

# *ANARCHISM...*

is the belief that people can voluntarily cooperate to meet everyone's needs, without bosses or political authority, and without sacrificing individual liberty.



It is the belief that people are able to work together in a peaceful and rational manner, as equals. Instead of a society of individuals competing against one another, some enjoying huge advantages, each looking after only his or her own interests, an anarchist community would be a *cooperative* effort. This mutual aid or team work does not require great altruism or self-sacrifice, but simply common decency and helpfulness.

Just think how wasteful a competitive society is - a pool of unemployed people keeps wages low and working conditions poor, businesses fail, suppliers bid each other's prices down, customers must wade through a confusing barrage of deceptive and exaggerated claims, equipment intended to make work more efficient results in higher unemployment instead of in higher living standards or a shorter work week. Huge amounts of resources are wasted in "bean counting", advertising, gimmickry, and security. And what does this competition bring? Frustration, anger, despair, broken dreams, poverty, crime, degradation of the environment, and on an international scale, war. This competition also pits different "races", sexes, and social classes against each other, locking humanity into a bitter struggle to maintain or resist domination.

Anarchism is the absence of the power to dominate and control. Human beings, when accustomed to taking responsibility for their own behavior, can cooperate on a basis of mutual trust and free association.

The market economy is based on *wage slavery* - the rich buy the working lives of the not-so-rich, and dominate and harass them under the threat of unemployment and poverty, creating a "totalitarian" work environment.

The government in large part serves to maintain the class power of the rich, but it also has its own agenda - to expand its power over its subjects. All governments survive on extortion - called taxation - and force their decrees on us, commanding obedience under the threat of harsh punishment. The principal outrages of history - war and brutal tyranny - have been committed by governments, while almost every advancement of thought, almost every betterment of the human condition, has come about through voluntary cooperation or individual initiative. The greater the power of government, the less freedom we have to exercise our ability to think, act, and cooperate. Creative, responsible human beings strain to improve their world by exercising their abilities, but concentrated wealth and power hinder their efforts. (08/97)

## *"Liberty, Equality, Cooperation"*

If you would like to get in touch with local anarchists, please contact:

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