

The Religious Fanaticism Required of Socialists

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is [beating the drum of socialism](#) again. In a recent tweet the congresswoman from New York seemed to gloat over the recent oil crash, suggesting it was time for a “worker-led, mass investment in green infrastructure.”

She deleted it, but here it is. pic.twitter.com/smePUtFFrK

– Chuck Ross (@ChuckRossDC) [April 20, 2020](#)

AOC soon deleted the tweet, suggesting she realized her comments were not in good taste and could reflect negatively on socialism as an ideology.

But AOC is not alone in thinking that the COVID-19 crisis might pave the way for her pet ideology. Over at *Scientific American*, John Horgan asks “[Will COVID-19 Make Us More Socialist?](#)” His list of journalists entertaining the thought suggests the answer could easily be “yes,” creating a system which “give[s] more to those who need it and take[s] more from those who don’t.”

It’s not just journalists who are enthused by the socialist possibilities. Polls show that [positive views of socialism](#) are increasing among the American public generally, particularly among [Gen Xers](#). Indeed, the discontent, unrest, and insecurity during the coronavirus pandemic may see positive views of socialism continue to grow. Yet one wonders if these positive views would still proliferate if people knew just what the ideology involves.

Featuring a letter from a young communist, the [1961 Congressional Record](#) offers insight into the mindset of socialism. For starters, those who adhere to socialism acknowledge that it influences their entire worldview. This worldview is all-consuming and grows more intense with time:

“I can’t carry on a friendship, a love affair, or even a conversation without relating it to this force which both drives and guides my life. I evaluate people, books, ideas, and notions according to ... the Socialist cause and by their attitude toward it.”

This all-consuming nature of socialism makes it easy to see why it becomes a replacement religion for many:

“We’ve been described as fanatics. We are. Our lives are dominated by one great, overshadowing factor—the struggle for socialism. Well, that’s what my life is going to be. That’s the black side of it. Then there is the other side of it. We Communists have a philosophy of life which no amount of money could buy. We have a cause to fight for, a definite purpose in life. ... [W]e have a code of conduct, a way of life, a devotion to our cause that no religious order can touch. And we are guided not by blind, fanatical faith but by logic and reason, by a never-ending education of study and practice.”

This statement clearly takes shots at organized religion. Unfortunately, adherents following the religion of socialism are devoid of the freedom and liberty offered to those in other religions, such as Christianity. Socialism doesn’t even offer the worldly consolation of wealth:

“[L]ife is no bed of roses. A genuine radical lives in virtual poverty. He turns back to the party every penny he makes above what is absolutely necessary to keep him alive...

Radicals don’t have the time or the money for many movies or concerts, or T-bone steaks or decent homes and new

cars.”

So what good does the socialist aim to do in the world? Contrary to what one might think, their goal is not to spread peace and love. Instead, it seems creating chaos is the main mission:

“We constantly look for places where the class struggle is the sharpest, exploiting these situations to the limit of their possibilities. We lead strikes. We organize demonstrations. We speak on street corners. We fight cops.”

In all likelihood, our nation is headed for more uncertainty in the days and weeks ahead. As uncertainty rises and drags on, it’s easy to look for a way out. It’s tempting to try something we haven’t tried, to give government more control over our lives, anything that makes us feel more secure. Given its recent popularity, socialism could easily come to be viewed as a necessary solution to our woes.

Before we give ourselves over to such an ideology, we need to think about the implications. Are we ready to turn ourselves into the fanatical ideologues that socialism seems to demand of its adherents? If not, are we ready to kowtow to those who are?

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