

WHAT IS A “COMMUNIST”?

The Last Good Liberal Provides an Expert Answer,
and the Ground for a Unified Field Theory of the Left.

What does it mean to accuse someone of being a “Communist”? We may not all agree on an answer to that question, much less share an attitude, so it’s something we need to consider in these confused times. Thank you for joining me, hopefully you will find this reading worthwhile. I want to propose a better understanding of the common usage of the terms “Communist” and “Communism”, and perhaps some other frequently kicked about terminology. Also, I want to propose a Unified Field Theory of the “Left” as a tool in political analysis, the value of which will, I hope, become apparent as we continue.

As a Right Wing Reactionary, however, my unflattering view of the Left would be subject to criticism as “slanted”. Therefore, I’m going to present the expert opinion of the late Professor John P. Roche, a *bona fide* man of the Left with an unmatched record of both activism for, and academic study of the political Left from the 1930’s through his death in the ‘80’s. I considered him among the last of the breed of genuine Liberals (a “good” Liberal relative to today’s.) As I see it, genuine old fashioned Liberalism was pretty well wiped out by the Radical Left (aka ‘Communists’) over two or three generations in the mid-Twentieth Century. Dr. Roche, Liberal intellectual, scholar, college professor, Democrat Party apparatchik, and newspaper columnist was the primary chronicler, and mourner, of this intellectual genocide. It was in that period he was fighting the radical leftist takeover of the Democrat Party that I came to know him through his newspaper columns. To him I owe my understanding of the difference between true Liberalism and the Radical Left that has usurped the “Liberal” label.

Long ago and far away in culture, there was something of a Golden Age of newspaper punditry and political satire. I loved reading them all, but I found Roche among the most interesting, probably because his rationales were so alien to mine, and yet seemed so well based. They were something I could argue with intellectually; and while I freely admit that he was a true scholar, and I am merely an opinionated dilettante who couldn’t wade through libraries of arcane Marxist dogma (as he did) if my life depended upon it, we had (unbeknownst to him) years of debate from which I profited greatly. Unfortunately he remained unmoved.

He wrote great philosophical (boring) critiques of Marxist-Leninist Theory for the benefit of budding young Leftist "Intellectuals". Any serious student of Socialism and Communism (which I am not) should read Roche’s voluminous scholarly works on their relationship and the history of Marxism/Communism. Although he rudely stated that he did not write for people like me ("the anti-Communist primitives who specialized in scarifying 'Godless, atheistical, anti-capitalist Bolsheviks'") I profited from his research a great deal, as I hope you will now. And being an impatient 'primitive', I'm skipping to his bottom line description of the Marxist-Leninist left:

Most analyses of Marxism-Leninism are philosophical exercises conducted in the intellectual stratosphere. That approach has limited utility, but is based on a deeply flawed premise: that Marxism-Leninism is a form of high theory, rather than an operational code for a new style Mafia, far more interested in finding a rationale for seizing or wielding power than in liberating “prisoners of starvation” or the “wretched of the earth”.¹

There we have it: Marxists/Leninists, and their fellow travelers under whatever disguises, are plain old gangsters who lie, cheat, steal and murder for their own selfish ends. That conclusion was based upon serious study and grotesquely abundant evidence from the history of the so called “Communist” world who avow Marxist/Leninist dogma. On that understanding of Communist and Communism I can agree with Prof. Roche.

G. K. Chesterton quipped that a figure of speech can sometimes fit into a crack where a definition can't. It is equally true that a figure of speech can cover a lot wider area than a definition. The term “Communist” has come to be something of a figure of speech. When we on the right use the term “Communist” we are not likely referring to political theory but to real gangsterism of all types, and to the well deserved expectation that the accused “Communist” will not play by the rules of our ‘civilized world’, and will, publicly or not, be associated with the absolute worst criminal states and organizations.

To his credit, though Roche flirted with the Far Left, he settled on a course of “improving” America by propounding Liberal/Socialist social policies (as they were in the past), rather than revolution. And that course was taken because he recognized the true nature of the Communist influenced “Left”. Let me emphasize that description again, so that there is no mistaking what Roche is saying. Speaking of his time in the Kennedy Administration in the 1960's:

“...we considered the Communists to be ideological whores, part of a highly articulated, worldwide criminal syndicate with its Godfather resident in the Kremlin. Its major objective was not to win the hearts and minds of mankind with the altruistic apothegms of Marx and Lenin, but to achieve power at whatever levels in institutions that presented themselves as targets of opportunity. The motivation for their activities was not to improve the caloric intake of the “wretched of the earth” — indeed as Cuba indicates, they can take a flourishing economy on the verge of “take-off” and in record time convert it into an outdoor slum wholly dependent on Moscow's handouts — but to buttress in one fashion or another the international position of the Soviet Union.”

You won't hear that kind of truth about Communism and its dismal record from anyone on the left today, but it is just as true. That candor is what I liked about him back in the day. There are differences now of course, there are more criminal syndicates now, with Godfathers in Moscow, Beijing, Tehran, and a few other places; and yes, even in Brussels (I refer to the EU), and even in Washington, DC. The world is circumscribed by criminal syndicates flying all colors but the truth — their selfish lust for power and wealth. And, though they may serve various masters, they share this one common enemy: America and what it stands for, and what it has stood in the way of.

A “Unified Field Theory of the Left” is a common denominator. Now that we have an understanding of the Left/Communist character we can note their commonalities. What did “Communist” Russian dictator Joseph Stalin, and “Fascist” Adolph Hitler, long avowed political enemies, have in common that they signed a pact to start WWII and divide up Europe between them? What do neo-Communist Russian dictator Vladimir Putin, avowed “Socialist” and actual drug lord dictator Maduro of Venezuela, and brutish Muslim theocrats in Iran have in common that they support

each other and make pacts against US? What does classic Marxist theory have to do with the hereditary, literally deified, Kim dynasty in the “Communist” Democratic Peoples Republic of (North) Korea, possibly the most repressive regime on earth, with one of the most ill fed and abused populace? Why do neo-Soviet Russia and The Peoples Republic of China support and defend it? What do Leftist/anarchist street mobs have in common with senior Democrat Party officials and their billionaire Capitalist donors like notorious stock manipulator George Soros; and tech mogul, Maoist sycophant and CCP propagandist now residing in China, Neville Roy Singham, to name only the two best known? It is the mutual, apolitical, amoral, desire to gain what they have no legitimate right to, whether other peoples’ wealth, or power for domination, maybe for destruction. In other words, a common criminality.

That they hypocritically but shrewdly camouflage themselves as seeking to liberate “prisoners of starvation” and the “wretched of the earth” is the identifying *modus operandi* of this particular criminal gang, and makes them powerful and dangerous. And it is America that stands against them and calls them out as “Communists”.

Take notice, if you will, of “operational code”, for the Marxist/Leninist/Stalinist organizational theory has prospered and is as relevant today as when Roche first encountered it in the 1930’s. Roche emphasized that: *It is therefore vital to explore the historical background of Marxism-Leninism at the operational, not the rhetorical level. And such an investigation reveals a spectacular record of what Lenin called “opportunism”, of attacking targets of opportunity at whatever cost in ideological consistency or doctrinal purity.*

In other words, look at what they do, not what they say; they will be everything to everyone in order to bring them under domination. The full title of the little book from which I quoted is *The History And Impact of Marxist-Leninist Organizational Theory*: “Useful Idiots,” “Innocent’s Clubs,” and “Transmission Belts”. The hardened criminals at the operational core (“cadre” for an individual and “cadres” collectively in Roche’s terminology) are not usually the public faces of the mob, that privilege is usually reserved for “useful idiots”; a position Roche once found himself occupying. They form, but do not control the “innocent’s Clubs” which are the “transmission belts” that move public opinion and government policy. It was the hypocrisy of the mob bosses that began to erode, and finally liberate Roche from the delusions of his Communist affiliates; but he was never entirely free of the Socialist mythology.

Some of you, my dear readers, may question if Roche’s 1930’s and ‘40’s experience with the Left’s “Operational Code” has any relevance today. Yes, only a few days ago I saw an interview with an open borders activist representing, he said, some “liberating the wretched of the earth” kind of organization whose name I’ve forgotten. Besides tearing down this government, he was asked, what kind of government did he want? His answer was that he wanted the first four years of the Soviet Union.

Whether he was a “cadre” paid and trained to spread lies, or merely a “useful idiot”, that answer was rather a shocker. That period would have been the reign of Vladimir Lenin. Lenin’s statues have been pulled down all over the old Soviet empire but his mystique still claims loyalty it seems in the world that has never experienced Communism. The carnage and the failure of the Soviet Union is blamed upon Lenin’s successor Joseph Stalin. It wasn’t really Communism that failed, it’s

apologists whine, it was just evil and incompetent people who ruined the noble Soviet experiment. But the truth is, Lenin's reign should be considered one of the blackest ages in the long history of man's inhumanity to man. The short term opening up of the Soviet Union's secret files under Boris Yeltsin give a glimpse into the early days of the Soviet Union. The Library of Congress has made available online translations of much of that information (*Revelations from the Russian Archives*), including letters from Lenin to some of his local henchmen ordering mass executions and confiscation of grain which resulted in historic levels of starvation. That brutal policy was obvious from the beginning of Soviet Russia, but it is now documented under Lenin's signature.

There is no doubt of the evil character of all Communism's founders, even Karl Marx himself, as Roche courageously pointed out. And yet such is the power of the myth and the naive susceptibility of an historically illiterate public that it prospers still. The Marxist-Leninist-Communist-Mafia scheme to camouflage gangsterism with lies and useful idiots surrounds us today with its deafening, mind numbing cacophony: think BLM, Antifa, Occupy this & that, Jane's Revenge, Animal Liberation Front, etc.. So again, yes, Roche's testimony still has value.

In fact, we have just witnessed, in the November 2025 elections, flawless execution of Marxist-Leninist organizational theory in the Mamdani phenomenon. Dozens, many dozens, of supposedly independent 'grass-roots' organizations sprang up to promote his candidacy for mayor of New York City: Unity and Justice Fund PAC, an Islamic front group; Bend the Arc, a supposedly Jewish group; Coalition of Black and Immigrant New Yorkers, New Yorkers for Lower Costs, among them. But they are all found to have connections in funding and organization with the Democratic Socialists of America (a revolting oxymoron for any true American) which has very shady connections to the Democrat party and to radical Islam, as well as close Communist ties. It is a classic astroturf network designed to put across a fraudulent candidate rather than a true grass-roots campaign. These manufactured candidates are usually seen in third world countries but the mayoral election in NYC, with a field of weak candidates and an ignorant and close-minded Democrat partisan majority was one of those "targets of opportunity" that Communists are always searching for.

How do I know Mamdani is a fraud? His campaign was a farrago of contradictions, misrepresentations, and bald faced lies, parroted by the fake grass roots network; and his cozy associations with anarchists and Islamists do not constitute a base for good governance. So, even leaving aside his Communistic threats to seize the means of production, is it legitimate to call "Democratic Socialist" Mamdani a Communist? Absolutely!

Some might say that calling Mamdani a Communist because of his associations, articulations, and actions is unfair, guilt by association, etc.; but I would say it is using a Unified Field Theory of the Left to predict the future, and a perfectly legitimate method of political analysis. My prediction for the reign of "Commie Mamdani" is that it will be typical chaos, corruption, incompetence, crime, suffering of the masses, and profiteering of a few, and all the failures will be blamed upon white, capitalistic, Christian America.

So is Mamdani a "useful idiot", or a "cadre"? My guess is that he sees himself as a cadre, but he is being used by the Socialist/Communist and Radical Islamist criminal syndicates for their shared goal of destroying America's one time greatest

city; a blow against American power and standing, against Capitalism; and in revenge, a sequel to the Twin Towers.

What made Roche different from the “useful Idiot’s” who just elected Mamdani? Roche cites two reasons for his estrangement from Radical/Left pro-Communist politics, the second being more a category; the first, a life changing experience. Which came first is hard to say, but I will start with the life changing experience. As a young idealistic Socialist in the late 1930’s Roche got caught up in the competition for political power between the Communist Left and the Fascist Left. That was before the Communist propaganda machine successfully exiled the Fascist side to the “Right”; even though Mussolini’s Italian Fascism, and the National Socialist German Workers Party (aka “Nazi Party”) were equally Socialist. Because of their anti-Semitism, largely I think, Roche was virulently anti-Nazi, and the Communists were before all other groups in their anti-Nazi rhetoric. Perhaps that explained why even though he considered himself a “Norman Thomas Socialist” he supported the Communist front. He later wrote critically that “From the time of the Sixth Comintern Congress in 1928, the American Communist Party had been imprisoned” by Stalin calling FDR a Fascist, and Norman Thomas and the leaders of the labor movement Fascists. Everyone outside the Party approved front were blasted as “Fascists”, much as it is today.

Roche wrote of working long hours after school as a dedicated activist for a pro-Soviet Union front group. Then completely out of the blue the unthinkable happened. Hitler and Stalin signed the infamous “Non-Aggression Pact” and all of a sudden Moscow ordered the cadres and useful idiots to spin on a dime and become supporters of Nazi German aggression. Germany invaded Poland from the west, and Soviet Russia from the east, and one hideous atrocity followed another. Roche writes of that moment with some detachment, about how it rattled the faithful, how some fellow travelers were so despondent they committed suicide, but the cadres (he noted with a seemingly personal disgust) never batted an eyelash. I believe it affected him far more that he was willing to admit; the sense of betrayal, the chagrin of having been taken for a fool. He became a dedicated, even Cold War mongering, anti-Communist from that time on.

The second reason, unusually sensible for a young socialist, was to see faulty logic in Marxist/Leninist/Communist dogma. The first he noted, while still affiliated with the pro-Soviet front, was that the ideal of “the people” seizing the means of production had an inherent weakness, in that someone had to run these businesses and industries. Under Soviet Communism they were given over to people with correct ideology, not the skill or the incentive to operate them efficiently, and industrial and agricultural production in the Soviet Union had plummeted. That critical insight was followed by many more as time went on, like the comment about the Communist failure in Cuba, and his criticism of “Social Democrats canonizing a man in love with a tommy gun”. Most young people don’t know about the infamous firing squads early in Fidel Castro’s Cuba, and most older folks have forgotten. At one time however they were positively “iconic”, even inspiring Mad Magazine parody. The shark bait Cuban “Boat People”, the South Vietnamese village leaders’ heads on spikes, the “Killing Fields of Cambodia”, the barbed wire entanglements and walls of the “Iron Curtain” where those desperate to escape the grip of Communism died every night for years are now forgotten. But that’s the people for you, a short memory of unpleasantries and a persistent naive gullibility.

Another of Prof. Roche's criticisms of the Socialist/Left that I appreciated involved the "impossibilist compulsion, which is latent in all Socialist movements". The one he especially referenced in that statement was the unilateral disarmament "Movement" which the Soviet inspired Radical Left was at that time pushing with all its subversive might both here and in Europe. Fortunately, it was not taken as seriously here as in Britain, but he decried it as "a calamity not just for British Socialism, but for democratic socialism everywhere. By endorsing unilateral disarmament, and forcing the Parliamentary leadership to challenge this absurd substitute for a defense policy has in the span of a few short days jeopardized the party's accomplishments over a period of sixty years." Recognition of that idiocy was only a temporary setback, but new impossibilist compulsions spring regularly from the Socialist mind, like open borders, free transportation, free child care, free health care, community policing, cashless bail, etc., all useful idiocies to create chaos and open "opportunities" for the criminal syndicate to exploit.

A historian of yesteryear once explained that the French Revolution failed because the revolutionary government hadn't the skills to manage the country. They were good only at stirring up mobs to violence. In the frustration of their failure, they soon began stirring up violence against each other, and against all opposition. Such was also the history of the Socialist/Communist Movement.

Having covered, in a brief way, why Roche rejected the Communist Far-Left, let's look at his reasons for turning Left in the first place. This bit of background information lies at the starting point of our differing opinions.

I am a Theist; that is, I believe, like the Founding Fathers, a Divine Hand superior to man is ultimately in control. And I am a Christian Theist, believing that man is created in the image of the God revealing Himself in the Judaeo-Christian sacred Scriptures as the creator and sustainer of all things, and as such the rightful King and Lord of humankind. More remarkably, that this God loves his special creation, mankind, even to the point of becoming incarnate as a man and giving His life for mankind's sake; no, make that for the sake of every man, woman, and child individually. And furthermore, that this life is not mankind's ultimate destiny, but we were created for eternal fellowship with the Creator. That theological doctrine, rolling them all into one bundle, is the source of human value and the natural rights acknowledged in the Declaration of Independence and protected in the Constitution.

On that basis, I believe that following Christian ethics is the best solution to society's problems. I also believe, upon perfectly sound evidence, as well as Scripture, an anti-Godly spiritual force is at war with Godliness in this world. It is being fought out in the social and political realms, as well as the spiritual. Capitalism is a system for producing wealth, not a moral system. Christian ethics provides a moral system for using wealth and distributing wealth. That combination of Capitalism and Christian conscience has worked, not perfectly, but better than any other system in history. Poverty and injustice in Western Christian society are the result of human failures not the failure of the Capitalistic system. Poverty and oppression are direct effects of Socialism however because of a serious design flaw.

To my mind, Karl Marx correctly identified symptoms of the illness that plagues mankind, but because he was an atheist materialist, he mistook the symptoms for the cause. He believed (or claimed to) that forced redistribution and equalization of wealth and power under a "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" would end man's history of violence and oppression. After which, the dictatorship would simply "wither

away" and everyone would live in harmony. But no Marxist/Communist/Socialist society has ever progressed past the dictatorship stage because it is not unequal wealth and power that create violence and oppression, but it is man's natural proclivity to violence and oppression that create unequal distribution of wealth and power. The Bible describes this as the "fallen nature of man". And when the Great Lawgiver who decreed "Thou shalt not..." is absent, as He is in Socialist dogma, what are the limits on violence and oppression?

Pioneer Marxist Vladimir Lenin moved into the Czar's palace, Mao into the Chinese Emperor's 'Forbidden City', Castro spurned the Cuban ex-Presidente's sumptuous palace and squeezed his own private 'pleasure island' out of the poverty ridden Cubans, and all were more despotic than the despots they replaced. Such is the history of all regimes of the "Left", and frankly, many Leftwing 'democratic' governments of late (witness the Clinton's, Obama's, Biden's multiple mansions purchased indirectly with the public's money). As 19th Century British historian Lord Acton famously noted "Power tends to corrupt, absolute power tends to corrupt absolutely."

The basis of our American freedom is the purely theological proposition "... that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." The Socialist/Communist Left does not recognize that theological proposition at all; nor do they recognize the political corollary "That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." It has been said that Socialism and Communism are Christian heresies, in that they purport to value and defend human life and well being, just without the religious trappings, but a century of experience has taught us the falsity of that claim. Always be aware that the opposite of "Left" is Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.

To allay the charge that anti-Radical Left Prof. Roche was a Closet Conservative all the time I will note that he was a one time member of a Soviet front group, a co-founder of Americans for Democratic Action (perhaps mostly forgotten now, but once a notorious Leftist group), advisor to the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, and speech writer for Liberal Democrat Presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey. Although he disliked it, he tacitly accepted the label "Establishment Liberal".

Roche's life's work, he said, was dedicated to human 'social welfare'. That's a very commendable sentiment, however we did not agree on what constituted mankind's social welfare or how to achieve it. Roche's writings show him to be a life long critic of the United States, who only grudgingly acknowledged that the general population here was better off than anywhere else in the real world; and that only because he and others on the Liberal/Left Axis were fighting like Hell against the "Maginot Line of moribund Puritanism", and the "white, Protestant, predominantly Anglo-Saxon elite that hate the City".

Those sentiments should warm hearts on the Left, but I'll have to stop here and interject a comment of my own. I pray and work every day to pump a little life into the Maginot Line of moribund Puritanism. "Maginot Line" of course was the absurdly futile French defensive line against Nazi Germany. It is the struggling remnants of Puritanism that stands between America the Constitutional Republic, and America the once greatest nation on earth that has now gone the way of the

Roman Empire. The Declaration of Independence and The Constitution are artifacts of Puritanism. They came straight out of the English Civil War, and not from the Royalist side. Yes, tempered and Americanized a great deal but still founded upon the Republican principles of the Puritan/Parliamentary opposition to the absolutist monarchy of the Stuart dynasty.

It is significant, and I will come back to it, that in a literary spat with another academic over the Vietnam War, ignoring all more recent political radicalism, Roche reached back over three centuries to find a radical Puritan sect in the English Civil War (The Fifth Monarchy Men) that was sufficiently despicable in his eyes to describe the current political opposition.

The supposed hatred of “the city” is a bug-a-boo that seems to haunt the dreams of many a Liberal. A look at voting maps shows the rural-urban division to be the sharpest of any division. If rural America hates urban America it is doubly certain that urban America hates their country relations, with, in his day, Roche at their head. To him all we outside the city limits of the big liberal cities were a bunch of “yahoos” not worth a second’s thought. That squares well with current Leftist Elitist ideology.

It is ironic that the Puritans and other Protestant and Anabaptist radicals of the English Civil War Era were drawn more from the cities than rural England. That is true also of the Fifth Monarchy Men, who were predominantly drawn from the urban working class. Which Roche certainly knew, as he seemed to be something of a scholar on that period (I thought myself fairly well versed on the English Civil War, aka “War of the Three Kingdoms”, but I had not run across the Fifth Monarchy Men, a fascinating bit of history.) I have found it interesting that in all big American cities, there are breaks in the skyline, and at their bases are churches, lots of churches. It seems that in earlier times, cities were the centers of thriving Christian communities, even radical ones—abolition, women’s suffrage, prohibition, civil rights are all more urban than rural concerns. It would seem that urban life produces radicalism; would that that radicalism could be channeled in a more positive direction today.

As I mentioned above, Prof. Roche’s bios and obituary (that I saw) oddly reveal no mention of any religious connection, even by cultural heritage. He seemed to be of the Deistic or perhaps Agnostic persuasion; Materialistic, but not the inhuman Atheist Materialism of the Hard Left/Communist. The irrelevance of any religious faith is quite obvious in his treatment of Will Herberg’s comment: “‘being Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish is an essential part of being an American: we have an unofficial tripartite Establishment’ ...To state this is hardly to endorse it.... It seems clear to me that the classical theory of the relationship of politics and religion in the United States has reached dead end; it no longer has any logical nexus with social and political reality. Where we go from here is anybody’s guess. Perhaps to the Forum to burn incense before the God of One’s Choice?”

Though reducing religious faith to an insignificant matter of taste, one cannot but wonder what affected his ‘taste’. From some offhand comments he made, I surmise that he was of Irish Catholic extraction; but estranged from it. He criticized his father’s connection to Father Coughlin’s politics, in which Roche was brought up, but abandoned. Coughlin was a Catholic Priest and pioneering radio personality who was deep into Social Welfare politics (and often in dutch with the Church). Many said he was an advocate for Socialism, until his Marxist competitors for political

support began to accuse him of drifting toward “Fascism” (which some Fascists were calling “practical Christianity”.) And Coughlin gained a bad reputation for anti-Semitism. That would square with Roche’s somewhat *mea culpa* attitude toward anti-Semitism. In other instances he seemed very offended by accusations that the influence of the Pope over the Catholic vote was un-American, though he grudgingly acknowledged some truth in it.

Overall he seemed more aligned with Liberal Jewish Secular Humanism than with Catholicism, but was overtly indisposed to Protestant Christianity. I surmise that he was raised Irish Catholic, and although rejecting Catholic theology, he maintained the Irish Catholic bias against Anglo-Saxon Protestantism, and that formed a major part of his political personality.

The most important point is that the hand of God was never a factor in Roche’s calculations. America was not exceptional, not a divinely ordained nation with a culture to be protected, but a flawed one to be improved by secular means. The Declaration of Independence and Constitution were just temporary rules, and not as immutable as Roosevelt’s New Deal policies. There was no personal redemption, only social redemption; and for that, the ground rules may not have been written on stone tablets.

It seemed to him that the US and its capitalistic system had failed: “When I became involved with the Young People’s Socialist League in the late Thirties, I did so as a protest against an economic system which had kept my father unemployed or semi-employed for most of a decade, against a social system which took racial discrimination for granted, and against an international system which seemed to guarantee the triumph of totalitarianism and the menace of war.”

It’s an interesting critique of “Capitalism” but it does not hold up well under scrutiny. The American system didn’t provide satisfactory jobs for everyone (that kept kept his father unemployed?), didn’t change human nature, and didn’t enforce peace and social justice worldwide; that was a lot to realistically expect from any system. In the first place, Capitalism is an economic system, not a all-encompassing social system like Communism. Where Capitalism is paired with Christianity, as singularly in the USA, the populace has thrived. Communism, on the other hand has failed both in the economic and social realms. To what did he compare American Capitalism — German and Italian Fascism, Soviet Communism, and the Mercantilism of the Imperial powers, especially the, then rampant and particularly brutal, Japanese Imperialism? In light of history, American Capitalism looks pretty good, but it evidently did not seem so to a young man in the 1930’s, indeed as it appears not to please everyone today.

Here I want to bring in another voice from the past, prominent American historian Daniel Boorstin. Roche went out of his way to disparage Boorstin as, well, let’s just say “Too American” in his outlook. But I think Boorstin may have hit close to the mark and ruffled a few feathers.

“There is an obvious cure for Failure—and that is success. But what is the cure for success? This is a characteristically American problem. Historians have often noted that revolutions are made not by the downtrodden but by the discontented. ...our national ailments are not misery, deprivation, or oppression, but malaise, resentment, and bewilderment ...our experiences of

success have become ‘attenuated’, stretched out, thinned by their commonality...

...we have lost our sense of history. In our schools the story of our nation has been displaced by “social studies”—which is often the story of what ails us.

Without the materials of historical comparison, having lost our traditional respect for the wisdom of ancestors and the culture of kindred nations, we are left with little but abstractions, baseless utopias, to compare ourselves with. No wonder, then, that some of our distraught citizens libel us as the worst nation in the world, or the bane of human history. For we have wandered out of history.

...

We compare our smoggy air not with the odor of horse dung and the plague of flies and the smells of garbage and human excrement which filled cities in the past but with the honeysuckle perfumes of some non-existent City Beautiful.”

Democracy and its Discontents, Daniel J. Boorstin, 1971

Boorstin gave a long list of issues of modern life (racial and ethnic issues, civil justice, income disparities, etc.) for which we never make comparisons with alternate realities, only alternate fantasies. But that last, most pungent, illustration sums it up well enough. And I believe that Boorstin’s premise played a large part in Roche’s veering to the Left, which he didn’t want to admit. This poisoning of the American mind has only worsened since Boorstin’s time, to a degree perhaps that Roche did not himself suffer. I have noticed that one of the Spiritual Enemy’s most successful ploys (perhaps to young people already alienated by unreasonable expectations) is to focus unwary victim’s attention on correcting the real or supposed sins of other people (“Jefferson and Washington were slave owners”, “the white man stole America”, ad nauseam), and ignore their own sins to the point of obsession and even mental illness.

There are other histories of the Great Depression era than Roche’s, which did not lead down a Leftward path. My parents married upon graduation from high school in 1930, the first full year of the Great Depression. They both came from poor rural backgrounds. My paternal grandfather was an itinerant Baptist preacher pastoring small rural churches in Alabama and Mississippi. It was unkindly remarked that he was a “sharecropper”, but it was true; he had no land, no home, not much more than the clothes on his back. He farmed on shares, kept stores, did carpentry, held “singing schools”, anything to supplement the meager pay from his pastorate. But he was always a Minister of God first. He wrote a brief family history for my father, then with the Third Army in Europe. What struck me most about it was “we moved”. Moving was constant, but never upward, as the world sees it. He died in the always neat and clean but tiny, sort of patchwork, home of a widowed daughter in the Mississippi backwoods.

Strange as it might seem to modern Americans, my dad’s recollections of his childhood, with his two older brothers and three surviving sisters, were universally pleasant, almost idyllic. He never realized, he said, how poor they were until later in life. That came as a shock, but not an embittering shock.

My maternal grandfather was a small farmer, forty acres and a mule small; however he was a landowner. He had a stroke when I was very young and became disabled,

but those who knew him earlier said he worked sunrise to sunset six days a week. He peddled his produce—vegetables, potatoes, eggs, butter, sometimes pork and beef; and in the season, watermelons, for which he was noted—to the coal mining camp a few miles up the road. I found his record books from the time, nickel and dime sales, literally, hundreds over the years, and mostly “on credit” until payday. The only customer name I recognized was that of a black man with whose family my mother’s family was friendly. It was a hard life for people in those days, including my mother, who as oldest child was expected to do a son’s labor; which she did, but not without bitterness.

Just before their marriage, Dad built a small log cabin for them on the ragged hillside edge of her father’s property. Unfortunately Dad went by the old pioneer property line. The Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company (TCI, a subsidiary of US Steel) had bought up thousands of acres of coal lands in the area (and the mineral rights under Grandad’s few acres for \$.25 an acre) and run their own surveys. By their survey, Dad’s cabin was over a neighbor’s line and he had to tear it down; for who could argue with TCI’s survey. With that disappointment, and finding no job prospects at home in 1930, my future parents loaded up a ramshackle Model T and headed for California and jobs. They rode out the worst of the Depression in the fruit fields alongside the Oakies and the Arkies of the Dust Bowl, and in logging camps of northern California where he swung an ax and she became the sour dough biscuit master. With the War overseas picking up the economy, 1940 found them back home in Alabama, living in a one room apartment above a furniture store, and attending college because she, particularly, was determined to rise above the poverty they had always known. In the mornings, Mom and Dad would hop the streetcar and go to the college where she would work in the cafeteria before and between classes. Meanwhile Dad would have his classes in the morning and hop back on the streetcar for his 3 - 11 shift in the coal mine. On days off they would catch a ride back to the farm and help out there.

I’ll leave the confessions of my “White Privilege” there and get to my point. I never knew any more patriotic people than my parents; despite generations of family ups and downs, poverty, and unrelenting labor in the storied “Golden Land of Opportunity”. Perhaps the “American Dream” to them was not quite the same as to Roche, and not quite as fragile. They had deep taproots in America, but they, especially my father, recognized that he was not only an American, but a citizen of a kingdom not of this world. It was in America most of all that he had this freedom of dual citizenship. And all threats to America were threats to that freedom.

I deduce that Roche held Christian based Humanistic views in that he was morally offended by Stalin’s cynical comment that ‘The death of an individual is a tragedy, the deaths of millions is a statistic.’ And he traced that directly back to Marxisms’ cold-blooded reduction of the individual into faceless classes. But Roche, himself, like his Socialist/Communist fellow travelers, seemed to regard working people only as a class: the Working Class this and that, the Workers this and that. A more paternalistic attitude than the predatory attitude of the Radical Left, but an elitist, detached relationship anyway.

That attitude is seen in his sarcastic explanation of the American “Workers” failure to join the Socialist Revolution. It seems “...the American worker ignored his historical mission of being the gravedigger of capitalism and refused to accept the Marxist premise that exploitation was simply an ineluctable by-product of the capitalist order. In short, he did not develop a Marxist-style ‘class consciousness’

which in effect would have psychologically imprisoned him in a sealed room: a room which could only be unsealed by revolution and the “dictatorship of the proletariat.”

It came as somewhat a puzzlement that American “workers” did not react as the theory predicted. His explanation for that was militant labor unionism “...if the American worker rejected the Marxist gospel of revolution, it was not in favor of passivity.” I don’t buy that however. I believe that it was simply that American working people saw themselves as free men and women, made in the image of God and endowed with inalienable rights and open to a world of possibilities for life beyond their “worker” status. In other words, as Americans.

Roche, the political historian and Constitutional scholar understood the theory of the ‘American Experiment’, but perhaps not in its context. Of the Founders he wrote: “it is almost as though they were prepared to admit that they too would become tyrants if an opportunity presented itself but that a government should be devised that would make this impossible. In the Constitution this theorizing came to grips with reality, and the solution evolved for avoiding both the peril of anarchy and that of tyranny was the creation of a mechanical wonder — a dynamic equilibrium. Liberty was to be a byproduct of conflict and balance, not a positive creation of public policy.”

The Founders actually did admit that they, too, would become tyrants if they could. That “dynamic equilibrium” is about the best they could hope for in a society of “fallen humanity”. The reason our founders gave us a Constitutional Republic rather than a pure democracy was to limit the power of partisan politics to move the balance point too far from the center, and Roche’s balance point was far to the left of mine, and I believe that point conceived by prior generations of Americans. Despite his seeming endorsement of “dynamic equilibrium” and declaring that “Freedom occurs when no individual interest can institutionalize its truth as *the* public interest”, Roche was a partisan political warrior, a dyed in the wool, no quarter given Democrat. In the Presidential election of 1952, after 20 years straight of Democrat Presidents, (and 18 of 20 years Democrat control of the House.) he scoffed at the idea that election of Republican Eisenhower was a good thing for restoring a healthy two party system in this country. He even went so far as to make petty, mean spirited criticisms of Gen. Eisenhower’s command in WWII. Any threat to FDR’s Socialist legacy was to be met with utmost resistance.

To me, Gen. Eisenhower was one of the great men of American history primarily because he dared restore the two party system. Only his immense personal popularity could have done it, and I know that this country prospered during his presidency, I lived it. And he was far more successful than his Democrat successor John Kennedy. Roche, unsurprisingly, doted on the “brilliant” President Kennedy, as though Kennedy had actually written the books and speeches attributed to him.

Roche had advocated for American intervention in the Hungarian uprising against the Soviets in 1956 during the Eisenhower presidency, but had no political influence at the time. At some point he was brought into the Kennedy administration as a policy advisor. I believe that he would have supported the Bay of Pigs counter-revolution against the Castro government (that was planned during the Eisenhower Administration), but I don’t recall a mention of that. However, he was all in for Vietnam. One source of his popularity to the Democrat Party elites of that day was his virulent anti-Communism and a Cold War hawkishness at a time when the Party

ranks were being pulled to the Left by anti-Vietnam War sentiment heavily influenced by the Communist criminal syndicate. Eventually that Leftward tilt broke the old Democrat Party and ushered in the new Radical Left Democrat Party. That Communist controlled Radical Left eventuated in the destruction of South Vietnam, and the Communist devastation of Laos and Cambodia.

The world has changed since Roche's day, but there is still, coming from Putin's neo-Soviet Russia and its Axis of Evil, including Red China, North Korea, Venezuela, Cuba, Iran, and a few other pest-holes of the world, an infectious moral, political, and military plague we can label "Communism". I hope his expert opinion on Communism will be of some use even now. And, perhaps from what little I mentioned of Professor Roche's other interests, we can get an idea of old school Liberalism as well. As for my views, I am very disappointed with what passes for "Conservatism" these days, at least among media celebrities, so I will call myself, as I did earlier, a "Reactionary", or, as Dr. Roche might label me, a "yahoo". But that is a subject for another time.

Bill Kitchens

1. *The History and impact of Marxist-Leninist Organizational Theory.*

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