

Socialism's Inherent Contradiction

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Ever since March 23, 2010, when President Barack Obama penned his signature on "The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act"—known by its opponents as "Obamacare"—the political landscape in the United States has been in turmoil. The Tea Party, a grassroots conservative movement determined to see Constitutional government restored to America, has fielded candidates across the nation in hopes of sweeping spendthrift, elitist members of Congress out of office in order to overturn the mountain of socialist legislation that has conferred crushing debt on Americans for generations to come. As of this writing, polls project that it will succeed in returning control of the U. S. House to Republicans, and a majority in the Senate is not out of reach.

Socialist policy—like that seen in universal healthcare, welfare, the many bailouts of banks and corporations, and the stunningly ineffective stimulus packages—appears to be so good and helpful that no one should want to oppose it. It provides money and other assistance to the old, poor, infirm, and disadvantaged, giving them a helping hand in their time of need. If that were all that it did—and sadly, this is all that a majority of the public *think* that it does—it would be admirable. Scripture is full of injunctions to aid the helpless (see, for instance, Deuteronomy 15:11; Proverbs 31:9; Galatians 2:10; etc.).

However, behind the mask of good intentions, socialism is a blood-sucking, whip-wielding monster, a fiend that wants nothing more than to pillage, enslave, and exercise increasing power over whole nations. Behind its claims to advocate for the "little guy" and its lofty rhetoric about "social justice," socialism is all about social, economic, and governmental control. Rather than give the individual liberty to make choices based on what is best for himself, his family, and his nation, socialists demand that an elite group of knowledgeable "experts"—usually members of the government, often faceless bureaucrats—should make those decisions for the people.

Noted libertarian economist Walter E. Williams, the John M. Olin Distinguished Professor of Economics at George Mason University and the author of many books, writes in a recent opinion piece:

The primary goal of communism and socialism is government ownership or control over the means of production. In the U.S., only a few people call for outright government ownership of the means of production. They might have learned that government ownership would mess things up. Instead, they've increasingly called for quasi-ownership through various forms of government regulation, oversight, taxation and subsidies. After all, if someone has the power to tell you how you may use your property, it's tantamount to his owing it.¹

In America, then, a "pure" form of socialism is not in play, but the progressive policies of the political Left are achieving the same ends by covert means. Some have called it "stealth socialism." It has been sold to the American people as a more compassionate and even "Christian" alternative to the rugged individualism of traditional American capitalism. In this way, it is easy to see that it promises to replace "selfish" and "unequal" self-reliance with reliance on the state under the guise of sharing and equality.

Due to this incremental advance, which has shifted into high gear under the Obama administration, Americans have a fading opportunity to recognize where full-blown socialism has led in other places where it has been tried (and been found wanting). While U.S. socialism is nowhere near this point, the following examples of twentieth-century socialism show that the accumulation of power and control by the state inevitably leads to its use and abuse, as Lord Acton's well-known dictum—"Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely"—warns.

Despite progressives' denials of a link, Nazism was a form of socialism—just note that its real name was the National *Socialist* German Workers' Party. It promoted a dictatorship that started and prosecuted a devastating World War and a holocaust that took the lives of nearly 21 million people. The former Soviet Union was officially named the Union of Soviet *Socialist* Republics—shortened to the acronym U.S.S.R. During its 70-year reign of terror, it was responsible for killing just under 62 million of its own citizens! Communist China, however, committed the worst atrocities, causing the deaths of an estimated 76 million people between 1949 and 1987.²

Thus, the inherent contradiction in socialism is exposed. While promising a better life to the less fortunate through the redistribution of wealth and the opening of opportunities, it takes a death-grip on the lives of its citizens. Control tightens and liberty disappears. The promised wealth and opportunity never materialize except to those few selected to join the ruling oligarchy. Want and misery spread, producing hopelessness, shortening life spans, and stirring revolt, which is put down with devastating force. What begins with soothing words and wonderful promises ends on the point of a bayonet.

For this world, on the other hand, the Kingdom of God will begin with Christ returning with power and a rod of iron to put down the perverse rule of ungodly men (Revelation 19:11-21), and as God's way is taught and implemented, will bring to pass all the wonderful promises of true peace, freedom, and prosperity found in Scripture (see Isaiah 2:1-4; 9:6-7; 65:17-25). While some would see divine monarchy as the ultimate in dictatorship and control, the exact opposite is true. God's government is based, not on power, but on love and service (Luke 22:25-27), and its citizens freely submit themselves to its rule and reap the blessings (James 4:10).

The prophet Jeremiah writes: "O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). Human forms of government are not the answer. Only those that incorporate godly principles have any hope of success in a world governed by satanic human nature, and even these eventually fall into corruption. Man's only true hope is God's Kingdom, which we pray comes quickly.

Endnotes

1 Williams, Walter E., "Leftists, Progressives and Socialists," *Townhall.com*, October 20, 2010 (http://townhall.com/columnists/WalterEWilliams/2010/10/20/leftists_progressives_and_socialists).

2 Rummel, Rudolph J., "20th Century Democide," *Death by Government* (revised online), New Brunswick, N.J., Transaction Publishers, 1994 (<http://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/20TH.HTM>).