

Appeal to emotion or reason?

Last week's Strategy Note mentioned "corporate greed" and "the billionaire class" as terms that can mislead.

We often encounter oversimplified terms like these in speeches and writings designed to rile people up by appealing to their hatred of injustice.

We should, of course, despise injustice. But we also need to rationally understand the causes of injustice. Otherwise we have little chance of actually eliminating it.

We need to engage emotions *and* reason.

The exploiters of working people use emotion as they strive to divide and subordinate us. We need an accurate rational understanding of how this exploitative system functions to avoid getting misled by our opponents' appeal to emotions.

Appeals to negative emotions like fear (and its derivatives anger and hatred) especially tend to mislead. Fear tends to isolate us. Property, exchange, and capitalism thrive on fear. When engaging emotions, we should focus on positive emotions like love and hope.

We need appeals both to positive emotions and to reason. We humans don't make decisions just by reason. But we also shouldn't rely only on emotion. We need to engage whole people: our emotional minds *and* our rational minds.



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