Note on the Impossibility of Reading Your Way To Liberty

Gerry Reith

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The best of us get few chances to wield authority of any kind. When we do, even more rare is the day when pull it off gracefully and consistent with common sense or decency. Emperor Norton, the worthiest anti-leader in American history, had but few Deeds to his name and retains, despite the truly moving substance of his heroic intransigence a taint of the frowsy. Perhaps it is the Time, or the audience; talk with intimates of the parody of meaningful life which we call Art can swift convince us that consummation will as often as not be stymied by causes no more profound than the horsefly bite on the other wise tumescent member, or the headache. If we perceive correctly our ad-lib role in this tenth grade movie then we await the moment when one word, or gesture, or brave act, or kind touch, will unleash potentials, cause women to throw themselves at our feet-or throw us down at their feet-and make our acquaintances forget the night they saw us picking our nose

This is Anarchy, then, sans the claptrap of the thinkers, whose business is to generate mouthings to parrot. (You know, the guys we cite in public, the grown up version of the ritual that involves a certain relative who's bigger than your equivalent relative and who could kick said relative's ass with one hand tied, etc.)we're mad as hell, and so on, and it is obvious that those jerks who run the show have put together the puzzle all wrong & lopsided. If they'd stand off to the side a moment, we'd switch the pieces around and the picture wouldn't look like Jackson Pollock vomit any more.

We prime ourselves for this mighty work and stand and wait, even champing at the bit by organizing factions fastidiously apolitical which we use to prove our commitment. We seek to finesse our way into positions where some simple act of our own could somehow for once carry as much weight & consequence as the distracted telephone decision of a third-class investment broker. Impatient we even lose our tempers now & again, tired of cheerleading international rioters, only to find that righteous violence rates lower in importance than drunk driving or the passing of bad checks. Your community will be shaken by the molested child far more than by the death of any accessible public figure; juggernaut, roll on. Mash the insects beneath your wheel, and rest assured that should they seize a planet and recruit Luke Skywalker, not only will he fail to find the Death Star and its Vulnerable Anti-G Spot, he'll ejaculate prematurely and end up in jail, probably in Canada.

Our editor asks us, will you please help? Exercise your authority and we will redefine Anarchy. One cannot redefine it without also doing something that will revivify it. The dispersed troops need a new flag, so the theory goes, under which to rally and charge the enemy.

I confess myself unequal to the task, and inclined to redefine this plague out of existence. I am a poor, irritable man who finds himself seized by alternating spasms of awe, disgust and horror at the world he was born into. I'm obsessed with the few forms of communication at which I seem to be successful in a minor league way; and with puzzles, not least among them being the problem of why everyone on the planet throughout all of history has been destroyed when joined in battle with the Yacatisma— and why so many continue to invite the joust, and why I do it, too. "Bob" knows.

Once it was exciting but now when written Anarchy graces my mailbox I can't avoid the sensation I had once when I spent a few hours charitably ministering to the wards of a home for the retarded. We were young, and it must have been a church trip, to teach humility or worse. The place was filthy and underfunded; we were brave, finding out what professions of pious concern will bring on. We played basketball or something, and cards with the ones who could handle it, and we rolled balls and batted balloons for the rest, much as we might idly amuse a kitten. While it was daunting to know that nothing you could do would suffice, it was crushing to realize that the cruelty was in ever going.

"We've brought you some more friends to play with," the introduction went, I think.

"Will you go away too?" they asked.

A friend sends a copy of a note excoriating him for intellectual games, reminding that while poking fun at the pseuds in Never Never land is possible, he must *Do Something* if he is to earn his stripes. If you go to the Eagles, it's a card, the Elks, a pin, the VFW, a scar maybe. But here, the radicals have conceived a disdain for other clubs and set out to form their own, aping the totems and rituals of the rest and reproducing the format with exactly the same ends in mind: recruit the strong, abolish the rest, and savor bliss in the eternal New Order. Now, prove your membership. Spout ideology, or whatever. The exotic flavors of the elegant play possible in the sub-sub circles of the proto-primal nucleus of the social group of all those who reject current groups—but which came first, the spurning or the spurn?— but are usually false. The young lady pestering my pal, my BRO, told him wisely that she couldn't delude herself with dreams of success and that in this respect of course they were already members of the same club. She went on to explain that the future laid in the children who couldn't read, and so on, and proposed teaching them, so that they could dream, etc. I've been given Christian millennialism in more palatable packaging.

But we're lucky; there are groups you will find yourself reading about who demand proofs what can really cost you. Try meetings the standards of a pack of psychic transsexuals (read: feminists) for instance. Maybe you could sign on with the alternative police of LaRoche, Scientology, People's Temples, RCPS. Or you could dig on the clammy sort of Community Tech types who make a fetish of de-centralism, the people who in another mode of relation to others might well face the problem of explaining marriage contracts to potential spouses. Think locally, act globally. We're privileged to live under a tolerant liberal pluralist regime: it allows us to be continually harassed by the groups that flourish therein, 80% of whom believe it their mission to exterminate the rest. Mencken was amused but he had the distance he needed. He must never have made the error of assuming that crusaders can be pleasant company or potential friends.

From the Laboratory. The first task of the revolution is to establish a monster radio station in Sheridan, Wyoming, that runs about a quarter of a million watts. All the time shall be given over

to extremist ranting, from the Klan to the FALN. The extremists, who might otherwise have no truck between each other unmediated by lead pellets, will leap at the chance to blast half a planet with words, and soon a common bond will form when they discover who the common enemy is: the FCC. Perhaps amusing apache-dance synthesis can result.

The first task of the revolution is to ensure that anyone who calls himself a revolutionary can recite, from memory and with feeling, Ulysses, by Tennyson. First they must understand it. When this is achieved, they must show themselves fully capable of playing a decent game of Chess.

When we're done with this, we'll start a political party devoted to liberty, and we'll get big oil bucks to back our candidate for President. Absurd? No. It's been done. But this time we have to resurrect Huey Long to lead us. He said, "Every man a king," which proves he was secretly a Stirnerist. Masters without slaves.

The other task of the revolution will be to simultaneously eradicate abortion—— which is the greatest indignity short of snuff films to which a woman can submit herself in this land of trivialization—— and affirm her right to own herself, which may turn out to be a trivial demand. Then we will at once build ourselves nukes in quest of the freedom futurist feudalism offers, and negotiate the Bomb out of existence. We will fail miserably at whatever we do 80% of the time, and the other 20% we'll barely make the grade, but if we want to raise the number on the weighted end of this scale we'll continue to pretend we are something called anarchists.

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