2, No. 1, Winter 1970, p. 5.

2. James J. Martin, the libertarian revisionist historian warns of the risks of "radical political activity along the traditional lines of mass politics" and offers little hope of reversing the statist tide in the early future. James J. Martin in the "Introduction" to Benjamin R. Tucker, State Socialism and Anarchism and Other Essays, (Colorado Springs, Ralph Myles Publishers, Inc., 1972) p. 9-10 and in Reason Magazine interview ("Introducing Revisionism", January 1976, Vol. 7, No. 9) p. 21.

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