

Dumbfounded by American Socialism

In some regards – no, in many regards – I am a knucklehead.

Talk to me of stocks and bonds, of escrow and amortization, and a curtain descends.

Speak to me at a party of the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein, the music of Philip Glass, and most of today's Hollywood celebrities, and I will listen agreeably, all the while wondering what brand of gin the bartender mixed with my tonic water.

Inquire as to what I know about women, and though I was born of one and have lived around and with them my entire life, I would hem and haw, and finally shrug my shoulders, admitting they are a mystery. (Which is fine by me, as I happen to relish that particular mystery.)

For most of us, much of the world is a deep well of incomprehension. Which brings to mind one more conundrum:

Why is it that in the United States of America, the country based on the premise of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," suddenly enlisted such an army of advocates for communism and socialism? Why do so many people on both the right and the left want to give our powerful and often inept federal government more and more control over our citizens? Why do some of us look to that government and demand such "rights" as a basic income for all, free medical care, and free universities, while at the same time that very government has buried us 22 trillion dollars deep in debt and counting?

Is it because our public schools, as some claim, are indoctrinating our young people, teaching them to exchange their natural rights for a security blanket? Is it because

students these days don't read books like George Orwell's *Animal Farm* or *1984*? Are they unable to make the connection between the warnings of Orwell and other dystopian writers about the dangers of totalitarian control? Or is it because so many of us, young and old, are terrified by the prospect of standing on our own two feet and making our way in life without the help of a sugar daddy by the name of Uncle Sam?

Socialism, and in particular its cousin communism, has a terrible track record worldwide, a dreary ledger book filled with oppression, broken dreams, and tens of millions of murders. Perhaps for some that figure – “tens of millions of murders” – by its very size loses its power to shock us. After all, as Joseph Stalin once reportedly remarked to U.S. ambassador Averill Harriman, “The death of one man is a tragedy, the death of a million is a statistic.”

So let's look at one man. Let's allow this one survivor of Communism to stand as a witness for the millions of dead around the globe, the neighbors snatched away in the dead of night, the beatings and torture, the theft of property, the erasure of private life, the work camps, the restrictions on speech and travel, the propaganda delivered as fact in schools and the press.

Nal Oum was a physician working in a hospital in Phnom Penh, the capitol of Cambodia, when communists, the Khmer Rouge, seized control of the country on April 17, 1975. That very day, young Khmer Rouge soldiers ordered Oum and other staff members out of the hospital and into labor camps, leaving many of their patients, including the sickly newborns in Oum's care, to die from lack of treatment. The Khmer Rouge [murdered or imprisoned](#) the vast majority of the country's intellectuals and professionals, sending Cambodia into a modern dark age. Dr. Oum's powerful personal testimony can be found [here](#).

People like Dr. Oum, who escaped from the hell of idealism gone mad, as well as millions of others from such countries as

the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, and Vietnam, must surely shake their heads in disbelief when they hear their fellow Americans calling for more government control and out-and-out socialism. These new citizens understand better than most of us that Socialists promising greater security and redistribution of wealth are less interested in helping their fellow human beings than they are in power and control.

Trotsky once allegedly stated, "You may not be interested in war, but war is very much interested in you."

Substitute socialism for war, and you get the picture.

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