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Anarchist Communism in plain English

Leonard Augustine Motler

1919

This is to explain exactly what Anarchist-Communists want, in as few words as possible, without waste of ink and paper.

Suppose you don't know what Anarchism is. But you'd like to know of course. Without committing yourself one way or another?

Well, here goes.

First of all, we'll bowl over that Sidney Street affair. Most of the chaps I've talked to have got that bee in their bonnet. But I don't blame them for it, because we can't always catch up with lies that get loose from the press.

The Sidney Street anarchists are easily disposed of. They weren't anarchists at all. You will admit that an anarchist ought to know what an anarchist is, so you can take our word for it. If however you want facts you can get same from our offices.

But, you'll say, what about all the assassinations and the bomb outrages by anarchists?

This is an old argument which doesn't apply now. Most of the assassinations and outrages lately haven't been done by anarchists. There is nothing in anarchism that preaches bomb-throwing.

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Of course it's true there have been anarchists who threw bombs maybe, just the same as there have been Roman Catholics who cut up their wives into bits. If you agree that the murder by Crippen is not an argument against the Pope, then an outrage by an anarchist proves nothing against Anarchism.

If you kick a dog, that dog will but you, but it does not prove the dog is an anarchist or a Wesleyan or a Mormon. Much the same thing happens in life; tyrants get knives stuck in them. But the people who chopped off King Charles' head were not anarchists. They were considered pious.

And now for Anarchism.

The word means "no-rule" or no government. What, you say, no government? How could the country be run? There would simply be chaos.

Well you can't have a spring clean, without upsetting a pail now and again. But what does it prove?

If you say "there will be a chaos" then you are saying perhaps the nastiest thing you have ever said against a government.

What would you think of a man who said that if he left home for a week his family would be fighting amongst themselves? You would say of course that he was a duffer in family affairs.

That is exactly what you suggest about the Government. A Government that cannot be thrown out without the people falling on each other with sticks is a pretty sort of Government.

In the first place, WHY should the people start fighting each other? Because some people have too much and some have nothing at all. Mind you, they are all the same kind of people too. Why should one Britisher have more than another?

Why should some people have one pair of boots stuck together with old pieces and tin tacks, whilst others have dozens at home they don't use?

Why are the shops stuck full of new suits and you can't afford one although there's a patch in your pants?

Why? Because we have such a brainy Government—and such a brainy people. That’s why.

I don’t want to pile it on—but look for yourself. Look at the war for instance. As soon as the Germans retired over the Rhine, we had a million out of works. Look at the Slough, look at any old thing you like—including the Government ale. Then ask yourself if YOU could have made a worse hash of it.

Of course not.

If you want a thing done, the best way is to do it YOURSELF.

What is the position? The position is that there are forty-six millions of people who want food, clothes, houses and work. Mind you, I don’t mean it is the working class only. We want to get rid of that pretty name. A shirker is a shirker whether he is a tramp or a Duke. When everybody gets to work then we’ll have more than enough for all. The principle is not share and share alike, but help yourself to what is good for you. Can a Duke eat more than a navy?

The questions really arise—

Who is to do the dirty work?

Who is to have the motor cars and who is to walk?

Who is to have the salmon and who the Yarmouth Bloaters?

And so on. And so on.

The chap who asks those questions seems to think that without a brainless Government to kick them the British nation is a nation of idiots. WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT?

Can’t the people take over the land and grow things on it? Can’t they take over the factories and run them?

Of course I don’t mean ”Can any busy-body jump into the ex-bosses’ shoes and tell you how to run it if you’ll let him lead you.”

Nunno. Having sat on Government and the capitalists, are we going to be ruled by noseyparkers and number eight hats?

Anarchism means no-rule. That is to say ”Mind you own business.” And when the people start doing that, they have no use for tyrants, big and little, plain and coloured.

Communism means working together for the good of all. Consequently the people will be prepared to accept the ex-capitalists as fellow-workers provided they do USEFUL work. And by working together in staunch co-operations, the people will be in less danger of any tyrant resurrecting himself and his friends and gong back to the "good old days."

That's all right you say, but REVOLUTION MEANS BLOOD-SHED.

How terrible!

When the Government said, "Line up, boys, and give the Germans what for, so we can pinch the German Colonies and anything that's lying handy. Down with the Beast of Berlin!" did anybody say—

IT MEANS BLOODSHED

Um!

You can't learn to swim without getting wet. But because a Revolution MIGHT mean bloodshed, that is no reason why it should mean bloodshed.

How many of the people are armed? Why there aren't enough guns round among the workers to run a Wild West show.

The soldiers and the police will do all the dirty work—if they agree to do it—for our kind masters.

Who are the soldiers and the police?

They are taken from the working class. They might be making bread or clothes or boots. They might be building houses. Is that good enough for the capitalists? Nunno.

Having pinched most of what the people earn, and "owning" all the land, they want somebody to protect them from the people, so they have police. They want someone protect them from the wicked foreigner, so they have the Army and Navy.

When the Revolution comes, the capitalists will be so fond of the OLD COUNTRY, they will collect all the boodle they can and make a dash for South America with the swag.

And they will leave the army and the police to fight the rest of the working class.

Does that strike you as funny?

You can't be on the side of the capitalists naturally, whether you are a worker of any sort, a policeman, a soldier, a sailor or an airman.

You can't be on the side of the Government, which runs the country for the benefit of the capitalists.

Get into the ranks of the Anarchist-Communists.

RIGHT NOW!