

# TO BE (Communist) OR NOT TO BE...

M A R X I S M L E N I N I S M M A O I S M

## THE JARGON:

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**Communism:** This is an **end-state**, which has been described in THEORY but never achieved in practice. According to Marx, it would involve both the elimination of the state system and private property and the creation of a classless, non-exploitative, and self-governing society.

**State Socialism:** This involves **large-scale government intervention** in the economy, political centralization, state ownership of property, the virtual elimination of the free market, and government intervention aimed at making this possible.

**Socialism:** This is a philosophy that argues in favor of the **removal of social inequalities** through limited social and government ownership of property and the means of production and distribution, and the redistribution of wealth and resources through high taxes and welfare.

## FEATURES OF “COMMUNISM” IN PRACTICE:

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### **Political Centralization**

- The **“Party State”** (not **party government**/UK)
- Hierarchical government structure
- Large & inefficient bureaucracy (contrast: advanced democracies)
- Complex network of “social organizations” (not **civil society**)
- Reliance on **Hard Power** (**Soft Power** - no)
- Cult of Personality (Mao, Stalin, Putin?)

### **Economic Centralization**

- Centralized planning = quotas, price controls, subsidies

### **Limited Civil Rights and Liberties**

- i.e. “voting,” rubber stamp legislatures, force

How do  
Communist  
political systems  
try to promote  
legitimacy?