



April 2014

The Rebirth of the Class Struggle

Dear Friend of Radio Liberty,

“We must hate. Hatred is the basis of Communism.” Vladimir Lenin (1)

“Ruthless war on the kulaks! Death to them! Hatred and contempt for the parties which defend them—the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks, and today’s Left Socialist-Revolutionaries! The workers must crush the revolts of the kulaks with an iron hand, the kulaks who are forming an alliance with the foreign capitalists against the working people of their own country.” Vladimir Lenin (2)

“We are expropriating as a general rule, and we have no kulaks in the Soviets. We are crushing them. We suppress them trying to choke the poor peasants. You see how the domination of one class is exercised here. Only the proletariat may dominate.”
Vladimir Lenin (3)

Beginning this fall, first-year students – we dare not call them **“freshmen”** – at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government will be required to undergo an orientation session dealing with power and privilege. (4)

What is **“privilege”**? New York magazine helpfully explains that it is:

“A catchall term for the perks an individual enjoys in society because of his race, gender, or class [and] has been used to analyze social inequality for decades.” In recent years, the phrase **“check your privilege”** has become ubiquitous in academia, an ideological incantation that forecloses rational discussion. The directive is an implicit accusation routinely directed at white, male students, who are supposed to feel guilt over being the beneficiaries of the institutionalized advantages that come with being part of an **“oppressor class.”**

It is a product of the same collectivist leveling impulse that inspired Barack Obama's notoriously dismissive rebuke to small businessmen: **“You didn't make that.”** In this age of Common Core, communitarianism, and deeply entrenched political correctness, the chief purpose of advanced education is to tutor young people regarding their respective places in the class hierarchy – first, whether they are **“oppressors”** or **“victims,”** and, if they are blessed to be assigned to the latter category, what government-assigned benefits they can expect.

This process necessarily begins with the assignment of some students to the villain class, and that means inducing within them a sense of indelible guilt over things their ancestors may or may not have done. Harvard's privilege-checking orientation class is intended to deprive **“oppressor”** students of their sense of self and cultivate submissiveness to those who speak on behalf of the collective.

“If what you've been told all your life is you're really talented and you deserve what you have, it's going to be really hard to find out *Maybe I don't deserve it, and all these other people equally deserve it but never even had a shot,*” explained a Harvard graduate student to New York Magazine. **“Schools are not giving students a space to manage that loss of identity.”** (5)

It's not much of an exaggeration to describe this kind of thing as a variant of the **“struggle sessions”** employed in Communist China during the Cultural Revolution. Those exercises were designed to induce **“self-criticism”** among people regarded as class enemies or suspected of ideological impurity.

Collectivism, especially of the left-wing variety, is entirely obsessed with identity. All social relationships are divided between oppressor and victim classes. Those assigned to the former group can never eradicate their inherited guilt; those designated as victims, on the other hand, enjoy a limitless supply of inherited virtue, which can be drawn upon by political figures who claim to act on their behalf.

This is a variant of the ideology that fed the guillotines in Revolutionary France, and filled the killing fields of Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge. And it is pervasive in Obama-era America.

We've made this point before, but it bears repeating: Although **“political correctness”** is often treated as the basis of satire, it is a deadly serious matter. The first recorded use of that expression was found in a directive from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to carry out the extermination of the Don River Cossacks. The directive stated:

“In view of the experiences of the civil war against the Cossacks, we must recognize as the only politically correct measure massive terror and a merciless fight against the rich Cossacks, who must be exterminated and physically disposed of down to the last man.”
(6)

From the collectivist perspective, **“justice”** is not defined by questions of fact, overt acts, and the imperative to defend property rights. It is entirely a question of identity:

“Do not look into the file of incriminating evidence to see whether or not the accused rose up against the Soviets with arms or words,” explained Martin Latsis, head of the Ukrainian Cheka secret police, shortly after the Revolution. **“Ask him instead to which class he belongs, what is his background, his education, his profession. These are the questions that will determine the fate of the accused. That is the meaning and essence of the Red Terror.”** (7)

Translated into contemporary terms, Latsis was directing his subordinates to **“check the privilege”** of people suspected of anti-government sentiments. If they were identified as part of the oppressor class, they were subject to expropriation, imprisonment, or liquidation, depending on the whims of those in charge of the Regime.

During the reign of Lenin, the Soviet secret police refined into a science the process of identifying **“class enemies,”** such as **“kulaks”** — wealthy, independent peasant farmers who resisted efforts to collectivize agriculture. After Stalin came to power, the Soviet government used an engineered famine in the Ukraine to murder tens of millions of people designated as “kulaks.” But they were hardly the only officially designated hate target: Official pronouncements and propaganda variously targeted Cossacks, Uzbeks, Tatars, and other central Asians; Jews; “exploiters”; “aristocrats,” and many other groups at various periods.

As the self-anointed Vanguard of history, the Soviet elite claimed an unqualified mandate to employ revolutionary terror. And as the Stalin Era demonstrated, everybody under the rule of the Soviet elite lived in a sense of perpetual insecurity, because literally anybody could be deemed an **Enemy of the People** at any time.

“Our morality has no precedent, and our humanity is absolute, because it rests on a new ideal,” proclaimed a 1920 editorial in *Krasni Mech* (The Red Sword), a publication of the Cheka secret police. **“Our aim is to destroy all forms of oppression and violence. To us, everything is permitted, for we are the first to raise the sword not to oppress races and reduce them to slavery, but to liberate humanity from its shackles.... Blood? Let blood flow like water ... for only through the death of the old world can we liberate ourselves forever....”** (8)

The current **“soft totalitarian system”** that exists in the United States has yet to yield mass extermination campaigns, but it is built on similar ideological foundations, employs very similar methods of identifying and demonizing hate targets, and has the same ultimate objective – consolidation of power in the hands of an unaccountable elite. This process, once again, requires that people be grouped in either oppressor or victim classes, and one common way this is accomplished is by treating violations of politically correct etiquette as grave crimes against the common good – as defined by collectivists, in any case.

Every once in a while, we're given a glimpse into the dormant bloodlust that pulsates beneath the facade of tolerance and compassion displayed by the custodians of politically correct opinion.

Billionaire media figure Oprah Winfrey, who fancies herself a high priestess of tolerance, told an interviewer from the BBC that America won't fulfill its moral potential until it undergoes what one commentator called “demographic pruning” through the death of old, bigoted people.

“There are still generations of people, older people, who were born and bred and marinated in it, in that prejudice and racism, and they just have to die.”

Oprah insisted, going on to insist that any criticism of Barack Obama – even by otherwise servile media outlets – must likewise be considered racist. (9)

Since the election of Obama, the Progressive left has neglected not a single opportunity to describe any expression of “anti-government” sentiment as subliminal racism. The assumption, as leftist scribe Jonathan Chait put it, is that:

"America's unique brand of ideological anti-statism is historically inseparable...from the legacy of slavery."

Which on this reading would have continued in perpetuity had it not been for the mass slaughter of the Civil War. (10) (Chait, like others of his ilk, neglect to mention that for more than sixty years, the federal government was formally committed to the preservation of chattel slavery, and that in the decade immediately before the Civil War many abolitionists supported secession because of federal efforts to enforce the Fugitive Slave Law.)

Progressives emit accusations of “**racism**” as a cultivated reflex. They relentlessly scrutinize the public and private utterances of their class enemies in search of comments, gestures, or even omissions of expected gestures of piety that can be described as evidence of proscribed attitudes about race, sex, “sexual orientation,” or other *au courant* victim categories.

H.L. Mencken once defined Puritans as the kind of people who are haunted by the suspicion that somewhere, somebody might be enjoying himself. Those who subscribe to the post-Christian, Marxist-derived variety of Puritanism that afflicts our country are similarly obsessed with the idea that somebody somewhere might be entertaining politically incorrect thoughts, or giving voice to bigoted opinions.

Consider the case of Donald Sterling, the billionaire real estate mogul who until recently owned the NBA's LA Clippers franchise. Sterling – an unsavory sort who is, among other things, an impenitent adulterer – was fined \$2.5 million by the league, which also banned him for life and ordered him to sell the team after a recording surfaced of allegedly racist comments he made to his girlfriend.

The comments in question are more accurately seen as the floundering, despairing words of a wealthy, elderly man who resents the fact that his young, nubile kept woman prefers the company of attractive, athletic men her own age. But this doesn't matter: Once the Directorate of Official Sensitivity has designated a figure as a bigot, the facts are inconsequential. All that remains is the duty of the public to execrate the hate target, and redouble its efforts to punish similar expressions of impermissible attitudes.

It is reasonable to believe that the NBA is entitled to impose on Sterling whatever sanctions are authorized in its contract with him. This proposition is complicated somewhat by the fact that the

NBA, like all other major league sports franchises, enjoys certain regulatory benefits as a result of an anti-trust exemption granted by Congress – so there is a sense in which enforcement of their personnel and cultural policies could be seen as extensions of government policy.

Sterling, a married octogenarian who has kept company with a woman young enough to be his granddaughter, has a history of making derogatory comments about non-whites. Yet as Dr. Thomas DiLorenzo has pointed out, business competition made it necessary for a man with bigoted views to employ many young black men. Sterling might have privately entertained squalid and objectionable views about black people, but in substantive terms he did more to promote black economic advancement than Barack Obama could ever have done. While Obama is slaughtering people of color overseas, and imprisoning them in record numbers for non-violent offenses at home, Sterling was making millionaires out of talented black athletes in his employ. This helps explain why the NAACP had actually planned to present him with an award.

Ah, but his unguarded comments were taken as proof that Sterling is an enemy of the community.

For Progressives, as we've noted before, giving voice to politically unacceptable opinions is a much more grievous offense than supporting the mass liquidation of living human beings. Sterling – like Cliven Bundy, who was falsely accused of pining for the lost days of chattel slavery – have become totems of the people whose death Oprah Winfrey cheerfully contemplated. It's worth pointing out that the Revolutionary Left has literally spent decades compiling demographic lists of people who are fit only for the gulag or the gas chamber.

In the years immediately after World War II, a group of academics led by Marxist Theodor Adorno compiled a large and thoroughly dishonest study entitled “The Authoritarian Personality.” This wasn't a work of scholarship. It was an ideological polemic intended to treat conservatives and traditionalists as people harboring secret impulses toward fascism.

The study treated conservatism as both a moral flaw and a form of mental illness. This isn't surprising, given that the Soviet Union – to which Adorno and some of his colleagues bore allegiance – treated opposition to socialism as a mental disorder.

The Adorno thesis has recently been revived as an explanation for the emergence of the Tea Party and other grassroots right-wing movements. In an article compiling several recent studies and books critical of the resurgent right, the leftist journal Salon concludes that conservatives are cognitively inferior to Progressives, and that many are latent psychopaths. (11)

From that perspective, conservatives aren't merely mistaken about politics; they are to be regarded as innately evil and suitable only to be controlled by wiser and more insightful people.

Nearly all Progressives eventually embrace the conceit that only deranged and immoral people object to being ruled by them.

The culture war is not the only front on which the totalitarian inclinations of the radical left are becoming apparent. The same is true of environmentalism – a movement to which Marxists migrated en masse in the late 1980s.

Climate change ideology is a dogma masquerading as science. Proponents of the theory of human-generated global warming insist that their views are rooted in objective data – yet they also insist that subjecting their conclusions to scrutiny constitutes “denial” – another invocation of the language of clinical psychology — rather than the application of skeptical intelligence that the scientific method requires.

Instead of defending their views, the guardians of global warming orthodoxy assail the motives of those who don't share their perspective. This is why people who are unpersuaded by the climate change movement's claims – a group that includes thousands of well-qualified scientists in the appropriate fields – are routinely denigrated as “**Climate Deniers,**” an epithet calculated to associate them with Holocaust Deniers and other unsavory figures.

Predictably, the high priests of the global warming cult have decreed that disagreement with them should be treated as a crime. One of their spokesmen, Adam Weinstein, insists that so-called “climate change deniers” should be arrested and prosecuted as purported accomplices in what he insists are 150,000 climate-related deaths each year. (12)

“First Amendment rights were never intended to be absolute.”

Proclaims Weinstein, invoking the familiar defense offered by totalitarian-minded people seeking to criminalize disagreement with them. In the meantime, however, people of Weinstein's ilk have to be satisfied with inflicting social and professional ruin on responsible scientists who refuse to peddle ideology in the guise of scholarship.

Swedish climate scientist and meteorologist Lennart Bengtsson wasn't arrested or imprisoned after he expressed skepticism about the “climate consensus,” but he found himself the subject of a global campaign of ostracism and vituperation. Within a week of joining the Global Warming Policy Foundation – a group that promotes an objective look at climate science issues – Dr. Bengtsson found himself subject to harassment, professional isolation, defamation, and threats. So acute and unrelenting was the onslaught of vilification that he resigned from the group.

“I had not expect[ed] such an enormous world-wide pressure put at me from a community that I have been close to all my active life,” wrote Dr. Bengtsson in his letter of resignation. **“Colleagues are withdrawing their support, other colleagues are withdrawing from joint authorship, etc. I see no limit and end to what will happen. It is a situation that reminds me about the time of McCarthy. I would never have expected anything similar in such an original peaceful community as meteorology. Apparently it has been transformed in recent years.”** (13)

While sympathizing with the traumatized Dr. Bengtsson, he made a very critical error: Nothing like the treatment he received was carried out in the name of anti-Communism in what people have been taught to call the “McCarthy Era.”

This variety of ideological persecution, however, is quite typical of the Revolutionary Left – and, as Dr. Bengtsson correctly said, there is “no limit and end to what will happen.” People who seek total power to bring about a “**revolutionary transformation**” of society will not be satisfied merely to harass, persecute, ostracize, and expropriate the people they hate. From its inception, Revolutionary Leftism has contemplated, promoted, countenanced, and celebrated the mass liquidation of its class enemies.

This bloody-minded sense of moral certitude was frequently expressed in the public writings and utterances of Lenin. And as we've seen, the same casual endorsement of mass death can fall from the lips of a female multi-billionaire who has been programmed to believe that because of her skin color she will remain an oppressed victim until the last racist is strangled in the entrails of the last Tea Party activist.

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- 6) Stephane Courtois, et. al. *The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), pg. 99.
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Written by William Grigg

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We are moving into a very difficult period in the history of our nation.

The Obama administration is implementing many of the totalitarian programs that existed in the Soviet Union under the pretense that: "they are protecting the American people from the threat of 'terrorism,'" but that isn't true.

Barbara and I appreciate your continued support for our ministry.

Please pray for our provision and protection.

Yours in Christ,

Stanley Monteith