

## Socialism and Science

By Thomas R. Cuba, Ph.D.

*Note: This is not an article about politics. This is about applying science to a politically based question.*

The curse of being a scientist is that it tends to make one question everything and demand some sort of proof before taking a position. As a scientist, positions taken by others are tested against observations and data in order to validate them. Sometimes this can be rather disruptive. For example, when Copernicus looked at the planets and stars the observed data did not fit the generally accepted model of the solar system. He concluded that the planets and stars did not revolve around the earth, but that the planets revolved around the sun. He never did figure out the stars.

Last night, I was faced with a similar situation. Someone asked me if we have become a socialist nation. My unthinking reaction was to say, "Not yet." Later, in attempting to examine that question using scientific protocols, there were observations to be made and questions to be asked.

1. Why do some wealthy people support socialism? The same applies to communism.
2. Why do some people who are much less than wealthy support capitalism?
3. We can observe people lining up to get their share of "to each according to their need" but, then, with the answer to question one still outstanding, we don't see people lining up to give their share of "from each according to his ability."

Unanswered, these questions led to a bigger one hidden beneath the veneer provided by the three above. Specifically, in global history, has socialism or communism ever really been tested?

Selecting three nations commonly referred to as socialist or communist for examination, we can look at the USSR, China, and Cuba. Scientific protocol admonishes that we make observations, collect data, and tell a story (hypothesis) that accounts for the observations and data.

It is immediately clear that the model of shared wealth (from each, to each, etc) does not really seem to have been applied in these nations. Were there not very wealthy people in these nations? Was not (is not) the poverty deep and persistent? The conclusion is, therefore, that these nations were not socialist or communist at all.

Taking a very close look at the flow of internal wealth in these nations, and using the data to create a story that fits the data, the conclusion is that capitalism was not shed in the people's revolutions, but it was driven into the shadows. Good old boy deals were struck in the Soviet Union just as frequently as in the U.S. People in positions of wealth, power, and authority, gained more wealth, power, and authority. The 'replacements' seen in the politburo were based on nothing more than an internal, capitalist (power) based coup.

This morning, I am confident that I can go back to the person who asked me the question last night and say with fair certainty that America is not becoming socialist or communist. Those forms of government do not exist in anything more substantive than social theory.

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