

Good Old \223May Day\224 Comes Back From the Dead
Posted On:December 31, 1969

On May Day in Santa Cruz, California, what was promoted as a college block party turned out instead to be a rampage of destruction led by a few black-clad, masked anarchist thugs. The undermanned police force was caught with their guard down, and small businesses suffered thousands of dollars of destruction. This time, there were no deaths, but the next time there may be.

In Athens, also on May Day, peaceful demonstrators marched to protest against capitalism and the economic consequences of their lavish benefits\227but a small group of black-clad masked anarchists turned it violent\227even killing three bank employees by torching a bank.

In New York, a Pakistani American (citizenship one year old) ineptly attempted a car bomb in Time Square, expecting to kill as many of his fellow Americans as possible. He was an educated, middle class 30-year-old from an elite Pakistani family, radicalized on a long visit to Pakistan, even abandoning his American wife and children there while he returned to do mayhem.

What to all these events have in common? May Day plays one role\227and Anarchism plays the other.

\225 May Day. May Day began as an old Pagan Spring fertility celebration in Northern Europe. Dancing around maypoles (obvious phallic symbols) and other courting rituals morphed after the French Revolution into an international day of labor protests, which communists usurped. The United States is the only country celebrating Labor Day in September, avoiding the loaded symbolism of May Day.

\225 Anaarchy. Anarchists have been around since the French Revolution, and this movement has attracted clever young people from elite families, not the poor. Anarchists disdain all authority, not just abusive power. They were responsible for the assassinations of six national leaders in the past, believing that these murders would produce a just, brave new world. World War I was set off by one of these assassinations\227and they did get a new world, but it brought with it fascist and communist dictatorships and World War II.

\225 Communism and Nazism. These two movements fit nicely into the anarchist mode. They began by destroying the societies in which they lived, and then a handful of thugs establish a fascist regime\227to the astonishment and disappointment of their na\357ve intellectual followers. Both of these movements predicted a brave new world. The communists predicted that government would shrink because people would rule themselves\227but that first, they had to have total power over the process. Nazis predicted a brave new world in which they would rule for a thousand years and all the people they did not like would be exterminated. Fortunately, both of these dictatorships of the people failed.

\225 Islamists. This poisonous form of Islam follows the anarchist blueprint: destroy the existing societies and replace them with a Muslim Dictatorship\227a brave new world.

\225 Leadership. The leadership of all anarchist groups (including Islamists) is not the poor and downtrodden; it is college-educated (or half-educated) who begin with ideals and end up with mayhem and death. What begins as protest against \223the establishment\224 morphs into increasing violence and eventual state repression. The intellectuals usually lose control to thugs who are happy to destroy and kill. (You might rent the German film, The Baader-Meinhof Gang, for a horrifying glimpse of this process.)

The same slogan scrawled on the walls of the chancellor\222s conference room at UC Santa Cruz (WE ARE CRISIS), during a student occupation and trashing of the same, also appeared on the masks worn by the black-clad thugs carrying torches and rocks. This was an organized event, with similar events elsewhere near university campuses around the country. It looks like we are in for another period\227just as in the 19th century\227of organized anarchist activity that will entice idealistic (or brainless) students who will soon be over their heads in violence.

Pakistan has produced more terrorists than any other single country\227and they may have to rethink the consequences of blind loyalty to religion rather than to their

country. And our universities had better teach critical thinking rather than half-thought-out radicalism. Lives are at stake.

682 words

Laina Farhat-Holzman is a writer, lecturer, and historian. You may contact her at Lfarhat102@aol.com or www.globalthink