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Weapons of mass disinformation

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If someone advocates an ideology that has contempt for the individual and has caused untold economic misery and the deaths of hundreds of millions at the hands of their governments, what would you think of that person?

The ideology I refer to is, of course, socialism and its numerous variations, including the utopian socialists, the Fabian socialists, the National Socialists, and, naturally, the communists. Socialism is simply an economic system where the government (or collective) owns and controls the means of production. Given that the two centuries of socialists' experiments, whether by utopians, Marxists, or Fabians, always ended in economic failure and a loss of personal liberty, why are people around the globe still proudly proclaiming themselves socialists? Socialist parties are still popular in parts of Europe, Latin American, and in much of Africa. Socialist parties have been elected to power in both Spain and Portugal in recent months. Many college professors and students on U.S. campuses claim to be socialists.

The "national socialists" caused the death of tens of millions of people. The communists in Russia, China, Cambodia and elsewhere caused the collective deaths of more than 100 million people and impoverished billions of others. (I happened to be at the Kremlin in Moscow in August 1992, when the Russia demographers announced they had determined there were 63 million "excess deaths" in the Soviet Union during Josef Stalin's reign -- 1923-53.)

The Third World socialists have kept their countries unnecessarily mired in poverty for a half-century. The democratic socialists gained control in England in 1945 under Clement Attlee. As a result, the British economy was run into the ground. Hence the British people voted to reprivatize their economy under Margaret Thatcher beginning in 1979.

Other democratic socialist economies had the same types of failure, so by the 1980s privatization became the vogue as it was obviously necessary to re-ignite economic growth.

Yet, the socialists keep coming back. They deny or ignore previous failures and say the next time "we will do it right." Socialism only fails and will continue to fail because its theory is as flawed as its practice.

Back in the 1920s, the eminent economist Ludwig von Mises showed socialism it could not work because it could not provide a functional alternative to the price system to properly allocate resources. The Nobel Prize-winning economist, F.A. Hayek, provided the definitive proof of why socialism could not work in his last book, "The Fatal Conceit." The argument in essence is that if the whole world were socialist there would be no objective way to determine prices, thus no way to allocate resources efficiently.

If people knew the real history of all the socialist experiments and its flawed theory, very few (other than the delusional or mean-spirited) would be socialists. People do not know the history of socialist disasters because the educational establishment and much of the news media have engaged in a massive cover-up. The large majority of teachers throughout the world are government employees or depend on government grants. All too many are thus understandably hostile to the idea government enterprises do not work as advertised and, hence, reluctant to both teach and allow materials in the classroom that show the socialist model neither works in practice or theory. Surveys in the U.S. and elsewhere show the overwhelming majority of professors and public school teachers are on the left side of the political spectrum, so one should not be shocked they hesitate to teach history and theory that show their self-interested ideology is a failure.

Much of the electronic media in the world are either owned or controlled by governments. In the U.S., National Public Radio (NPR) provides a steady diet of the alleged failures of those in the private sector, with scant mention of the endless failures of socialist undertakings, let alone the reasons. Many NPR stations are now airing the BBC in part to further propagandize Americans in the socialist way of thinking. (Most Americans do not realize the government-owned BBC is increasingly monopolizing the broadcast media in Britain and, particularly, news to the benefit of the left.)

The employees of these socialist media are disinclined to bite the hand that feeds them, and many do not know any better. The situation is not much improved in the print media. Most reporters have been fed a steady diet of leftist and socialist propaganda from both their schools and from government agencies, and too few are willing to do the independent study and research to discover and, in turn, report the truth.

Perhaps the Internet will be our salvation, because it enables good people of conscience to get out the facts about the human misery caused by 200 years of socialist experimentation, without first being filtered by left-leaning information controllers.

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