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Dyer D. Lum
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1886

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Communal Anarchy

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A distinction has been sought between what has been termed "Mutualistic Anarchy" and communistic anarchy, but it is one we fail to recognize. Anarchy, or the total cessation of force government, is the fundamental principle upon which all our arguments are based. Communism is a question of administration in the future, and hence must be subordinate to and in accord with the principles of Anarchy and all of its logical deductions. Anarchy proclaims that sovereignty of the individual, the abrogation of all artificial inequalities, and the total cessation of coercion over a minority, even if that minority be a single individual. To secure this end it demands the abolition of the State. This involves the destruction of the privileges now legalized and which are the cause of our social discord. To abolish the state is at one blow to destroy special privilege. With the fall of the legal scaffolding property ceases to be a ravenous beast and is converted into a useful domesticated auxillary to individual effort. Government exists merely for the protection of special privileges their laws confer upon property.

Anarchy being our fundamental principle, no scheme of social administration we may advocate, must be contrary thereto. In using the word communism, therefore, we in no wise abridge the

rights of the individual. But why use the word at all? it may be asked. For this reason: In speaking of the individual we believe Anarchy covers the whole ground; but in speaking of society in its associative phase, forming into groups for the purposes of production and distribution, we prefer to use this old term, and by associating it with the qualifying word Anarchy, rescue it from the abuse into which it has fallen.

Each writer in *The Alarm* is responsible for his own articles, but in giving them editorial space they become representative of principles inculcated by this paper. We would therefore say that *The Alarm* does not advocate the *institution of any system* whereby individual right can be invaded. We demand the abolition of the legal sanction to property, believing the destruction of exclusive claim to products for speculative purposes will *leave* property communal. We recognize the right of each to own and possess the result of his own labor; he may make a machine if he wish and call it his "private property" and no one can object, for under communal anarchy his claim would involve no infringement upon others' rights. But where the claim has no sanction in law it becomes harmless. In attaching private property we are combating the legalization of privilege. In using the word State we refer to any alleged source of authority and hold the principle to be as operative in the Social Communes of the future as in the political republic of the present. In brief, the only use of force, in any manner whatever, an Anarchist can justify is that used in attaining and defending his natural rights as an individual. Communal Anarchy rejects all assumed "divine rights" to authority of man over man, whether it be asserted by a monarch, priest, or the majority of the people. The destruction of privilege is our sole object.

Lum