

Carlsbad 1819

Like another Chouannerie

Leninism and scale

July 30, 2018 by Nulle Terre Sans Seigneur

Before such “innovations” as humanism, autonomism and the redefinition of alienation from an economic to a psychological category, a common understanding of Marxist-Leninist praxis is that it would inevitably involve socializing a concentrated and cartelized industrial structure, and that this would be desirable for reasons of productivity. Antitrust was thus historically retrograde. See e.g. Jay Lovestone (CPUSA) against https://archive.org/stream/TheLaFolletteIllusionAsRevealedInAnAnalysisOfThePoliticalRoleOf_270/TheLaFolletteIllusion-opt1#page/n7/mode/2up. Wisconsin’s Sen. Robert LaFollette:

LaFollette is and has been trying to fly in the face of industrial development. The fact of the matter is that, economically, great industrial units are both desirable and inevitable. Instead of demanding that these highly organized industries be socialized and controlled by the working class, LaFollette has been seeking to return to the old system of competitive, small industrial units.

If attempted prosecution of trusts is to be considered a criterion of friendship to workers and poor farmers, then Coolidge and his anti-labor crew have at least as much right to be deemed friends of the working masses as the Wisconsin Senator. Since the Harding-Coolidge administration came into office it has brought no less than sixty-one anti-trust suits. The contractors and manufacturers in the building trades, the sugar, lumber, pottery, and harvesting machinery corporations have been amongst the targets of the reactionary Republican administration.

Of course, nothing dangerous or harmful has happened to these groups of powerful exploiters.

Lenin himself infamously noted in *The State and Revolution* (Ch V) that the process of socialization would involve making all citizens workers of a country-wide syndicate:

Accounting and control—that is mainly what is needed for the “smooth working”, for the proper functioning, of the first phase of communist society. All citizens are transformed into hired employees of the state, which consists of the armed workers. All citizens becomes employees and workers of a single countrywide state “syndicate”. All that is required is that they should work equally, do their proper share of work, and get equal pay; the accounting and control necessary for this have been simplified by capitalism to the utmost and reduced to the extraordinarily simple operations—which any literate person can perform—of supervising and recording, knowledge of the four rules of arithmetic, and issuing appropriate receipts.

Now of course this was advertised as merely a necessary “first step,” but it could never be anything than the last.

But most unambiguously and forcefully of all, the Italian Marxist Amadeo Bordiga in “Force, Violence and Dictatorship in the Class Struggle” (1946) put it like this (<https://www.marxists.org/archive/bordiga/works/1946/violence.htm>):

It is quite remarkable that even the few groups in the communist camp which reacted to the opportunist degeneration of the parties of the now dissolved International of Moscow, tend to display a hesitation on this point. In their preoccupation with fighting against the suffocating centralisation of the Stalinist bureaucracy, they have been led to cast doubts on the Marxist principles re-established by Lenin, and they reveal they believe that Lenin – and along with him all the revolutionary communists in the glorious period of 1917-20 – were guilty of an idolisation of the state.

We must firmly and clearly state that the current of the Italian Marxist left, with which this review is linked, does not have the slightest hesitance or repentance on this point. **It rejects any revision of Marx and Lenin’s fundamental principle that the revolution, as it is a violent process par excellence, is thus a highly authoritarian, totalitarian, and centralising act.**

Such honesty is heard mostly from social democrats and economic nationalists these days. The populist emphasis on trust-busting doesn’t quite square with it, though.

Also to a certain type of literal-minded reactionary personality who responds to liberalism by narrowly idealizing the iron fist, this stuff can be heroin. Hence why many rightists enjoy loud-and-proud Bolshies like Slavoj Žižek. Notice, however, that the reverse phenomenon — a pinko enjoying a fascist — is nearly unheard of.

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