

Ten Suggestions for Leftist Militants

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1. Keep indignation alive

Periodically, verify that you really are a leftist. Adopt Norberto Bobbio's criteria: the right considers social inequality as natural as the difference between day and night. The left, to the contrary, sees social inequality as an aberration to be eradicated.

Be careful: you may be contaminated by the virus of social-democracy, whose principal symptom is using the methods of the right to obtain conquests for the left and, in cases of conflict, of displeasing the little people so as not to upset the powerful.

2. The head thinks where the feet stand.

It is impossible to be a leftist without dirtying one's shoes in the soil where the people live, struggle, suffer, enjoy and celebrate their beliefs and victories. To engage in theory without practice is to play the game of the right.

3. Do not be ashamed of believing in socialism.

The scandal of the Inquisition does not make Christians abandon the values and ideals of the Gospels. Similarly, the failure of socialism in Eastern Europe should not lead you to erase socialism from the horizon of human history.

Capitalism, already at work for 200 years, has failed the majority of the world's population. Today we are 6 thousand million inhabitants. According to the World Bank, 2,800 million survive on less than 2 dollars per day, and 1,200 million on less than one dollar per day. That the globalization of misery is not even greater is thanks to Chinese socialism, that, in spite of its mistakes, assures food, health and education to 1,200 million people.

4. Be critical without losing self-criticism.

Many militants from the left change sides after they start rationalizing their failures. Excluded by power, they become bitter and accuse their comrades of errors and hesitations. As Jesus says, they see the straw in the other's eye and not the plank in their own. Nor do they commit themselves to improving things. They just remain as mere spectators and judges, and, little by little, they are co-opted by the system.

Self-criticism not only consists of recognizing our own mistakes but accepting the criticism of comrades.

5. Know how to differentiate between a militant and a "mili-fool".

A "mili-fool" is one who presumes to be everywhere, who participates in all the events and movements, and acts on all the fronts. His speech is full of big words and the effects of his actions are superficial. The militant deepens his links with the people, studies, reflects, meditates; becomes well-versed in one defined area and aspect of action or activity, and values his organic links and

community projects.

6. Be rigorous in the ethics of militancy.

The left acts on principles. The right, on interests. A militant of the left can lose everything - liberty, work, life... but not morality. Without morality, the cause being defended and embodied is demoralized, which is an invaluable service to the right. There are yellow types masquerading as leftist militants. They are the ones who commit themselves, keeping an eye above all on their own rise to power. In the name of a collective cause, they actually seek their own personal interest. The true militant - such as Jesus, Gandhi, Che Guevarra - is a servant, always willing to give his own life so that others may live. The true militant does not feel humiliated for not being in power, nor proud for being in power. He does not confuse himself with the functions he performs.

7. Nourish yourself with the tradition of the left.

Prayer is needed to cultivate faith, tenderness to nourish a couple's love, and "going back to the sources" to keep live the mystique of militancy. Know the history of left, read (auto) biographies such as "Diary of Che in Bolivia, " and novels such as Gorki's "The Mother" or "The Grapes of Wrath" by Steinbeck.

8. Prefer the risk of making mistakes with the poor, to the pretension of being right without them.

To live with the poor is not easy. At first there is often a tendency to idealize them. Then it becomes evident that among the poor the same vices occur as in all other social groups. They are neither better or worse than other human beings. The difference is that they are poor, this is, they are persons who are unjustly and involuntarily deprived of the goods essential to a dignified life. That is why we are on their side. It is a question of justice. A leftist militant never negotiates the rights of the poor and knows how to learn from them.

9. Always defend the oppressed, even though they may not appear to be right.

The poor of the world endure so much suffering that we cannot expect of them attitudes that likewise do not always appear in the lives of those who had a refined education.

In all sectors of society there are bandits and corrupt individuals. The difference is that, in the elite, corruption occurs with the protection of the law and the bandits are defended through sophisticated economic mechanisms that allows a speculator to carry whole nation to ruin. Life is the greatest gift of God. The existence of poverty cries out to the heavens. Never hope to be understood by those who favor the oppression of the poor.

10. Make prayer an antidote against alienation.

To pray is to let the spirit of God question you. Many times we stop praying so as to not hear the divine call that demands our conversion, this is, a change in our way of living. We talk like militants and live like the bourgeois, comfortable or in the easy position of judges of those who struggle.

To pray is to let God subvert our existence, teaching us to love as Jesus loved, a liberating form of love.

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P.S.

* <http://www.maltastar.com/dart/20120404-ten-suggestions-for-the-leftist-militant>

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