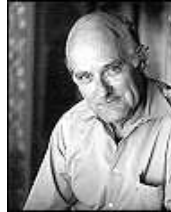


CAPITALISM MAGAZINE

We are the New Sons of Liberty

by [Edward Cline](#) (July 3, 2009)

A good friend wrote me about the speed with which the government is erasing freedom and establishing a fascist regime, and the despair this phenomenon can cause: "If presented with an existential crisis, I don't see a modern day Sons of Liberty around to fight for liberty."



I will reply that we are the new Sons of Liberty. We're all over the place. You will recall that the Sons of Liberty, for about ten years leading up to Concord and Bunker Hill, communicated with each other all over the colonies through committees of correspondence, trading intelligence, ideas, strategies, and progress reports. The new committees are facilitated by the Internet. Fundamentally, there is no difference between their functions, except the element of time. It might have taken two weeks for correspondence from Boston and Sam Adams to reach Richmond and Richard Henry Lee. Now, it takes mere seconds for anyone's communications to reach a hundred times the number of addressees.

Another chief difference is that the committees of yore were guided in their policies and actions by many of the Founders, who acted as intellectual workmen. Today, many of the movers behind the Tea Parties are acting in the same capacity. They are not especially intellectuals, but they will come around eventually, out of necessity, in order to present arguments, and not just stage ad hoc demonstrations of anger and disgust. Objectivists are making their presence known at the Tea Parties, and they are attracting lots of attention, especially from protestors looking for moral and intellectual guidance and not more of the "same old, same old."

Here's another parallel: In the Founders' time, before the Declaration, opposition to Crown policies was expressed by a number of groups. Call them 18th century "libertarians," religious based groups, conservatives, and the like. But by the time of Bunker Hill and the second Continental Congress, most of them were agreed on the fundamentals of why the colonies should separate from the Crown. We are in the same situation today. Religious groups, libertarians, conservatives, and other groups opposed to Obama and the Democratic Congress's policies are all vying for attention and trying to dominate especially the Tea Parties. But Objectivism is the only philosophy that offers a consistently rational politics. None of the other

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"Francisco's Money Speech"

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Religion vs. Liberty

Secularism is not a sufficient condition for freedom--but a necessary one.

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The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a charter of tyranny.

In Defense of the "Barbarous Relic"

Why The Enemies of Capitalism
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Why Terrorists Attacked
America

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forces do.

If Yaron Brook and ARI don't exhaust themselves with speeches and appearances, in time Objectivism will come to dominate the political thinking. All the other groups are capable of compromise, whereas Objectivism is not. This stops the rationalizers and compromisers cold, and they have nothing to say, nothing to add, nothing to refute. You've heard especially Yaron on TV and on the radio expound the philosophy of individual rights and handily discard or rebut objections and reservations about the necessity of a consistent policy of individual rights, that is, a moral philosophy based on the nature of man, and not on religion or utilitarianism (capitalism and freedom promote the greatest good for the greatest number, etc.). He doesn't give an inch. He doesn't concede the fallacies of any of his opponents.

I agree with you that many Americans are now emerging tentatively from what Jack Frake and Hugh Kenrick might have called their "Plato's caves." Some are blinking, others are shutting their eyes or sidling back into the caves. They don't matter. And some are bravely moving ahead. But it is we, the new Sons of Liberty, who never inhabited those caves, who are the point men in this conflict. Objectivists are now running and contributing to dozens of "committees of correspondence" today.

Remember also that all throughout the pre-Revolutionary period and during the war itself, the population here remained roughly divided in thirds: one-third loyalist, one-third neutral dross, and one-third that fought for independence or supported it. You cite the overwhelming number of people in the "masses." The "masses" don't count. Look what happened in Iran. For days hundreds of thousands of Iranians took to the streets and had running fights with the mullahs' armed thugs and their "thought police," but the numbers of the protestors didn't matter. They probably outnumbered the thugs. They were moved not by radical ideas, but by emotions. Their protests had to peter out. They have only a vague glimmering of "freedom" and worse yet some notion of "democracy," which they associate with freedom. Well, "majority rule," or those who support Ahmadinejad, spoke, and that was "democracy." I haven't observed any evidence, through the news, that anyone there has grasped that. (And I think that the U.S.'s Voice of America broadcasts to Iran and other countries ruled by dictatorships do more harm than good, because in a mealy mouthed way, they also promote "democracy"; this is the confused confusing already confused minds.)

Of course, victory for us isn't guaranteed. It wasn't guaranteed for the Founders, either. How it will all end, and when, is an open question. If Obama and the Democrats move to their final folly, which is censorship (and we know they very much would like to silence any and all moral opposition), then we may see actual rebellion against government force, and that may or may not be a good thing, given the state of the culture. It could backfire, as some Objectivists elsewhere have noted, and only provoke the government to impose even more stringent controls, and possibly result in the arrest of the most

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The fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 did not usher in capitalism. It merely replaced communism with socialism.

Israel Has A Moral Right To Its Life

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The alternative to the dogmatism of the religious right and the emotionalism of the egalitarian left is a code of moral absolutes based on reason and individualism.

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outspoken and rational critics. The statist is too close to their final goal, a "democratic" dictatorship in which everyone exists in support of and for the sake of the state, to concede rationality in any quarter or on any issue. If that end can only be achieved by becoming bestial, they'll have nothing to lose and won't hesitate to bloody a few heads (and that may be their undoing -- or not).

One thing we should not doubt -- and I noted this in "Obama contra Churchill" and in past commentaries -- is that if they cannot exercise complete political power over the country, they would rather see it die or descend into anarchy. That's their death premise. No one should underestimate their viciousness. The obvious glee with which they legislate our freedom away will be matched by their bottomless malice for any resistance. Fundamentally, it's as much "either/or" for the statist as it is for the advocates of a philosophy of reason, who act on the life premise. You can see it in their faces and hear it in their words. Their capacity for evil is sustained only by the confusion and mixed premises of their current and future victims. *Atlas Shrugged* dramatized that in no uncertain terms.

A major problem is the state of the American spirit. Generations of dumbing-down and educational indoctrination can't be undone during a single repressive administration (which is how the Obama administration can only be characterized). Perhaps Americans will wake up quickly to their peril, perhaps not. They must be taught the value of freedom. Many do not even know what it is, and many don't put a value on it. Where the Founders had the advantage of the spread of Enlightenment ideas, and a population receptive to them, we have the disadvantage of the decline of those ideas, and a population largely indifferent to or ignorant of them. This is quite an obstacle.

All we can do for now is keep on arguing, talking, writing, and protesting, to get as many people on our side as possible. To paraphrase Rand, by fighting for our future, we are living it now. For the moment, this is all that is within our power to do.

Long Live Lady Liberty!

Edward Cline is a novelist who has written on the revolutionary war period. He is author of the *Sparrowhawk* series of novels set in England and Virginia in the Revolutionary period, the detective novel *First Prize*, the suspense novel *Whisper the Guns*, and of numerous published articles, book reviews and essays.

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