

# **A Response to Ziq's 'Red Revolution' Rant**

**A Marxist Critique of Post-Left Lifestylism**

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## Part 1: “Harm Reduction”

Industrial societies all eventually lead to ecocide, without exception.

Such is the contradiction of man: in the pursuit of overcoming nature’s restraints to survive, he begins to destroy the very foundation that birthed him. But no one can step into a time machine and shout to our ancient ancestors, “Cease at once! Do not plant seeds, do not build shelters, do not tame fire!” That moment has passed. The evolutionary path we took wasn’t chosen by fate or god. It was shaped by necessity, by struggle, and by experimentation. Through trial and error humanity became a species that makes, builds, and uses. We cannot rewind the process that brought us here. But what do these people propose? *To be fair*, they list these as “hard reduction” but however, you are still partaking in the circulation of commodities, therefore, partaking fully in “industrial society” but let us hear this individual out.

Here’s an example of several levels of harm reduction that can measurably make a difference. Things that stone-faced reds will no doubt decry as “lifestylist” simply because they don’t succeed in immediately overthrowing capitalism and bringing on a communist utopia:

- Eating vegan locally-grown pesticide-free unprocessed food is absolutely more ethical than eating imported processed meat.

Absolute genius. Why didn’t I think of that before? Let’s see how much “vegan locally-grown pesticide-free unprocessed food” costs. Let’s ask the single mother working three jobs. Let’s ask the broke college student with no kitchen. Let’s ask the rural town flooded with dollar stores and poisoned groundwater. And let’s ask the global south, where your “local” vegan food comes from and your “ethically sourced” avocados are picked. A pound of dry beans at Walmart costs, on average, \$1.40. The organic, local, ethical variety? \$4.50. Over three times the price. But anarchists like Ziq propose:

Vegan diets, bicycling, dumpster diving, upcycling, guerilla gardening, permaculture, squatting, illegalism, food forestry, communes, self-sufficiency,

The global capitalists are certainly shaking in their boots right now, terrified of losing control of their oil fields, their cobalt mines, their shipping lanes, their slave-labor plantations, and their multinational logistics networks, all thanks to some kids planting kale in abandoned lots with mold and leftover pesticides, dumpster diving behind Taco Bell at 3 a.m. and getting food poisoning, or hopping trains and larping as modern-day vagabonds while their dad works at Lockheed Martin. (Not a personal jab at Ziq, I don’t know what they do, but I have seen these trust fund larpers all too often)

These reds are well-versed in workerist rhetoric, and see all lifestyle choices as “a distraction” from the global proletarian revolution they see as their singular goal.

The state doesn’t care if you eat vegan. Capital doesn’t blink when you bicycle. Chevron will not be toppled by your food forest. Yes, they are distractions. They are commodified resistance, placing the blame at the individual level and avoiding any real systematic changes. Since all systems lead to the same outcomes for these anarchists, they refuse to build anything new. Instead, they fall back on liberal notions that if you just buy more paper straws, the climate crisis will be solved. NO! Only through the toppling of the capitalist mode of production, and the establishment of the socialist mode of production and the proletarian state, which is capable of abolishing the profit motive, centrally planning production, restricting destructive industries, and enforcing ecological limits, can we end the chaos of market-driven overproduction and confront the climate crisis with the scale, coordination, and authority it demands.

But this isn’t the case for Ziq. They proceed to criticize that the world’s first proletarian state dared to industrialize, Magnitogorsk in 1929. How dare they build steel. How dare they improve living

conditions for the Russian peasants and have the steel to beat the Nazis. Then they list the Aral Sea and the Baku oil fields. All three of these have their negative impacts, as Ziq listed. However: without Magnitogorsk and the Baku oil field, the Soviets would have been steamrolled by the German fascists. But this isn't a concern for Ziq, because at the end of the day, fascist Germany and the Soviet Union are both evil, totalitarian, industrial states, so they must be the same thing.

But then Ziq wouldn't be able to post all of this nonsense, or even have access to a computer or phone, as they'd be rotting in a concentration camp because the Soviet Union couldn't beat the Germans, all because someone on the internet criticized them for industrializing, when instead they could have just done ethical consumption.

At the end of this they say:

These are just 3 examples of devastating ecocide caused by the push for industrial growth (which is required to achieve communism according to Marx), and they of course only ever achieved more capitalism and more misery, because industrialism and the continued pursuit of menial labor will not liberate people.

As if this person ever read Marx to begin with. "More misery"? The misery of ending illiteracy, electrifying villages, giving women legal equality, raising life expectancy, and turning peasants who once starved in famines into workers who at least had bread, housing, and schools. A truly dreadful fate.

He goes on to assume that the worker "...won't vote to scale down their industry or its environmental impact as their livelihoods depend on their industry's growth" because "the wholesale destruction of our planet will not slow down one bit just by instituting a power-shift from bosses to workers". Now, the contradiction between industry and ecology would not simply vanish because socialism, or what he assumes to be socialism, has changed the dynamic between "bosses and workers" because that is not the dynamic that is at stake here, and because socialism will change the contradiction, it will no longer be blind expansion due to the guiding hand of the free market but because socialism will have transformed society to be fully conscious of its economy and plan it accordingly, but poor Ziq is still haunted by bourgeois ideology, instead of progressing forward beyond it, he negates it in his own head and cannot think about anything else other than what capital demands, and goes into fatalist hysterics, but what does Ziq purpose here? Let us go on further

Eating vegan locally-grown pesticide-free unprocessed food is absolutely more ethical than eating imported processed meat.

We already covered that

Buying seeds / cuttings / grafts and growing your own food in a community garden, as well as dumpster diving from outside supermarkets is more ethical than buying locally grown food from a for-profit business.

Seeds don't fall from the heavens nor do all the tools necessary for this. Buying seeds is buying a commodity produced, packaged, distributed, and sold under capitalism. You're still feeding the very industrial system, the same way your neighbor down the street is. The seed industry is one of the most monopolized sectors on Earth (Monsanto, Bayer, Syngenta). So congratulations, you're still feeding the same slave labour. Kids as young as 6-14, forced to pollinate cotton flowers by hand, often in debt-bondage arrangements. Long hours, pesticide exposure, sometimes outright trafficking.

And are you going to hand-carve a spade out of driftwood? You need shovels, hoes, gloves, watering cans, hoses, maybe an irrigation system, iron nails, rope, all forged in steel plants, transported on fossil-fuel supply chains, and sold in hardware stores. Every tool drags the garden back into the "ecocide" you pretend to transcend beyond as "less harmful" You need, nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium. Where do you get them? Synthetic fertilizer produced by industrial-scale fossil-fuel intensive Haber-Bosch processes?

Even “rainwater collection” requires barrels, filters, metal spigots, all manufactured commodities, and unless you want your crops eaten alive, you’ll use pesticides or fungicides, again, industrial. If you refuse, good luck feeding yourself on half-chewed kale leaves and wilted tomatoes. Now let’s list the diseases you can bring home by dumpster diving:

- Salmonella
- E. coli
- Hepatitis A
- Listeria
- Norovirus
- Botulism

And broken glass, spoiled meat juices, rat urine, mold spores, and the occasional hypodermic needle. A fun way to live your anarchist dream, until you end up in the ER, treated with antibiotics produced by the very “industrial civilization” you hate. But at least they admit it’s downsides

Downsides: Native flora is displaced in favor of domesticated food crops. Land ownership feeds the state via taxes (unless you use squatted land to plant the garden). Living in a city means you’ll still be consuming a lot of things you can’t produce yourself in your limited space. But again, this is a measurable improvement over the previous scenario.

It’s really not, it won’t put a dent in “industrial society”, it’s just to make yourself feel better. But wait until you hear this profound notion:

Moving out of the city to a rural area and living as a subsistence farmer to grow all your own food in a food forest you plant, giving away or trading your surplus. Foraging for food where it’s sustainable to do so. Planting trees on every unused piece of land you see.

Pack up your iPhones everybody, time to go LARP as a peasant, praying that Demeter, Helios, and Zeus doesn’t decide to smite you one day, and you’ll still need all the already listed tools to make this sustainable for yourself and for the people that rely on this food forest, thus still not doing any harm reduction. And planting trees everywhere sounds good but just make sure it isn’t an invasive species.

When a group of people choose to e.g. not consume cow products, that directly creates less demand for cow products.

Cow productions can include meats and dairy and pastries, without cow there is no milk, without milk there is no pastries, without milk there is no cheese, a lot of these foods are cultural staples, the same way you assume that the workers are just going to mindlessly expand production no matter the change in social & economic modes of production, the same way I am going to assume that just because 5 people decided to boycott all cow productions one day, doesn’t mean that 8 billion people are going to stop too, or at least a sufficient enough, to stop or even make a difference. Production of a certain commodity that has become so ingrained in daily life for most people on earth will not stop, and you aren’t doing any less harm reduction because you stopped as well, it’s like pouring water from a plastic water bottle onto a forest fire. Yet he cries out for a vegan cultural revolution. Their only solution is to interact with people and hope that you can convince them to completely change their lifestyle and routine, that is unrealistic unfortunately and we cannot rely on that to change anything.

## Part 2: Vegan Cultural Revolution

There needs to be a cultural shift that precedes and guides any revolutionary movement otherwise you'll just end up replicating capitalism like Marxists have done time and time again. People who live destructive consumerist lifestyles that cause ecocide in exchange for fleeting material comforts won't be capable of shifting to ethical lifestyles just because "the revolution" happened.

And you expect them to change their lifestyles now? You think people who have commodity fetishism drilled into their head since the day they were in the womb, will change their lifestyle now? And when the mode of production, which is the basis for all social development, transforms into production for need, instead of commodities, which at a certain point, forever rids the human brain of commodity fetishism which you describe as just "consumerism" you think that won't have a bigger impact, than your isolated food forests? Don't get me wrong, I think practicing all of that is great, and lovely, just don't pretend that's better than changing the engine of social existence itself and don't put yourself on the moral high ground because it's more "ethical" when it isn't

Reds will tell you with a straight face that capitalism is to blame for the cruise industry's rampant polluting, and 'after the revolution', the cruise industry would do no harm because it would be worker-managed.

No serious "Communist/Red" believes worker-management of the cruise industry would purify the oceans. This is a strawman so brittle it dissolves under contact. Realistically socialist planning would not enshrine useless pleasure ships, it would abolish or repurpose industries that have no rational social function. And cruises are on the list to get rid of in my opinion. To equate socialism with 'free cruises for all' is to confess you've never grappled with what a planned economy actually means or you're dealing with unserious people who never gave you a realistic plan ahead for society.

They go on to remark that "Consumption under capitalism (or socialism) isn't ethical, but that's no excuse for inaction" and they proceed to say that any of what they propose is serious action against "industrial society", people taking apart pipelines and going face to face with armed cops are doing more action against "industrial society".

We can have small local revolutionary action in the here and now that can lead the way to sustained change at a wider level. Just ask the Zapatistas and similar indigenous and anti-civ anarchist movements around the world.

Localized events right now, have not spread at the 'wider level' they have failed, or are only specific to local areas, as of 2025 the Zapatistas have been dissolved, in 2023, the EZLN has announced the dissolution of its main political structures, they have completely failed. And like any unread person, they say that the revolution won't happen because the world is too fragmented and localized,

too diverse to be molded into a uniform entity controlled by a 19<sup>th</sup> century ideology designed to serve European factory workers.

If you went up to this person and ask them to define "proletariat" you won't get a response out of them that is any close to the materialist definition. You sell your labour power for a certain time to someone who owns a property but lets you use it, but you yourself have no property, that is a worker, retail workers, baristas, warehouse workers, restaurant staff, drivers and couriers, factory workers, call center employees, healthcare workers, construction workers, clerical and office staff, teachers, and tech workers, if none of these people own property and are dependant on their work to live, that is proletarian. To quote a mutual of mine

The proletariat is not a homogeneous, undifferentiated, and abstract universal. It is a concrete universal refracting itself into a rainbow particular modalities (of race, gender, nationality, and so on) that the universal alienated class is lived and experienced through.

## Part 3: Strawmans after strawmans

Now for the fun bit:

Reds! Listen up, friends. Mocking people for caring about minimizing the harm they do and for thinking long and hard about the ethical implications of their actions doesn't make you somehow more radical than them. It just makes you a smug fuck. I don't care how many marches you've waved your shiny red flag at. Being able to recite the words of a long-dead white philosopher doesn't make you special, so shut up about "lifestylism" already.

When we see exploitation and engage in direct action to fight it, that doesn't make our fight useless. We have to live in this world and people are dying in it. All around us scores of people are suffering and dying. To ignore that and do nothing because our actions to relieve that suffering won't install communism to free the sacred workers from their bosses would be fucked.

1. You have done a lot of mocking in this article but I'll grant you that people have been mean to you
2. There is nothing minimizing about lifestyleism it's just another commodified way of life dressed in radical aesthetics, and it won't make a dent on the present state of things
3. You go to show that you haven't picked up a book on this "long-dead white philosopher" because it's more than just reciting words but you wouldn't know that
4. I don't think you are helping workers become less alienated and you're certainly not making a dent on the industrial-agricultural leviathan
5. There wouldn't be workers under communism, the proletariat kills itself under communism, making society just be made up of human beings, which would be closer to begin undoing the mess of the climate disaster because we aren't bound by classes anymore, and we are free to do with our lives, what we please

They keep blabbing about how reds = capitalism because they both = industry, which we have already demonstrated to be quite the inaccurate statement, I don't think I need to touch on this part of the article, its called "Capitalism & Communism Are Cut From the Same Exploitative Industrial Cloth". I don't think I need to bother, but they make a good point here, that "The 'Communist Party of China' is perhaps the most powerful upholder of capitalism in the world today per capita." Thank you Ziq, down with the Dengist revisionists!

I am not going to bother with good chunk of what follows after that section you can read it yourself, but I do want to highlight something important to touch on here:

If you think your average meat-and-potatoes white male worker is going to suddenly become enlightened and compassionate towards the plight of minorities when you give him the power of direct democracy, as social ecologists and other red anarchists envision, you haven't been paying close attention to the world around you. Time and time again, voters have successfully used their vote to deny rights to migrants, sex workers, trans and gay people, and anyone they see as differing from their normative standards.

They assume that we uphold the proletariat as some moral virtuous class, which is ridiculous and absurd, especially when we have third-worldists in the same broad camp of “Reds”. We do not think about the proletariat this way, it is that the universality I touched upon already with the quotes from my friend, and the shared living experiences of alienation, and objectively that they are the only remaining global class other than the bourgeoisie, the peasantry certainly still exist but they aren’t as universal as the proletariat, they are the class that makes the very stuff you use to type this nonsense, in their liberation is the liberation of all mankind, from class distinctions.

This last section we will deal with this piece by piece. They start off with

Reds expect you to put the needs of the almighty collective above your own needs, but the collective good matters little if your individual needs are ignored by the collective.

Which already sets the dumpster-fire we’re going to walk into but, you do not live in a bubble, I am sorry, but you do not, human consciousness was gained by interacting with the world around us, as we evolved, from childhood the only way you form thoughts is by interacting with the world around us, this means engaging socially with other people, your individual needs, are certainly the individual needs of others, but society won’t grant you, for example, a girlfriend, just because it’s your “individual need”.

All too often, Western reds demanding you obey the “collective good” are simply engaging in red-washed white supremacy where the “collective” just means “white working men”, and the “good” just means “our profits”. Putting the will of the dominant population in society before your own needs and desires is an incredulous proposition. The profits of the white working man should not be of any concern to e.g. a brown unemployed woman.

This part speaks for itself, I do not need to say anything, this individual has seriously not engaged with any real work on anything at all.

We can’t paint seven-billion people that have wildly different ideas of what life should be as one unified entity because they’re not one unified entity.... “the working class” in our minds makes no logical sense and does nothing but fuel the industrial wasteland rapidly decimating the entire globe. Why should all humans be seen as workers, why should each of us be measured by our capacity to produce industrial goods?

We already touched on this but to answer your question, that’s not a position by Marxists, but now we get to the part where he directly mentions Marxism and not just “reds”,

People from different places have different needs. Marxism deals with this by separating people into classes and telling us to only concern ourselves with the worker classes and to hell with the peasant classes and the hunter-gatherers and the pastoralist nomads and the “land-owner classes”.

What a work of genius, truly, we Marxists concern ourselves with every class, because we want class distinctions gone, I already touched upon why we only “concern ourselves with the worker” because literally anyone can and is becoming one, Capital is eating up the rest of what remains of the peasantry and nomadic peoples, just as it did in the industrial revolution, that’s not going to stop, until the people who produce everything around the world bring the old order down, the peasantry are self producing and are specific to certain parts of the world, they need liberation too but it can only be through the dismantling of class society that humankind in totality can be free.

The very idea of the worker class trumping everyone else is a proven recipe for colonialism and genocide. Individuals who avoid consumerism and live deliberately; apart from the



system aren't exploiting anyone, but throughout history collectivists have caused untold death and suffering trying to shape indigenous lands into their image. Collectivism is far more dangerous than "lifestylism" to anyone who would fail to fit into the collectivist's ideological dogma.

The "worker class" hasn't "trumped everyone" historically because the proletariat has never actually held power on a global scale. Colonialism was driven by bourgeois states, not democratic councils of retail workers and textile machinists. Equating worker universality with imperial domination is historically illiterate. Marxist collectivism isn't about forcing one culture to paint the world in its image, it's about abolishing class relations and establishing rational control over production. That's fundamentally different from imperial expansion, which was about capital accumulation, and saying people "living apart from the system" aren't exploiting anyone is a fairy tale. Their seeds, tools, infrastructure, digital platforms, medical care, and even land rights are embedded in global capitalist supply chains. Their hands aren't clean just because they compost. The world isn't a conflict of "races", that is Nazi talk.

Communism and other red ideologies (including the ones purporting to be anarchist) create as big an in group / out group divide as capitalism. The power just shifts to the producers rather than the owners

That's the point, but you act like Communists don't have a Plan B after this, Anarchists usually don't. We do.

The red ideologies view the entire world through a Western industrial worker-serf lens. But the whole world isn't organized like the industrial West and it's unfair to force Western values and economic systems on everyone.

I can tell you haven't read a single thing, which knowing your sect of the "post-left" you'll be against reading too. Economic modes of production dominate globally, I'm sorry to burst your bubble, the very phone or computer or whatever, whatever simple thing you buy at the store, even the store's existence, that is the capitalist mode of production, and you cannot be outside it, you don't live in a fucking bubble, grow up.

Their last piece is the end, it is a regurgitation of the same points bundled up in the conclusion "Reject Collectivism, Embrace Anarchy", they'll certainly embrace anarchy alright.

The Library of Unconventional Lives

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Dumpster dived from The Anarchist Library's deleted texts bin.

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