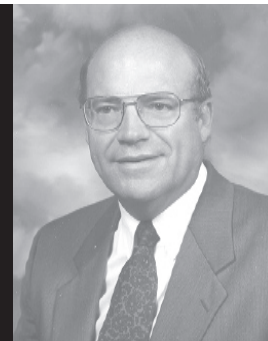




Dr. Fred Schwarz

The Schwarz Report



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Barack Obama's "Red" Spiritual Advisor

by David A. Noebel

El Salvador has officially joined the Red regimes of Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Ecuador, and Bolivia. South America is turning Red, dark Red, and little is being said to alert North Americans of the encroaching Red plague. Perhaps that's because North America is moving in the same direction. The President of the United States has surrounded himself with socialists, and some of those closest to him have had a part in turning South America Red.

According to the Associated Press (March 17, 2009), Mauricio Funes, the presidential candidate of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) is the new head of the nation of El Salvador. Behind Funes "is a party of former Marxist guerrillas that fought to overthrow U.S.-backed governments in the 1980s and whose rise to power has raised fears of a communist regime in the war-scarred Central American country."

The AP admits "ex-guerrillas will almost certainly form part of the Funes government, including Vice President-elect Salvador Sanchez Ceren, a rebel commander-turned-congressman."

And then there's the "drug" connection! *Investor's Business Daily* (IBD) reports that "last May, the FMLN confessed to 'a relationship' with Colombia's drug-trafficking FARC Marxist terrorists after documents found on the computer of dead FARC chieftain Raul Reyes, killed in a 2008 raid, proved it" (March 16, 2009).

Funes, of course, says he'll "govern moderately, more like Brazil's 'socialist' President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva than Venezuela's radical [communist] Hugo Chavez." Of course, this is what the Nicaraguan communist Daniel Ortega said, too, before he displayed his Communist "proletariat morality" by hugging the Communist dictators Castro and Chavez. Ortega and all his South American pals are hardcore Marxist-Leninists.

While all of this, of course, is relevant to an ardent free-market capitalist, what really frightens me is that Obama's latest announced "spiritual advisor" has had connections with all these Marxist regimes. And who is the President's latest advisor? The Rev. Jim Wallis!

FrontPageMagazine (March 17, 2009) reports, "The most notable of [Obama's] spiritual advisors today is his friend of many years, Rev. Jim Wallis." Rev. Wallis admits that he and Obama have "been talking faith and politics for a long time." He was picked by Obama to draft the faith-based policies of his campaign at the Democratic National Convention in Denver, Colorado in 2008. Why should this alarm us?

First, Jim Wallis has had relationships with the communist Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES).

Second, his "Witness for Peace" was an attempt to defend the Nicaraguan Sandinistas! Wallis, together with the Rev. Jeremiah Wright (Obama's former pastor of 20 years) "rallied support for the communist Nicaraguan regime and protested actions by the United States which supported the anti-communist Contra rebels" (*Family World News*, February 2009, p. 7).

Founded in 1953, the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade, under the leadership of Dr. Fred C. Schwarz, has been publishing a monthly newsletter since 1960. *The Schwarz Report* is edited by Dr. David A. Noebel and Dr. Michael Bauman. The Crusade's address is PO Box 129, Manitou Springs, CO 80829. Our telephone number is (719) 685-9043. All correspondence and tax-deductible gifts (the Crusade is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization) may be sent to this address. Permission to reproduce materials from this *Report* is granted provided our name and address are given.

Third, Wallis and his Sojourners community of fellow-travelers believe Fidel Castro's Cuba, Hugo Chavez's Venezuela, Daniel Ortega's Nicaragua, and the other revolutionary forces "restructuring socialist societies" are the Communist paradises the United States needs to emulate in order to establish "social justice." Writing in the November 1983 issue of *Sojourners*, Jacob Laksin notes, "Jim Wallis and Jim Rice drafted what would become the charter of leftist activists committed to the proliferation of Communist revolutions in Central America" (Laksin, "Sojourners: History, Activities and Agendas" in *Discoverthenetworks.org*, 2005).

The ugly truth is Wallis wishes to see the destruction of the United States as a nation and in its place "a radical nonconformist community" patterned after the progressive, socialist commune he established in Washington, D.C., in 1971 (Laksin, *Ibid.*).

"The Sojourners community," says Laksin, "actively embraced 'liberation theology,' rallying to the cause of communist regimes that had seized power with the promise of bringing about a revolutionary restructuring of society." Clark Pinnock, a disaffected former member of Sojourners, said that the community's members were "100 percent in favor of the Nicaraguan [communist] revolution" (Laksin, *Ibid.*).

All this revolutionary activity in spite of the fact that today's Cuba, for example, has to import 84 percent of its food supply due to the socialistic mess of the agricultural system (150,000 oxen till the ground because tractors represent capitalism). However, in a move that looks more like capitalism than Marxism's state farms, "Raul Castro is moving to boost food production by putting more land under the control of private farmers" (*The Weekly Standard*, March 23, 2009, p. 13).

It appears that Raul Castro is learning what America's early pilgrims learned back in the 1620s! William Bradford noted in his *History of Plymouth Plantation* that once he canceled the pilgrims' socialistic experiment and provided each settler with a piece of property to till, starvation was averted. We can hope and pray that Raul Castro continues to implement more capitalistic policies and will learn firsthand the economic system that has brought more people out of poverty than any other in the history of the world. (See Rodney Stark, *The Victory of Reason.*)

Of course, Rev. Wallis should have learned the lessons

of Plymouth Plantation early in his education, but may not have because our Secular Humanistic K-12 curricula deletes most of the history of the pilgrims and the Mayflower Compact in an attempt to avoid acknowledging its "advancement of Christianity." (Sadly, one first grade textbook that does include the pilgrims has them "praying to the Indians.")

For years, Wallis has been in the forefront of the "evangelical" left and has been fêted at numerous evangelical colleges and seminaries. That seems to be the "in" thing right now. His publication *Sojourners* is piled high on these campuses for the reading pleasure of the naïve and foolish.

Unbeknown to these colleges and seminaries is Wallis' Red background. He was the president of the radical Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) while at Michigan State University. The SDS was the youth arm of the League for Industrial Democracy—the American counterpart to the British Fabian Society founded to promote socialism throughout the West. One of the League's mentors for years was Norman Thomas, who argued that "the American people will never knowingly adopt socialism, but under the name of liberalism, they will adopt every fragment of the socialist program until one day America will be a socialist nation without ever knowing how it happened" (Google, Norman Thomas quotes). Another prominent League mentor was John Dewey, a signatory of the atheistic, socialistic 1933 *Humanist Manifesto*. The SDS actually merits a chapter in Richard J. Ellis's work *The Dark Side of the Left: Illiberal Egalitarianism in America* published by the University of Kansas Press.

In October of 1969, SDS original organizer Tom Hayden directed his followers to "set off on a rampage, smashing windows of parked cars, hurling rocks and bricks through apartment windows, and fighting with police." Hayden blamed the police for his violence even though later his followers "comforted themselves, because theirs was a violence to end all violence, a liberating and righteous violence that would rid the world of a system that deformed and destroyed people. Such glorious ends justified, even ennobled, violent means" (Ellis, p. 137).

Ellis insists that the language of revolution and violent confrontation was evident throughout the ranks of the SDS. Jim Wallis was part and parcel of this pro-communist group of radicals and revolutionaries.

The Schwarz Report Bookshelf

To see a complete list of books recommended by the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade please check out our website at www.schwarz-report.org. This site also has back issues of *The Schwarz Report* as well as other great resources.

Wallis' Sojourners enterprise has been a radical, socialistic undertaking from the start. *FrontPageMagazine* (March 17, 2009) says, "As one of its first acts, Sojourners formed a commune in the Washington, D.C. neighborhood of Southern Columbia Heights, where members shared their finances and participated in various activist campaigns that centered on attacking the U.S. foreign policy, denouncing American 'imperialism,' and extolling Marxist revolutionary movements in the Third World."

Sojourners contributing editors included the radical Daniel "Plowshares" Berrigan, Walter Brueggemann, James Hal Cone (author of the racist *Black Theology and Black Power* in which the white race is depicted as devils), Rosemary Radford Ruether (Professor of Feminist Theology, Catholics for Choice, God is the feminine Gaia), Ron Sider, Cornel West, and Garry Wills. Today, *Sojourners*' Board of Directors includes Wallis, Ron Sider, Brian McLaren, and Bart Campolo.

Over the years, Wallis has been pro-Vietcong and actually gloried in America's defeat in Vietnam. He said, "I don't know how else to express the quiet emotion that rushed through me when the news reports showed that the United States had finally been defeated in Vietnam" (Ronald H. Nash, *Why The Left Is Not Right*, p. 58).

However, like Jane Fonda, Wallis said next to nothing about the Communist genocide that followed the wars in Vietnam and Cambodia. In fact, in a typical communist response, he criticized those fleeing Vietnam by boat as somehow attempting "to support their consumer habits in other lands" (Nash, p. 59).

Wallis has been closely associated with Richard Barnet (former contributing editor of *Sojourners*) and the Institute for Policy Studies, a radical leftwing think tank supporting socialist revolutionaries around the world; Wallis had his book *The Soul of Politics* published by Orbis Books in 1994, a radical leftwing Roman Catholic publishing arm of the radical leftwing Maryknollers; *Sojourner* magazine has been a strong supporter of the Cuban dictator Fidel Castro and, indeed, has supported every leftwing, liberation theology cause around the world.

And yes, Wallis portrays the evangelical right that happens to be pro-American and anti-Communist "as members of the forces of darkness" (Nash, p. 66, 71). For Wallis, a good Christian is someone who is pro-Communist and socialist, while a bad Christian is someone who is anti-Communist and pro-capitalist. The cry of the Sojourners crowd is "social justice" for the poor and downtrodden—"social justice" being code for socialism/communism.

I could not disagree more strongly. I contend that the

Marxist-Leninist worldview is 100 percent contrary to Biblical Christianity, and I document this extensively in my book *Understanding the Times*. Further, Communism is directly responsible for the murder of tens of millions of human beings, a slaughter documented by Stephane Courtois, et. al. in their 1999 book *The Black Book of Communism* (Harvard University Press).

I will attempt to be as kind and gentle as humanly possible and break the news to the Rev. Wallis and his "spiritual" advisee Barack Obama—socialism has **never** lifted the poor out of poverty. It has equally distributed poverty, but it has never been able to create the wealth that is partially responsible for lifting the poor out of poverty.

I say "partially responsible" because one's worldview is even more important than wealth in reducing poverty. But socialism is a flawed idea, and it poisons the worldview of the people it influences. Our brothers on the evangelical left, who are concerned with the poor, need to read Theodore Dalrymple's *Life at the Bottom: The Worldview That Makes the Underclass*. Although not a Christian, Dalrymple understands perfectly the importance of a proper worldview and its role in combating poverty, drugs, crime, and broken families.

Can we admit a hard truth? Christian capitalist Truett Cathy's Chic-fil-A has done more to fight poverty and help the poor than all the pronouncements of Jim Wallis, Ron Sider, Daniel Berrigan, Brian McLaren, Tony and Bart Campolo, and their entire crew of leftwing sociological and economic friends combined.

Thomas Sowell explains, "It would be devastating to the egos of the intelligentsia to realize, much less admit, that businesses have done more to reduce poverty than all the intellectuals put together. Ultimately, it is only wealth that can reduce poverty and most of the intelligentsia have no interest whatever in finding out what actions and policies increase the national wealth" (*Capitalism Magazine*, May 9, 2005).

In fact, the intellectuals are the very ones who complain about those who do increase wealth. Again, Thomas Sowell speaks to this issue: "Think about the things that have improved our lives the most over the past century—medical advances, the transportation revolution, huge increases in consumer goods, dramatic improvements in housing, the computer revolution. The people who created these things—the doers—are not popular heroes. Our heroes are the talkers who complain about the doers."

Socialism is built on a slogan: "What can government do for me today?" instead of "What can I do to better prepare myself to take care of myself in order to be a better

Christian and servant of my Lord?” Preparation involves individual responsibility, traditional family values, education, love of God and neighbor, and compassion for the up-and-outers as well as the down-and-outers.

Socialists stand against nearly every Christian, conservative principle imaginable. Compare the socialist agenda with Yale professor David Gelernter’s summary of the conservative position—“the freedom of every American to make his own way, free speech on the radio and everywhere else, free elections for workers and other people . . . freedom to acknowledge and celebrate the nation’s rootedness in Christianity, Judaism, and the Bible, . . . love of liberty, and love of God” (*National Review*, March 23, 2009, p. 32).

In 2006, Barack Obama was the keynote speaker at Jim Wallis’ Call to Renewal conference, “Building a Covenant for a New America.” Following his address, in an interview by the United Church News, he cited “the teachings of the UCC (United Church of Christ) as foundation stones for his political work.” He said, “Just as my pastor the Rev. Jeremiah Wright from Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago welcomed me as a young man years ago, UCC churches across the country open their doors to millions of Americans each Sunday. . . . I believe that democracy demands that the religiously motivated translate their concerns into universal values. Social justice and national security are both universal values, values that may originate for some in their religious beliefs, but are shared by us all.”

What Americans can look forward to now that Rev. Wallis has the ear of the President is what *Sojourners* magazine has been pedaling since 1971—“advocating America’s transformation into a socialist nation” (Accuracy in *Media Research Report*, May 1983, Section 19).

Could it be that America, who turned her back on God by deciding that prayer and the Bible can no longer grace her public schools, but homosexuality (indeed the whole GLBTQ rainbow), abortion counseling, and condoms in school colors are welcomed, is experiencing the very judgment of God? There are consequences for “forgetting God” as Solzhenitsyn noted about his mother country, Russia. These same consequences are piling up on the metrosexual West, in general, and on the United States, in particular.



Keynesian Economics—A Flawed Economic Theory

by Roger Martinez

In these times of great financial turmoil, American policymakers have abandoned the free market principles of our Founding Fathers in favor of the economic dogma put forth by the 20th century British economist John Maynard Keynes. This is not the first time America has forsaken its capitalist heritage. FDR embraced this economic policy with devastating consequences. FDR's Keynesian-influenced New Deal turned a deep but short-lived recession into a 13 year Great Depression. Social Security and Fannie Mae were born of the New Deal, and these relics, along with their government dependents, continue to burden our economy today.

What is so titillating, so irresistible about this doctrine that our policymakers fail to see its obvious shortcomings? Why in times of economic peril do our leaders abandon free market capitalism in favor of this big government, big deficit course of action? To answer this question one must first understand what Keynesian economics is and why it will never work.

What is Keynesian Economics?

The Keynesian theory is based on the belief that aggregate demand is the engine that powers the economy. The idea is that when one person spends money he provides the earnings for the person or entity from whom he bought goods or services. This person or entity then spends money on another's goods or services providing this entity with earnings, and so forth across the economy, creating a circular flow of earnings. When crisis strikes, people and businesses hoard their money thereby choking off the earnings of workers and businesses downstream in the economy. As factories and workers are idle, society is deprived of the potential wealth they could have created.

This paucity of aggregate demand sets the stage for considerable government intervention and a perceived need to “prime the pump.” Keynesian economics advocates government spending and tax cuts (fiscal policy) and lower interest rates (monetary policy) to inflate demand and allow productive segments of the economy that would have otherwise remained idle, to produce wealth. Furthermore, Keynesian Economics argues for the redistribution of wealth from wealthy to poor, as the poor are more likely to spend that wealth thereby generating even more economic growth.

The Obama Administration's Keynesian-saturated stimulus bill calls for:

1. \$145 billion in tax cuts for individuals making less than \$75,000 (\$150,000) for couples.
2. \$43 billion for increased unemployment benefits.
3. \$39 billion for expanded healthcare benefits for the unemployed.
4. \$20 billion to increase food stamp benefits.
5. \$41 billion for school improvements, including better buildings, computer upgrades, and teacher training.
6. \$15 billion to increase the maximum Pell grant by \$500 in 2009-10; plus, increases to the annual unsubsidized Stafford Loan limits.
7. \$14 billion in tax credits of up to \$2,500 a year for college students with an annual income below \$80,000.
8. \$6 billion for college building improvements.
9. \$4 billion for more preventative care programs.
10. \$1.5 billion for improvements at community health centers.
11. \$20 billion to computerize health care records.
12. \$6 billion to weatherize moderate income homes, making them more energy efficient.
13. \$4 billion for homeowners to take up to 30% of the cost of conservation measures as a tax credit, up to \$1,500 per person.
14. \$300 million for consumers to replace old appliances.
15. \$500 million to help rural families secure mortgages.
16. \$16 billion in energy retrofits and improvements.
17. \$500 million to help rural families secure mortgages.
18. \$30 billion for highway and bridge construction projects.
19. \$10 billion for mass transit, including new lines, buses, trains and stations.
20. \$3 billion to expand congested airports.
21. \$1.15 billion for better land and sea ports.
22. \$4 billion for more police officers and equipment.
23. \$500 million for better airport screening detectors.
24. \$31 billion to modernize public buildings, making them more energy efficient.
25. \$3.1 billion for improvements on public lands, including new roads, trails, and facilities at national parks.
26. \$6 billion for broadband Internet access in rural areas.

27. \$400 million for flood control efforts, which include buying and preserving open land around the country.

28. \$6 billion for communities to replace aging sewer lines.

29. \$4.2 billion for towns to purchase and rehabilitate foreclosed, vacant homes.

30. \$32 billion for a "smart" utility grid and renewable energy production.

31. \$10 billion for science research facilities.

Source: "How Stimulus Affects You" money.cnn.com

It's hard to argue against this litany of good works. How does one publicly argue against health care and food stamps for poor children? Certainly it is preferable to the alternative, the alternative being the creative destruction of Free Market Capitalism.

What would happen if the Free Market were left unfettered? Insolvent banks would fail. The management that ran them into the ground would be drummed out of the business and possibly imprisoned for gross mismanagement of their depositor's life savings. Forget about 8 figure bonuses, they would be lucky to stay out of jail. Wary depositors and investors would carefully consider the integrity of the bank's management, its assets, and its lending habits before they entrusted their hard earned cash. Autoworkers at the Big 3 would face massive wage deflation as the domestic automobile industry fought to stay viable. Shareholders of American corporations would scrutinize the compensation of management forcing executives to be good stewards of their investors' money. The days of the \$68,000 credenza on the company's dime would be over. And parents (gasp!) would be responsible for providing for their children. High spending states would be forced to trim their budgets without the influx of federal funds.

One can see why this economic ideology [i.e., Keynesianism] is so popular to both policy makers and the public. Obviously, we would much prefer to spend and consume our way out of this recession rather than living within our means, retraining or relocating for a new job, and expecting less from the government and relying more on ourselves. Creating wealth by spending and consuming is a wonderful thing. Unfortunately, that's not how it works. Yet it's amazing how many modern economists and politicians don't get it. You can defy market forces in short run, but in the long run it reigns supreme. Ultimately the debtor must pay!

The Flaw of Keynesian Economics

The flaw of Keynesian economics lies in its basic premise that demand leads to wealth. We can no more demand or wish to be wealthy than we can vote ourselves rich. Demand does not create wealth; capital does, both material, and human capital. A nation, just like an individual, becomes wealthy by the accumulation of income producing assets or what economists call capital formation.

Think about your personal situation. Would you become wealthy if you lived beyond your means, indulging in egregious consumption? Would you be able to retire young if you lived off your credit cards, treating yourself to exotic vacations and sultry lap dances? The answer is an emphatic "no." But you might retire wealthy if you lived below your means and invested your savings in income-producing and wealth-preserving assets. The same is true for a nation. If we lived below our means, the government would no longer have to borrow money to fund current expenditures. The money it saved on interest could be used for more spending or even lower taxes. Lower taxes would allow citizens and corporations to direct more of its earnings to capital formation leading to even greater wealth in the future. One thing is certain; no one ever got rich paying interest on a depreciating asset.

Deficit government spending is a good thing when it makes the country more productive and its citizenry more self-reliant. The value of this added productivity should be greater than the total cost of the spending (including interest) and cheaper than private sector alternatives, and this is precisely what the Democrats will claim their near-trillion dollar stimulus achieves. They will say that their clean energy initiatives will create millions of high paying non-exportable jobs and their infrastructure spending will increase the efficiency of transportation and heavy industry. Let's assume their claims are true for the moment, and that's a big assumption. What about their other spending initiatives?

A significant portion of Obama's stimulus package is wealth transfer from future taxpayers to present day non-producers. He plans to increase benefits for the unemployed by nearly \$100 billion and this is in addition to the hundreds of billions of dollars already given to the unemployed. Can someone please explain to me how paying people not to work produces sustained economic growth. The President's plan to give tax cuts to people who do not pay taxes is a not a tax cut at all but a welfare check. Furthermore, the notion that we can get rich by giving poor people money that they can spend on knick knacks and trinkets is absurd. That is precisely why they

are poor. Because they spend every dollar they get as soon as they get it instead of saving or investing it. Do we really think that future generations are going to make good on treasury bills sold today for the purpose of subsidizing some present day inner city kid's purchase of an ipod? Well, if you believe that, I have a bridge in Brooklyn to sell you and also some more T-bills for the second round stimulus package.

Keynesian economics fails because of an effect called "Crowding Out." Simply put, for every dollar of government spending, private investment must be reduced by the same amount. Since the government does not have a surplus of money to spend, it must sell treasury bills to finance this spending. Thus, personal and corporate savings are used to buy these T-bills, and these funds are no longer available for private spending and private investment. Thus any increase in government spending is exactly offset by a reduction in private investment and private spending.

Supporters of Keynesian economics will declare that government spending won't reduce private spending because people and corporations are not spending. That might be true if people were burying their money in their backyard or baking them into pies. If people are not spending, then they are saving or paying down debt, which means banks have more money to lend. Again Keynesian supporters will cry that banks are not lending. Untrue, banks are still lending if they believe they will get a good return on their investment. They are not going to lend money for a Mob museum in Las Vegas, a bike path to nowhere, or other money-losing propositions contained in the stimulus package. Therefore, the only way to have an increase in domestic spending is to sell our T-bills to foreign investors, but the global net effect is the same. Global private spending and investment must decrease by the exact cost of our T-Bills as this money is no longer available for private spending or investment (instead it is funding government spending).

In the Long Run

The stimulus package will fail because it relies on a flawed economic philosophy that runs contrary to common sense. If government spending is such a boon to the economy, why stop at a trillion dollars? Why not two trillion or ten? Why not a quadrillion? Better yet, why not give every American man, woman, and child a trillion dollars. We could all buy yachts, jumbo jets, and hire servants to feed and bathe us. Imagine the economic growth we would create with all of our lavish consumption.

When the stimulus package fails to stimulate, the chorus from the left will be that the government didn't do enough. Didn't spend enough. The government will rush out an even

larger stimulus package, but this time our Asian benefactors might not be so quick to finance it. In fact, they may decide it's time to cash in their chips. If that happens, hyperinflation will ensue decimating what is left of the consumer's purchasing power. Keynes is famous for saying, "In the long run, we're all dead." Indeed, dead, broke, and in debt.

—www.capitalisthero.com/Keynesian_Economics.php

Fidel Castro and the Congressional Black “Red” Caucus

by Jamie Glazov

Earlier this week [April 10, 2009], Congressional Black Caucus members visited Cuba and, expectedly, found heaven on earth. It was no surprise, of course, since all fellow travelers find paradise when they arrive at their totalitarian destinations.

The trip occurred amid talk that the Obama administration is considering a shift in relations with Cuba, perhaps entailing an end to certain restrictions placed on the communist tyranny for the past five decades.

Several members of the caucus, in typical fellow traveler fashion, prostrated themselves before Cuban President Raul Castro and the dictator himself at his home. At a following press conference, the caucus members lavished veneration on the cruel and sadistic despotism. “He looked directly into my eyes!” boasted Rep. Laura Richardson (D-CA) after her meeting with Fidel. “He’s one of the most amazing human beings I’ve ever met!” exclaimed Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO) about Fidel.

Castro’s brother received some praise as well of course: “Raul Castro was a very engaging, down-to-earth and kind man,” gushed Bobby Rush (D-IL) “someone who I would favor as a neighbor. It was almost like visiting an old friend.”

Caucus Chairwoman Barbara Lee emerged from her meeting with Fidel as though she had just witnessed the Second Coming. Beaming with an apparent new purpose in life, she announced: “It was quite a moment to behold. Former President Fidel Castro is very engaging, very energetic. Our conclusion is, given the new direction in our

foreign policy, that it’s time to look at a new direction in our policy toward Cuba. The 50-year embargo just hasn’t worked.”

Castro is indeed very energetic; he was always energetic. He was so energetic, in fact, that he succeeded in constructing one of the most evil and barbaric regimes that ever prevailed on the planet—a fact documented well by Humberto Fontova’s *Fidel: Hollywood’s Favorite Tyrant*.

But the Black Caucus political pilgrims weren’t too interested in this particular detail. Instead, they simply just called out for an end to the U.S. trade embargo and other diplomatic restrictions placed on Cuba. They didn’t call out for the release of the hundreds of political prisoners in Cuba. Nor did they say anything about any of the atrocious human rights abuses perpetrated by the communist regime. And while Lee encouraged a “new direction” in U.S. policy, nowhere in her statements did she hint at the need for the Castro despots to start a “new direction” from their personal road of totalitarian terror.

And so nowhere was there even a hint that maybe the Castros would first have to turn a page from executing and torturing tens of thousands of their own people, or start releasing prisoners of conscience, or have at least even some semblance of free speech or free elections or freedom of religion, before any benefits started being showered on the regime.

This behavior of the Congressional Black Caucus is nothing new of course. It’s just another chapter in the long tradition of the Left’s love affair with Castro’s Cuba. Ever since Castro seized power on January 1, 1959 and established his Stalinist regime, the Left has been ever grateful.

The horrifying experience of Armando Valladares, a Cuban poet who endured twenty-two years of torture and imprisonment for merely raising the issue of freedom, is a testament to the regime’s barbarity. Valladares’s memoir, *Against All Hope*, serves as Cuba’s version of Solzhenitsyn’s *Gulag Archipelago*. Valladares recounts how prisoners were beaten with bayonets, electric cables, and truncheons. He tells how he and other prisoners were forced to take “baths” in human feces and urine.

With this barbaric nature of Castro’s regime in mind, it is completely understandable why the Left initiated a romance with Castro and his slave camp, just as it did with Lenin’s and Stalin’s Gulag. Jerry Rubin set the tone for the Black Caucus political pilgrims more than four decades ago during his trip to Cuba in 1964, during which he paid special homage to Castro’s chief executioner, Che Guevara. Rubin proudly recalls:

We were 84 Amerikan students visiting Cuba illegally in 1964. We had to travel 14,000 miles, via Czechoslovakia, to reach Cuba. . . . As Che rapped on for four hours, we fantasized taking up rifles. Growing beards. Going into the hills as guerrillas. Joining Che to create revolutions throughout Latin America. None of us looked forward to returning home to the political bullshit in the United States.

Five years later, in 1969, American leftists formed the *Venceremos Brigade*, a coalition whose members traveled to work in Cuba to show their solidarity with the Communist revolution. These fellow travelers participated mostly in sugar harvests in the first pilgrimages, while later brigade members engaged in various types of agricultural and construction work. High-profile Western leftists, meanwhile, including Susan Sontag, Jean-Paul Sartre, Norman Mailer, and Abbie Hoffman, also made pilgrimages to Cuba.

Berkeley activist Todd Gitlin traveled to Cuba with an SDS delegation to a Cultural Congress in 1967. In the belly of the totalitarian beast, where he was well aware that dissidents were rotting in jail and being tortured beyond imagination, Gitlin, too, experienced the intoxication of venerating tyranny. Leaving Cuba proved quite painful for him. He recalls:

“What was palpable was the pain of re-entry to my homeland. . . . At the Mexico City airport, having a drink with Dave Dellinger and Robert Scheer, I looked out the window and saw a billboard advertising Cutty Sark. I had to change seats: after twenty-three days where public space was turned to revolutionary use, capitalist propaganda disgusted me.”

What disgusted him, of course, were the withdrawal symptoms he was experiencing—analogue to a drug addict coming off his fix. For twenty-three days he had experienced his euphoria of shedding his inner self and submerging himself within the totalitarian whole. In Cuba he had found a home where even the slightest dissent would be crushed instantly and the concept of the individual was non-existent. The advertisement he saw, therefore, was a horror to him, since it symbolized a free society where individuals could use their free will to pursue their own tastes and desires. This reality is anathema to any leftist.

As Gitlin so well revealed, Western leftist intellectuals were greatly inspired by the persecution of intellectuals in Cuba, just as the earlier generation had been by the persecution of intellectuals in Stalin’s Soviet Union. Charmed

by the notion of a society in which their own talent—as well as their entire being—would be extinguished, they continued the practice of labeling the totalitarian monstrosity the opposite of what it was.

As the Black Caucus members exemplified, Western leftists have continued to shower adulation on Castro to this day. Here is just a brief portion of Humberto Fontova’s documented compilation of leftist praise for the death-cult leader:

“Cuba’s own Elvis!”—that’s how Dan Rather once described his friend Fidel Castro. Oliver Stone, another friend, describes Fidel as “very selfless and moral” and “one of the world’s wisest men.” “A genius!” agreed Jack Nicholson. Naomi Campbell said meeting Castro was “a dream come true!” According to Norman Mailer, Castro is “the first and greatest hero to appear in the world since the Second World War.” Jean-Paul Sartre said, “Castro is at the same time the island, the men, the cattle, and the earth. He is the whole island.” . . . Actress Gina Lollobrigida cooed, “Castro is an extraordinary man. He is warm and understanding and seems extremely humane.” Francis Coppola simply noted, “Fidel, I love you. We both have the same initials. We both have beards. We both have power and want to use it for good purposes.” Harry Belafonte added: “If you believe in freedom, if you believe in justice, if you believe in democracy, you have no choice but to support Fidel Castro!”

Steven Spielberg visited the father-god in Havana in the fall of 2002. He called the meeting with Castro “the most important eight hours of my life.”

Barbara Lee and her Congressional Black Caucus colleagues now definitely have something to talk about.

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