

# Lesson 16: The Failures of Socialism—Histor y

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## 1. Lesson 16: The Failures of Socialism—History

## 4. Chapter: Lesson 16: The Failures of Socialism—History

### 1. Lesson 16: The Failures of Socialism—History Questions

#### 4.1.1. \*Does the historical record prove that socialism is a flawed econom...

Author: Robert Murphy

\*Does the historical record prove that socialism is a flawed economic system?

- No, because we can never know how history would have unfolded in an alternate timeline where socialism hadn't been implemented.  
(For an analogy, if someone has a headache and takes an aspirin, and then the headache gets worse, that doesn't prove that "aspirin makes your head hurt." It's probably the case that the headache would have gotten really bad had the person never taken an aspirin.)

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#### 4.1.2. \*Explain this subsection title: "Close to a Controlled Experiment."

Author: Robert Murphy

\*Explain this subsection title: "Close to a Controlled Experiment."

- There can never be a truly controlled experiment in the social sciences, because people learn from experience; thus the original experiment cannot be recreated, save for one minor adjustment. (This is the hallmark of a controlled experiment.) Even so, the examples of East and West Berlin, and especially North and South Korea, cast considerable doubt on the efficiency of socialism as an economic system.

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### 4.1.3. Compare and contrast communism and fascism.

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Compare and contrast communism and fascism.

- Communism achieves total government control of the means of production through a workers' violent revolution.  
Fascism allows citizens to retain nominal ownership of factories, stores, etc., but it heavily regulates them to the point that they are merely following the government's orders. Historically communism focused on international class struggle while fascism tended to be nationalistic and racial.  
Sample Partial Credit Answer  
Under communism the government owns everything, but under fascism the government technically allows private owners who have to obey all the government's orders.

Check the answer of this question online at QuizOver.com:

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#### 4.1.4. Explain how the conventional "Left Wing/Right Wing" dichotomy (or L...

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Explain how the conventional "Left Wing/Right Wing" dichotomy (or Left/Right Spectrum) with communists on the left and fascists on the right makes little sense in terms of economics.

- Both communism (extreme left wing) and fascism (extreme right wing) are examples of socialism. It is more useful to group Stalinist Russia and Nazi Germany in the same category of totalitarianism, and contrast it with a society based on private property where government officials can't violate individual rights.

Sample Partial Credit Answer

Both are socialism.

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#### 4.1.5. Does the material in this chapter show that we prove economic theor...

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Does the material in this chapter show that we prove economic theory with experimental evidence?

- No, we can never have a truly controlled experiment in economics. However, our deductive logic might give us true principles that, in practice, are insignificant and/or are swamped by other factors that we didn't include in our reasoning. Looking at history is thus a useful "check" on our principles or laws.  
Sample Partial Credit Answer  
No, we are just seeing if our economic laws are illustrated in history.

Check the answer of this question online at QuizOver.com:

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