



The Alinsky Effect or How to Understand Barack Obama

If you want to be able to understand Obama, our Community Organizer-in-Chief, you have to read Saul Alinsky's two books, *Rules for Radicals* and *Reveille for Radicals*, which Obama read and obviously absorbed. Otherwise, you won't have a clue as to what he means by his words and actions. Those two books contain the basics of Alinsky's ideas of revolutionary radicalism which Obama spent several years learning.



Alinsky invented the idea of the Community Organizer as an alternative to what leftists believed was the only way to socialist power: violent revolution. He wrote: " 'Power comes out of a barrel of a gun' is an absurd rallying cry when the other side has all the guns.... Spouting quotes from Mao, Castro, and Che Guevara, ... are as germane to our highly technological, computerized, cybernetic, nuclear-powered, mass media society as a stagecoach on a jet runway at Kennedy airport."

He called that revolutionary strategy "political lunacy." The government, backed by the American people, would easily crush any violent revolution staged by the left. So if the revolutionary left wanted to succeed in imposing socialism on America, they would have to use a new strategy, one that took advantage of the opportunities the two-party system provided. And that required working through the system in order to overthrow it. "We are concerned," he wrote, "with how to create mass organizations to seize power and give it to the people."

Alinsky saw the world in rather crude economic terms. There were the "Haves," the rich and powerful, the "Have Nots," who lived in the ghettos of our large cities, and the "Have-a-Little and Want Mores," the middle class. The aim of his revolution was for the "Have Nots" to take the wealth and power away from the "Haves," otherwise known as the redistribution of wealth. Through the strategy of Community Organization they would be able to recruit many of the members of the middle class to help in advancing this stealth revolutionary effort.

And Alinsky was right. The people who were attracted to his philosophy of radical social change were members of the middle class like Hillary Rodham and Barack Obama. This has also been confirmed by the mobs in Madison, Wisconsin, who are mainly made up of unionized government workers and kids and adults from the middle class. The so-called "Have Nots" who live in our large city ghettos are not interested in the revolutionary doctrines that mesmerize university students. Most of them are functionally illiterate and were made that way by our public schools. The "Have Nots" are merely interested in getting more goodies from the government. But then there are the young hotheads among



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the “Have Nots” who will riot because riots make it possible to loot appliance stores and supermarkets. Alinsky sees his [Rules for Radicals](#) as a revolutionary handbook for the “Have Nots.” But it is the university educated middle class that has read the book. The “Have Nots” don’t read books, and certainly no books by radicals. They watch movies and TV. He writes: “My aim here is to suggest how to organize for power: how to get it and to use it....The revolutionary ideology is not confined to a specific limited formula.” In other words, he’s trying to convince committed leftist revolutionaries that they are going about revolution in the wrong way. The new way is stealth infiltration of the instruments of power.

Alinsky’s use of the term “Have nots” to characterize the poor is an insult to anyone who has been poor. I was brought up in a poor family. My parents arrived from Poland in the 1920s with nothing. My father became a pushcart peddler. Never did we think of our selves as “have nots.” We had a lot: our religious heritage, American freedom, an education at the public schools, which in those days were rational and patriotic, and the energy to work at whatever jobs were available. We did not envy the rich nor wanted to take from them what was rightfully theirs. In fact, many of us were ambitious and smart enough to eventually become rich. But by pinning the label “have nots” on the poor, Alinsky was able to appeal to middle class guilt over the iniquities of our capitalist society. It convinced the university revolutionaries that they would be doing a favor to the poor by stealing from the rich.

Today’s “have nots” are not like the poor of yesteryear. They have been poorly educated by our “progressive” public schools, and the welfare system has convinced them that they cannot rise up above their status. Indeed, most of the “have nots” have subsidized housing, TV sets, cars, food stamps, and other benefits the government has lavished on them. In fact, Alinsky’s revolutionaries were largely made up of “haves,” middle class students subsidized by wealthy radicals.

To Alinsky, the revolutionary organizer had to be a political relativist, with no fixed truth. He must be loose, resilient, fluid, and on the move in a society which is itself in a state of constant change. “To the extent that he is free from the shackles of dogma,” Alinsky explained, “he can respond to the realities of the widely different situations our society presents.”

In other words, the Community Organizer must be a pragmatist. Indeed, the sub-title on the cover of [Rules for Radicals](#) is: *A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals*, which more or less sums up Alinsky’s political philosophy. But whether Alinsky was a dogmatist or not, there is no escaping that what revolutionary radicals want is socialism or communism. Obama was well schooled in Marxist-Leninist socialism before he became a Community Organizer, so while he may be operating as a pragmatist, he must know that what he and his fellow radicals ultimately want is socialism. Otherwise, what is the purpose of radical revolution?

Becoming a stealth socialist meant becoming a professional liar, a deceiver, a fraud. Alinsky justified such deception by analyzing the question of means and ends. He wrote: “The man of action views the question of means and ends in pragmatic and strategic terms.... He asks of ends only whether they are achievable and worth the cost; of means, only whether they will work.”

But lying to achieve political power is not the American way. In fact, Americans applaud honesty in politicians, and abhor politicians who lie. Most Americans adhere to the basic tenets of the Ten Commandments. Thou shalt not lie. Yet, Alinsky endorsed lying as a legitimate means to a socialist end.

One of Obama’s advisors during his 2008 election campaign was Peter Dreier, chairman of the Urban and Environmental Policy Department at Obama’s old alma-mater, Occidental College. In 1982, he co-



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chaired the Democratic Socialists of America Urban and Community Commission. He was a delegate to the Democratic Socialists of America conference in New York City in October 1983.

Stanley Kurtz, in *Radical-in-Chief*, credits Dreier with formulating the stealth plan to destroy capitalism. His plan is to gradually expand government spending until the country nears fiscal collapse. At that point, a public accustomed to entitlements will presumably turn on its capitalist masters when they propose cutbacks to restore fiscal balance.

Apparently Obama has followed Dreier's plan to the letter, for he has virtually spent the federal government into near bankruptcy, expanding government debt by the trillions of dollars, thereby putting the dollar in peril as the world's reserve currency, and he is resisting Republican attempts to legislate realistic cuts in government spending. The mobs in Wisconsin are the forerunners of the mobs that the stealth socialists hope will force Republicans to give up their attempts to balance the budget, which will make it easier for the radicals to persuade Americans to replace capitalism with a new socialist economy.

But it won't work because the entire plan is built on lies and deception, and Americans expect their political leaders to be honest. Thus, the key to success for conservatives is to send people to Congress who have the backbone and determination to set things straight in Washington. Perhaps as many as 45 percent of the American people may be willing to live under a socialist system. But the other 55 percent are not. And that is sufficient to prevent the nation from abandoning the principles of government bequeathed us by the Founding Fathers.

Alinsky wrote: "Men don't like to step abruptly out of the security of familiar experience; they need a bridge to cross from their own experience to a new way. A revolutionary organizer must shake up the prevailing patterns of their lives- — agitate, create disenchantment and discontent with the current values, to produce, if not a passion for change, at least a passive affirmative, non-challenging climate."

And that is what Obama attempted to do during his campaign for the presidency when he called for "change we can believe in" and was able to get the assent of millions of adorers who had no idea what he meant by change. He was Alinsky's perfect bridge. Indeed,

David Remnick, editor of the *The New Yorker*, titled his book on the life and rise of Barack Obama, *The Bridge*. In other words, Obama is the bridge to socialism, and you would not understand the title of Remnick's book unless you had read Alinsky.



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