

EGO

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EGO AND SOCIETY

S.E. Parker

We live in the Age of Society. On every side pundits of various political and moral hues pontificate about the "need" for a society that is "caring", "compassionate", "moral", even "Christian". They proclaim differing degrees of real or assumed fervour that "society" should or ought to do this or that and are quick to denounce as "selfish" those who refuse to go along with their particular panaceas. Traditional conservative moralists of the Right, Marxist socialists of the Left (and their "libertarian" allies), liberal welfarists of the Centre, fuelled by their visions of a past or future paradise, or the latest statistics of old people suffering from hypothermia, all join in the chorus of supplication to the god of Society and demand that its "will" be done.

Behind this clamour lies the mistaken belief that when individuals form a "society" they thereby create an organic entity to which appeals can be made and to which they are related as mere cellular parts of a whole. Such a belief has no basis in fact. "Society" is no ego which can cause, feel, or will anything. It is an abstract noun denoting a specific aggregation of individuals relating to each other for certain purposes. To claim, therefore, that such individuals are nothing but cells of an organism is a gross misuse of words. A cell cannot exist apart. An individual can - albeit at the cost of considerable discomfort and inconvenience. "Society" is thus a purely mental construct. The only concrete entity involved is the particular, flesh-and-blood individual.

It may be objected to this line of reasoning that "man" is, after all, a "Social animal". If by this is meant that each individual living in a society has a multiplicity of relations with other individuals that is true. But if from this obvious fact the conclusion is drawn that these inter-individual relationships themselves constitute a real body with a life and demands of its own then those who draw it are simply placing themselves on the same level as the animism of primitive savages. It is no more than an empty hypostatisation.

Nonetheless, no belief exists which does not serve some purpose, however foolish or irrational that may be. The sociocentric myth, the belief that the individual is mere a component of an abstraction called "society", in the gloss put upon the interests of those who have in mind some prescriptive ideal as to how people ought to behave. It is another spook with which to deceive the naive and the gullible. To make plain one's own interest is by no means as impressive as invoking the interests of "society". And as long as one is not called upon to explain how such a disembodied entity can have interests the myth remains intact for the future use of its beneficiaries. Against the mystique of the sociocrat, stands the conscious ego of the autocrat, whose being is pivoted within, and who regards "society" simply as a means or instrument, not a source or

sanction. The egoist refuses to be ensnared by the net of conceptual imperatives that surrounds the hypostatization of "society" preferring the real to the unreal, the fact to the myth.

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WHAT IS JUSTICE?

James L. Walker

It is an idea presupposing a power that lays down a rule or law to which the individual owes respect and obedience. God is presented as the supreme egoist. My wishes must yield to his. This is God's justice or law. Those who believe in God fear and obey – not I. Then comes society's justice. "Society" the egoist orders what it wills. I must sacrifice my wishes to the family, to the State, to humanity. If the power exists and knows how to subject me, I must – not otherwise.

Shall I waste my life in setting up and obeying an idea that I must treat all men alike? They are not alike – not equally able or willing to sustain me in return. Society is the natural state of men, and holds each Individual to "duties" so long as it can, or till he refuses to obey. When he comes to full consciousness, he sets up as his own master, and thereafter. If there be any use for the word justice, it must mean the rules of a union of egoists with benefits to at least balance duties; and these duties are simply matter of contract. The egoists will act as they see fit or prudent towards natural society.

Can any infidel say why he directly enslaves horses and not men? Men are indirectly enslaved and their deference to ideas keeps them enslaved. It is useless to urge that slavery is unjust. The chameleon changes colour, but remains a chameleon. One form of slavery is abolished to give place to another so long as men consent to be hold subject. The idea that slavery is "unjust" is the idea that there is a rule or law against it. The facts of nature are there. The mere idea that, if rulers would cease to oppress, all would be better, is not effective of improvement to the subject man. When, however it comes to his consciousness that he is naturally a subject till he refuses, and realizes that power and will are the essential matters, he makes himself free so far as he can. It is "just" to enslave those willing to be enslaved – that is, it is according to the role, or law, of shortest line of nature.

Those who believe that man has an Immortal soul, and that a horse has not, may act from superstitious fear or reverence. The intelligent egoist will "respect" the "vicious" horse sooner than the tame, subservient man. Viciousness is the resistance to enslavement. There is more virtue in the criminal classes than in the tame slaves. Crime and virtue are the same under State tyranny, as sin and virtue are the same under theological tyranny.

"Justice", as a generality, with reference to natural society, is a snare, or a transposition of the horse and cart. I recognize no duty towards the powers that control me instead of bargaining with me, I am indifferent to the annihilation of the serfs whose consent enslaves me along with themselves. I am at war with natural society, and "all's fair" in war, although all is not expedient. All was lawful, but not expedient,

with the apostle. So it is with the individual who comes to self-consciousness, not for the Lord's sake or humanity's sake, but for himself. The assertion of himself will be as general and various as his faculties.

To utterly dismiss the idea that there is any other justice in nature than force seeking the least line of resistance is to dismiss at the same time the Idea that there is any injustice. This may save generations of complaining and begging. In short we want to perceive the [Continued on page 6]

THE EGOIST SALUTES ORWELL

Anthony Milne

The flurry of attention that has inevitably accompanied the first weeks of this year, the setting for George Orwell's internationally acclaimed satire has disingenuously perpetuated the myth that Orwell was a socialist. Perhaps he purposefully lived the lie to add brilliant poignancy to his last masterpiece. But if he was a socialist, he belonged to a breed that died about the same time as he did.

Only the egoist can claim Orwell for his own. He was a latter-day William Cobbett, a conservative, a lover of old England that Industrialism threatened to destroy, a writer who was thoroughly rattled by the rise of 20th century techniques of mind-control.

When he wrote *Nineteen Eightyfour*, he felt that many sectors of society deserved the fate that awaited them. The working classes had failed to appreciate the evils of Stalinist collectivism largely because of the duplicity and naivety of influential Left fellow-travellers. Therefore the workers became the morons of his novel, and the intellectuals the villains. The ruling class disgusted him, so he promoted them into deities. He despaired of the communicators of the tabloid press, which he could see, in 1949, were all set for a growth industry of vulgarity and hyperbole; ready to inflict a reign of linguistic poverty on the already culturally impoverished masses.

Orwell was thus warning of two malign threats to modern society: the emasculation of the English in order to limit political self-expression, and the tyranny of socialism. The fact that many of Orwell's critics, including his chief biographer, deny this latter feature, is a stunningly ironic confirmation that already the practice of *Doublespeak* was on its way in.

And so, for that matter, was *Newspeak*, which had been devised to meet the ideological needs of *Ingsoc*, or English Socialism. The purpose of *Newspeak*, explained Orwell "was not only to provide a medium of expression for the worldview and mental habits proper to the devotees of *Ingsoc*, but to make all other modes of thought impossible".

According to Marxist theory, on which *Ingsoc* is based, history is marching towards the triumph of socialism. It holds, therefore, that change itself is desirable, since there can only be one outcome. *Newspeak*ers today hence, are not shy of talking about the need for change which by implication is 'progressive'.

Marxism, as a political philosophy, even now still has great intellectual respectability, as anyone who has received higher education, or reads monthly journals, or belongs to an intellectual movement, will

confirm. Of course, Marxists are not all card-carrying militants, but they are to be found throughout the opinion-making sectors of the community, including – the greatest of mockeries – the Freethought movement.

The danger, to Orwell, was that the Left intelligentsia might not simply wish to remain vocal but ineffective teachers, writers or media praters. Instead they might want political power, and be utterly ruthless in their execution of it.

Orwell it seems. developed a philosophical system called Collective Solipsism. The Latin term solus ipse mane, oneself alone, refers to a highly personalized way of looking at reality, all other views becoming irrelevant or erroneous. When an entire political party behaves like an organism – seeing reality only one way – everything outside is a lie, or error that needs to be irreversibly corrected. Under Collective Solipsism, a good party member will tailor his view of reality to accord with the worldview of the party: in other words to exercise Doublethink.

Many western socialists today, ergo, practice the same Doublethink techniques by condemning the West for imperialistic, oppressive, and manipulative characteristics applicable only to their own system of rule as practiced by the Soviets. Living in the West, moreover, they know that their criticisms are untrue so they must be able to mentally adjust to the contradictions inherent in the theory and the reality, Most Western Marxists, indeed, go beyond Doublethinking by criticizing both the western and Soviet models, to offer instead their own cornucopia of social perfection that exists only in their a form of Cheatthink.

Moreover, postwar manipulation of the language by intellectuals has succeeded in blunting the cutting-edge of our critical faculties. “Freedom”, “democracy”, “racism”, “imperialism” are fast losing their original Oldspeak meanings, and are inexorably on their way to mean the reverse of the truth. In the meantime, if they are used often enough they begin to have an incantatory effect. They lack any precision, but induce the right quiescent frame of mind.

As Karl Popper observed, such linguistic methods are intended through a conscious manipulation of facts and minds to foist invalid historical interpretations on the populace By politicizing everything, life becomes depersonalized. Marriage abortion, the status of women – all once neutral social facts – are now made into political facts.

Anybody possessing views antipathetic to the Left is called “fascist”, a smear word designed to render heretical thoughts unthinkable; the most glaring example of Doublethink, the kettle calling the pot black. For example, Tony Benn, the standard-bearer of the vocal hard-left in Britain, espouses Mussolini's fascistic principles weekly in a newspaper column,, He is fond of talking about “corporations” and “syndicates” without apparently realising what a corporate or syndicalist society really is.

The reality of a world is where the entire economic activity of the State is organized into corporations, subordinate to the State and answerable to it, the corporations are the syndicates, representing the interests of the workers, employers, and professionals, all horizontally linked to the centralized authority. It is not quite a collectivized economy, but only one stage from it (perhaps that in why Fascism is such a dirty word to the Left).

Even without the hard Left, freedom has been lost in Britain in ways more subtle than Orwell predicted. There are the terrorists, the muggers, the rapists, all operating under a system that deifies the Rule of Law and hence prone to abuse, by those who scorn legality. And the greater freedom to unelected pressure groups has meant the deprivation of some goods or services to the majority. Mary Whitehouse, for example, is free to have the Soho sex shops closed down at her own behest (with the aid of obliging arch-reactionary Tory Mps).

Of course the real 1984 is a much freer and more prosperous world than either Orwell's shabby, shortage-haunted 1949 or his Nineteen Eightyfour. Our society is more open. less conformist, there is greater access, to the m, media, and – less worry about old age. Even the high levels of unemployment distinguish our society sharply from the Soviet model, where everyone has a job in the way that the Roman slaves had jobs.

Rather like those employed in the Ministry of Truth.

Revolutions have never lightened the burden of tyranny: they have only shifted it to another shoulder.

Bernard Shaw

Self-sacrifice enables us to sacrifice other people without blushing.

Bernard Shaw

[Continued from page 3] facts and processes of nature without coloured glass before our eyes. No justice, no injustice, as between an individual and any other in nature? Why then no “wrong” in any method of becoming free! Startling. thought to the halting slave. Nothing in crime but fact? Nothing. See the complaining wife, not loving, but submitting and suffering. Nothing wrong in putting six inches of steel into the bosom of her leige lord? The egoist says, call it what you like, there is no hell. What the woman will do depends upon what are her thoughts.

Therefore, my reader, as the laws of society, and the State, one of its forms, are tyrannies or disagreeable impediments to me (but I need not give any reason except to influence you), and I see no difficulty in discarding them but your respect for ideas such as “right”, “wrong”, “justice”, etc., I would have you consider that these are merely words with vague, chimerical meanings, as there is no moral government of the world, but merely an evolutionary process, and it depends upon perception of this fact, and self-direction of our individual powers united as we shall agree, how we can succeed in obtaining and enjoying more or less of the things of this world.

Do you feel fully conscious of this? Then you and I can perhaps join our forces, and I begin to have an appreciable interest in you. Nothing that I could do for you (without setting you in power over myself) could fail to be agreeable to me. I think we will not act very benevolently towards outsiders. They might take all we offered, an tile ox takes the grass in his pasture. Disinterestedness is said to feed on unreciprocating self-indulgence in those upon whom it is spent.

Do you not begin to think that by suiting only myself I am really doing far better towards others than by throwing myself away to serve them? If so, it is a lucky coincidence, for I only serve and amuse myself. And I

really do not care If you call that unjust. I shall begin to work for you when I see you are able to work for me. But if you are afraid to be free – stay in slavery. I must have the satisfaction of seeing that you do not wholly escape sufferings, if you are so unfit to aid me when I would aid you. And If you are thus lacking In stamina or sense, it will be no harm if you do get over-worked and your existence is shortened.

But I hope better things from you.

(Under the pseudonym "Tak Kak", James L. Walker was a frequent contributor to Benjamin Tucker's "Liberty". The above first appeared in that publication on March 6, 1886, and sparked off a lively debate on egoism)

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PUBLICATIONS RECIEVED

Egoist

In Beyond Pearl Harbour (Ploughshare Press, Rill Little Current, Ontario P0 P1K0, Canada – no price given) James J. Martin continues his acerbic investigation into the background and consequences of World War 2. Here he concentrates on the mystery surrounding Pearl Harbour, the treatment of Japanese living in the USA and the framing of "Tokyo Rose".

Issue No 13 of The Storm is the always interesting journal of The Mackay Society (Box 131, Ansonia Stations, New. York, NY 10023, USA – 5 issues for 6 US dollars) contains a discussion of "rights" by Mark Sullivan, Robert Clancy, Kerry Wendell Thornley and Arthur Moyse and an article by S. E. Parker on Ragnar Redbeard and the Right of Might, assessing the main work of an elusive but colourful character.

From the same publishers comes The Secret Life Of John Henry Mackay by Hubert Kennedy (2 US dollars), a description of the homosexuality of Mackay and the struggle he carried out in Germany to establish the right of "man/boy love". Kennedy writes as a sympathizer and provides a lucid glimpse of this side of Mackay's life, illustrating at the same time his delusory belief that it is possible to reconcile the notion of "equal freedom" with Stirnerian egoism.

FREEDOM

Dora Marsden

What have we in mind when we say freedom? We detect three elements, two notions and an atmosphere. There is the notion of a force, and a notion of a barrier which the force breaks through. A "breaking through" is the single complex which is "getting free". A definite action therefore, with a positive beginning and a definable end: limited in time and complete in its operation. There exists nothing in this which explains the vague unending thing called "freedom". To "get free" apparently is not freedom, which is something which carries on an independent existence on its own account. This separate existence is the atmosphere. Freedom therefore is made up of loose association with the two notions which coalesce into the one action of getting free plus an atmosphere here. The action is an individual affair, the thing which must be done for oneself and permits of no vicariousness: the other, i.e., the atmosphere is the part which one creates for others. The atmosphere is an interesting study, examined it reveals itself, half swoon, half thrill. It is the essence of sensation. The food of the voluptuary. The thrill is the memory, the aroma of far-off deeds: the swoon is the suspension of intellect which allows vague association to make those deeds appear in part as one's own. Deeds, mark your definite things. Now we can ask the question. What is the relationship of the simple, normal, definable life – process of over-coming specific resistances, which we call getting free, to the vague symbolic indefinable thing called freedom. The second is a blatant exploitation of the first. The first is an individual affair which must be operated in one's own person and which once done is over. The second is riot an action: it is a worked up atmosphere, secured by culling special nosegays of "free-ings" – the most notable deeds, of the most notable persons. by preference bunching them together and inhaling their decaying sweetness with exactly the same type of pleasure as that which the drugtaker and the drunkard get out of their vices. As tipling is the vicious exploitation of the normal quenching of the thirst so the following after "freedom" is the vicious exploitation of the normal activity of working oneself free of difficulties. . . .

"Freedom" presumes a state and there is no state of being free; there is an activity of free-ing but the activity is limited by time to the duration of the act itself; the act completed, the free-ing is ended.

(from "The New Freewoman", No 01)