

THE BEAUTIFUL IDEA

Excerpts on Anarchy

THE END OF ANARCHISM?

Luigi Galleani

What is anarchism by definition?

It is the struggle for a condition of society where the only link among individuals is solidarity, basically the solidarity of material and moral interests, which leads to the elimination of the vicious daily competitions between individuals and among peoples. And it calls upon them to unite for a greater and more noble struggle against the adverse forces of nature in order to realize superior, more complete and more secure forms of social life.

The condition and character of solidarity are spontaneity and freedom. But whereas the bourgeois regime is the domination of a majority over the minority, we aspire to realize the autonomy of the individual within the freedom of association, the independence of his thought, of his life, of his development, of his destiny, freedom from violence, from caprice and from the domination of the majority, as well as of various minorities; and when we refer to libertarian communism, a term which our descendants will take care to amend, we are trying to find an economic *ubi consistam* [where should I stand] in which this political autonomy of the individual may find an enlightened and happy reality.

...

Anarchy is not a metaphysic abstraction. The anarchist idea did not spring alive, complete, perfect from the minds of Babeuf, Proudhon, or Bakunin, the way Minerva, according to the myth, is said to have sprung from Jove's brain. It has budded, grown, ripened, slowly and painfully by the experience of centuries, during which the common people have besought from time to time, god, the State, the law, or universal suffrage to give them a good master, a good judge, a little piece of bread, a little compassion, a little rest, a little light and love — always in vain.

As their trust in gods and demigods was fading, under continual mocking and repulsions, into the twilight of disenchantment and defeat; as their strength was revealing itself in their heroic and glories, but unfortunate struggles, and as they were gaining solidarity — instinctive at first, then through sacrifices and disaster — the common people came to understand that the faith they had spent in vain on the threshold of temples, thrones, parliaments and masters was to be revived in their own right and in their own strength. They began to believe in themselves and could see themselves freed from their chains.

THE CONQUEST OF BREAD

Peter Kropotkin

We must recognize, and loudly proclaim, that every one, whatever his grade in the old society, whether strong or weak, capable or incapable, has, before everything, THE RIGHT TO LIVE, and that society is bound to share amongst all, without exception, the means of existence at its disposal. We must acknowledge this, and proclaim it aloud, and act up to it.

It must be so contrived that from the first day of the revolution the worker shall know that a new era is opening before him; that henceforward none need crouch under the bridges, with palaces hard by, none need fast in the midst of food, none need perish with cold near shops full of furs; that all is for all, in practice as well as in theory, and that at last, for the first time in history, a revolution has been accomplished which considers the NEEDS of the people before schooling them in their DUTIES.

This cannot be brought about by Acts of Parliament, but only by taking immediate and effective possession of all that is necessary to ensure the well-being of all; this is the only really scientific way of going to work, the only way to be understood and desired by the

mass of the people. We must take possession, in the name of the people, of the granaries, the shops full of clothing, and the dwelling houses. Nothing must be wasted. We must organize without delay to feed the hungry, to satisfy all wants, to meet all needs, to produce, not for the special benefit of this one or that one, but to ensure that society as a whole will live and grow.

...

In claiming that right they claim the right to possess the wealth of the community — to take the houses to dwell in, according to the needs of each family; to seize the stores of food and learn the meaning of plenty, after having known famine too well. They proclaim their right to all wealth — fruit of the labour of past and present generations — and learn by its means to enjoy those higher pleasures of art and science too long monopolized by the middle classes.

And while asserting their right to live in comfort, they assert, what is still more important, their right to decide for themselves what this comfort shall be, what must be produced to ensure it, and what discarded as no longer of value.

The “right to well-being” means the possibility of living like human beings, and of bringing up children to be members of a society better than ours, whilst the “right to work” only means the right to be always a wage-slave, a drudge, ruled over and exploited by the middle class of the future. The right to well-being is the Social Revolution, the right to work means nothing but the Treadmill of Commercialism. It is high time for the worker to assert his right to the common inheritance and to enter into possession.

ANARCHISM: WHAT IT REALLY STANDS FOR

Emma Goldman

Anarchism, then, really stands for the liberation of the human

mind from the dominion of religion; the liberation of the human body from the dominion of property; liberation from the shackles and restraint of government. Anarchism stands for a social order based on the free grouping of individuals for the purpose of producing real social wealth; an order that will guarantee to every human being free access to the earth and full enjoyment of the necessities of life, according to individual desires, tastes, and inclinations.

THE PLACE OF ANARCHISM IN SOCIALISTIC EVOLUTION

Peter Kropotkin

Anarchist Communism maintains that most valuable of all conquests — individual liberty — and moreover extends it and gives it a solid basis — economic liberty, without which political liberty is delusive; it does not ask the individual who has rejected god, the universal tyrant, god the king, and god the parliament, to give unto himself a god more terrible than any of the preceding — god the Community, or to abdicate upon its altar his independence, his will, his tastes, and to renew the vow of asceticism which he formerly made before the crucified god. It says to him, on the contrary, “No society is free so long as the individual is not so. Do not seek to modify society by imposing upon it an authority which shall make everything right; if you do, you will fail as popes and emperors have failed. Modify society so that your fellows may not be any longer your enemies by the force of circumstances: abolish the conditions which allow some to monopolize the fruit of the labor of others; and instead of attempting to construct society from top to bottom, or from the center to the circumference, let it develop itself freely from the simple to the composite by the free union of free groups. This course, which is so much obstructed at present, is the true forward

march of society: do not seek to hinder it, do not turn your back on progress, but march along with it. Then the sentiment of sociability which is common to human beings, as it is to all animals living in society, will be able to develop itself freely, because our fellows will no longer be our enemies, and we shall thus arrive at a state of things in which each individual will be able to give free rein to his inclinations, and even to his passions, without any other restraint than the love and respect of those who surround him.”

THE ANARCHIST TENSION

Alfredo Bonanno

So anarchists keep asking themselves the same question: What is anarchism? What does it mean to be an anarchist? Why? Because it is not a definition that can be made once and for all, put in a safe and considered a heritage to be tapped little by little. Being an anarchist does not mean one has reached a certainty or said once and for all, ‘There, from now on I hold the truth and as such, at least from the point of view of the idea, I am a privileged person’. Anyone who thinks like this is an anarchist in word alone. Instead the anarchist is someone who really puts themselves in doubt as such, as a person, and asks themselves: What is my life according to what I do and in relation to what I think? What connection do I manage to make each day in everything I do, a way of being an anarchist continually and not come to agreements, make little daily compromises, etc? Anarchism is not a concept that can be locked up in a word like a gravestone. It is not a political theory. It is a way of conceiving life, and life, young or old as we may be, whether we are old people or children, is not something final: it is a stake we must play day after day. When we wake up in the morning and put our feet on the ground we must have a good reason for getting up, if we don’t it makes no difference whether we are anarchists or not. We might as

well stay in bed and sleep. And to have a good reason we must know what we want to do because for anarchism, for the anarchist, there is no difference between what we do and what we think, but there is a continual reversal of theory into action and action into theory. That is what makes the anarchist unlike someone who has another concept of life and crystallises this concept in a political practice, in political theory.

WHY ARE WE ANARCHISTS? Elisee Reclus

If we are anarchists, the enemies of every master, we are also communist internationals, for we understand that life is impossible without social grouping. Isolated, we can do nothing, while through close union we can transform the world. We associate with one another as free and equal men, laboring at a common work and governing our mutual relations by justice and reciprocal benevolence. Religious and national hatreds cannot separate us, since the study of nature is our only religion and because we have the world for a homeland. As for the great cause of ferocity and meanness, it will cease to exist among us. The earth will become collective property, the barriers will be removed and from now on the soil, belonging to all, could be developed for the pleasure and well-being of everyone. The products demanded will be precisely those that the earth can best furnish, without anything every being lost as occurs in the disorganized labor that is performed today. As well, the distribution of all this wealth among men will be taken from the private exploiter and will be made part of the normal functioning of Society as a whole.

We do not have to draw a picture of the future society in advance: It is up to the spontaneous action of all the free men to create it and give it its form, which will, incidentally, be constantly

changing, like all the phenomena of life. But what we know is that all injustice, every crime of reason humanity, will always find us standing to combat it. As long as iniquity endures, we, international anarchist-communists, will remain in a state of permanent revolution.

WHY I AM AN ANARCHIST

Lorenzo Komboa Ervin

All anarchists do not believe in the same things. There are differences and the field is broad enough that those differences can coexist and be respected. So I don't know what others believe, I just know what I believe in and I will spell out it simply, but thoroughly.

I believe in Black liberation, so I am a Black revolutionary. I believe that Black people are oppressed both as workers and a distinct nationality, and will only be freed by a Black revolution, which is an intrinsic part of a Social revolution. I believe that Blacks and other oppressed nationalities must have their own agenda, distinct world-view, and organizations of struggle, even though they may decide to work with white workers.

I believe in the destruction of the world Capitalist System, so I am an anti-imperialist. As long as Capitalism is alive on the planet, there will be exploitation, oppression and nation-states. Capitalism is responsible for the major world wars, numerous brush wars, and millions of people starving for the profit motive of the rich countries in the West.

I believe in racial justice, so I am an anti-racist. The Capitalist system was and is maintained by enslavement and colonial oppression of the African people, and before there will be a social revolution white supremacy must be defeated. I also believe that Africans in America are colonized and exist as an internal colonial of the U.S, white mother country. I believe that white workers must give up their privileged status, their "white identity," and must

support racially oppressed workers in their fights for equality and national liberation. Freedom cannot be bought by enslaving and exploiting others.

I believe in social justice and economic equality, so I am a Libertarian Socialist. I believe that society and all parties responsible for its production should share the economic products of labor. I do not believe in Capitalism or the state, and believe they both should be overthrown and abolished. I accept the economic critique of Marxism, but not its model for political organizing. I accept the anti-authoritarian critique of Anarchism, but not its rejection of the class struggle.

I believe in workers control of society and industry, so I am an Anarcho-Syndicalist. Anarchist Syndicalism is revolutionary labor unionism, where direct action tactics are used to fight Capitalism and take over industry. I believe that the factory committees, workers' councils and other labor organizations should be the workplaces, and should take control from the Capitalists after a direct action campaign of sabotage, strikes, sit-downs, factory occupations and other actions.

I do not believe in government, and so I am an Anarchist. I believe that government is one of the worst forms of modern oppression, is the source of war and economic oppression, and must be overthrown. Anarchism means that we will have more democracy, social equality, and economic prosperity. I oppose all forms of oppression found in modern society: patriarchy, white supremacy, Capitalism, State Communism, religious dictates, gay discrimination, etc.

A PROJECT OF LIBERATION

Insurgent S.

The Exploited Individual

“We must take into account not only the objective causes of oppression, but must also examine the subjective factors which play an important role in the persistence of exploitation and are hindering the process of workers’ autonomy.”

– Jean Weir, *Worker’s Autonomy*

The will to resist exploitation and social exclusion is an often overlooked factor within the revolutionary movement, but without this subjective element revolutionary change can not take place. Oppression can nurture apathy and resignation as easily as it can provoke hatred and anger. The exploitation of the capitalist system creates the context and justification for mass rebellion, but the determination to resist must come from within each individual. The spirit of revolt, the indispensable revolutionary initiative of individuals must be the groundwork of a project that aims at overthrowing the dominant class and destroying the infrastructure of their economy. The struggle for real individual freedom must also necessarily become a struggle for equality of conditions and access to social life for the entire exploited class.

The Insurrectionary Process

“When a revolutionary situation arises in a country, before the spirit of revolt is sufficiently awakened in the masses to express itself in violent demonstrations in the streets or by rebellions and uprisings, it is through action that minorities succeed in awakening that feeling of independence and that spirit of audacity without which no revolution can come to a head.”

– Peter Kropotkin , The Spirit of Revolt

With the individual as a catalyst, an insurrectionary process can begin to take shape, first in small affinity groups, and then in base structures; mass organizations founded on principles of self-management, direct action and permanent conflict with the class enemy. The forum for individual and collective action is the class war itself, the contradiction between exploiter and exploited that can only be resolved by the violent elimination of those in power. Organization is a tool to be used in coordinating specific tasks, a tool to be fashioned, adapted and dismantled as necessary. It should not be an end in itself. Only the struggle should be permanent. Revolutionary initiative has a variety of means at its disposal, from counter-information work and expropriation to attacks on capitalist institutions. Class warfare may develop over time in the form of escalating individual, intermediate and mass insurrectionary struggles, but all efforts should aim at achieving concrete results and gains, and symbolic methods should be dismissed as useless.

The Institutions of Oppression

“Naturally one must begin with the insurrectionary act which sweeps away the material obstacles, the armed forces of government which are opposed to any social transformation.”

– Errico Malatesta, The Insurrection

Capitalism is not merely an abstract concept or system of social relationships. It depends on its institutions of repression, its courts, police stations, and prisons. These structures will not destroy themselves. They will not crumble under the weight of an inevitable historical process. They must be physically assaulted. The subjective aspects of material resistance also come into play, as individuals realize their capacity to actively attack and destroy capitalist targets.

By intervening directly in the social clash, individuals and groups gain experience that can be attained in no other way. When engaged in collective action, the bonds of solidarity are strengthened between comrades. The combative spirit gathers momentum.

The Class Enemy

“Let every dirty, lousy tramp arm himself with a revolver or knife and lay in wait on the steps of the palaces of the rich and stab or shoot the owners as they come out. Let us kill them without mercy, and let it be a war of extermination and without pity. Let us devastate the avenues where the wealthy live.”

– Lucy Parsons

Behind every institution of oppression is the class enemy. Determined to maintain their position at all costs, intoxicated by power and willing to use the most brutal forces of repression at their disposal, the exploiters wage class war relentlessly. Revolutionary organizations must act against this reality by refusing negotiation or compromise with the class enemy. The only effective strategy in revolutionary warfare is the strategy of annihilation. The application of violence to this concrete necessity of the movement itself should not cause discomfort for even a moment. The lives of the exploiters and their servants are not worth a cent.

Autonomy and Centralization

“If revolutionaries organize like those whose rule they seek to overthrow, they are defeated before the battle is engaged.”

– Andy Anderson, Hungary ‘56

Autonomy is the prerequisite of social freedom. Only the absolute autonomy of individuals and groups, the freedom to associate or disassociate with others at will, can allow the natural

tendency towards solidarity and mutual aid to take root. The principle of self-determination must grow from the free individual out towards the community, and further outwards to distinct cultural groups and geographic regions. Autonomy provides the basis for meaningful interrelations between groups and territories on the basis of communism; the equality of access to the means of existence and social life. Revolution is a project that develops decentralized organizational structures on the one hand while it attacks the centralized formations of the class enemy on the other. Revolutionaries must take the initiative to constantly fight against any tendency towards centralization if they are to defend freedom. From this perspective, revolutionary initiative becomes a project based on combining the struggle for individual liberation with the social struggle to overthrow the capitalist system and the class enemy.

THE REVOLUTUIONARY PROJECT

Alfredo Bonanno

But before discovering what a revolutionary project might be, it is necessary to agree on what the revolutionary must possess in order to be able to elaborate this project of theirs. First of all courage. Not the banal courage of the physical clash and attack on the enemy trenches, but the more difficult one, the courage of one's ideas. Once you think in a certain way, once you see things and people, the world and its affairs in a certain way, you must have the courage to carry this through without compromise or half measures, without pity or illusion. To stop half way would be a crime or, if you like, is absolutely normal. But revolutionaries are not 'normal' people. They must go beyond. Beyond normality, but also beyond exceptionally, which is an aristocratic way of considering diversity. Beyond good, but also beyond evil, as someone would have said.

They cannot wait for others to do what needs to be done.

They cannot delegate to others what their conscience dictates to them. They cannot wait peacefully to do what others itching to destroy what oppresses them like themselves would do if only they decided, if only they were to awake from their torpor and from allowing themselves to be swindled, far away from the chatter and confusion.

So they must set to work, and work hard. Work to supply themselves with the means necessary to give some basis to their convictions.

And here we come to the second thing: constancy. The strength to continue, persevere, insist, even when others are discouraged and everything seems difficult.

It is impossible to procure the means one requires without constancy. The revolutionary needs cultural means, i.e. analyses and basic common knowledge. But studies that seem very far from revolutionary practice are also indispensable to action. Languages, economy, philosophy, mathematics, the natural sciences, chemistry, social science and so on. This knowledge should not be seen as sectarian specialisation, nor should it be the dilettante exercises of an eccentric spirit dipping into this and that, desirous of knowledge but forever ignorant due to the failure to possess a method of learning. And then the technics: writing correctly, (in a way that reaches one's objective), speaking to others (using all the techniques on the subject), which are not easy to learn and are very important, studying (this is also a technique), remembering (memory can be improved, it does not have to be left to our more or less natural disposition), the manipulation of objects (which many consider a mysterious gift but instead is technique and can be learned and perfected) and others still.

The search to acquire these means is unending. It is the revolutionary's task to work continually to perfect these means and extend them to other fields.

Then there is a third thing, creativity. There can be no doubt that all of the above means would be useless, simply specialisation as an end in itself, were they not to produce new experiences, continual modification in the means as a whole and the possibility of putting them to use. And it is here that it becomes possible to grasp the great force of creativity, i.e. the fruit of all the preceding efforts. Logical processes become no more than a basic, unimportant element, whereas a different, total new one emerges: intuition.

So now the problem comes to be seen differently. Nothing will be as it was before. Numerous connections and comparisons, inferences and deductions are made without our realising it. All the means in our possession begin to vibrate and come alive. Things of the past along with new understanding, old concepts, ideas and tensions, that had not fully been understood become clear. An incredible mixture, itself a creative event, which must be submitted to the discipline of method in order for us to produce something, limited if you like, but immediately perceivable. Unfortunately the destiny of creativity is that its immense initial explosive potential (which becomes something miserable in the absence of the basic means mentioned above) must be returned to the realm of technique in the narrow sense of word. It must go back to becoming word, pages, figures, sounds, form, objects. Otherwise, outside the scheme of this prison of communication, it would be dispersive and abandoned, lost in an immense fathomless sea.

And now one last thing, materiality. The capacity, that is, to grasp the real material foundations of what surrounds us. For example, we require suitable means in order to understand and act, and that is not so simple. The question of means seems clear, but always leads to misunderstanding. The question of money, for example. It is obvious that without money one cannot do what one wants. A revolutionary cannot ask for State financing to develop projects aimed at its destruction. They cannot for both ethical

reasons and a logical one (that the State would not give it to them). Nor can they seriously believe that with small personal subscriptions they will be able to do everything they want (and consider necessary). Nor can they simply continue to complain about lack of money or resign themselves to the fact that some things just can't be done for that reason. Even less can they adopt the stance of those who, being penniless, feel their conscience to be at rest and, stating they have no money, do not participate in the common effort but wait for others to do so in their place. Of course, it is clear that if a comrade does not have any money they cannot be held to pay for what they cannot afford. But have they really done everything they can to procure some for themselves? Or is there only one way to get hold of money: go begging for it, letting oneself be exploited by a boss? I don't think so.

In the arc of the possible ways of being, including personal tendencies and cultural acquisitions, two extreme kinds of behaviour polarise, each of which is limited and penalising. On the one hand there are those who accentuate the theoretical aspect, on the other, those who immerse themselves up in the practical one. These two poles hardly ever exist in the 'pure state', but are often accentuated enough to become obstacles and impediments.

When exasperated to infinity the great possibilities that theoretical study gives the revolutionary remain dead letters, becoming elements of contradiction and impediment. Some people can only see life in theoretical terms. They are not necessarily men of letters or scholars (for the latter this would be quite normal), but could be any proletarian, an emarginated person that grew up in the streets coming to blows. This search for a resolution through the subtlety of reason transforms itself into disorganic anxiety, a tumultuous desire to understand that invariably turns into pure confusion, lowering the primacy of the brain that they are trying to hold on to at any cost. This exasperation reduces their critical capacity to put order in their ideas, widening their creativity but only

in the pure, one might say wild, state, supplying images and judgement devoid of any organisational method that might make them utilizable. This person lives constantly in a kind of 'trance', eats badly, relates to others with difficulty. They become easily suspicious, when not anxious to be 'understood', and for this reason tend to accumulate an incredible hotchpotch of contradictory thoughts with no guiding thread. The solution for getting out of the labyrinth would be action. But according to the model of polarisation we are looking at, this would have to be submitted to the dominion of the brain, to the 'logic' of reason. So, the action is killed, put off to infinity or lived badly because not 'understood', not brought back to the pre-eminence of thought.

On the other hand, there is endless doing, the passing of one's life away in things to be done. Today, tomorrow. Day after day. Perhaps in hope of a particular day that will see an end to this putting off to infinity. Meanwhile no search for a moment's reflection that is not exclusively linked to things to be done, or very little at least. Devoting all one's time to doing kills in the same way as devoting it all to thinking does. The contradictions of the individual are not resolved by action as an end in itself. For the revolutionary things are even worse. The classic flattery that individuals use to convince themselves of the validity and importance of the action they wish to undertake is not enough for the revolutionary. The only expedient one can have recourse to is to put things off to infinity, to better days when it will no longer be necessary to dedicate oneself 'exclusively' to doing and there will be time to think. But how can one think without the means to do so? Perhaps thought is automatic activity that one slips into when one stops doing? Certainly not. In the same way as doing is not automatic activity that one slips into when one stops thinking. The possession of a few things then, courage, constancy, creativity, materiality, can allow the revolutionary to bring the means they possess to fruition and build their project.

AT DAGGERS DRAWN

Anonymous

Curiously, those who consider insurrection to be a tragic error (or an unrealistic romantic dream) talk a lot about social action and areas of freedom for experimentation. One only has to squeeze such arguments a little, however, for all the juice to come out of them. As we said, in order to act freely it is necessary to be able to talk to each other without mediation. And about what, how much, and where can one engage in dialogue at the present time?

In order to discuss freely one must snatch time and space from social obligations. After all, dialogue is inseparable from struggle. It is inseparable materially (in order to talk to each other it is necessary for us to take time and seize the necessary space) and psychologically (individuals like talking about what they do because that is how words transform reality).

We forget we are all living in a ghetto, even if we don't pay rent and every day is a Sunday. If we are not capable of destroying this ghetto, the freedom to experiment will be a poor thing indeed.

Many libertarians believe that social change can and must come about gradually, without any sudden rupture. For this reason, they talk of 'areas free of the State' in which to elaborate new ideas and practices. Leaving aside the decidedly comical aspects of the question (where does the State not exist? how do you put it in parentheses?), you can see that the point of reference for such questions remains the self-managed federalist methods experimented by subversives at particular times in history (the Paris Commune, revolutionary Spain, the Budapest Commune, etc.). What one omits to say, however, is that the possibility of talking to one another and changing reality was taken by the rebels with arms. In short, a small detail is left out: insurrection. You cannot remove a method

(neighbourhood meetings, direct decision-making, horizontal linking up, et cetera) from the context that made it possible, or even draw it up against the latter (e.g. ‘there is no point in attacking the State; we must self-organise, make utopia concrete’). Before thinking about what the proletarian councils signified for example—and what they could signify today—it is necessary to consider the conditions under which they existed (1905 in Russia, 1918–21 in Germany and Italy, et cetera). These were insurrectional times. Will someone please explain how it would be possible for the exploited to decide in first person on questions of any importance today without breaking social normality by force? Only then will you be able to talk about self-management or federalism. Before discussing what self-managing the present productive structures ‘after the revolution’ means, it is necessary to be aware of one simple thing: neither the bosses or the police would agree to it. You cannot discuss a possibility while omitting the conditions required to make it concrete. Any idea of freedom implies a break with the present society.

...

Not only does acting in small numbers not constitute a limit, it represents a totally different way of seeing social transformation. Libertarians are the only people to envisage a dimension of collective life that is not subordinated to central direction. Authentic federalism makes agreements between free unions of individuals possible. Relations of affinity do not exist on the basis of ideology or quantity, but start off from reciprocal knowledge, from feeling and sharing projectual passions. But projectual affinity and autonomous individual action are dead letters if they cannot spread without being sacrificed in the name of some claimed higher necessity. It is the horizontal link that concretises the practice of liberation: an informal link, of fact, without representation. A centralised society cannot exist without police control and a deadly technological apparatus. For this reason, anyone who is incapable of imagining a community

without State authority is devoid of instruments with which to criticise the economy that is destroying the planet. Anyone who is incapable of imagining a community of unique individuals has nothing to put in the place of political mediation. On the contrary, the idea of free experimentation in a coming together of like-minded people, with affinity as the basis for new relations, makes complete social upheaval possible. Only by abandoning the idea of centre (the conquest of the Winter Palace or, to bring things up to date, State television) does it become possible to build a life without imposition or money. In such a direction, the method of spreading attacks is a form of struggle that carries a different world within it. To act when everyone advises waiting, when it is not possible to count on great followings, when you do not know beforehand whether you will get results or not, means one is already affirming what one is fighting for: a society without measure. This, then, is how action in small groups of people with affinity contains the most important of qualities—it is not mere tactical contrivance, but already contains the realisation of one's goal. Liquidating the lie of the transitional period (dictatorship before communism, power before freedom, wages before taking the lot, certainty of the results before taking action, requests for financing before expropriation, 'ethical banks' before anarchy, etc.) means making the revolt itself a different way of conceiving relations. Attacking the technological hydra right away means imagining a life without white-coated policemen (i.e. without the economic or scientific organisation that makes them necessary); attacking the instruments of domestication by the media now means creating relations that are free from images (i.e. free from the passivity that fabricates them). Anyone who starts screaming that it is no longer—or not yet—time for rebellion, is revealing the kind of society they want in advance. On the other hand, to stress the need for social insurrection now—an uncontainable movement that breaks with historical time to allow the emergence of the possible—simply

means: we want no leaders. Today the only real federalism is generalised rebellion.

If we refuse centralisation we must go beyond the quantitative idea of rallying the exploited for a frontal clash with power. It is necessary to think of another concept of strength—burn the census lists and change reality.

MORE EFFECTIVE PRISONER SUPPORT

Anthony Rayson

We're here today trying to learn from each other how to become more effective prison abolition anarchists. The most important thing each and every one of us can do is to resolve to cross the fear line, get off the dime, overcome inertia and propel ourselves to become what we are capable of becoming – ever evolving, real time being striving to maximize our loving potential. This to me means a full, vibrant life of genuine mutually beneficial personal relations, a full range of interests and pleasures, a panorama of desires and adventures and emotions and a life of dedication to the realization of anarchy. Despite having my nose quite often to the grindstone with work, my life is a joyous, daily discovery – a thrill ride of life – despite being mired in a death gloryfying culture.

Here's a few things that keep me anxious to awaken every morning.

1. Music – I blast music all day long no matter where I am or what I'm doing. Smash the television, the computers, the video games and the movies and play, sing and or listen to music.

2. Write – Write hand written letters to loved ones everyday – inside and out.

3. Read voraciously.

4. Talk constantly and listen respectfully and engage in serious conversations frequently.

5. Think and develop your ideas relentlessly.

6. Develop positive attitudes towards necessary work. Sing while you clean the house. Do two, three or four things at once. Be positive, helpful to others. Be kind and honest. Never tolerate predation.

7. Knock off and just have fun, planned or unplanned, but never be lazy or let people down. Do what you like to do. Try not to let stress fry you out.

8. Don't sell yourself short. You can accomplish what you set out to do, but you must persevere. We all make mistakes but can make amends and improve ourselves.

9. Remain a child, pursue your dreams and surround yourself with actual children, who live in wonder.

10. Above all love yourself. This beyond profane society tries to make us handcuff our lives with deep-seated self-hate. "We're shit! You can't do this, can't do that. You'll never be able to do anything so don't even try. Wait until you die and if you didn't screw up too much, you might get to go to Heaven. Everything sucks. The only thing in life is to sell your soul for the almighty dollar so you can buy a bunch of crap and become an obese couch potato.

That's the real bullshit, of course, because each and every one of us is a marvelous creature capable of incredible things. All it takes is the confidence and determination to become whatever you want. Once you overcome the self-hate you can love others and fight for truth and beauty with a smile in your heart. A selfless purposefulness is self-love in action.

This society relies on the so-called base instincts to function – follow the leader, you are insignificant, the only thing you can hope to accomplish is the accumulation of material wealth.

All that has to be overcome by a lifetime of serious, personal struggle. We all need love. We must learn how to love self and others. If we can't effectively overcome self-hate our work cannot be

genuine. For, Anarchy springs from love and a love for life amidst a world of hate and death.

We can never let that flickering ember of love and life and belief in ourselves die out. If we do, our development will be based on arrogance, bitterness and malevolence. We have to live our entire lives in childlike wonder and find happiness in simple things.

