

# Communism, the new communism and the challenge to “progressive” intellectuals

Some time ago now, a comrade, who is a highly developed intellectual, made the observation that intellectuals should be tremendously enthusiastic (“dancing in the streets”) about the new communism that I have developed, which involves a scientific summation of the mainly positive achievements, but also serious problems and errors, in previous communist revolutions.

After all, the new communism places great emphasis on the importance of an atmosphere that encourages and supports intellectual and artistic ferment, critical thinking, scientific curiosity and the restless pursuit of the truth, wherever the truth leads. And, as I have repeatedly emphasized, the goal of the new communism is not *revenge* for those who have been subjected to real horrors under this system of capitalism-imperialism; the goal is *the emancipation of humanity as a whole*, from every way in which one part of society rules over, exploits and oppresses others. As one key expression of this, there is this crucial principle of the new communism:

The new communism *thoroughly repudiates* and is determined to root out of the communist movement the poisonous notion, and practice, that “the ends justifies the means.” It is a bedrock principle of the new communism that the “means” of this movement must flow from and be consistent with the fundamental “ends” of abolishing all exploitation and oppression through revolution led on a scientific basis.

What has been revealed, however, is that overwhelmingly among “progressive” intellectuals the concern they express about communism being repressive is not so much a reason, but more a *rationalization*, an *excuse*, for refusing to seriously engage the new communism.

Why is this? Because, whatever their “progressive” pretensions, these intellectuals are “invested” in this parasitic system of capitalism-imperialism, and the role of the U.S. as the top-dog imperialist power—feasting off the brutal exploitation and murderous oppression not just of masses of people in this country but literally billions of people around the world, including more than 150 million children. This *parasitism* is the *basis* for the “goodies” this system makes available to these intellectuals. (By “goodies,” I don’t mean just material benefits—which many of these intellectuals do have to varying degrees—but also the benefit of being able to engage in intellectual work and artistic expression, *so long as this is in the service of, or at least does not seriously challenge or threaten, the interests of the ruling class of this system.*)

For those intellectuals who can recognize that whatever “goodies” they get from this system are not nearly as important as the tremendous suffering and destruction caused by this system, worldwide—and the very real threat it poses to the future, and the very existence, of humanity—and for those who are not so “invested” in this system, there is the very positive challenge of seriously engaging and actively taking up the new communism and the emancipating and uplifting revolutionary transformation of the world that it illuminates and embodies.

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