

anchorage anarchy

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Lesser Evil?

While it is certainly tempting to take pleasure in the defeat of the republicans in congress, it would be incorrect to imagine that something actually important happened November 7, when supporters of the united states government went to the polls. The conventional wisdom may be that there is a real difference between having one party or another as our rulers, but the democrats are just as vicious, acquisitive, authoritarian, and hypocritical as the republicans and have no more interest in individual liberty than those they will replace.

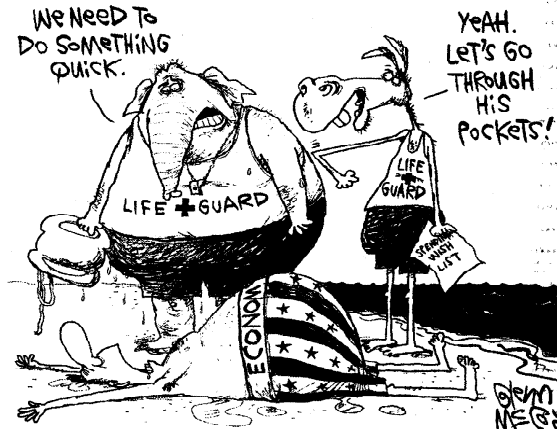


Just look back at the last time the democrats controlled part of the federal government. Clinton did his best to pass his version of the patriot act after the OKC bombing. The american military bombed a pharmaceutical plant in sudan to distract attention from the president's extramarital

blowjobs and later went on to slaughter civilians in serbia. Clinton signed on to the defense of marriage act and reneged on his promise to allow openly homosexually active people into the military. He and his government cozied up to the rulers of china while keeping cuba in poverty with a continued embargo. And they terrorized, murdered, and impoverished the people of iraq with a campaign of bombings and sanctions that softened them up for the invasion that followed when Bush took over.

There is no reason to believe that the democrats have changed since then. While some democrats are mildly critical of Bush's handling of the war against the people of iraq, they fall over each other in their attempts to demonstrate their admiration for the "heroism" of the troops, the same troops who kill, rape and pillage non-combatants while propping up a nasty police state. None of them support an immediate withdrawal of the united states death machine from iraq or afghanistan. Democrat supporters have puritanically (and hypocritically) castigated Tom Foley as a pedophile and predator because of his boorish emails to 16-year old pages, who could legally have sex with him if they choose. And now Charles Rangel is again calling for a return to the military draft, a form of slavery pure and simple. The democrats have shown no indication they will waver in their traditional support for war and international bullying,

opposition to sexual freedom, and contempt for individual liberty.



In addition, the new congressional majority feel as entitled to steal and dispose of other peoples' money as do their lame duck opponents. While the republicans have been profligately feeding at the public trough during the years they have ruled, the democrats are simply waiting for their own chance to oversee the separation of working people from their money. Although there was plenty of partisan sniping at senator Ted Stevens from alaska for his attempt to make the residents of other states pay for his favored bridges, the incoming regime has no plans to reduce the tax burden on working people or stop redistributing their hard-earned wages to the wealthy and politically connected. As Daniel Inouye, who will inherit Ted Stevens' committee chair, told an interviewer recently, "I don't see any monumental changes." This sentiment is shared by incoming transportation committee chair Patty Murray, who, in defending Stevens' bridge earmarks, said, "What's good for the goose is good for the gander." *Plus ça change...*

Those who voted have done nothing to promote freedom and fairness. They have

simply helped a new gang of thugs to claim they represent "the people" while they lord over, steal from, and otherwise abuse those who voted for them as well as those who did not, both here and abroad. While we who refuse to take part in elections are often told we have no right to complain, since we do not vote, it is in fact non-voters who are best suited to criticize. By refusing to vote and declare our subservience to the state, we give a clear message: we choose to be free. So when voters try to foist their chosen rulers, policies, and laws on us, despite our best efforts to mind our own business, we are absolutely justified in telling them what we think of their horrid system of regulating human affairs. Democrat, republican, green, libertarian—it makes no difference. Voting for lesser evils will never produce anything but more evil.



Voter

An Unholy Alliance

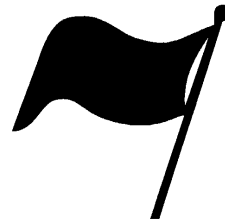
One of the things that supposedly distinguish the western style secular democracies from the more authoritarian regimes found in much of the world is freedom of religion. If the official positions of the governments of countries like the united states were to be taken at face value, one would have to assume that not only are people in these nations free to hold and practice whatever religious beliefs they like, but the state is barred from interfering in matters of religion. This is, however, not at all the case.

There is no wall of separation between church and state in the united states or any other country. Just as governments have taken it upon themselves to regulate just about every other area of people's lives, intervention in religious life is standard procedure for those who rule us. And there is little real opposition to such interference. Left and right often differ as to where and how the state should intervene in religious affairs, but virtually everybody who believes in the political system supports this mixing of state and church in some fashion.

While governments arguably discriminate against religions in some ways, such as when they refuse to fund religious schools or social service agencies while giving money to other private, but secular, ones, the predominant effect of most actions by courts, legislatures, and other public officials that concern religion is to actively promote and favor it. Laws and institutions regularly grant privileges to religious groups and individuals, whether by freeing them of obligations required of those that are secular or by allowing them to engage in activities that would be prohibited if those

taking part in them were doing so for non-religious reasons. The common theme in all such cases is that political institutions, the first amendment notwithstanding, value religious belief over secular values.

In alaska, one example of the preferential treatment of religious institutions and practitioners is the state law whereby the homes of priests, bishops, rabbis, and other religious officials are exempt from property taxes. After the municipality of Anchorage changed its interpretation of this law and decided to start taxing the homes of teachers in religious schools, a well-connected conservative (and wealthy) church was able to get an amendment to the law passed barring the city from doing so. The Anchorage baptist



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temple called attempts by the city to tax their teachers' homes as "religious discrimination." This is nonsense, since teachers in non-religious non-profit schools are not allowed to live tax-free.

The ACLU challenged the amended law, considering it discrimination *in favor of* religion. But neither the ACLU nor most other critics of the amendment were willing to challenge the rest of the statute, which grants privileges to clergy which are denied to private secular individuals. In fact, the *Anchorage Daily News*, which opposed the church-sponsored amendment, editorialized that, "The law also exempts church-owned housing for ordained ministers. That's a defensible exemption, since ministers devote their lives to religion, and it's fairly common for churches to provide ministers with housing to compensate them for working long hours at

relatively low pay. But extending the tax break to lodging for teachers who don't have formal religious credentials is stretching too far." In other words, people who devote their lives to religious ministry are entitled to privileges not due others who work long hours for low pay in secular jobs. The conservative Anchorage baptist temple, and the liberal *Daily News* and ACLU all agree on this.

Besides favoring churches economically through tax breaks, governments make other exceptions for church members that they deny to others. For instance, when one applies for conscientious objector status to avoid military servitude, it is virtually impossible to get it unless one's opposition to war is part of their religious beliefs. An atheist who opposes war simply because they loathe killing is unlikely to be allowed to legally refuse to be drafted, unlike a mennonite.

Similarly, the supreme court ruled this year that members of a religious congregation in new mexico may legally drink hoasca tea, an hallucinogen illegal for everyone else. A number of american states also allow the use of peyote by members of a certain church, but



criminalize its use by anyone else. Religious privilege trumps even the war on drugs, so that the religious can legally get high, while secular marijuana growers can still end up in federal prison.

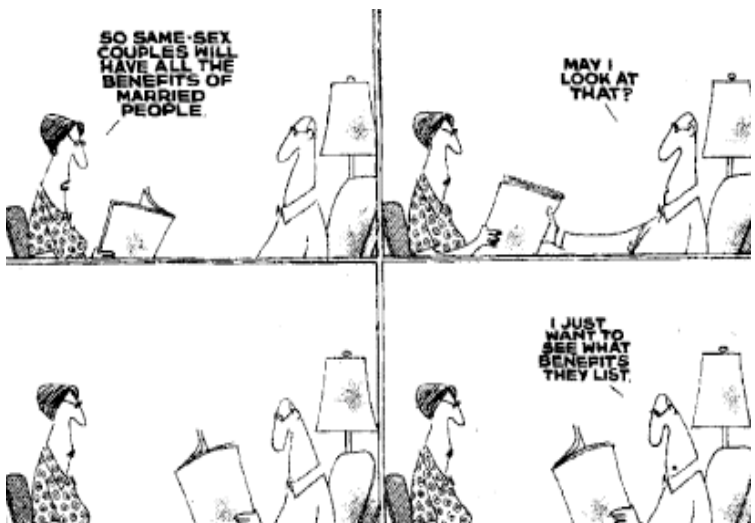
Even in completely mundane matters, like the dress code policies of both public and private entities, the government often intervenes on the side of religious believers. In numerous situations, courts and other public officials have allowed people to wear banned clothing or headgear, or grow beards, in violation of an institution's dress or appearance code because they did so for religious reasons. In none of these cases were the rules thrown out for everyone; only the religious were given that privilege, while an agnostic who simply liked to dress differently could still have been fired or barred by the businesses or agencies concerned.

And then there are the public schools, where a kid can be disciplined for having a toy gun, or a nail clipper, or even for pointing a piece of food at another kid as a mock weapon, while other students are allowed to carry daggers for "religious reasons."

I could go on and on, but the point is clear: beliefs and actions motivated by religious sentiment are given different standing from those based on secular convictions or simple personal preference. This isn't to say that every time someone whines or files a lawsuit about religious "discrimination" they win, or that the state consistently sides with religious belief in all cases. For instance, except in

massachusetts, it is just as illegal for churches that wish to do so to marry two people of the same sex as it is for secular officials. But it is clear that the state interferes with religion, usually to its benefit.

Needless to say, it doesn't upset this anarchist that some are able to escape taxation, or avoid some stupid rule mandating how one dresses, or use recreational drugs, or carry weapons. More power to them. I would love to see all taxes, all drug and gun laws, all restrictions on appearance, all the public schools—in fact, all forms of plunder, authority, and control—eliminated so that we could all keep what we produce, smoke or swallow whatever we want, dress or undress as we see fit, and carry the weapons we choose. But people should be treated as individuals, worthy of fair treatment, whatever their religious faith or lack thereof. Modifying oppressive institutions so that only some are able to benefit, and then only if they can justify their practices as part of a ritual devotion to some higher power, is not going to get us any closer to a world free of power and intolerance.



Alaska Notes

Smoking ban in Anchorage

Come next summer it will be illegal to smoke tobacco in any bar in Anchorage. The prohibitionists claim that banning smoking is necessary to protect the health of workers and patrons in these businesses. They fail to acknowledge there is a much simpler, and entirely voluntary, method of avoiding the risks, both real and perceived, of inhaling smoke from others' cigarettes. That is staying out of bars, bingo halls, and the small number of other places where people are still allowed to smoke.

But acknowledging people's freedom to choose conflicts with the authoritarian impulse of both politicians and voters to push other people around, as well as the tendency of so many americans to view themselves and others as helpless victims who require the government to protect them and make their choices for them. In victim nation, someone else is always to blame for any bad outcome or inconvenience that people experience. And expecting people to take responsibility for themselves is just blaming the victim.

Those who enjoy a cigarette with their cocktail will soon be allowed to indulge themselves only out of sight of the busybodies who are coming to dominate more and more of our lives. Puritanism is slowly but surely conquering the last frontier.

...we don't need no thought control

In 2002, a student was suspended from high school in Juneau for holding a banner reading "BONG HITS 4 JESUS" on a public street. The student filed a lawsuit against the school board and principal, and after some conflicting decisions in lower courts, the united states supreme court agreed to hear an appeal by school



officials after a lower court ruled in favor of the student.

This case demonstrates (once again) what is really important to the government education authorities—maintaining control over students and enforcing compliance with consensus social attitudes. While we regularly hear school officials complain of lack of funds for education, and teachers claim they are trying to teach students critical thinking skills, the schools in Juneau apparently have more than enough money to pursue a vendetta against a free-thinking student all the way to the supremes in order to teach other students the lesson that they should just sit down and shut up during their twelve year sentence.

New mandatory minimum

And speaking of twelve year sentences, the authorities are planning to make it more difficult

for alaska students to get early release from their compulsory commitment to educational institutions. A democrat legislator from Anchorage, with the support of the city's school superintendent, will introduce a bill in the next session to raise the mandatory school attendance age from 16 to 18.

Although anchorage has a high dropout rate, the authorities have chosen not to look at the horrid schools they run to see if they can be made more worthwhile and appealing to students who see no reason to continue their schooling once they are no longer forced to attend. Instead they want to artificially improve their lousy graduation statistics by forcing students to continue coming to school, whether they want to or not. But we wouldn't expect any other strategy from an institution run by the government, which understands only the language of force and compulsion.

Schooling for success in a police state

Students at a middle school in North Pole were recently provided with free laptop computers, supposedly to enhance their educational experience. But before being given the computers, students and parents had to sign a contract which provides that, since the computers remain government property, they cannot expect privacy in their computer usage. While in school, all the computers will be linked to a monitored server so that anything students do on the computer can be watched by the authorities at any time. And every day, when the computer is brought to school, it will upload to the server a record of everything the user did with it at home. As the school district's technology boss told students, "So we will know what you do." There was no reported opposition to this new surveillance system from parents, who are probably just jealous that they don't have the means to monitor their children as efficiently as the schools now can; nor from students, who have grown so used to being followed and

pestered 24/7, that this new system probably doesn't seem the least bit out of the ordinary.



New tax in Fairbanks

Working people in Fairbanks will have to pay a new \$20 per month tax to support the parasites running the city government there. This protection money will be taken from their checks by their employers to ensure no one tries to "cheat" the extortionists. This tax was imposed after voters passed measures to cut property taxes and temporarily prohibit a sales tax. Democracy at work: voters cut some taxes and the government just goes ahead and imposes others. Military personnel, many of whom live in and around Fairbanks, will be exempt from the tax, apparently to reward them for their unquestioning subservience to the principle of authority.

Due process?

They just can't let it go. Even though a federal judge ruled that the state of alaska must allow DNA testing of evidence in a 1993 Anchorage rape case, the prosecutors are appealing to a higher court to stop it. They are so convinced of their own wisdom and rectitude, that they are exhausting all means at their disposal to prevent the person convicted of the rape, who is currently in prison and due for release in 2007, from having the opportunity to prove his innocence. Not only are they trying to

NO APOLOGIES!



block DNA testing through the courts, but state prosecutors also lobbied against a bill in the state legislature which would have established a formal procedure for testing of DNA after trials are over.

One of the prosecutors defends the state's action by saying the victim needs "closure." But he ignores the fact that the government may well have victimized an innocent person who has already spent years in one of their jails for a crime he did not commit. The state has shown that truth is not the concern of the criminal justice program. The real interest of state officials is preserving their monopoly on social control and they fear that if it can be proven they have imprisoned an innocent person, their legitimacy in the eyes of their subjects may be threatened. As one of the prisoner's lawyers naively said of the prosecutors, "[T]hey should be more interested in justice, not in their reputation of infallibility."

Ignorance is bliss

The national geographic society has funded a project to track people's migration patterns as far back as their first excursions out of eastern

africa. In order to do this, they are seeking DNA samples from people all over the world, especially from so-called indigenous people.

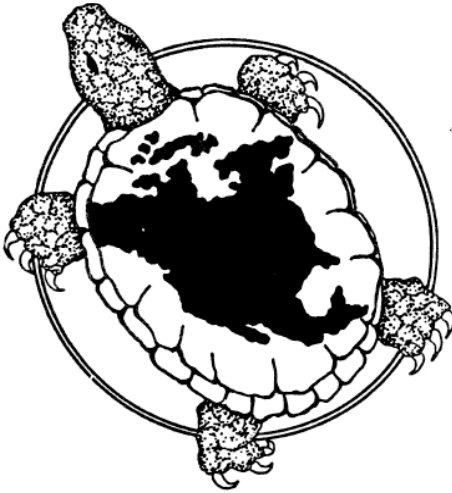
But they are running into some difficulties with the project in alaska, because they are confronting the generally unspoken fact that, outside of africa, there is no such thing as an indigenous person. Whether in europe, asia, north america, or anywhere else outside of eastern africa, everybody is descended from immigrants. Some of these migrations happened earlier than others, of course, but this does not change the fact that the lapps, the ainu, and the aleuts are no more "native" to the places they live than are black or white residents of Anchorage.

Although a number of DNA specimens were collected in alaska, the researchers have transferred them to a specimen bank pending resolution of a dispute between the geographic project and a group called the alaska area institutional review board. This organization opposes the project because they feel that the "risks" of participation (ie, donating DNA samples) have not been adequately disclosed to the people they claim to speak for. These perceived risks appear to be that people might be forced to reconsider the inaccurate stories they have been told about their ancestry, and/or that they might find that their genetic make up may not really entitle them to the special programs some are currently eligible for based on their "official" ethnicity.

The review board, not surprisingly, is a creature of the federal government's indian health service (IHS). Since IHS funding and power is based on maintaining the myth of racial differences, primarily to the advantage of IHS employees, it comes as no surprise that an organization that it has created would try to prevent anyone from challenging the myths that justify their jobs, income, and influence.

Board members believe that it could be "disturbing," if not injurious, if the people they

claim to speak for learned that the stories they are familiar with about where their ancestors originated are in fact untrue. They would apparently prefer that those they “represent” remain in ignorance of how the world and humanity really work and have worked, so long as they preserve their “cultural identity.”



This principle is at odds with that applied to most other people when it comes to discussing science and history. Attempts to ban evolution from school curricula are generally either opposed or laughed at, and revisionist history books, like Zinn's *People's History*, that try to tell a more accurate, or at least different, story about historical events are widely read. Christians are expected to accept that humans and apes share a common ancestor, and white supremacists are ridiculed for believing their own bizarre theories of human development. But the self-appointed guardians of traditional “native” people believe their charges are incapable of hearing and living with the truth. This is bigoted nonsense.

As for the special programs people are sometimes entitled to based on their “indigenous” identity, they should go the way of other institutions based on ethnicity like separate

but equal schools. Whether it is segregated health care, “native” corporations, or tribal governments, such institutions are discriminatory and conflict with the view that people are worthwhile individuals in their own right, regardless of their ethnicity. Any discrimination based on color or ancestry is, at best, illiberal. If people need health care, or jobs, or other things, there is no reason these cannot be obtained or provided without regard to where one's ancestors came from. But the government and the institutions it creates are so riddled with patronage systems based on their clients' superficial characteristics that people are encouraged to assume whatever identity will gain them the most spoils.

Such corrupt, and corrupting, ethnic politics are part and parcel of federal agencies, whether republicans or democrats are in control. In 2000, the democrat interior secretary, who oversaw IHS's parent agency, the bureau of indian affairs, decided to turn over the remains of Kennewick “man” to a group of american indian people who have no apparent ethnic or historical connection to the body, because their claim to the remains was consistent with their stories, stories which are largely myths like that of Adam and Eve. While it would be seen as preposterous for a government official to claim that humans originated in the garden of Eden, it was acceptable for Bruce Babbitt to endorse the belief that some “native” people had *always* lived in the american northwest. But for a bureaucrat, the considerations of politics outweigh science, history, and the truth.

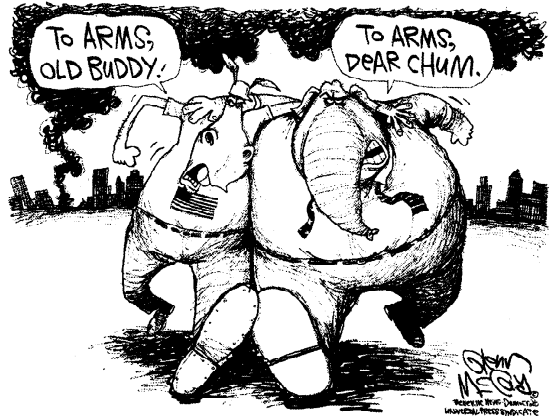
As is typical of governmental bodies, the review board will not allow individuals to make their own decision. The DNA specimens originally collected were freely given by alaskans, and a number of those who have done so support further research using this material. But tough luck for them. Big Brother has said no, so the project is stopped for now.

The Violent Hypocrites

This piece was written by Jo Labadie after World War I. I have changed some spelling, corrected some grammar, and eliminated a couple of obscure references, but the piece otherwise remains as originally written.

All of this talk and legislation against the use of force and violence as means of changing sociological conditions is hypocrisy on the part of exploiters. Force and violence are at the bottom of exploitation. Government itself is force and violence. Tell me, some of you governmentalsists who are so averse to the use of force and violence, not only here in American but the world over, how did you become possessed of the land on which the native races earned their living? How did England get to be ruler of India, Egypt, Ireland, Canada, Australia, and so much of the world elsewhere if not by force and violence? How did the U.S. become possessed of Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Philippines [and Alaska—*ed.*]; indeed, how did these super-Americans—the spoliators—become the owners of the land and nearly every thing else in this country? How did the robbers, the pirates, land sharks, brigands, freebooters, buccaneers—governmentalsists, every one—the world over get possession of the world, if not by force and violence? Did they get it for the asking? Did the peoples of the world say: “Here, friends, you may have the world; we don’t want it?” Even [if] the people of the world at some time in the past did say so, what has that got to do with the people of the world now? The world is for the use of the people who live on it, and the dead have neither the right nor the power to give or sell it to anybody forever. They have neither the right nor the power to put the unborn into debt or to make any conditions whatsoever for them, and when

the living fully realize this, then good bye national debts, good bye the laws, the titles and all of the other superstitions of the past!



The world is for the people of the world. They have only to take it and use it so long as they need. But they cannot tie the hands of the future as our hands have been tied by the past. The delusion, the superstition, the gullibility that one generation ought to or can bind the generations to come in any manner whatsoever is fast passing away, and it is to be hoped never to return. The governmental scheme has had its day. It must go. If it will not go peacefully, orderly, in obedience to the law of evolution, of right and of equity, then it will go by the fury of that ferocity born of desperation. But the time is not yet. It takes a long while to [establish] the notion that rulership is a crime, as it took a long while to [establish] the belief that human beings ought not to be property. When the time does come, in the fullness of the season, the robbed will not permit the robber to say how much loot he may take, nor will he permit the robber to choose the means by which he shall defend his home, his family and his belongings. A wise robber will get out

as soon as the light is turned on.

But the robber is trying to prevent the light being turned on. For years he has been tampering with the connections. He has been by force and violence sabotaging the works. Monkey wrenches...have been thrown into the machinery. The presses have been smashed; the types have been pied; the books have been destroyed; but it is not too late.

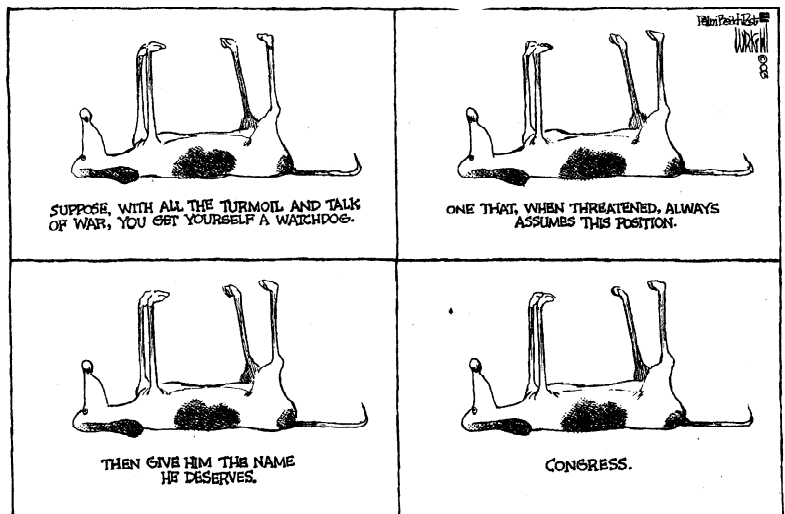
Say, Mr. Burglar, Mr. Exploiter, Mr. Profiteer—all of you capitalistic buccaneers—get out while the getting is good. It'll soon be daylight, and you can't put that out. The sun is painting the eastern sky an illuminating red and flooding the western horizon. They who have been asleep are yawning. They are about ready to get up out of a long and troubled sleep. If you don't get out soon you may be put out, and there is no guarantee that they will be overly gentle in doing the job. Safety first, you know!

We who don't like to have the place all mussed up want the job done orderly, gently—all of us gentle anarchists do—as this will save breaking up the furniture, shooting up the windows, covering the rugs with smudge and smutch; and, also, we have some regard of our own composure, dignity, and flesh and bones. We are not insured against rough-house stuff, and so we want to preserve what we've got and prevent you from taking any more than you have. If you're a real high-class bandit you'll recognize the fact that the jig is up, make the best of a bad situation and smilingly back out and scoot around

the corner before the boys get you.

You have depended upon the soldier boys, the sailor boys, the professors, teachers and students, and the professional class generally to condone your exploitations, but I tell you again, it's too late. They are realizing what we mean when we say "the workers." They also realize that the law of recompense to the hired worker is no respecter of persons, that it works with the High Brow as it does with Smutty Face and Muddy Boots: that the boss of Dirty Alley is also the boss in spotless Town.

The war opened the lid and they looked in. This was fatal to governments and their favorites. What they saw was convincing that war is a governmental trade; that invasion, conquest, spoliation are inseparable from government; that peoples rarely ever make war; that the desire for more rulership is the prime cause of war, and that rulership is not beneficial to the masses, but the means by which they become the tools of a class as wealth producers for that class. No, you made a mistake, dear beloved Spoliators, by promoting the World War, as this demonstrated all too clearly...your long



continuance in your unholy occupation of reaping where you had not sown. You showed that you could fight internationally to maintain your grip on Labor's throat, and showed what international direct action could do. They reason now that if that kind of co-operation can kill and destroy so effectively, it might build up and make life worth living, if the desire to be neighborly and helpful supplanted the desire to kill and rob. If international action could produce such a helluva war, by putting it to saner uses it might produce a heavenuva peace.

The World War surely uncovered a great prodigality of wrong in the world, and may also have gleamed to the world's people that the rulership of man over man is a false doctrine that leads only to enmity, discord, and all that is eternally pernicious.

Rulership is inevitably anti-social. To love one's master is sanely unthinkable. Only brutes do that, and those who have been brutalized. And even that which appears as love of a master is simply fear. Those who preach fear of God get further and further away from the carpenter of Nazareth. No sane person can love a fear-inspiring God. Jesus was a lover of his kind, and his love begat love. To love one's fellows, to love truth and equity and to be on the level is to love one's self, and self-love is the highest degree of sanity. Who hates himself can't love anybody. Who does wrong hates himself, bars the reception of the spirit that makes great happiness possible.

He who wields physical power over his fellows is sure, sooner or later, to use it badly. It is given to but few to have the wisdom of not abusing this power. This is the truth which those who seek the powers of government fail to realize. They see the disaster that comes

from the possession of this power in the hands of others and mislead themselves into the belief that they are made of sterner stuff and will resist the temptation to become despotic. Vain belief. I wouldn't trust Jesus himself with political power over me. He who believes himself holier than others is ready for a good awakening.

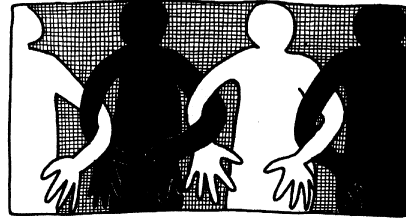
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