

# The Joy of Putting The Gun Down

by ozhaawashko animikii

*"Why did we let Ronald Reagan die calmly in his sleep, at age ninety-three, almost a quarter century after he destroyed everything decent in America? This book is an attempt to dig up Reagan's remains, hang them upside down from the nearest palm tree, and subject him, at last, to a proper trial."*

- Mark Ames, Going Postal - Rage, Murder, and Rebellion: From Reagan's Workplaces to Clinton's Columbine and Beyond

I don't know whether it's possible for someone to hate Ronald Reagan too much, but *if it is*, Mark Ames may be the only person to have figured out how. In 2005, Mark Ames published Going Postal: one of many books attempting to understand American mass shootings, but one of much fewer attempting to form any kind of economic perspective of the shootings. Contrary to the media narratives dismissing these shootings as completely random, insane, or simply "evil" - Mark actually fairly convincingly defends his claim that in the vast majority of these cases, the perpetrators do target people directly and significantly responsible for making their lives as fucking miserable as possible, while standing behind the argument that the workplaces and school environments were still *more responsible* for the shootings than any particular individual. There are of course still innocent victims and clear evidence of insanity in action as well, but we will return to that topic later. What Ames is driving toward is a Marxist analysis of American school and workplace violence, he just doesn't seem to want to stay on the road that he built. Most of his analysis is limited to only a subset of the conditions of capitalism: the "corporate culture," and the changes to that culture which began with Ronald Reagan. Reagan's administration certainly marked a turn for the worse in multiple, measurable ways. But Ames pays a bit too much attention to Reagan at the expense of the systems that made him possible. Mark Ames does talk about capitalism, and colonialism and slavery, but in a very half-assed white man kind of way. What follows is a more whole-assed attempt at the thesis Ames was trying to draw out. What exactly will it take for America to experience the joy of finally putting the gun(s) down?

The Conditions of Capitalism

Lets begin with one of Ames' most lucid attempts at defining the problem: "If you accept that schools and offices, as compressed microcosms of the larger culture, create massacres, just as poverty and racism create their own crimes or as slavery created occasional revolts, then you have to accept that on some level the school and office shootings are logical outcomes and perhaps even justified responses to intolerable conditions that we can't yet put our fingers on." Putting aside for a moment the fuckery of placing the blame on "culture," the claim that schools and offices produce these shootings because they are microcosms of larger systems is still dead on (as is the mention of "intolerable conditions that we can't yet put our fingers on"). There are certainly particular conditions at different schools and workplaces that make them more or less likely to produce deadly violence, but not one of these institutions exists independently of the soul-crushing forces of capitalism. Just how much explanatory power is Mark Ames missing out on by leaving a more rigorous analysis of capitalism to someone else (me) and choosing to point vaguely at "corporate culture" instead? Quite a bit. If we ignore the part where this use of the word culture should probably be left to describing very distinct groups of people, even a more abstract definition of culture is still a system which will tend to select for different outcomes and behaviors in multiple (or all) aspects of human life. No matter how much pressure a culture puts on people to behave and live in particular ways, there will still always be

outliers - people who break with tradition and nonetheless still belong to the culture. More importantly, some of those who break with a tradition may even be able to force the culture itself to change over time. The problem with Ames' "culture" handwaving is that there are social dynamics under capitalism which cannot be changed without destroying capitalism outright - and those social dynamics begin with alienated labor.

In his 1844 manuscripts, Marx articulates not one but four forms of alienation we experience within the capitalist mode of production. First, our labor, and the product of that labor, is separated from us. We spend a massive part of our lives producing something that cannot belong to us, which is always already someone else's before we are even done with it. And for all of the time that we work, our labor is not the satisfaction of something we need as a living, breathing, social organism. No, during the hours we labor, our bodies are acting only as means to an end for satisfying someone else's imagined need (the "need" for profit), and as means to an end for us to hopefully be able to afford to keep existing (so that we may labor again). We are estranged not only from what we produce but from ourselves.

Marx goes on to assert that we are additionally estranged from something which is particular to us as humans: man's species-being, our near-infinitely adaptable habit of creating (producing) new things from what we find in our environment. This includes the ancient human art of making shit up, including (and especially) when we have no particular need to do so. This means that even our capacity for bullshitting is turned against us to sustain a global system of ecocide and genocide. Finally, because each of us is estranged from ourselves and from the qualities that make us *us*, we are also estranged from humanity as a whole, from each other. We spend roughly a third of our life sleeping, another third estranged from ourselves, our peers, and humanity as a whole, and have to devote much of the remaining third to ensuring our most basic needs are met. How could capitalism possibly lead to anything other than an absolute clusterfuck of mental health outcomes as diverse as we are? And we haven't even touched on Das Kapital yet. Of all the concepts Marx develops there which seem most likely to cause incredible human suffering, we only have space for the sparknotes: the division of labor into increasingly mindless and repetitive tasks, the law of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall (and the corresponding falling value of our labor), and the ever-repeating cycle of economic crises (which are not "extenuating circumstances" of capitalism but a fundamental part of how it operates).

Capitalism as a Technology of Colonialism

A half-assed material analysis isn't the only problem with Mark Ames' book, however. His understanding of colonialism and of resistance to it is also a bit dogshit, to put it lightly. If capitalism is a system which requires a ready supply of people to be dehumanized and exploited, then colonialism is the other side of this coin: that socially organized labor and force which dehumanizes and kills people for material benefit and control. And it is important to understand: colonialism is primary to capitalism - capitalism would never have been possible if not for the (continuous) primitive accumulation of colonial violence.

To see just how blind Mark Ames is on this topic, we can return to his fixation with Ronald Reagan. When Reagan beat out the incumbent governor of California by almost a million votes in 1966, it wasn't just because of his celebrity status, it was because he promised to "send the welfare bums

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# Materialist Confidence

by Hard Working Netizen

Anxious? Me too. About what? A lot of things, as I'm sure is the case with you, dear reader. Would you like some confidence rooted in action, not abstraction? Allow me to offer this formulation: materialist confidence.

*"Materialism regards nature as primary and spirit as secondary; it places being first and thought second. Idealism holds the contrary view."*

- V.I. Lenin, Materialism and Empirio-criticism, Chapter 2.1, 1909

Lenin, drawing from Engels' Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy, succinctly outlines the fundamental distinction between materialism and idealism. This philosophical dichotomy is not merely an abstract academic debate—it has profound implications for how individuals understand themselves, their anxieties, and their place in the world. Self-awareness—the recognition of one's existence, thoughts, and relationship to the external world—can generate anxiety precisely because it forces an individual to confront the tension between subjective experience and objective reality. The moment we become aware of "I", we simultaneously become aware of "not I." This fundamental separation can be terrifying. We are no longer seamlessly integrated with our environment but are distinct, finite beings in a vast, often indifferent universe.

This realization carries with it an awareness of our mortality, our limitations, and our vulnerability. Furthermore, self-awareness thrusts us into the complex web of social existence. We see ourselves in relation to others, leading to comparisons, judgments, and the often-painful recognition of societal expectations. Do we measure up? Do we belong? This internal scrutiny, this constant self-monitoring, can easily curdle into a gnawing anxiety. But anxiety is not inherently negative—its value depends on how it is processed. Does it lead to withdrawal and alienation, or does it spur engagement and transformation? The key lies in the philosophical framework one adopts: idealism, which often seeks meaning in abstract or moral narratives, or materialism, which grounds understanding in empirical reality and historical conditions.

When the anxiety born of self-awareness is not productively channeled, it tends to manifest in ways that lead to withdrawal, alienation, and a fundamental dehumanization either of the self or of others. The individual, feeling a profound sense of dissonance and alienation from the world, might internalize this discomfort. This can lead to a corrosive internal dialogue: "I don't fit in with this world, so what is wrong with me?" This self-directed negativity is a fertile ground for various forms of psychological distress, including depression, debilitating self-doubt, and a pervasive sense of inadequacy. The world appears as a coherent, functioning system from which the individual feels inexplicably excluded, leading to the painful conclusion that the fault must lie within their own essential nature. Life becomes a burden, and self-awareness a curse, illuminating only one's perceived flaws and failures.

Conversely, this profound unease can be externalized, projected onto the world and its inhabitants. The internal monologue shifts: "I don't fit in with this world, so what is wrong with everybody else?" This perspective can breed a deep-seated cynicism, a bitter misanthropy, and a generalized refusal to engage constructively with society or its institutions. Others are perceived as the source of the problem—ignorant, malicious, or simply "other"—leading to their dehumanization. This externalization can manifest in various forms, from bitter resentment and social isolation (albeit of a different flavor than the internalized version) to aggressive

anti-social behaviors or an embrace of ideologies that scapegoat particular groups. In both scenarios, whether the anxiety turns inward or outward in these negative ways, the individual remains trapped. Their self-awareness, instead of being a tool for understanding and growth, becomes a source of persistent torment, locking them into cycles of despair or animosity, preventing any meaningful engagement with the root causes of their distress.

Yet embedded within this anxiety is a spark of profound potential: curiosity. The very question "what is wrong?"—whether directed inward or outward—is an implicit desire for understanding, a nascent yearning for truth. When this curiosity is nurtured, when the individual chooses to explore the roots of their unease rather than succumbing to it, anxiety transforms from a paralyzing agent into a vehicle for engagement. It prompts investigation, a deeper dive into the self and the world to uncover the underlying realities that generate such discomfort. The problem, therefore, is not anxiety itself—it is a natural, perhaps even necessary, byproduct of a conscious mind grappling with existence. The crucial determinant of its ultimate impact lies in the modes of thinking applied to address it.

Idealism, which prioritizes thought over material conditions, tends to interpret anxiety in one of two ways:

A. Moral Panic

The individual's discomfort is framed as a personal failing—a lack of virtue, discipline, or spiritual alignment. "If I were more disciplined, I wouldn't feel this way.", "My anxiety is a sign of weak faith." This approach places the burden entirely on the individual, ignoring systemic and material factors.

B. Predestination

The anxiety is seen as part of a grander narrative where the individual must "find their place" in a preordained order.

"Everything happens for a reason.", "My suffering is part of a divine plan." Both responses are idealist because they treat consciousness as primary, suggesting that the solution lies in adjusting one's mindset rather than altering material conditions.

Materialism, in contrast, examines the total conditions of existence:

1. State of Being: The individual recognizes that they exist in a material world populated by others.

2. State of Environment: They assess the empirical reality of their surroundings (economic structures, social relations, historical forces, etc.).

This approach does not dismiss anxiety as a personal failing but treats it as a signal—an indication of contradictions between the self and the world. The materialist framework offers a scientific methodology for understanding and acting upon anxiety:

1. Empirical Grounding: Instead of relying on abstract narratives, materialism demands engagement with observable reality.

2. Historical Analysis: Learning from past struggles and dialectical developments provides context for present conditions.

3. Dialectical Action: Theory must be tested and refined through practice—change is not just interpreted but enacted.

From this materialist framing emerges the concept of "materialist confidence." This is not blind optimism or arrogant self-assurance, but a confidence rooted in the understanding that there is a tangible, scientific methodology to obtain truth, rather than the idealist approach of constructing subjective "truths" detached from empirical verification.

1. Learning from History: History provides a vast repository of human experience, revealing patterns of social development, class struggle, and the consequences of different modes of organization.

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back to work" and repress anti-war/ anti-establishment protestors at Berkeley. As governor, he instituted gun control for the specific purpose of crushing Black peoples' dissent to a capitalist-colonialist country. Reagan would have never made it close to the Oval Office if not for the majority of voters who WANTED violence, repression, and death. For about 20 of the 25 years preceding Ronald Reagan's presidency, nearly any man with a truly unshakeable desire to kill something could sign up to go to Vietnam (if he wasn't drafted already), where he may literally have been given a quota of how many people he was expected to kill. But this still isn't tracing the problem nearly far back enough.

Genocide, rape, murder, and enslavement are not simply things that have happened in America every now and again, they *were and continue to be* motor forces that have driven America's development from a backwater set of colonies (which would have starved to death if not for the generosity of Indigenous peoples), to the largest and most prolific killing machine in the history of the planet. A collective desire to inflict these grievous bodily harms on a racially-marked Other, along with the enjoyment derived from seeing and imagining them being carried out, have played a far greater role in actively shaping the history of this country than any genuine concern for the rights of man. All their talk of *all men being created equal* was just that, TALK, to soothe alcoholic genocidaires into believing they weren't the most recent incarnation of the fucking devil.

"Why do we need to celebrate, with a kind of malicious pride, our worsening condition? What the hell is wrong with us?...Why is it that in those rare, exceptional cases when Americans take up arms against the malice that Ronald Reagan bequeathed to us we only turn on each other, in our workplaces, our post offices, and schools, rather than turning on the real villains in this tale?" Colonialism is a machine that produces madness, because *quickly or slowly*, it IS the destruction of man. So intolerable are the conditions of colonialism that without considerable community support it can drive us to lateral violence, lashing out even at those who play no real part in our suffering. The biggest blind spot in Ames' analysis was that colonialism affects white people too. His fascination with Reagan was only because it was one of the most notable periods where white people sank a little lower from the ruling class (and perhaps because Ames was 15 when Reagan's first presidential term began). But this historical process of colonialism devouring and disfiguring white people has been ongoing since before the United States was even established (since before they even decided to call themselves white). This country will never be capable of putting the guns down for good until white people are capable of seeing the effects of colonialism on themselves, until whiteness as a tool for organizing violence has been shattered, and "white people" become something else.

So what is the joy of finally putting the gun down? Certainly some part of that joy will derive from consciously entering a more peaceful era of humanity and life on earth.But what about the joy of confronting the systems bearing down on us, which are boiling the planet and making it harder to breathe? The joy of grabbing hold of the murderous collective desire that this country runs on, and redirecting that energy into annihilating the very systems that have long depended on it? The joy of breaking down barriers and abolishing what for so long has been holding us back and disfiguring us. Of reclaiming the full extent of our species-being - our near infinite creative capacity, and organizing it around valorizing life, the land, and this planet, not capital. What about the joy of smashing the forces of colonialism and capital so thoroughly that the work of dismantling them can be finished with our bare hands. I don't think we can even imagine the joy of putting the gun down, until we can hold all of this in mind.

None of us are free until all of us are free. End the Occupation. Heal our Bodies. Heal our Planet.

For those interested in reading more of Going Postal I do not recommend actually buying a copy. Mark Ames does not deserve your money.

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2. **Applying Dialectics:** Understanding contradictions within systems and how they drive change.

3. **Engaging in Praxis:** The unity of theory and action—not just interpreting the world, but changing it.

*"The highest point reached by contemplative materialism, that is, materialism which does not comprehend sensuousness as practical activity, is contemplation of single individuals and of civil society."*

- Karl Marx, Theses On Feuerbach, Point 9, 1888

Through this process, materialist confidence is built and reinforced. Each attempt to understand and change the world—even if met with partial success or temporary setbacks—provides new data, refines theoretical understanding, and builds collective capacity. The anxiety that once felt overwhelming and isolating can be channeled into collective effort, fostering solidarity and a sense of agency. It is the confidence that comes not from an idealized notion of self or destiny, but from the tangible experience of grappling with reality and striving, alongside others, to shape it for the better.

In conclusion, the self-aware individual, armed with materialist confidence, no longer asks "what is wrong with me?" or "what is wrong with everybody?" in a spirit of despair—instead, they ask: "What are the material conditions creating this unease?", "How can we collectively act to transform them?"

Anxiety, then, becomes not a symptom of a flawed spirit, but a testament to a sensitive consciousness engaging with a complex, contradictory, yet ultimately changeable world. By adopting a materialist framework, we shift from passive suffering to active transformation—turning existential dread into a driving force for understanding, comradeship, and revolutionary change.

Have fun out there!

*Original Formulation*  
<https://bsky.app/profile/ginzhizhawizi.net/post/3ls7jikdn4c2b>

*Materialism and Empirio-criticism*  
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1908/mec/index.htm>

*Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*  
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1886/ludwig-feuerbach/index.htm>

*Theses on Feuerbach*  
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/theses/theses.htm>

## The Lid on in Houghton County

by A.M. Stirton, reprinted from the May 1, 1908 issue of The Wage Slave, Hancock, MI

Following the order of Sheriff Beck, for the first time in years the saloons were close up last Sunday both front doors and back, also the edict has gone forth that on week-days they must all be closed at eleven o'clock at night. This is a complete departure from the traditions and customs in Hancock.

The Wage-Slave is in complete sympathy with the policy of closing up at eleven o'clock on any day of the week. That seems to us a sensible hour. By that time the quiet citizen can certainly have secured what beer he needs, if he wants any, and those who linger to sip later are in grave danger of getting drunk and proving a nuisance. We believe the liquor men, too, will generally fall in with the plan of closing at eleven o'clock without any objection and that this will prove of benefit to the whole community.

Sunday closing is another matter. The man who wants a glass of beer or wine has as much right to have it on Sunday as on any other day of the week, and to buy it over the bar, and enjoy it in company if he prefers.

Sunday closing is an outrageous and high-handed piece of class legislation designed to force the workingman to go to church by closing up all other places where he might congregate. Wherever the churches have been able to do so, they have sought not only to close up the saloons on that particular day of the week, but the theaters, and even the

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# Let Us Now Praise Revolution

by Michael Parenti

*Excerpts from Chapter 2 of Michael Parenti's Blackshirts and Reds: Let Us Now Praise Revolution*

### The Costs of Counterrevolution

From grade school through grad school, few of us are taught anything about these events, except to be told that U.S. forces must intervene in this or that country in order to protect U.S. interests, thwart aggression, and defend our national security. U.S. leaders fashioned other convenient rationales for their interventions abroad. The public was told that the peoples of various countries were in need of our civilizing guidance and desired the blessings of democracy, peace, and prosperity. To accomplish this, of course, it might be necessary to kill off considerable numbers of the more recalcitrant among them. Such were the measures our policymakers were willing to pursue in order to "uplift lesser peoples."

In the name of democracy, U.S. leaders waged a merciless war against revolutionaries in Indochina for the better part of twenty years. They dropped many times more tons of explosives on Vietnam than were used throughout World War II by all combatants combined. Testifying before a Congressional committee, former CIA director William Colby admitted that under his direction U.S. forces and their South Vietnam collaborators carried out the selective assassination of 24,000 Vietnamese dissidents, in what was known as the Phoenix Program. His associate, the South Vietnamese minister of information, maintained that 40,000 was a more accurate estimate. U.S. policymakers and their media mouthpieces judged the war a "mistake" because the Vietnamese proved incapable of being properly instructed by B-52 bomber raids and death squads.

By prevailing against this onslaught, the Vietnamese supposedly demonstrated that they were "unprepared for our democratic institutions." In pursuit of counterrevolution and in the name of freedom, U.S. forces or U.S.-supported surrogate forces slaughtered 2,000,000 North Koreans in a three-year war; 3,000,000 Vietnamese; over 500,000 in aerial wars over Laos and Cambodia; over 1,500,000 million in Angola; over 1 ,000,000 in Mozambique; over 500,000 in Afghanistan; 500,000 to 1,000,000 in Indonesia; 200,000 in East Timor; 100,000 in Nicaragua (combining the Somoza and Reagan eras); over 100,000 in Guatemala (plus an additional 40,000 disappeared); over 700,000 in Iraq; over 60,000 in El Salvador; 30,000 in the "dirty war" of Argentina (though the government admits to only 9,000); 35,000 in Taiwan, when the Kuomintang military arrived from China; 20,000 in Chile; and many thousands in Haiti, Panama, Grenada, Brazil, South Africa, Western Sahara, Zaire, Turkey, and dozens of other countries, in what amounts to a free-market world holocaust.

### Whose Violence?

The very concept of "revolutionary violence" is somewhat falsely cast, since most of the violence comes from those who attempt to prevent reform, not from those struggling for reform. By focusing on the violent rebellions of the downtrodden, we overlook the much greater repressive force and violence utilized by the ruling oligarchs to maintain the status quo, including armed attacks against peaceful demonstrations, mass arrests, torture, destruction of opposition organizations, suppression of dissident publications, death squad assassinations, the extermination of whole villages, and the like.

Most social revolutions begin peaceably. Why would it be otherwise? Who would not prefer to assemble and demonstrate rather than engage in mortal combat against pitiless forces that enjoy every advantage in mobility and firepower? Revolutions in Russia, China, Vietnam, and El Salvador all began peacefully, with crowds of peasants and workers clanking nonviolent protests only to be met with violent oppression from the authorities. Peaceful protest and reform are exactly what the people are denied by the ruling oligarchs. The dissidents who continue to fight back, who try to defend themselves from the oligarchs'

repressive fury, are then called "violent revolutionaries" and "terrorists."

For those local and international elites who maintain control over most of the world's wealth, social revolution is an abomination. Whether it be peaceful or violent is a question of no great moment to them. Peaceful reforms that infringe upon their profitable accumulations and threaten their class privileges are as unacceptable to them as the social upheaval imposed by revolution. Reforms that advance the conditions of life for the general public are not as materially intractable or as dependent on capital resources as we have been led to believe. There is no great mystery to building a health clinic, or carrying out programs for food rationing, land redistribution, literacy, jobs, and housing. Such tasks are well within the capacity of any state- if there is the political will and a mobilization of popular class power.

### The Freedom of Revolution

U.S. politico-economic leaders may find revolutionary reforms undesirable, but most people who live in revolutionary societies find them preferable to the old regimes and worth defending. The Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba was a fiasco not because of "insufficient air coverage" but because the Cuban people closed ranks behind their government and threw back the invaders.

Another "captive people," the North Vietnamese, acted in similar fashion in the early 1970s. Instead of treating the severe destruction and disruptions caused by the U.S. aerial war against their country as a golden opportunity to overthrow "Hanoi's yoke," they continued to support their beleaguered government at great sacrifice to themselves. And in South Vietnam, the National Liberation Front enjoyed tactical opportunities for supply and surprise, largely because it was supported by people in the countryside and cities.

During the Vietnam era, explanations as to why people sided with the communist revolutionaries came from some unexpected sources. U.S. ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge admitted, "The only people who have been doing anything for the little man - to lift him up have been the communists" ( New York Times, 2/27/66). In a similar vein, one faithful propagator of the official line, columnist James Reston, wrote with surprising candor, "Even Premier Ky [U.S.-sponsored dictator of South Vietnam] told this reporter today that the communists were closer to the people's yearnings for social justice and an independent life than his own government" (New York Times, 9/1/65). What Lodge and Reston left unsaid was that the "little man" and the "people's yearnings" for social justice were the very things that U.S. leaders were bent on suppressing.

Some people conclude that anyone who utters a good word about leftist one-party revolutions must harbor antidemocratic or "Stalinist" sentiments. But to applaud social revolutions is not to oppose political freedom. To the extent that revolutionary governments construct substantive alternatives for their people, they increase human options and freedom.

There is no such thing as freedom in the abstract. There is freedom to speak openly and iconoclastically, freedom to organize a political opposition, freedom of opportunity to get an education and pursue a livelihood, freedom to worship as one chooses or not worship at all, freedom to live in healthful conditions, freedom to enjoy various social benefits, and so on. Most of what is called freedom gets its definition within a social context.

Revolutionary governments extend a number of popular freedoms without destroying those freedoms that never existed in the previous regimes. They foster conditions necessary for national self-determination, economic betterment, the preservation of health and human life, and the end of many of the worst forms of ethnic, patriarchal, and class oppression. Regarding patriarchal oppression, consider the vastly improved condition of women in revolutionary Afghanistan and South Yemen before the counterrevolutionary repression in the 1990s, or in Cuba after

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Don't be Mr. Block. Don't just stand there. Do something!

By Jonathan Hill

# Combat Liberalism

By Mao Zedong

We stand for active ideological struggle because it is the weapon for ensuring unity within the Party and the revolutionary organizations in the interest of our fight. Every Communist and revolutionary should take up this weapon.

But liberalism rejects ideological struggle and stands for unprincipled peace, thus giving rise to a decadent, Philistine attitude and bringing about political degeneration in certain units and individuals in the Party and the revolutionary organizations.

Liberalism manifests itself in various ways.

To let things slide for the sake of peace and friendship when a person has clearly gone wrong, and refrain from principled argument because he is an old acquaintance, a fellow townsman, a schoolmate, a close friend, a loved one, an old colleague or old subordinate. Or to touch on the matter lightly instead of going into it thoroughly, so as to keep on good terms. The result is that both the organization and the individual are harmed. This is one type of liberalism.

To indulge in irresponsible criticism in private instead of actively putting forward one's suggestions to the organization. To say nothing to people to their faces but to gossip behind their backs, or to say nothing at a meeting but to gossip afterwards. To show no regard at all for the principles of collective life but to follow one's own inclination. This is a second type.

To let things drift if they do not affect one personally; to say as little as possible while knowing perfectly well what is wrong, to be worldly wise and play safe and seek only to avoid blame. This is a third type.

Not to obey orders but to give pride of place to one's own opinions. To demand special consideration from the organization but to reject its discipline. This is a fourth type.

To indulge in personal attacks, pick quarrels, vent personal spite or seek revenge instead of entering into an argument and struggling against incorrect views for the sake of unity or progress or getting the work done properly. This is a fifth type.

To hear incorrect views without rebutting them and even to hear counter-revolutionary remarks without reporting them, but instead to take them calmly as if nothing had happened. This is a sixth type.

To be among the masses and fail to conduct propaganda and agitation or speak at meetings or conduct investigations and inquiries among them, and instead to be indifferent to them and show no concern for their well-being, forgetting that one is a Communist and behaving as if one were an ordinary non-Communist. This is a seventh type.

To see someone harming the interests of the masses and yet not feel indignant, or dissuade or stop him or reason with him, but to allow him to continue. This is an eighth type.

To work half-heartedly without a definite plan or direction; to work perfunctorily and muddle along—"So long as one remains a monk, one goes on tolling the bell." This is a ninth type.

To regard oneself as having rendered great service to the revolution, to pride oneself on being a veteran, to disdain minor assignments while being quite unequal to major tasks, to be slipshod in work and slack in study. This is a tenth type.

To be aware of one's own mistakes and yet make no attempt to correct them, taking a liberal attitude towards oneself. This is an eleventh type. We could name more. But these eleven are the principal types. They are all manifestations of liberalism.

Liberalism is extremely harmful in a revolutionary collective. It is a corrosive which eats away unity, undermines cohesion, causes apathy and creates dissension. It robs the revolutionary ranks of compact organization and strict discipline, prevents policies from being carried through and alienates the Party organizations from the masses which the Party leads. It is an extremely bad tendency.

Liberalism stems from petty-bourgeois selfishness, it places personal interests first and the interests of the revolution second, and this gives rise to ideological, political and organizational liberalism.

People who are liberals look upon the principles of Marxism as abstract dogma. They approve of Marxism, but are not prepared to practice it or to practice it in full; they are not prepared to replace their liberalism by Marxism. These people have their Marxism, but they have their liberalism as well—they talk Marxism but practice liberalism; they apply Marxism to others but liberalism to themselves. They keep both kinds of goods in stock and find a use for each. This is how the minds of certain people work.

Liberalism is a manifestation of opportunism and conflicts fundamentally with Marxism. It is negative and objectively has the effect of helping the enemy; that is why the enemy welcomes its preservation in our midst. Such being its nature, there should be no place for it in the ranks of the revolution.

We must use Marxism, which is positive in spirit, to overcome liberalism, which is negative. A Communist should have largeness of mind and he should be staunch and active, looking upon the interests of the revolution as his very life and subordinating his personal interests to those of the revolution; always and everywhere he should adhere to principle and wage a tireless struggle against all incorrect ideas and actions, so as to consolidate the collective life of the Party and strengthen the ties between the Party and the masses; he should be more concerned about the Party and the masses than about any private person, and more concerned about others than about himself. Only thus can he be considered a Communist.

All loyal, honest, active and upright Communists must unite to oppose the liberal tendencies shown by certain people among us, and set them on the right path. This is one of the tasks on our ideological front.

CONTINUED FROM THE LID ON IN... parks and Art Museums also. This has been undertaken solely in the interest of the attendance and, of course, the collections at the churches.

The Wage Slave is an enemy to drunkenness and disorder, but we are also an enemy to religious legislation. If anyone believes that a particular day of the week is too sacred to buy and drink a glass of beer on that say, that is his privilege; this is supposed to be a free county in matters of religious belief, but it does not give him the right to dictate terms of belief and practice to others who may think differently.

"One man esteemeth one day above another, another man esteemeth every day alike, let every man be fully ersuaded in his own mind."-The Bible. (Rom. XIV-5.) What is equally important, let him attend to his own affairs and so give other people a chance to attend to theirs.

There are other interests also at work in the interest of Sunday laws. On his trip to Laurium on Sunday last the Editor overheard a well-known Mining Captain in the electric car "though not a temperance man himself" as he put it, endorsing Sunday closing on the ground that the miners would be in a better condition now to work and make profits for the Company on the Monday following.

We would suggest too, to the officials of Houghton Country that if they intend to enforce Sunday closing laws, they would do well first to clean up on the tough joins in Houghton before they pull a decent fellow who has always kept a quiet place where neither boys, drunks, nor women are allowed, for letting a quiet party of friends enjoy a bottle of beer in his basement, while meddling with nobody.

## Oscar Wants The Whole Cheese

by Oscar Ameringer, reprinted from a 1913 issue of The Miner's Magazine

I am a proletarian. That is a landless, toolless worker who works four-fifths of his time for a boss in order that I may have the opportunity to work one-fifth of the time for myself. I do not do so for the fun of it, but because I have to. I'd much rather keep the whole product of my labor. But the things with which I produce wealth are the private property of my boss. Without their use I cannot live at all. Even a poor living is better than no living. Hence I turn over to my master four-fifths of the wealth I produce. I do this with joy in my heart, because I must or starve to death.

Now comes Socialism. It promises me the whole cheese through the common ownership of the cheese factory. The whole cheese looks good to my hungry eyes. Therefore, I say, "Socialism is right."

The present owner of the cheese factory begs to differ. The ownership of the cheese factory gives him the whole cheese, minus the one-fifth which is set aside for my maintenance while I make the cheese. The major portion of the cheese looks as good to my beloved boss as it does to me. Socialism endangers this strangle hold. Therefore, he says, "Socialism is wrong."

Any person of ordinary horse sense can see from the above that Socialism is both right and wrong. This may look contradictory to some folks, but it isn't. A thing may be right today and wrong tomorrow. Or it may be right and wrong at the same time. Or it may look right to some people and wrong to others. So you see there is something wrong about wrong, and right don't seem to be altogether right, or not quite right, or not right at all times or in the eyes of certain people. All this is as clear as mud.

For instance, it is right for a chicken to eat grasshoppers. But the grasshoppers entertain an entirely contrary notion on this subject. It is also right for the early bird to catch the worm. But it is safe to presume that the worm is bitterly opposed to the concept of right harbored by the early bird.

A coyote may also eat chickens without losing caste among his brethren. But judging from the amount of indignant noise arising from the chickencoop this action is bitterly condemned by the fowls.

It is even so among other animals called humans. There was a time when

CONTINUED FROM LET US NOW PRAISE... the 1959 revolution as compared to before.

U.S. policymakers argue that social revolutionary victory anywhere represents a diminution of freedom in the world. The assertion is false. The Chinese Revolution did not crush democracy; there was none to crush in that oppressively feudal regime. The Cuban Revolution did not destroy freedom; it destroyed a hateful U.S. sponsored police state. The Algerian Revolution did not abolish national liberties; precious few existed under French colonialism. The Vietnamese revolutionaries did not abrogate individual rights; no such rights were available under the U.S.-supported puppet governments of Bao Dai, Diem, and Ky.

Of course, revolutions do limit the freedoms of the corporate propertied class and other privileged interests: the freedom to invest privately without regard to human and environmental costs, the freedom to live in obscene opulence while paying workers starvation wages, the freedom to treat the state as a private agency in the service of a privileged coterie, the freedom to employ child labor and child prostitutes, the freedom to treat women as chattel, and so on.

Today, no one in U.S. policy circles worries about the politico-economic oppression suffered in dozens of right-wing client states. Their professed desire to bring Western political democracy to nations that have had revolutions rarely extends to free-market autocracies. And the grudging moves toward political democracy occasionally made in these autocracies come only through popular pressure and rebellion and only with the unspoken understanding that democratic governance will not infringe substantially upon the interests of the moneyed class.

the best people, the pillars of the church and state owned slaves or traded in slaves. Nowadays we say slavery is a wrong. But it was not wrong prior to 1863. And the undesirable citizen who raised his voice against the institution of slavery in those days had a good chance to be hanged by a committee of the leading citizens.

Yes, the world does change, and our own conception of right and wrong changes it. "But," you say, "is there no right or wrong in this sinful world?" Oh, yes, oodles and oodles of it. Whatever is against the strongest class in society is wrong. In other words, "might makes right."

At the present writing my boss belongs to the strongest class. Hence the cheese belongs to him by right — by right of might. It is the only right that has any standing in court — because the courts also belong to the strongest class. The cheese I made is not my cheese. Should I take that cheese, notwithstanding, I would be condemned by law. Morality, the interpretation of religion and law, follows the strongest class in society even as the tail follows the dog. The tail don't wag the dog. It expresses the sentiment of the dog.

Some day the working class will become the strongest class in society. When that day comes my boss will lose the cheese I made. For I will belong to the strongest class.

**I am right because I am right.**

This is the economic interpretation of the actions of men. This is the scientific view of life. It is the true conception of life because it is borne out by the recorded facts of life and by the 6,000 years of known history. Therefore the Socialist who tries to prove the justice of Socialism by a religion or a morality arising out of the institution of a semi-barbarous people is a muddlehead of the first order. The beneficiary of the present system which he seeks to convert with such arguments will laugh at him. Because whenever religion interferes with business we cut out religion. On the other side the victim of the system needs no moral arguments to convince him that four-fifths of the cheese is preferable to one-fifth. What he wants to know is how to get it. Show him, and he's your man! — Exchange.

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Keweenaw Socialists Quarterly is an anti-capitalist quarterly publication bringing academic literature, meaningful discussion, visual art, poetry, and prose to the people of the Keweenaw. This publication seeks to advocate for the liberation of workers, indigenous peoples, and all other minorities in the Keweenaw peninsula and throughout the world.

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