



Written by [Walter E. Williams](#) on October 20, 2010

Leftists, Progressives and Socialists

One of the greatest sources of confusion and deception is the difference between leftists, progressives, socialists, communists and fascists. I thought about this as I caught a glimpse of the Oct. 2 “One Nation” march on Washington. The participants proudly marched with banners, signs and placards reading “Socialists,” “Ohio U Democratic Socialists,” “International Socialists Organization,” “Socialist Party USA,” “Build A Socialist Alternative” and other signs expressing support for socialism and communism. They had stands where they sold booklets under the titles of Marxism and the State, Communist Manifesto, Four Marxist Classics, The Road to Socialism and similar titles.



The gathering had the support of the AFL-CIO, Service Employees International Union, stalwarts of the Democratic Party such as Al Sharpton and organizations such as the NAACP, the National Council of La Raza, Green for All, the Sierra Club, and the Children’s Defense Fund.

What goes unappreciated is that socialists and communists have produced the greatest evil in mankind’s history. You say, “Williams, what in the world are you talking about? Socialists, communists and their fellow travelers care about the little guy in his struggle for a fair shake! They’re trying to promote social justice.” Let’s look at some of the history of socialism and communism.

Nazism is a form of socialism. In fact, Nazi stands for National Socialist German Workers’ Party. Nazis murdered 20 million of their own people and in nations they captured. The unspeakable acts of Adolf Hitler’s Socialist Workers’ Party pale in comparison to the horrors committed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Between 1917 and 1987, Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin and their successors murdered, or were otherwise responsible for the deaths of, 62 million of their own people. Between 1949 and 1987, Mao Tse-tung and his successors were responsible for the deaths of 76 million Chinese. The most authoritative tally of history’s most murderous regimes is in a book by University of Hawaii’s Professor Rudolph J. Rummel, *Death by Government*. A wealth of information is provided at his [website](#).

You say, “Williams, isn’t it a bit unfair to lump the “One Nation” communists, socialists and their supporters with mass murderers such as Hitler, Stalin and Mao Tse-tung? After all, they expressed no such murderous goal.” When Hitler, Stalin and Mao were campaigning for political power, you can bet they didn’t campaign on the promise to murder millions of their own people, and probably the thought of doing so never crossed their minds. Those horrors were simply the end result of long evolution of ideas leading to consolidation of power in central government in the quest for “social justice.” It was decent but misguided earlier generations of Germans, Russians and Chinese, like many of today’s Americans, who would have cringed at the thought of genocide, who built the Trojan horse for a Hitler, a Stalin or Mao to take over. But as Voltaire said, “Those who can make you believe absurdities can



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make you commit atrocities.”

While America’s leftists, socialists and communists condemn Hitler, they give the world’s most horrible murderers a pass. First, they make a false distinction between fascism, communism and socialism but more importantly, they sympathize with the socioeconomic goals of communism and socialism. 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 owning it.

I believe most Americans find the ideals and principles of socialism, communism and progressivism repugnant, but by our sanctioning greater government centralization and its control over our lives, we become their dupes or, as Lenin said, “useful idiots.”

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