

Jerusalem Letters

The Challenge of Marxism

By Yoram Hazony, August 31, 2020

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I. The Collapse of Institutional Liberalism

For a generation after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, most Americans and Europeans regarded Marxism as an enemy that had been defeated once and for all. But they were wrong. A mere 30 years later, Marxism is back, and making an astonishingly successful bid to seize control of the most important American media companies, universities and schools, major corporations and philanthropic organizations, and even the courts, the government bureaucracy, and some churches. As American cities succumb to rioting, arson, and looting, it appears as though the liberal custodians of many of these institutions—from the *New York Times* to Princeton University—have despaired of regaining control of them, and are instead adopting a policy of accommodation. That is, they are attempting to appease their Marxist employees by giving in to some of their demands in the hope of not being swept away entirely.

We don't know what will happen for certain. But based on the experience of recent years, we can venture a pretty good guess. Institutional liberalism lacks the resources to contend with this threat. Liberalism is being expelled from its former strongholds, and the hegemony of liberal ideas, as we have known it since the 1960s, will end. Anti-Marxist liberals are about to find themselves in much the same situation that has characterized conservatives, nationalists, and Christians for some time now: They are about to find themselves in the opposition.

This means that some brave liberals will soon be waging war on the very institutions they so recently controlled. They will try to build up alternative educational and media platforms in the shadow of the prestigious, wealthy, powerful institutions they have lost. Meanwhile, others will continue to work in the mainstream media, universities, tech companies, philanthropies, and government bureaucracy, learning to keep their liberalism to themselves and to let their colleagues believe that they too are Marxists—just as many conservatives learned long ago how to keep their conservatism to themselves and let their colleagues believe they are liberals.

This is the new reality that is emerging. There is blood in the water and the new Marxists will not rest content with their recent victories. In America, they will press their advantage and try to seize the Democratic Party. They will seek to reduce the Republican Party to a weak imitation of their own new ideology,

or to ban it outright as a racist organization. And in other democratic countries, they will attempt to imitate their successes in America. No free nation will be spared this trial. So let us not avert our eyes and tell ourselves that this curse isn't coming for us. Because it is coming for us.

In this essay, I would like to offer some initial remarks about the new Marxist victories in America—about what has happened and what's likely to happen next.

II. The Marxist Framework

Anti-Marxist liberals have labored under numerous disadvantages in the recent struggles to maintain control of liberal organizations. One is that they are often not confident they can use the term “Marxist” in good faith to describe those seeking to overthrow them. This is because their tormentors do not follow the precedent of the Communist Party, the Nazis, and various other political movements that branded themselves using a particular party name and issued an explicit manifesto to define it. Instead, they disorient their opponents by referring to their beliefs with a shifting vocabulary of terms, including “the Left,” “Progressivism,” “Social Justice,” “Anti-Racism,” “Anti-Fascism,” “Black Lives Matter,” “Critical Race Theory,” “Identity Politics,” “Political Correctness,” “Wokeness,” and more. When liberals try to use these terms they often find themselves deplored for not using them correctly, and this itself becomes a weapon in the

hands of those who wish to humiliate and ultimately destroy them.

The best way to escape this trap is to recognize the movement presently seeking to overthrow liberalism for what it is: an updated version of Marxism. I do not say this to disparage anyone. I say this because it is true. And because recognizing this truth will help us understand what we are facing.

The new Marxists do not use the technical jargon that was devised by 19th-century Communists. They don't talk about the *bourgeoisie*, *proletariat*, *class struggle*, *alienation of labor*, *commodity fetishism*, and the rest, and in fact they have developed their own jargon tailored to present circumstances in America, Britain, and elsewhere. Nevertheless, their politics are based on Marx's framework for critiquing liberalism (what Marx calls the "ideology of the bourgeoisie") and overthrowing it. We can describe Marx's political framework as follows:

1. **Oppressor and Oppressed**

Marx argues that, as an empirical matter, people invariably form themselves into cohesive groups (he calls them *classes*), which exploit one another to the extent they are able. A liberal political order is no different in this from any other, and it tends toward two classes, one of which owns and controls pretty much everything (the *oppressor*); while the other is exploited, and the fruit of its labor appropriated, so

that it does not advance and, in fact, remains forever enslaved (the *oppressed*). In addition, Marx sees the state itself, its laws and its mechanisms of enforcement, as a tool that the oppressor class uses to keep the regime of oppression in place and to assist in carrying out this work.

2. False Consciousness

Marx recognizes that the liberal businessmen, politicians, lawyers, and intellectuals who keep this system in place are unaware that they are the oppressors, and that what they think of as progress has only established new conditions of oppression. Indeed, even the working class may not know that they are exploited and oppressed. This is because they all think in terms of liberal categories (e.g., *the individual's right to freely sell his labor*) which obscure the systematic oppression that is taking place. This ignorance of the fact that one is an oppressor or oppressed is called the *ruling ideology* (Engels later coined the phrase *false consciousness* to describe it), and it is only overcome when one is awakened to what is happening and learns to recognize reality using true categories.

3. Revolutionary Reconstitution of Society

Marx suggests that, historically, oppressed classes have materially improved their conditions only through a *revolutionary reconstitution of society at large*—that is, through the destruction of the oppressor class, and of the social norms and ideas that hold the regime of systematic

oppression in place. He even specifies that liberals will supply the oppressed with the tools needed to overthrow them. There is a period of “more or less veiled civil war, raging within existing society, up to the point where that war breaks out into open revolution” and the “violent overthrow” of the liberal oppressors. At this point, the oppressed seize control of the state.

4. Total Disappearance of Class Antagonisms

Marx promises that after the oppressed underclass takes control of the state, the exploitation of individuals by other individuals will be “put to an end” and the antagonism between classes of individuals will totally disappear. How this is to be done is not specified.

Marxist political theories have undergone much development and elaboration over nearly two centuries. The story of how “neo-Marxism” emerged after the First World War in the writings of the Frankfurt School and Antonio Gramsci has been frequently told, and academics will have their hands full for many years to come arguing over how much influence was exerted on various successor movements by Michel Foucault, post-modernism, and more. But for present purposes, this level of detail is not necessary, and I will use the term “Marxist” in a broad sense to refer to any political or intellectual movement that is built upon Marx’s general framework as I’ve just described it. This includes the “Progressive” or “Anti-Racism” movement now advancing toward the conquest of liberalism in America and Britain. This

movement uses racialist categories such as *whites* and *people of color* to describe the oppressors and the oppressed in our day. But it relies entirely on Marx's general framework for its critique of liberalism and for its plan of action against the liberal political order. It is simply an updated Marxism.

III. The Attraction and Power of Marxism

Although many liberals and conservatives say that Marxism is “nothing but a great lie,” this isn't quite right. Liberal societies have repeatedly proved themselves vulnerable to Marxism, and now we are seeing with our own eyes how the greatest liberal institutions in the world are being handed over to Marxists and their allies. If Marxism is nothing but a great lie, why are liberal societies so vulnerable to it? We must understand the enduring attraction and strength of Marxism. And we will never understand it unless we recognize that Marxism captures certain aspects of the truth that are missing from Enlightenment liberalism.

Which aspects of the truth?

Marx's principal insight is the recognition that the categories liberals use to construct their theory of political reality (*liberty, equality, rights, and consent*) are insufficient for understanding the political domain. They are insufficient because the liberal picture of the political world leaves out two phenomena that are, according to Marx, absolutely central to human political

experience: The fact that people invariably form cohesive *classes* or *groups*; and the fact that these classes or groups invariably *oppress* or *exploit* one another, with the state itself functioning as an instrument of the oppressor class.

My liberal friends tend to believe that oppression and exploitation exist only in traditional or authoritarian societies, whereas liberal society is free (or almost free) from all that. But this isn't true. Marx is right to see that every society consists of cohesive classes or groups, and that political life everywhere is primarily about the power relations among different groups. He is also right that at any given time, one group (or a coalition of groups) dominates the state, and that the laws and policies of the state tend to reflect the interests and ideals of this dominant group. Moreover, Marx is right when he says that the dominant group tends to see its own preferred laws and policies as reflecting "reason" or "nature," and works to disseminate its way of looking at things throughout society, so that various kinds of injustice and oppression tend to be obscured from view.

For example, despite decades of experimentation with vouchers and charter schools, the dominant form of American liberalism remains strongly committed to the public school system. In most places, this is a monopolistic system that requires children of all backgrounds to receive what is, in effect, an atheistic education stripped clean of references to God or the Bible. Although liberals sincerely believe that this policy is justified by the theory of

“separation of church and state,” or by the argument that society needs schools that are “for everyone,” the fact is that these theories justify what really is a system aimed at inculcating their own Enlightenment liberalism. Seen from a conservative perspective, this amounts to a quiet persecution of religious families. Similarly, the pornography industry is nothing but a horrific instrument for exploiting poor women, although it is justified by liberal elites on grounds of “free speech” and other freedoms reserved to “consenting adults.” And in the same way, indiscriminate offshoring of manufacturing capacity is considered to be an expression of property rights by liberal elites, who benefit from cheap Chinese labor at the expense of their own working-class neighbors.

No, Marxist political theory is not simply a great lie. By analyzing society in terms of power relations among classes or groups, we can bring to light important political phenomena to which Enlightenment liberal theories—theories that tend to reduce politics to the individual and his or her private liberties—are systematically blind.

This is the principal reason that Marxist ideas are so attractive. In every society, there will always be plenty of people who have reason to feel they’ve been oppressed or exploited. Some of these claims will be worthy of remedy and some less so. But virtually all of them are susceptible to a Marxist interpretation, which shows how they result from systematic oppression by the dominant

classes, and justifies responding with outrage and violence. And those who are troubled by such apparent oppression will frequently find themselves at home among the Marxists.

Of course, liberals have not remained unmoved in the face of criticism based on the reality of group power relations. Measures such as the US Civil Rights Act of 1964 explicitly outlawed discriminatory practices against a variety of classes or groups; and subsequent “Affirmative Action” programs sought to strengthen underprivileged classes through quotas, hiring goals, and other methods. But these efforts have not come close to creating a society free from power relations among classes or groups. If anything, the sense that “the system is rigged” in favor of certain classes or groups at the expense of others has only grown more pronounced.

Despite having had more than 150 years to work on it, liberalism still hasn’t found a way to persuasively address the challenge posed by Marx’s thought.

IV. The Flaws that Make Marxism Fatal

We’ve looked at what Marxist political theory gets right and why it’s such a powerful doctrine. But there are also plenty of problems with the Marxist framework, a number of them fatal.

The first of these is that while Marxism proposes an empirical

investigation of the power relations among classes or groups, it simply assumes that wherever one discovers a relationship between a more powerful group and a weaker one, that relation will be one of oppressor and oppressed. This makes it seem as if every hierarchical relationship is just another version of the horrific exploitation of black slaves by Virginia plantation owners before the Civil War. But in most cases, hierarchical relationships are not enslavement. Thus, while it is true that kings have normally been more powerful than their subjects, employers more powerful than their employees, and parents more powerful than their children, these have not necessarily been straightforward relations of oppressor and oppressed. Much more common are mixed relationships, in which both the stronger and the weaker receive certain benefits, and in which both can also point to hardships that must be endured in order to maintain it.

The fact that the Marxist framework presupposes a relationship of oppressor and oppressed leads to the second great difficulty, which is the assumption that every society is so exploitative that it must be heading toward the overthrow of the dominant class or group. But if it is possible for weaker groups to benefit from their position, and not just to be oppressed by it, then we have arrived at the possibility of a *conservative society*: One in which there is a dominant class or loyalty group (or coalition of groups), which seeks to balance the benefits and the burdens of the existing order so as to avoid actual oppression. In such a case, the overthrow and destruction of the dominant group may not be necessary. Indeed,

when considering the likely consequences of a revolutionary reconstitution of society—often including not only civil war, but foreign invasion as the political order collapses—most groups in a conservative society may well prefer to preserve the existing order, or to largely preserve it, rather than to endure Marx’s alternative.

This brings us to the third failing of the Marxist framework. This is the notorious absence of a clear view as to what the underclass, having overthrown its oppressors and seized the state, is supposed to do with its newfound power. Marx is emphatic that once they have control of the state, the oppressed classes will be able to end oppression. But these claims appear to be unfounded. After all, we’ve said that the strength of the Marxist framework lies in its willingness to recognize that power relations do exist among classes and groups in *every* society, and that these can be oppressive and exploitative in *every* society. And if this is an empirical fact—as indeed it seems to be—then how will the Marxists who have overthrown liberalism be able use the state to obtain the total abolition of class antagonisms? At this point, Marx’s empiricist posture evaporates, and his framework becomes completely utopian.

When liberals and conservatives talk about Marxism being “nothing but a big lie,” this is what they mean. The Marxist goal of seizing the state and using it to eliminate all oppression is an empty promise. Marx did not know how the state could actually

bring this about, and neither have any of his followers. In fact, we now have many historical cases in which Marxists have seized the state: In Russia and Eastern Europe, China, North Korea, and Cambodia, Cuba and Venezuela. But nowhere has the Marxists' attempt at a "revolutionary reconstitution of society" by the state been anything other than a parade of horrors. In every case, the Marxists themselves form a new class or group, using the power of the state to exploit and oppress other classes in the most extreme ways—up to and including repeated recourse to murdering millions of their own people. Yet for all this, utopia never comes and oppression never ends.

Marxist society, like all other societies, consists of classes and groups arranged in a hierarchical order. But the aim of reconstituting society and the assertion that the state is responsible for achieving this feat makes the Marxist state much more aggressive, and more willing to resort to coercion and bloodshed, than the liberal regime it seeks to replace.

V. The Dance of Liberalism and Marxism

It is often said that liberalism and Marxism are "opposites," with liberalism committed to freeing the individual from coercion by the state and Marxism endorsing unlimited coercion in pursuit of a reconstituted society. But what if it turned out that liberalism has a tendency to give way and transfer power to Marxists within a few decades? Far from being the opposite of Marxism,

liberalism would merely be a gateway to Marxism.

A compelling analysis of the structural similarities between Enlightenment liberalism and Marxism has been published by the Polish political theorist Ryszard Legutko under the title [*The Demon in Democracy: Totalitarian Temptations in Free Societies*](#) (2016). A subsequent book by Christopher Caldwell, [*The Age of Entitlement*](#) (2020), has similarly documented the manner in which the American constitutional revolution of the 1960s, whose purpose was to establish the rule of liberalism, has in fact brought about a swift transition to a “Progressive” politics that is, as I’ve said, a version of Marxism. With these accounts in mind, I’d like to propose a way of understanding the core relationship that binds liberalism and Marxism to one another and makes them something other than “opposites.”

Enlightenment liberalism is a rationalist system built on the premise that human beings are, by nature, free and equal. It is further asserted that this truth is “self-evident,” meaning that all of us can recognize it through the exercise of reason alone, without reference to the particular national or religious traditions of our time and place.

But there are difficulties with this system. One of these is that, as it turns out, highly abstract terms such as *freedom*, *equality*, and *justice* cannot be given stable content by means of reason alone. To see this, consider the following problems:

- 1. If all men are free and equal, how is it that not everyone who wishes to do so may enter the United States and take up residence there?**

By reason alone, it can be argued that since all men are free and equal, they should be equally free to take up residence in the United States. This appears straightforward, and any argument to the contrary will have to depend on traditional concepts such as *nation, state, territory, border, citizenship*, and so on—none of which are self-evident or accessible to reason alone.

- 2. If all men are free and equal, how is it that not everyone who wants to may register for courses at Princeton University?**

By reason alone, it can be argued that if all are free and equal, they should be equally free to register for courses at Princeton on a first come, first served basis. This, too, appears straightforward. Any argument to the contrary will have to depend on traditional concepts such as *private property, corporation, freedom of association, education, course of study, merit*, and so on. And, again, none of this is self-evident.

- 3. If all men are free and equal, how can you justify preventing a man who feels he is a woman from competing in a women's track and field competition**

in a public school?

By reason alone, it can be said that since all are free and equal, a man who feels he is a woman should be equally free to compete in a women's track and field competition. Any argument to the contrary will have to depend on traditional concepts of such as *man*, *woman*, *women's rights*, *athletic competition*, *competition class*, *fairness*, and so on, none of which is accessible to reason alone.

Such examples can be multiplied without end. The truth is that reason alone gets us almost nowhere in settling arguments over what is meant by freedom and equality. So where does the meaning of these terms come from?

I've said that every society consists of classes or groups. These stand in various power relations to one another, which find expression in the political, legal, religious, and moral traditions that are handed down by the strongest classes or groups. It is only within the context of these traditions that we come to believe that words like *freedom* and *equality* mean one thing and not another, and to develop a "common sense" of how different interests and concerns are to be balanced against one another in actual cases.

But what happens if you dispense with those traditions? This, after all, is what Enlightenment liberalism seeks to do.

Enlightenment liberals observe that inherited traditions are

always flawed or unjust in certain ways, and for this reason they feel justified in setting inherited tradition aside and appealing directly to abstract principles such as freedom and equality. The trouble is, there is no such thing as a society in which everyone is free and equal in all ways. Even in a liberal society, there will always be countless ways in which a given class or group may be unfree or unequal with respect to the others. And since this is so, Marxists will always be able to say that some or all of these instances of unfreedom and inequality are instances of oppression.

Thus the endless dance of liberalism and Marxism, which goes like this:

1. Liberals declare that henceforth all will be free and equal, emphasizing that reason (not tradition) will determine the content of each individual's rights.
2. Marxists, exercising reason, point to many genuine instances of unfreedom and inequality in society, decrying them as oppression and demanding new rights.
3. Liberals, embarrassed by the presence of unfreedom and inequality after having declared that all would be free and equal, adopt some of the Marxists' demands for new rights.
4. Return to #1 above and repeat.

Of course, not all liberals give in to the Marxists' demands—and certainly not on every occasion. Nevertheless, the dance is real. As a generalized view of what happens over time, this picture is accurate, as we've seen throughout the democratic world over the last 70 years. Liberals progressively adopt the critical theories of the Marxists over time, whether the subject is God and religion, man and woman, honor and duty, family, nation, or anything else.

A few observations, then, concerning this dance of liberalism and Marxism:

First, notice that the dance is a byproduct of liberalism. It exists because Enlightenment liberalism sets freedom and equality as the standard by which government is to be judged, and describes the individual's power of reason alone, independent of tradition, as the instrument by which this judgment is to be obtained. In so doing, *liberalism creates Marxists*. Like the sorcerer's apprentice, it constantly calls into being individuals who exercise reason, identify instances of unfreedom and inequality in society, and conclude from this that they (or others) are oppressed and that a revolutionary reconstitution of society is necessary to eliminate the oppression. It is telling that this dynamic is already visible during the French Revolution and in the radical regimes in Pennsylvania and other states during the American Revolution. A proto-Marxism was generated by Enlightenment liberalism even before Marx proposed a formal structure for describing it a few decades later.

Second, the dance only moves in one direction. In a liberal society, Marxist criticism brings many liberals to progressively abandon the conceptions of freedom and equality with which they set out, and to adopt new conceptions proposed by Marxists. But the reverse movement—of Marxists toward liberalism—seems terribly weak in comparison. How can this be? If Enlightenment liberalism is true, and its premises are indeed “self-evident” or a “product of reason,” it should be the case that under conditions of freedom, individuals will exercise reason and reach liberal conclusions. Why, then, do liberal societies produce a rapid movement toward Marxist ideas, and not an ever-greater belief in liberalism?

The key to understanding this dynamic is this: Although liberals believe their views are “self-evident” or the “product of reason,” most of the time they are actually relying on inherited conceptions of what freedom and equality are, and inherited norms of how to apply these concepts to real-world cases. In other words, the conflict between liberalism and its Marxist critics is one between a dominant class or group wishing to conserve its traditions (liberals), and a revolutionary group (Marxists) combining critical reasoning with a willingness to jettison all inherited constraints to overthrow these traditions. But while Marxists know very well that their aim is to destroy the intellectual and cultural traditions that are holding liberalism in place, their liberal opponents for the most part refuse to engage in the kind of

conservatism that would be needed to defend their traditions and strengthen them. Indeed, liberals frequently disparage tradition, telling their children and students that all they need is to reason freely and “draw your own conclusions.”

The result is a radical imbalance between Marxists, who consciously work to bring about a conceptual revolution, and liberals whose insistence on “freedom from inherited tradition” provides little or no defense—and indeed, opens the door for precisely the kinds of arguments and tactics that Marxists use against them. This imbalance means that the dance moves only in one direction, and that liberal ideas tend to collapse before Marxist criticism in a matter of decades.

VI. The Marxist Endgame and Democracy’s End

Not very long ago, most of us living in free societies knew that Marxism was not compatible with democracy. But with liberal institutions overrun by “Progressives” and “Anti-Racists,” much of what was once obvious about Marxism, and much of what was once obvious about democracy, has been forgotten. It is time to revisit some of these once-obvious truths.

Under democratic government, violent warfare among competing classes and groups is brought to an end and replaced by non-violent rivalry among political parties. This doesn’t mean that power relations among loyalty groups come to an end. It doesn’t

mean that injustice and oppression come to an end. It only means that instead of resolving their disagreements through bloodshed, the various groups that make up a given society form themselves into political parties devoted to trying to unseat one another in periodic elections. Under such a system, one party rules for a fixed term, but its rivals know they will get to rule in turn if they can win the next election. It is the possibility of being able to take power and rule the country without widespread killing and destruction that entices all sides to lay down their weapons and take up electoral politics instead.

The most basic thing one needs to know about a democratic regime, then, is this: You need to have at least *two* legitimate political parties for democracy to work. By a *legitimate* political party, I mean one that is recognized by its rivals as having a right to rule if it wins an election. For example, a liberal party may grant legitimacy to a conservative party (even though they don't like them much), and in return this conservative party may grant legitimacy to a liberal party (even though they don't like them much). Indeed, this is the way most modern democratic nations have been governed.

But *legitimacy* is one of those traditional political concepts that Marxist criticism is now on the verge of destroying. From the Marxist point of view, our inherited concept of legitimacy is nothing more than an instrument the ruling classes use to perpetuate injustice and oppression. The word *legitimacy* takes

on its true meaning only with reference to the oppressed classes or groups that the Marxist sees as the sole legitimate rulers of the nation. In other words, Marxist political theory confers legitimacy on only one political party—the party of the oppressed, whose aim is the revolutionary reconstitution of society. And this means that the Marxist political framework cannot co-exist with democratic government. Indeed, the entire purpose of democratic government, with its plurality of legitimate parties, is to avoid the violent reconstitution of society that Marxist political theory regards as the only reasonable aim of politics.

Simply put, the Marxist framework and democratic political theory are opposed to one another in principle. A Marxist cannot grant legitimacy to liberal or conservative points of view without giving up the heart of Marxist theory, which is that these points of view are inextricably bound up with systematic injustice and must be overthrown, by violence if necessary. This is why the very idea that a dissenting opinion—one that is not “Progressive” or “Anti-Racist”—could be considered legitimate has disappeared from liberal institutions as Marxists have gained power. At first, liberals capitulated to their Marxist colleagues’ demand that conservative viewpoints be considered illegitimate (because conservatives are “authoritarian” or “fascist”). This was the dynamic that brought about the elimination of conservatives from most of the leading universities and media outlets in America.

But by the summer of 2020, this arrangement had run its course.

In the United States, Marxists were now strong enough to demand that liberals fall into line on virtually any issue they considered pressing. In what were recently liberal institutions, a liberal point of view has likewise ceased to be legitimate. This is the meaning of the expulsion of liberal journalists from the *New York Times* and other news organisations. It is the reason that Woodrow Wilson's name was removed from buildings at Princeton University, and for similar acts at other universities and schools. These expulsions and renamings are the equivalent of raising a Marxist flag over each university, newspaper, and corporation in turn, as the legitimacy of the old liberalism is revoked.

Until 2016, America still had two legitimate political parties. But when Donald Trump was elected president, the talk of his being "authoritarian" or "fascist" was used to discredit the traditional liberal point of view, according to which a duly elected president, the candidate chosen by half the public through constitutional procedures, should be accorded legitimacy. Instead a "resistance" was declared, whose purpose was to delegitimize the president, those who worked with him, and those who voted for him.

I know that many liberals believe that this rejection of Trump's legitimacy was directed only at him, personally. They believe, as a liberal friend wrote to me recently, that when this particular president is removed from office, America will be able to return to normal.

But nothing of the sort is going to happen. The Marxists who have seized control of the means of producing and disseminating ideas in America cannot, without betraying their cause, confer legitimacy on any conservative government. And they cannot grant legitimacy to any form of liberalism that is not supine before them. This means that whatever President Trump's electoral fortunes, the "resistance" is not going to end. It is just beginning.

With the Marxist conquest of liberal institutions, we have entered a new phase in American history (and, consequently, in the history of all democratic nations). We have entered the phase in which Marxists, having conquered the universities, the media, and major corporations, will seek to apply this model to the conquest of the political arena as a whole.

How will they do this? As in the universities and the media, they will use their presence within liberal institutions to force liberals to break the bonds of mutual legitimacy that bind them to conservatives—and therefore to two-party democracy. They will not demand the delegitimization of just President Trump, but of all conservatives. We've already seen this in the efforts to delegitimize the views of Senators Josh Hawley, Tom Cotton, and Tim Scott, as well as the media personality Tucker Carlson and others. Then they will move on to delegitimizing liberals who treat conservative views as legitimate, such as James Bennet, Bari Weiss, and Andrew Sullivan. As was the case in the universities and media, many liberals will accommodate these Marxist tactics

in the belief that by delegitimizing conservatives they can appease the Marxists and turn them into strategic allies.

But the Marxists will not be appeased because what they're after is the conquest of liberalism itself—already happening as they persuade liberals to abandon their traditional two-party conception of political legitimacy, and with it their commitment to a democratic regime. The collapse of the bonds of mutual legitimacy that have tied liberals to conservatives in a democratic system of government will not make the liberals in question Marxists quite yet. But it will make them the supine lackeys of these Marxists, without the power to resist anything that “Progressives” and “Anti-Racists” designate as being important. And it will get them accustomed to the coming one-party regime, in which liberals will have a splendid role to play—if they are willing to give up their liberalism.

I know that many liberals are confused, and that they still suppose there are various alternatives before them. But it isn't true. At this point, most of the alternatives that existed a few years ago are gone. Liberals will have to choose between two alternatives: either they will submit to the Marxists, and help them bring democracy in America to an end. Or they will assemble a pro-democracy alliance with conservatives. There aren't any other choices.