

Meet The Father Of Neoconservatism: Leon Trotsky



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When neoconservatism stormed onto the national stage, sweeping the GOP into power in 1994, it took many pundits by surprise.

Founded in the 1950's by **intellectuals such as James** Burnham, Max Shactman, Leo Strauss, Suzanne LaFollette, Willmoore Kendall, and Irving Kristol, it had remained on the fringe of our nation's politics for decades. With its own pool of intellectuals, neoconservatism grew until it began to

dominate right-wing thought in the halls of power, with the presidency of George W. Bush pointed to as their most triumphant moment.

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The irony of course is that Neoconservatism is not conservative at all, but is in fact a branch from the anti-Stalin Communist movement, led by Leon Trotsky. By taking on the rhetoric of the anti-Communist right, the Trotskyists created a new paradigm that came across as more palatable to the American public. By doing so, the neoconservative movement began its climb to power without any disruption, unlike those who followed Lenin's ideologies, such as Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong and Enver Hoxha. Having rebranded the anti-Stalinist Left, **the Trotskyists had the clean break** they needed to help develop, and deliver, their ideology.

Trotsky's Heirs.

It may sound strange to hear, but history is what it is. The founding fathers of the neoconservative movement came from Trotsky's circles, from the anti-Stalin communists.

Many may ask how neoconservatism can derive from communism. What one needs to keep in mind is that during this period, we had a major break within the Communist sphere of influence. Below this schism however, we find an underlying thought process. Trotsky, like Stalin and Lenin before them, did not believe that the workers or the poor were organized enough to function in a purely communist society. In addition, like Stalin and Lenin, Trotsky did not trust the middle-class, and felt that the moneyed interests would transform into petty dictators disguised as democracy.

By stripping away the layers of bureaucracy while taking apart the government, the transition to full communism as Trotsky saw it — now rebranded as Libertarianism — was able to take root. And with the rise of the reactionary right, which sought allies without asking about their motives, it was the perfect marriage.

But, while Stalin and Lenin believed in the use of bureaucracy for enabling Communism by giving a rigid structure of controls and regulations combined with education and organization, Trotsky instead argued that a bureaucracy would only give the middle-class too much power and oppress the working class. Trotsky argued that an empowered feudal state, at the expense of the middle class, would ultimately be what led to communism. Of course, it would have been Trotsky and his circles of elites who would serve as these new feudal lords.

While Trotsky and Lenin put aside their differences for the October Revolution, they never did share many of the same ideals. After all, in 1913 Trotsky said of Lenin that:

“The entire edifice of Leninism at the present time is built on lies and falsification and bears within itself the poisonous elements of its own decay.”

In a similar vein, Lenin wrote at length of Trotsky's issues, without similarly turning to broad statements and generalizations. And with Stalin continuing Lenin's work — having been Lenin's right-hand man for nearly two decades — Trotsky had found himself cut off from the movement he had hoped to dominate. Indeed, a major factor behind split between Stalin and Trotsky was over Trotsky's brutality of leadership, **with Trotsky calling Stalin too soft.**

It is telling that the great purges within the Soviet Union only ended after the death of Trotsky at the hands of Ramon Mercader, along with the expulsion or execution of Trotsky's allies within the Soviet government and military. At the time of Trotsky's death, the sole remaining supporter of his within the Soviet government was future Premier Nikita Khrushchev, who survived because he called his support of Trotsky a “Deviation.”

Communists No More.

With the ousting of Trotsky and his followers from the mainstream communist community, they found a ready market for their ideas in western audiences. The ideas of Trotsky further developed within the western world. As mainstream communism had rejected Trotsky's theories, and with anti-Communist rhetoric on the rise following World War II, it was not safe for any kinds of communists — even anti-Stalinist communists — in the U.S. Following a page from numerous other efforts of the past, the Trotskyists set out to rebrand themselves.

During the era of the ‘red scare’ if you were against Stalin, you proudly called yourself a conservative. So, the Trotskyists did just that: They took on the rhetoric of Joseph McCarthy along with the John Birch Society, and with the support of the CIA, the former Communists thrived, and so did their rebranded ideology of neoconservatism.

The ideology of neoconservatism lends itself well to right-wing rhetoric. In Trotsky's view, freedom came with economic power. By having a rich oligarchy able to drive the economic engine, the thought was that it would promote freedom for the masses. **And by stripping away the** bureaucracy, while taking apart the government, the transition to full communism as Trotsky understood it — now rebranded as Libertarianism — could happen. And with the rise of the reactionary right, which sought allies without questioning their motives, it was the perfect marriage.

Neoconservatism Triumphant.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the neoconservatives now had their opportunity. They could point to the collapse and proclaim that their ideas had worked, that they had triumphed over Stalin's state. They could claim that it was Communists who were proclaiming victory over Communism, which was an irony not missed by some. And with that claim came renewed efforts to push neoconservatism into the halls of power.

The merging of these differing ideas together brought about neoconservatism as we know it today. Having abandoned the rhetoric of the worker, and outwardly embraced the "Free Market," neoconservatism is the end result of decades of evolution from anti-Stalin Communist thought. Is it any wonder that we find fans of former KGB officer Vladimir Putin within neoconservatism's circles?

While Trotsky still has adherents who have not abandoned his rhetoric, they are on the fringes even within the Communist sphere of influence. But while the roots are the same, the bastard fruits of Trotsky and McCarthy has fallen far from the revolutionary tree from whence it sprung.

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