

Communism: The Demon of The United States

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The three economic systems: capitalism, communism, and socialism. All three are vastly different, with extremely different ideals. So different, in fact, that the government of the United States of America has demonized communism since the early 20th century. Why? It is fairly well-known that communism does not work, but why would the United States go out of its way to demonize it to such an extent?

Capitalism is an economic system that focuses on the freedom of the people to govern their own market. The consumers decide the prices they are willing to pay, and the sellers decide what price they want to sell at, and these balance out into a fair price for everybody. The means of production are privately owned, so the government has little to no direct control over the economy, aiding in the ideal of economic freedom. (1)

On the other hand, communism revolves around the government controlling the means of production, and most of the land. Communism is a form of socialism conceptualized by Karl Marx, and it aims to entirely replace private property and a profit-based economy with public ownership and communal control of at least the major means of production. (2)

Communism has many large and noticeable flaws in it. Firstly, it fails to motivate its working class to do their best, because it rewards them the same regardless of their performance. Secondly – and similarly – it fails to encourage entrepreneurship, resulting in less breakthroughs and thriving new businesses in the state. Lastly, with communism's high focus on government control over the economy and all land, it runs a very high risk of government corruption. People with more power have a higher chance to misuse it, and communist states give their leaders a lot of power, and the ability to misuse it greatly.

A communist state is intended to be a wonderland where everybody is treated equally. There is no poverty and no upper class. Everyone puts in their share of work for the industrial machine, and everybody gets a fair – and equal – share of profit from the government. What actually happens is that the working class in its entirety ends up in shambles. They are mistreated, living in poverty, and they all get just enough money to get by. In the midst of widespread poverty, the government consists of a very well-off upper class of people who could not care less about the working class and their troubles. On top of all this, nobody except the upper class has the right to own land; the government owns it all. The government also has full control over the means of production, and no businesses are privately owned.

The communist ideals clash violently with that of the American people. One of the main ideals of capitalism is that people should be rewarded for their effort. Under communism, this is not true, and people are given money equally and unfairly. Aside from that, capitalists believe in owning land – at the very least raising enough money to buy a house to call your own. However, under communism the government holds all the land, and the means of production. So, on top of not being able to hold property of your own, you also are unable to start a business of your own if you choose to do so. At the core, this is the reason capitalism and communism cannot ever get along: they scare each other. They are opposites, and in this case they absolutely do not attract. Out of fear, they both demonize each other in order to help validate their own existence. However, let us still see how and why exactly it happened. (1)

Russia went through two separate revolutions in 1917. First, the February Revolution saw the Russian people overthrow the monarchy and instate a provisional government. Unfortunately, this provisional government did not fix much of anything. They did nothing to

end Russian interference in World War I, and nothing to help the people living in poverty because of it. What they did do, however, was pardon the people who were sent into political exile by the monarchy. One of those such people happened to be Vladimir Lenin, who led the Bolsheviks in a second revolution to topple the faulty provisional government. Following this was a bloody civil war between the “Reds” (the Bolsheviks) and the “Whites” (basically everyone else). In the end, the Reds won, and Russia became a communist state that would then until 1991 be known as the Soviet Union. (3)

The Russian revolution inspired many people across Europe to hold a communist revolution of their own, and so they did. In the wake of the more or less successful Bolshevik Revolution and the subsequent revolutions across Europe, there were steadily mounting fears across America that it would happen to them too. This obviously never happened, but the anxiety and fear was very real. This caused many people to become viciously against communism, and anything related to it. Because of this, Soviet immigrants were deported, and thousands of US citizens were jailed and searched in violation of their constitutional rights. This time has gone down in history as the First Red Scare. (3)

The name First Red Scare obviously implies the existence of a Second Red Scare, and that would be correct. The Second Red Scare occurred after World War II and went hand-in-hand with the Cold War. In 1949, RDS-1 – the first soviet nuclear weapon test – was successful. With the Soviet Union acquiring nuclear weaponry, the United States lost a lot of their global advantage. On top of that, data from the Manhattan project was stolen to create RDS-1. Almost immediately after that, Mao Zedong, leader of the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) started open conflict with the Chinese Nationalists. The Nationalists, even with support from the United

States, lost the war and retreated to Taiwan. These events raised anti-communist tensions to great heights once again.

All of this led to the American people, and government, being vehemently against the very idea of communism. Because communism is flawed, right? Does that mean the United States, a country that is diehard capitalist, whose very foundation was built on the ideals of a capitalist society, has the right to look down on communism as horrible? No, it does not, because capitalism is not that much better.

Capitalism, on its own, is also flawed. If everything is controlled by the consumers, that means sometimes things get thrown out of balance. These instances are called *market failures*, and they have many causes such as monopolies and inelastic demand. When a market fails and is left unchecked, that can cause disastrous consequences. A recent example of this is the Texas power failure. Texas decided to privatize electricity, a service that is normally heavily regulated by the government – even though that is against the pure capitalist system, and it caused most of the Texas power grid to go offline during a snowstorm. Because it was run by a private company, they worked based on incentives, and some things they did not have reasonable incentive to do, such as weather-proofing their generators against a storm that, in all likelihood, would never happen. So, when it did happen, everything broke apart. (4)

Communism left unchecked creates a terrible economy where nobody but the richest lead good lives, but so does capitalism. Unchecked, it could create a state where things like power, water, heating, and even housing are only available to the rich. Monopolies could run rampant, becoming more powerful than even the government that allowed them to exist. The

poor would only become poorer, and the rich would become richer. The middle class would slowly disappear, mostly dissolving into the lower class as they too become poorer and poorer, while the rich get richer and richer.

The United States demonizes communism to an extreme extent, which at first glance seems justified, until you realize that the capitalism the United States stands by is just about equally as flawed. No economic system in its pure form works, so bashing one and not the others is simply wrong. The only way to make sure everything works correctly is through compromise.

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