

anchorage anarchy

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Imagine There's No Countries

Politicians and the news media have decided that jumping on immigrants is a way to inflame the prejudices of the locals and make them believe that it matters who wins the next presidential election. The most vile, racist sentiment is being stirred up as the candidates compete to be seen as the best person to fix the "problem" of people wanting to move to the united states without jumping through the hoops the government mandates for legal entry into its jurisdiction. Immigrants are demonized for everything from stealing americans' jobs and overtaxing the finances of hospitals and school districts to importing drugs and corrupting american culture.

People in this country tolerate cops shooting people who are trying to cross the border. They ignore the fact that immigrants are dying in the desert trying to evade these brutes and make a new life. They accept, and even celebrate, the fact that people who have lived here for years can be arrested and imprisoned simply because they didn't get government permission to move here. Their jobs are snatched from them, their families are torn apart, and they are deported back to their country of origin penniless, having lost everything they once had.

People support, or at least put with, this loathsome abuse of other human beings because they believe the nonsense they are being fed about countries and borders and nationality and culture. They have been educated to believe that those born in some specific geographical region, and those who have been officially allowed to enter by the powers-that-be, are automatically part of a club of sorts. All members of this organization supposedly have the same interests, wants, freedoms, rights, whatever, and anyone from anywhere else needs to suck it up and learn to live with the circumstances into which they were born.

Both democrats and republicans attack immigrants and have made closing the borders an

electoral issue. Since the issue is playing so well in the electoral theater we will likely have to listen to this bigotry for the next year or so. But although the volume has been turned up for the presidential campaign, the sentiments being expressed by politicians and voters alike are a standard feature of american political thinking and show the superficiality of american inclusiveness and generosity.

The Nationalist Idea

The real problem here is nationalism, the idea that the place of one's birth or residence determines one's interests, beliefs, and loyalties. This idea is not new, and is as irrational and destructive as it ever was. It underlies wars, it justifies hatred based on ethnicity or skin color, it dovetails quite nicely with religious bigotry. And it serves to empower rulers who can make political hay from their subjects' petty prejudices, distracting the "masses" from real evils like the slaughter in iraq or corporate tyranny, and instead getting them fired up about the mexican groundskeeper working down the street without a visa.



But there is no moral or factual justification for such a view. Nations and countries did not (and do not) arise naturally as voluntary groupings of like-minded individuals who came together to pursue similar interests. They have always been political institutions based on force and obedience, where rulers use myths of national identity to manipulate the ruled and maintain their own power. This has been true in ancient egypt and mexico, medieval europe, post-colonial africa, and today's balkans.

It matters not what the official ideology of the government ruling any specific country is. Governments always consider the maintenance of their borders and the definition of who is and isn't a citizen to be two of their primary functions, and they emphasize the importance of boundaries and nationality in the indoctrination of their subjects. People are encouraged to identify with their rulers and failure to support "their" government is disloyal, if not treasonous. Most of the citizens take this ideology to heart and actually believe that their status as americans (or russians or nigerians or whatever) actually makes them somehow different in some important way from those in other countries.



The American Dream

In the united states, this has come to mean that americans believe they have certain rights and privileges, as well as a moral status, that people in other countries neither have nor are necessarily entitled to. It is a fortress mentality, as it were: our

virtuous (immigrant, slave-holding, and war-making) ancestors fashioned this paragon of virtue that we have inherited, and the rest of the world can admire and envy us, but only from afar. It would appear that there is a limited amount of freedom and wealth available in the world, and if people who want to are allowed to come into the united states, those of us already here will have less of both. We need to secure the borders and keep all but a few lucky newcomers out so we don't lose any of our privileges or wealth by sharing our good fortune with too many unworthy others. And we must never lose sight of the terrorists massing at the border who want to punish and kill us for our good fortune. After all, they hate our freedoms, we are told.

This widespread outlook, which sees americans as "us" and virtually everyone else as "them," sets the tone for discussions of immigration. And although "illegal" immigration is what gains most of the attention and news coverage, there is really a bias against almost any immigration. There is opposition to work visas being issued to skilled workers at present, and little support for even temporary "guest" worker programs. *Contra* the words on the statue of liberty that tell the rest of the world: "Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free," contemporary americans and their political leaders want to shut the door in the faces of people seeking more social freedom and economic opportunity.

Lies and Damned Lies

While nationalism predisposes people to be against immigration, lies supplied by anti-immigrant politicians and activists solidify this opposition with plausible, if inaccurate, justifications. Americans are told that people sneaking into the country are hurting "legal" residents economically and socially by limiting the job opportunities of natives and draining the public coffers with excessive demands on government services. They are led to believe that immigrants are changing (for the worse) american culture with foreign languages and customs. And they have been advised to be very, very afraid.

But this is bullshit. While immigrants are accused of stealing american jobs, the fact is that immigrants are filling jobs americans either don't want or can't do. Although accused of consuming government "services" they are not entitled to,

immigrants working in the united states, even those without official permission, pay taxes like other workers and deserve the same return for this money confiscated from them as do other taxpayers.

The concerns of the nativists about social or cultural change brought about by newcomers are as unfounded as their economic fears. Immigrants may retain some of the practices and beliefs they were accustomed to in their former country of residence, but gradually adopt the ways of living they see around them in their new land. And their children and grandchildren quickly become as "american" (for better or worse) as anyone else here. New immigrants may never become fluent in english, but their kids easily do. Meanwhile, many of the new ideas, customs, and cuisines that immigrants bring with them gradually meld into the mainstream such that chinese, greek, west indian, and italian restaurants and cultural festivals are

common sights in american cities and are popular with people of all colors and ethnicities.

Schizophrenia

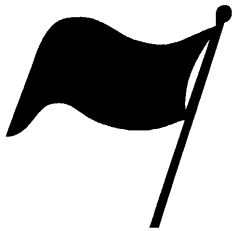
The fact that their fears of economic and "cultural" catastrophe are baseless doesn't dissuade the bigots from their opposition to immigration. Neither does the clear historical record that everyone on this continent is descended from someone who came here from somewhere else. The ancestors of some current residents may have arrived long before the forebears of others, but that really doesn't matter. The first immigrants may have come to a land devoid of people, but except for those first few individuals, everyone who immigrated to america was entering what modern people would consider some else's country.

And immigrants now are a hell of a lot more peaceable in their approach to the people already here than were the immigrants of the past. This continent, like all the others, has a bloody, nasty history of wars of conquests, slavery, rape, and attempts at extermination, perpetrated by evildoers of various skin colors. New arrivals tend to be peaceable folk looking for new homes and jobs and happy to share with their new neighbors. It is the height of hypocrisy for the descendants of invaders and conquerors to attempt to deny entry to other people who pose no threat to them.

The Liberal Nativists

Not all of those who oppose immigration are as baldly racist as others. Some claim that they are concerned about the effects that the newcomers' migration to the united states will have on their former countries. They talk about brain drain and claim that skilled workers like computer experts and nurses coming to america should stay home because they are needed more there.

But this is just more nationalist crap. If the real concern is for the people in the philippines who need nursing care, or folks in india who could benefit from a home-grown high tech industry, then it would make sense for these concerned americans, usually nurses and techies who are actually worried about competition for jobs in the united states, to offer their own services in these places under some sort of exchange program. Instead they contend that skilled workers in other countries owe "their" people something and therefore shouldn't seek to



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You can reach Bad Press at:
PO Box 230332
Anchorage, AK 99523-0332
USA

bbrigade@world.std.com

better their own economic and social conditions by moving to the west.

There surely are poor and needy people in other countries, exponentially more in fact than in the united states. But the presumption that others born in their country should be forced to stay and help them, while those in other countries bear no responsibility to end these people's suffering, is nationalism pure and simple. Those opposed to immigration apparently believe that if you're a nurse who was born in the philippines, you deserve to be a captive there, while one born in the united states, through no action on their own part, should be free to stay here and live a life of comparative luxury. For these nativists, an accident of birth should determine where and how you have to live your life.



The real issue here is not concern for the disadvantaged in other countries, but a desire to maintain a smaller pool of "professionals" in the united states. If there were freer entry of trained technicians and health care workers into this country, the artificial shortage of these workers would become less acute, thus putting downward pressure on wages and working conditions in these occupations. Although an approach of organizing newly-arrived workers into unions could effectively counter the potential adverse economic consequences of a larger supply of labor, by and large skilled workers, including even unionized

nurses, have decided that pressuring politicians to limit immigration requires a lot less effort, and plays better to prevailing prejudices, than does the hard work of building unions. Their worries about those "left behind" by migrants is simply a mask for protectionism.

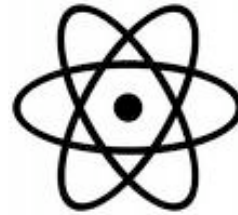
A Libertarian Approach to Immigration

Anarchists reject the very concept of borders and countries. They are merely tools to enable groups of economically and socially dominant people to control populations in order to maintain their own power and wealth. The idea of nationalism which nation-states promote breeds hatred, suspicion, mistrust, and racism. It encourages people to identify with and support their enemies, the political and corporate bosses who rob and bully them. It leads them to reject alliances and cooperation with others who share similar interests simply because they are foreigners and therefore suspect.

It's a convenient trick that has worked for millennia. And it is meeting the needs of the american business and government elites once again, as people are distracted from real problems like war and diminishing personal freedom and instead getting wound up about the fake problem of immigration. People in this country are angry about inadequate wages, high taxes, shitty schools, unemployment, and expensive health care. But instead of seeing that their rulers' insatiable desire for wealth and fetish for controlling others are to blame, they instead turn on would-be immigrants who did not cause these problems and suffer from them even more severely than do citizens.

Nationalism is an irrational, bigoted way of thinking that serves only those who wish to dominate others and works to the disadvantage of regular folk both here and abroad. If people reject this ideology, and with it the nations and governments that promote it, they might instead see themselves as individuals who share concerns and interests with similarly situated people all over the world. Then perhaps they would ignore the borders, tear down the walls and fences created by various governments, and welcome new friends and neighbors from other places. National boundaries serve only to restrict our vision and rein in our desires and activities, making it all the easier for our masters to plunder us.

Paranoid Parenting Prompts Predatory Policing



In the last issue of this newsletter, I wrote about the adverse effects on children of today's overzealous parenting. But a recent incident in Anchorage demonstrates how today's pervasive, and unjustified, anxiety about supposed threats to children can easily interfere with the lives of the rest of us as well.

Last month, a child came out of the bathroom at Chuck E Cheese with a "suspicious" substance on his clothing which



his mother thought was semen. She also thought he was acting strangely. So, she called in the local constabulary, who locked

down the restaurant and interrogated everyone there for an hour and a half.

Well, it was revealed the next day that the "semen" on the boy's clothing was simply liquid soap, and he was acting oddly because he had soiled his pants and didn't want to tell his mother because he was embarrassed. He had soap on his clothes because he was trying to clean up the mess.

One wonders why the mother and/or cops did not notice the mess in the kids pants, or take a closer look, perhaps even a sniff, to see if that white stuff was cum or soap. Instead, 150 innocent people were subjected to involuntary detention and questioning, just to make this nutty parent feel like she was protecting her precious charge.

The New Element

Recent hurricanes and gasoline issues are proof of the existence of a new chemical element. Research has led to the discovery of the heaviest element yet known to science.

The new element, Governmentium (Gv), has one neutron, 25 assistant neutrons, 88 deputy neutrons, and 198 assistant deputy neutrons, giving it an atomic mass of 312. These 312 particles are held together by forces called morons, which are surrounded by vast quantities of lepton-like particles called peons. Since Governmentium has no electrons, it is inert; however, it can be detected, because it impedes every reaction with which it comes into contact.

A minute amount of Governmentium can cause a reaction that would normally take less than a second to take from four days to four years to complete. Governmentium has a normal half-life of two-six years; it does not decay, but instead undergoes a reorganization in which a portion of the assistant neutrons and deputy neutrons exchange places. In fact, Governmentium's mass will actually increase over time, since each reorganization will cause more morons to become neutrons, forming isodopes.

This characteristic of moron promotion leads some scientists to believe that Governmentium is formed whenever morons reach a critical concentration. This hypothetical quantity is referred to as critical morass.

When catalyzed with money, Governmentium becomes Administratium, an element that radiates just as much energy as Governmentium since it has half as many peons but twice as many morons.

Public Health Authoritarianism

Governments in the united states have forced people to have their children vaccinated against various diseases for decades now. The primary way they accomplish this is by requiring kids to have a range of immunizations before they are granted the “privilege” of entering government schools. While exemptions may be granted for religious or medical reasons, most parents comply with the rules and have their kids stuck.

However, in recent years, more and more people have resisted the pressures put on them by the authorities and have questioned the need and/or safety of many of the mandatory vaccinations. Vaccine skeptics sometimes fear that certain preparations may cause autism, or might believe that hepatitis B is not a significant risk for younger kids, or think that frequent and multiple vaccinations could be linked to autoimmune diseases. Although these concerns are generally dismissed out-of-hand by the public health and medical establishments, they remain real for some parents.



Whatever the reasons for resistance to mandatory vaccination, the authorities do not take kindly to their subjects pushing back against their regulations. Although only a few thousand of the 3,700,000 students entering kindergarten in 2005 were officially exempted, many other kids, whether intentionally or not, do not get vaccinated when they are supposed to and this tends to piss off the bullies who run the schools. So in maryland last month a judge required supposedly delinquent parents to come to court within days and either prove their kids had their shots, get them immunized that day, or go to jail. In this case, many of the suspects actually had already submitted and had their kids jabbed, but the inept school system lost or otherwise fucked up their records and they had to prove once again that they were good citizens. But the intended take-home message here, as in most interactions between rulers and subjects, is that resistance is futile: submit to the demands of the state or go to jail

The Importance of Mandatory Immunization?

Although the rates of death and disability associated with most infectious diseases were already low and declining in the united states before vaccines were introduced, mass immunization has reduced the incidence of these diseases, and thus the complications and deaths associated with them as well. And since they are freely available in this country, there are few barriers to people having themselves or their children vaccinated. Therefore, those who believe it is prudent to get immunized can do so and thus protect themselves and their family against these diseases. But the bureaucrats and experts cannot leave it to people to decide these matters for themselves. They think it perfectly appropriate to force people to do what is right,

or healthy, or prudent if they haven't decided to do it on their own. So they require compliance with their immunization "recommendations."

In addition to their basic approach of pushing people around for their own good, however, the public health authorities also believe that by forcing vaccinations on the vast majority of people they are protecting the few who cannot get immunized for medical reasons, or have immune systems that are inadequate to fight infections even when they have been immunized, as is often the case for people with cancer or immune deficiency diseases. The theory is that there needs to be a certain background level of immunization in a population in order for there to be too few susceptible individuals to sustain an outbreak, thus minimizing the chance any infected person will infect another. This is called herd immunity, perhaps because the public health officials, like all bureaucrats, consider the rest



of us to be cattle. The bottom line is that people are forced to undergo a procedure, vaccination, which does have real, though very small, risks associated with it to protect

someone else from a similarly small risk of infection should the person avoiding immunization get ill. While assuming some additional risk for oneself or one's family to help protect others may be virtuous, it should not be mandatory.

Arguments Against the Needle

A case could be made that the reason immunization resisters can so easily make the calculation that it is safer to risk infection than to take vaccines is because so many others have been forced into getting them. This is true, but does not invalidate their concerns or serve to justify forced vaccination. The only approach to getting skeptics to vaccinate themselves and/or their children that is consistent with a libertarian ethic is to convince them it is the right thing for them to do. That can be done only by demonstrating that their reservations are unwarranted or exaggerated and that it is somehow in their own interests to do so.

It has proven difficult, though, to argue against some of the concerns expressed by those who speak out against vaccination. For instance, one of the more common beliefs among vaccine opponents is that childhood immunizations, especially MMR, are linked to the supposed outbreak of autism and associated disorders. The theory goes that autism is being diagnosed in ever increasing numbers, many kids' autistic behavior began around the time they were vaccinated with MMR, that MMR used to contain the presumed toxin thimerosal (which is mercury-based), and, thus, MMR caused (and may continue to cause) the autism "epidemic."

The fact that there have been a number of scientific studies that have debunked this hypothesis has not done much to change the minds of those who believe it. The stories circulating around from parents whose kids are supposed victims of MMR seem to outweigh any evidence that is presented, and the expanding definition of what constitutes autism and autism spectrum disorders just

adds to the problem. Once relatively rare, these diagnoses have become more and more common in the united states, although it may well be that this is due more to overdiagnosis than to a true increase in these conditions. More and more developmental irregularities are considered pathological and are being included in this growing category of illness. As with other realms of human behavior, if individuals stray too far from expectations, an underlying illness or disorder is assumed and people are labeled with whatever condition is currently in vogue to describe their abnormality. More and more “autism” occurring in the same time frame with more and more vaccinations reinforces the connection in the minds of a number of people.

Whatever the real risks associated with MMR, there have been documented problems with other vaccines. Remember swine flu and guillain-barré syndrome? Well, after the government managed to manipulate people into getting vaccinated against the fake threat of swine flu, a number of those immunized developed paralysis that was clearly related to the vaccine they received. And more recently, experts with WHO have acknowledged problems with polio vaccines, where the vaccinations have themselves caused polio outbreaks. So even though concerns about the safety of some vaccines may be overblown, experience has shown that skepticism about immunizations is not unfounded and should not be lightly dismissed

Where's the (Infected) Beef?

Persistent urban legends and cold hard facts about vaccine side effects are only part of the difficulty faced when arguing against the skeptics. At least as important is the fact that public health experts and government authorities have often been less than straightforward in their assessment of risks to individuals, whether of getting an infectious disease or of a bad outcome caused by vaccines. This is not surprising given their

goal of protection of the “public” health, a mission which assigns individuals to a secondary status, and considers their desires and needs less important than those of the community. They look only at the statistics, at prevalence and incidence of diseases in the community at large, and if vaccination or any other control strategy results in better statistics for the group as a whole, they try their best to enforce such measures. Furthermore, they are willing to use whatever means they think will work, including exaggeration, if not outright lies, as well as force.



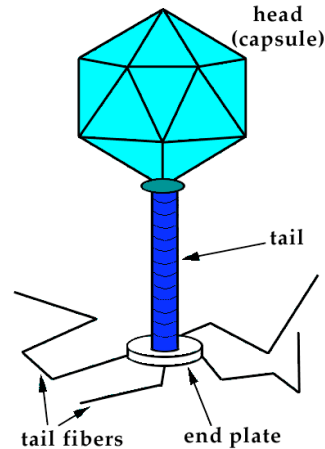
The authorities have misled people about the prevalence and risk of HIV infection, both in the united states and around the world. They have tried to scare people in this country

with fake threats like west nile virus, bird flu, TB, adult pertussis, or whatever is the infectious disease *du jour*. Although the bureaucrats in the federal and state governments, as well as those in international bodies like WHO, generally dismiss criticism of their scare tactics, skeptics have often been shown to be right in hindsight. The american HIV “epidemic” never really was one, and the WHO last month acknowledged at long last they have been overcounting HIV cases around the world. A number of recent pertussis outbreaks were proven to be nothing of the sort, despite significant costs and inconvenience to the victims of overzealous public health guardians. Hysteria over the danger of TB outbreaks, including concern about the “renegade” airline passenger earlier this year, has also proven unfounded. And it looks like the chances that this month’s mumps outbreak in maine will fulfill the fantasies of new england’s state epidemiologists and become a regional threat to public health are minimal. While we are constantly being warned of one infectious threat after another, we’re still waiting for the threatened outbreak of SARS, bird flu, mad cow disease, dengue, or ebola to actually happen here.

The Governmental-Medical-Industrial Complex

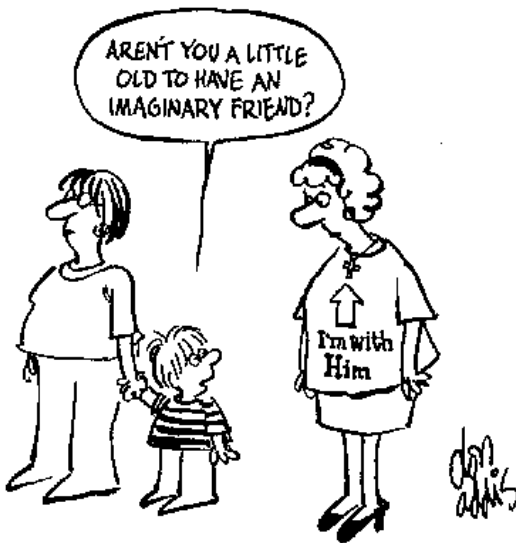
In addition to the public health experts’ lack of credibility when it comes to proclaiming what is risky and what isn’t, the fact that politicians’ support of mandatory vaccination appears at times to meet the needs of pharmaceutical manufacturers more than those of the individuals affected just makes it that much harder to believe that immunization rules are necessarily based on real analysis of risks and benefits and not on some other incentive. A case in point is what happened with the HPV vaccine Gardasil earlier this year. Instead of letting people decide if it was wise to have themselves or

their daughters injected with this vaccine based on the merits of the scientific evidence, Merck decided that spending money to “lobby” politicians to make the vaccine mandatory was a potentially more profitable business strategy. Although their scheme was discovered and they were forced to back off, one wonders if this is the first and only time a drug company has manipulated the political system to market its products by government mandate.



The Agglomeration of Church and State

So it should be no surprise, given the demonstrable lack of scientific rigor and tendency towards hyperbole found among the public health bureaucrats, as well as the questionable motivations of politicians forcing vaccines on the rest of us, that attempts to convince vaccine resisters that immunization is safe and opposition is irrational have been less than successful. But what is interesting in light of the seriousness of some of the attempts to impose immunization of unwilling subjects, is that the argument against vaccines which is, in fact, truly irrational is the one that the authorities are most likely to consider valid when allowing exemptions from mandatory programs. And that is the contention that vaccination violates one’s religious beliefs.



While there may be scant evidence for a connection between vaccines and autism, and inadequate data to prove a link between immunizations and asthma, there is precisely *no* evidence for the existence of god. But despite that, those who believe that a higher power has dictated that they not allow themselves or their kids to get vaccinated are the ones who stand the best chance of being allowed to avoid these shots. This has encouraged parents with secular objections to immunizations to pretend they have superstitious reasons for their wish to exempt their children as well, since they have learned that politicians are more hesitant to avoid offending someone's religious fantasies than they are to respect people's genuine concerns about threats to their or their families' health. Despite the supposed separation between church and state in this country, here is but one more example where government supports religious faith, while rejecting individual freedom of choice.

Leave Those Kids Alone

But all this discussion of government force, vaccine safety, and religious prejudices

leaves out perhaps a more important issue than any of the others that have been raised: that of whether anyone, either a school board or a parent, should be making the decisions about what to force another person to ingest or have injected. This question has come up in the public debates about vaccination when some have argued that an anti-HPV vaccine would encourage girls to fuck around, or that in most cases there is little risk of children contracting hepatitis B before they start having sex, and thus these immunizations should be delayed until kids are older. While these concerns have been brought to the fore by controlling parents who want to more closely supervise their children and want to make the call themselves, the issues raised should make people think about what role kids themselves should have in these decisions.

Adults care for young children and make virtually all of their decisions for them. This inherently hierarchical relationship is problematic from an anarchist perspective, but it is what it is. So, if a caretaker is expected to do their best to protect their charge from harm, and immunizations appear likely to have more positive than negative effects on a child, it seems reasonable that a parent should be able to have a young child vaccinated, although they should not be forced to do so. But this should apply only to vaccines that protect kids from infections they are likely to be harmed by when they are fairly young.

As individuals get older, more knowledgeable, and better able to make decisions and fend for themselves, it becomes easier to argue from an individual freedom perspective that they should have veto power over such treatments. So administration of vaccines against things like HPV and hepatitis B (except in the case of an infected mother) should be deferred until kids are older so they can be involved in the decision-making themselves. Such an approach would be a challenge to the conventional relationship

between parents and children, which the state upholds by means of age-of-consent and –majority laws, as well as compulsory schooling statutes, that limit the freedom of younger people to control their own bodies and lives. But the anarchist demand for individual liberty is meant to apply to everyone, including kids, however uncomfortable that might be for certain adults.

Enlightened Self-Interest

As noted in the last *anchorage anarchy*, people are not very good at accurately assessing risks, and this is part of the problem with discussing immunizations. People exaggerate risks that are minimal or non-existent and ignore others that are quite real. This is due to a combination of factors, including lack of knowledge, inability to critically evaluate scientific data, manipulation of this data by experts and bureaucrats, and religious or other superstition. People end up making their decisions based on inadequate information, social pressure, and official threats.

This is not going to change until society in general changes in the direction of greater freedom for individuals. This does not mean a world of atomization and anomie, but rather a society of free, leaderless people who respect their own and each others' liberty and cooperate where and when necessary and desirable in order to meet their own needs and fulfill their own desires. A key concept in making such a libertarian social network work is that of enlightened self-interest, or benevolence, whereby people voluntarily do things that help others but which do not necessarily benefit themselves at the time, in the expectation that other individuals will act accordingly in similar situations. Such an approach would preserve individual freedom while allowing for cooperative and reciprocal social interactions.

Many of the vaccinations currently available appear to do more good than harm

and would hopefully remain available in a different, anarchist world. But just as immunization, like all else, would be voluntary were we free of authoritarian institutions, it should be voluntary now. Just because an action is unwise or irrational, it should not be prohibited. People must be free to refuse the needle, whether they fear autism or hellfire and brimstone. It is their business and no one else's.



An Anarcho-Lefty Personality Cult?

On a recent trip to the netherlands and belgium, I was struck by the number of items for sale that bore the image of Che Guevara. There were Che t-shirts and Che bags of various sorts available in all the tourist traps. This, of course, was not the first time I had encountered Che's image. It is all too common to see Che t-shirts here in the states, as well, including those on the chests of self-described anarchists or offered for sale in the AK Press catalog. But it did make me think once again about the way the myths of the nobility of the marxist-leninist movement persist among so many people despite all the horrors for which it has been responsible.

There appears to be a romantic attachment to this movement which is wholly unwarranted, if not shameful. It is not uncommon to see Che's image at demonstrations or rallies against abhorrent actions by the united states, but those who display this image seem not to remember the real accomplishments of this person and the movement of which he was an important part.

Authoritarian communists, from Lenin to Fidel and Che have been just as responsible for murder, war, and oppression as the authoritarian capitalists whom Che's devotees hold in such contempt. They have killed their domestic opponents. They have maintained prisons that would be the envy of the worst wardens in the united states. They have held their subjects captives by building walls and fences on their borders that put the Rio Grande and west bank walls to shame. They have locked up queers, persecuted jews, "ethnically cleansed" tatars and chechens, and kept women "in their place." Their record on redressing racism, especially in their own movement, is abysmal as well; in cuba, for instance, the rulers are just as white as those in the united states, while a large majority of

their subjects are black. Marxist-leninists have been as imperialistic, sexist, racist, heterosexual, (and whatever other PC epithet comes to mind) as those they have opposed. And perhaps most ironic, they have been even more efficient, again notably in cuba, in exterminating anarchists.



The body count racked up by the international communist movement likely exceeds that of the fascists/nazis of europe, but they have been given a pass. When I go to the city market in Anchorage on weekends, there are buttons with Lenin's image for sale. If I decide to go drinking in Cambridge, I can sit in a bar decorated with russian communist posters. But imagine the outrage were a bar to display images from fascist italy or nazi germany. Picture the self-righteous lefties trying to shut down a booth that dared to sell Hitler badges.

Authoritarian socialists, while much less powerful than they once were, still rule a number of countries and play an important role in opposition movements around the world. But there really is no moral difference between the leninists and the fascists, and until that is understood, particularly by Che-wearing (and Che-marketing) anarchists, there is no hope for attaining a free society.