

# Red Republicans and Lincoln's Marxists: Marxism in the Civil War

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## The American System and Socialism

The answer lies in an idea of strong central government promoted by Alexander Hamilton, passed on to Henry Clay, and finally making its way into the White House through the election of Abraham Lincoln. The "American System" as it was called is defined by the authors as "nothing less than an attempt to increase the power of the Federal government beyond that which the Constitution authorizes." Clay, a politician Lincoln modeled himself after, was an advocate of centralized banking, internal improvements, and protective tariffs all of which conflicted with the Constitution and promoted a centralized state. Sometimes these policies are referred to as "State Capitalism," a system in which the government favors certain businesses and regions over others in exchange for favors and vice-versa. It goes without saying that it takes a strong central government to impose a system of redistribution. The communist transformation (note: communist and socialist meant the same thing in 1860) of America gained legitimacy under the leadership of the early Republican party due to these policies. If we compare the *Communist Manifesto* to Lincoln's actions we can see this quite clearly. The Manifesto calls for a "heavy progressive or graduated income tax." In comparison, Lincoln signed the Legal Tender Act in 1862, and the national currency acts in 1863 and 1864. Instantly a system of nationally chartered banks were created and a federally run national banking monopoly was born. One of the leading supporters for nationalizing banking, (R) John Sherman of Ohio proclaimed, "Nationalize as much as possible [and thereby] make men love their country before their states." In 1862 Lincoln signed America's first income tax into law creating the first IRS service. Another idea supported by both Lincoln and Marx was Federal involvement in education. In 1862, Lincoln signed the Morrill act, named for Senator Justin Morrill who defended it this way: "The role

of the national government is to mold the character of the American people.” Instantly money that was made through Federal land grant sales went to funding colleges. It goes without saying that Washington controlled the curriculum. In Carl Sandburg’s six-volume account of the life of Lincoln he highlights something conservatives should find disturbing. When referring to Robert Owen’s (an early American socialist) utopia it is said that “the scheme lighted up Lincoln’s heart.” It is for these reasons that columnist Vin Suprynowicz has called Lincoln and his most ardent supporters “American Bolsheviks.”



### **Communists in the Ranks**

The communist connections and participants in Lincoln’s War emphasized by *Red Republicans* are too numerous to mention within the limited space here, so for times sake I will mention some of the more influential men and important connections. After the failed socialist revolutions of 1848 which encompassed most of the European continent, many German, English, Hungarian, Bavarian, etc. atheistic socialists flocked to the United States having been banned from their homelands for treason. Ironically just about all of them wound up in the North (for a number of factors including an already strong progressive movement brought on by *Transcendentalists and Unitarians*) as ardent supporters of the Republican party. During the first GOP convention one of the main objectives of the Forty-Eighters was to assure that “Puritans and native born Americans” would not control the party. The Germans, being the largest of the immigrant groups, contributed the greatest to Lincoln’s election. Frederick Engels (Marx’s brother in arms) pointed out, “had it not been for the experienced soldiers who had entered America after the European revolution — especially from Germany — the organization of the

Union army would have taken still longer than it did.” The first GOP convention included 19 German -American delegates, most of whom were forty-eighters some of whom were personal friends of Marx and Engels. In fact, the GOP platform included protection of voting rights for foreign-born citizens and promotion of the Homestead Act under the nickname of the “Dutch” (i.e. German) planks. Lincoln valued the German vote so much that he even secretly purchased a German newspaper, the Illinois Staats Anzeiger before his election. In fact, just about every, if not all, of the German communist participants highlighted in *Red Republicans* were at some point journalists for German newspapers in the U.S.. It was the “default” vocation for exiled socialists.

A couple of the more influential German Forty-Eighters (i.e. communist revolutionaries) in the GOP were Carl Schurz who was a GOP delegate, Lincoln supporter, minister to Spain in Lincoln’s administration, General in the Union Army, Secretary of the Interior under Hays, senator from Missouri, journalist, and president of the National Civil Service Reform League (a position he used to disenfranchise Native Americans just as he had the South). Franz Sigel served as a general in the Union Army and became the superintendent of the St. Louis Public School system. It is worthy of mentioning that the uniforms of the Third Regiment of Missouri under his command had been customized to resemble the socialist revolutionary uniforms worn in Germany in 1849. Friedrich Karl Franz Hecter who led the German revolution was a key player in obtaining the German vote for Lincoln, he also led a German regiment in the war. August Willich, a personal friend of Marx (Marx described him as a “communist at heart”) recruited more than 1,500 German soldiers and became a Union General. Louis Blenker was General of the 8th New York Infantry and gained a reputation in Northern Virginia as a looter from the way in which he commanded his men to steal from the civilian population. Edward Solomon and two of his three brothers became Generals (the 4th was a Sergeant) in the Union Army, he himself became governor of Wisconsin. Another Edward Solomon (unrelated, who was a bit young to be a forty-eighter, yet was still a socialist) became a General under General Grant and was awarded the

appointment of governor of the Washington territory from President Grant. Friedrich Kapp, a newspaper man after the German revolution, was an elector for the GOP and became the commissary of immigration in 1867. Fritz and Mathilde Anneka were influential German revolutionaries who were also friends with Karl Marx and supported the Union war effort through speeches and journalism. Mathilde went on to be one of the original radical feminists in the United States. Karl Heizman was also a journalist and became an advocate of terrorism against the South by attacking civilians and women and children (an idea unfortunately implemented). Joseph Weydemeyer was a close associate of Marx's the Annekes and Willich starting the first Marxist organization in the U.S., the Proletarian League of New York, and starting two socialist newspapers which favored Lincoln. Peter Joseph Osterhaus became a postwar military governor in Vicksburg after serving under General Sherman. Max Weber migrated to New York from Germany to become a General in the Union Army, an IRD agent (modern day IRS), and finally a U.S. consul to Naples.

When we turn our attention to the Non-German socialists the connection between the Republican government and socialism becomes even more clear. It is thought that Lincoln himself offered Giuseppe Garibaldi, the Italian leader of socialism against the Pope the position of commander of Union forces, a position Garibaldi declined upon Lincoln's refusal to reframe the war as being "anti-slavery." Two of the members of John Brown's gang were Forty-Eighters (from Bavaria and Vienna). Frederick Hassaurek from Vienna edited a German newspaper in Cincinnati, campaigned for John Fremont (the first Republican candidate for president), and became a diplomat to Ecuador under Lincoln. Julius Staul, a Hungarian revolutionary, became the US consul to Japan and Shanghai after serving under Fremont in the Union Army as a General. Fremont's chief of staff was Alexander Asboth, also from Hungary. He went on to become a U.S. diplomat to Argentina. In fact, Fremont (the famous explorer, GOP presidential candidate, and general) is so connected with socialism judging from the men he surrounded himself with, most of whom are

not included in this review, that it leaves little doubt that he himself was a socialist. The commander of Fort Delaware (a notorious Union prison camp in which captured Confederates were tortured and killed) was Hungarian revolutionary Albin Francisco Schoepf. Thomas Francis Meagher was an influential Irishman who helped substantially in the raising and commanding New York's Irish Brigade. He was also a journalist, lecturer, and not to mention a convicted criminal having been first deported to Australia (penal colony) by Great Britain. Lorez Brentano, another Forty-Eighter became a senator from Illinois and served as a U.S. ambassador to Dresden.

Many of the early republican socialist leaders weren't foreign at all. John C. Fremont was the first Republican presidential candidate, Senator John Sherman was General William T. Sherman's brother, General Sherman himself was on a list of "approved communists", Charles A. Dana who was according to Lincoln the "eyes of the administration" was Assistant Secretary of War and a very close friend of Marx and Engels. Horace Greeley, a committed communist, hired Dana as an editor for his paper *The New York Tribune*, and included Karl Marx as a columnist. If we broadened our margins to include Unitarian, Transcendentalist, and other Utopian humanists supporters of the Union we would have a very large list of influential socialists indeed.



### **Hitler and Lincoln**

Having recently finished *Mein Kampf* part I, I find it almost laughable to hear modern conservatives compared to Adolph Hitler. Hitler was nothing more than a "National Socialist" which is what the Nazi party stood for. His railings against communism were over a slight

disagreement in their method of class warfare and international socialism. He chose race/cultural warfare instead of class, however still maintaining the basic principles of socialism (save perhaps destruction of the family). It is interesting to note that Hitler had much in common with Lincoln (No I'm not saying Lincoln was a Nazi).

Hitler stated in Mein Kampf

*The states that make up the American Union are mostly in the nature of territories. . . formed for technical administrative purposes. These states did not and could not possess sovereign rights of their own. Because it was the Union that created most of these so-called states.*

Abraham Lincoln said:

*The Union is older than the States and, in fact created them as States. The Union, and not themselves separately, procured their independence and their liberty. The Union threw off their old dependence for them and made them States, such as they are.*

Aside from being **completely wrong** historically speaking the philosophy behind both statements is also wrong. Hitler believed in a Reich that would last 1,000 years. In other words a "perpetual" empire, insofar as human governments can be ongoing. Lincoln believed that the nation would "**not perish from the earth.**" Since neither Lincoln nor Hitler were **Christians** in the orthodox sense it is doubtful that their token statements about God from a Christian perspective were legitimate. It is more likely that as master politicians they were able to fulfill the expectations of religious people while pursuing a centralized God-like state with their actions. Actions do speak louder than words. And Hitler's actions were akin to Lincoln's. The authors state:

*. . .the Federal Republic of Germany was composed of twenty-five German states. . . free, independent, and sovereign. . .One of the first things done by Hitler. . . was to deny any claim of state sovereignty by these states and to consolidate all power into one big government.*

Placing a government in a position of perpetuity is to ascribe to it an attribute of God, and deny Him the right to divide a people as He did

at Babel and as He'll do when He returns. It places man's faith in a "stable" system instead of a stable God.

### **Conclusion**

At the very least it should be mildly disturbing to hear that Hitler and Marx were named among the fans of Lincoln, and it should call into question just how "Republican" in the conservative sense Lincoln truly was. Far from being a sole indictment against Lincoln however, we should call into question the whole origin of the GOP. Are they truly conservative if they look back to Lincoln for inspiration? They were the original party to allow socialists to gained admittance into the U.S. government, which ushered in the progressive era of Roosevelt, Wilson, and FDR. It's clear that a "renewal" is not the answer for the GOP, but rather a complete start from scratch. Either that or the creation of a third-party that will adhere to the Constitution and stop trampling on the rights of states and people like both parties have been in the habit of doing over the past 150 years. Still, it is the principles of God that will save this nation, the God that Hitler, Marx, and Lincoln rejected, not political parties. It is a battle of humanism vs. Christianity and only revival in the orthodox Christian sense has any hope of restoring the government of the United States.