

Node # 4013

**Transparency will be based on  
-- a level playing field --  
with equal democratic rights for all**

**No cargo cult will be able to dominate  
the democratic platform  
that will emerge from the left**

Ben Seattle -- October 4, 2020 -- x04.601.pm  
posted at <http://communism.org/node/4013>

“Fate leads the willing, the reluctant are dragged.”  
— Cleanthes of Assos, ~ 200 B.C.E.

Hi Salvador,

I have had time to read more carefully this mistaken opinion you gave to me in your capacity as a moderator (I have used xxxx below in order to comply with moderator requirements):

- > You are basically calling to make of xxxx
- > a broader media platform for the left,
- > which still evolve around the promotion
- > of the xxxx, even if not under their
- > current line

You are mistaken and confused, and I will explain why.

**(1)** The "broader media platform for the left" (as you call it) will not be controlled by xxxx or by any particular group, or grouping of groups, or corporation, or government. Neither will it be controlled by any combination of the above.

**(2)** For me to say this certainly goes against prevailing wisdom.

I don't care. It is still true.

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**The "means of production" for our platform  
will be a big blackboard in the cloud**

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**(3)** The "broader media platform for the left" will be run, in a democratic way, by the working class.

**(4)** The above will happen for two reasons:

(a) From the perspective of independent class politics, it is **absolutely necessary**.

(b) It is **now possible to do this technically**, by means of the block chain and massively redundant distributed storage.

In other words, **there is no longer a need for a "single point of control" that can throttle the information, shut up and isolate the critics, and rule the roost.**

The opposite is now true.

**(5)** In the struggles for control that will take place--the democratic element will be overwhelmingly successful--because the "**means of production" of the platform** will always remain in democratic hands.

In other words, a democratic platform will be based on a **public database** and public, democratic algorithms based on **open source**

**code.** Any attempt by **anyone** to grab control of the platform and shut down critics will result in oppositional forces simply starting with their current copies of the database and code and setting up a new site to which users will flock.

The **basic idea here is simple.** In the early days of the internet it was said that it **interprets censorship as damage and simply routes around it.** This basic idea still holds. Activists simply need to realize that the time has come to take the action necessary create a democratic platform based on this principle.

**(6)** With an distributed immutable ledger, the proletariat will (essentially) have **a big blackboard in the cloud** that anyone will be able to write to--and anyone will be able to read. This has never before been possible.

This is going to happen--and no force on earth will be able to stop it.

**(7)** As this happens, this appears likely to set in motion a **chain reaction of consciousness** that will prove **more powerful** than the other famous chain reaction that made headline news in 1945.

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**Critical mass of support will require  
democratic rights for users**  
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**(8)** It is obviously my hope that the xxxx works to help promote the idea of a "broader media platform for the left". However, in the long run--if they and all of their clone trotskyist cargo cults refuse to lift a finger to make this happen--then **it will still happen.**

**(9)** Where you are mistaken is in thinking that the xxxx would (somehow) have the ability to control this thing.



**(10)** They would not.

**(11)** The left needs a media platform that is based on the **democratic rights** of those who use it.

**(12)** A media platform that is **not** based on those rights will **go nowhere**--because few will support it.

**(13)** On the other hand, once such a platform emerges--which has a genuinely democratic character on the basis of these democratic rights--it will get **plenty of support.**

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(14) In other words:

**The platform that emerges will be democratic--because otherwise it will never gain the critical mass of support it will need to be able to emerge.**

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**Movings things forward will require sunlight**  
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(15) As far as how some have described the internal culture and practices of the xxxx -- I can say two things:

(a) I have no direct evidence or reliable knowledge whatsoever, and

(b) something in my brain tells me that these descriptions are highly likely to be accurate--because they fit such a well-known pattern. So many times in the past, it has turned out that "where there is smoke there is fire".

(16) The conclusion that I believe most would make, is that moving things forward will require sunlight. We need to welcome transparency rather than attempting to hide from it.

Everything else will be details.

(17) Of course, we also keep in mind that people have a right to privacy, and (more to the point) we live in a class divided society in which the representatives of capital will use any excuse to crush or repress any organization which tells people the truth and organizes the workers to defend their own class interests.

But if I expose the xxxx for failing to lift a finger to work toward the **democratic aggregation of content** from all organizations which claim to support the struggle to **end the rule of capital**--then I am not infringing on anyone's privacy, nor am I assisting the state with repression.

(18) It is not uncommon for groups of this sort to run into trouble with things that happen, because bad things can happen when group loyalty distorts people's perceptions and perspective, and we live in a culture in which people are conditioned to exploit others.

(19) But if bad things happen in these kinds of groups, so do good things, because groups like this often do a lot of good work in various ways: they often help workers organize struggles and give publicity to these struggles.

Sometimes they give workers advice which is helpful. Sometimes they give advice which is the opposite of helpful.

(20) This is why we need transparency. **Only with transparency can we separate the good from the bad.**

(21) As materialists, we look at the big picture, and we are confident that political transparency will make it possible for people to understand both the good and the bad--and to take appropriate actions or measures as will follow from the understanding that grows out of political transparency.

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**A level playing field**

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**(22)** The way forward is a platform based on a **level playing field--** in which **no person or group has a privileged position that gives them the ability to effectively censor or entirely restrict the flow of information from their critics.**

**(23)** The democratic platform that will emerge would not be controlled by the xxxx, or any other groups of gatekeepers or power-brokers, because, with democratic rights for the users--the xxxx would end up losing control even if they started out with this control. That is how it works. That is what everyone who is serious about overthrowing the rule of capital needs to know.

**(24)** **The weapon of transparency is unlike any other kind of weapon--because in serious struggle it overwhelmingly favors the side of truth.**

In terms of military theory, transparency is an asymmetric weapon.

**(25)** We need to be able to have a conversation like adults.

We are not children. We are not a product. We are not a commodity. We must have the ability to talk, not only as adults, but as those who are determined to end the rule of capital.

**(26)** That means we are not afraid of sunlight. We welcome it.

**(27)** Finally, I hope you will understand if I come across as being somewhat confrontational.

Maybe the simple truth is that, at some level, I need to have some kind of confrontation in order to remember that I am alive.

I am old, my time is limited, and I am simply unable to motivate myself to engage in any kind of discussion with someone--where I need to bite my tongue or hold my breath. There will be plenty of time for that when I am dead.

I am genuinely interested in hearing your thoughtful comments, questions and criticisms of this letter.

Some are on this earth for the same reason I am. Those are the people with whom I wish to connect.

Respectfully,  
Ben Seattle

This thread is archived at: <http://communism.org/node/4013>