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Fellow Travelers

January 17— March 8, 2024

Wyatt Niehaus and Stefano Faoro are *Fellow Travelers*.

CS Leigh's *See you at Regis Debray* will be screened at **empire on January 19th at 7pm.**

The party theorized by Lenin was a mechanism enacting the historical inevitability of socialism. An embodiment of the future in the present. For those who participated in its structures, it was a form of time travel. Alongside them were the poputchik, travelers of the same path. In the American crusade against such Communists, the term was renewed with derogatory intention. Fellow traveler was an accusation of affiliation, sympathy.

By the 60s, the vanguard position of the party was contested socially and theoretically. The guerrilla presented itself as a spearhead affixed to the spear of the party. This reorientation of the revolutionary program saw the location of struggle shift to the Southern Hemisphere. Many in the north learned through exchange. More or less, a new left emerged, divorced from the party, aligned with the militancy of the urban guerrilla. The figure of the proletariat ceded agency to protagonists alienated from the mechanics of organized labor. Itinerant and immigrant.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Party's dissolution was complete. The fellow traveler's aloneness was broadened to all those cleaved from the apparatuses they once appended themselves. In this sense, there were just travelers now, traversing a historyless landscape. This dilemma is synonymous with the post Cold War trope of an absent future. In truth, the future was always cloaked in mythology, tacked to the horizon of leisure and productivity. Yet, residual promises reside on the beach of our collective imagination.