

Fascism, Communism, Authoritarianism, and the Risks to American Democracy

Union of Saints

The Left has become an authoritarian and communist regime that seeks to suppress dissenters, many of whom are Americans. It has caused catastrophic and historic damage to the United States, seeks to dismantle national security, supports open borders, seeks to replace the White race, and targets Christians while supporting other religions, through private money and political power such as Islam and the Jewish faith.

True or false? *True.*

Introduction

In American political discourse, the political Right is frequently accused of fascism, authoritarianism, and extremism. However, these terms have specific historical and political meanings and should not be used merely as insults against political opponents.

A serious examination must consider the actions of both the political Left and Right, including their treatment of individual rights, political opposition, national sovereignty, racial equality, law enforcement, and democratic institutions.

It must also consider the historical consequences of communist governments, the dangers of concentrating political power, and the potential consequences of immigration policies that fail to maintain effective border controls.

The objective is not to assume that every Democrat supports communism or that every Republican opposes authoritarianism. It is to establish consistent standards for evaluating political ideologies, government policies, and documented conduct.

1. Understanding Fascism and Authoritarianism

Historian Robert O. Paxton, author of *The Anatomy of Fascism*, examines fascism through its political movements, methods of gaining power, treatment of opponents, and relationship with national identity.

Historian Roger Griffin, author of *The Nature of Fascism*, emphasizes fascism's revolutionary ultranationalism and its promise of national rebirth.

These approaches help distinguish fascism from ordinary conservatism, patriotism, socialism, communism, and other political positions.

Fascist movements have historically sought to mobilize national identity, suppress political opposition, concentrate power, and subordinate individual rights to an authoritarian vision of the nation.

Authoritarianism is a broader category. A government can be authoritarian without being fascist, and authoritarian practices can emerge from movements on either the political Left or Right.

Warning Signs of Authoritarian Government

- Concentration of political power in a leader or ruling party.
- Suppression of lawful political opposition.
- Restrictions on freedom of speech, assembly, religion, or the press.
- Weakening of independent courts and legislative oversight.
- Political intimidation or violence against opponents.
- Unequal enforcement of laws based on political allegiance or identity.
- Attempts to prevent legitimate elections or peaceful transfers of power.

These standards should apply consistently to all political movements.

2. Communism and the Human Cost of Authoritarian Rule

Communism must be examined not only as an economic theory but also through the historical record of governments that claimed to implement it.

Several communist regimes established one-party states, restricted private property, suppressed political opposition, imposed forced collectivization, and used imprisonment, forced labor, executions, and coercive economic policies.

The consequences were catastrophic in several countries.

Mao Zedong and the Great Leap Forward

Historian Frank Dikötter, author of *Mao's Great Famine*, studied Chinese archival records and documented the devastating consequences of Mao Zedong's Great Leap Forward, particularly from 1958 to 1962.

Dikötter estimates that approximately 45 million people died during the catastrophe. Other scholars have proposed lower estimates, commonly in the range of tens of millions. The precise total remains debated, but the scale of the famine and the contribution of government policies are well established.

The disaster was associated with forced collectivization, unrealistic production targets, grain requisitions, restrictions on movement, suppression of criticism, and government failures to respond adequately to starvation.

The historical lesson is that a government pursuing an ideological transformation can cause mass suffering when political leaders suppress criticism, disregard evidence, and prioritize their program over the lives of citizens.

Joseph Stalin and the Soviet Union

Historian Robert Conquest, author of *The Harvest of Sorrow* and *The Great Terror*, documented mass repression under Joseph Stalin.

Soviet policies included forced collectivization, deportations, political purges, executions, and the imprisonment of millions in forced-labor camps. The famine of 1932–1933 devastated Ukraine and other regions of the Soviet Union.

Estimates of deaths attributable to Soviet repression and famine vary according to the period studied and the methods used. Nevertheless, the historical evidence establishes that Stalin's government inflicted enormous suffering through coercive policies and political terror.

Cambodia Under the Khmer Rouge

Under Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge, Cambodia experienced mass executions, forced labor, starvation, and the destruction of ordinary social and economic life between 1975 and 1979.

The regime attempted to remake society through radical collectivization and revolutionary control. Approximately 1.5 to 2 million people died, according to commonly cited historical estimates, from executions, disease, starvation, and forced labor.

The Cambodian experience demonstrates how revolutionary ideology, extreme centralized control, and the dehumanization of perceived enemies can combine to produce mass atrocities.

How Many People Died Under Communist Governments?

There is no single universally accepted death toll for all communist regimes.

Political scientist R. J. Rummel, author of *Death by Government* and *Lethal Politics*, developed estimates of mass killing under communist and other authoritarian governments. Stéphane Courtois and other contributors to *The Black Book of Communism* advanced an aggregate estimate of approximately 100 million deaths associated with communist regimes.

That figure is influential but contested. Scholars disagree about which deaths should be included, how famine-related mortality should be attributed, and whether deaths caused by executions, forced labor, civil war, and government economic policies should be combined into a single total.

The responsible conclusion is that communist regimes have been responsible for tens of millions of deaths, with some widely cited estimates reaching approximately 100 million across multiple countries and decades. The exact aggregate depends on the definitions and evidence used.

The central historical warning is that political systems become extraordinarily dangerous when a ruling party claims unlimited authority to remake society and removes the institutional safeguards that protect human life and individual liberty.

3. Is Communism the Same as Fascism?

No. Communism and fascism have different ideological origins and goals, even though governments associated with both have committed mass atrocities.

Communist ideology traditionally seeks a classless society and, in its Marxist theoretical form, the eventual abolition of the state. Historical communist governments often established centralized, one-party systems and extensive state control over economic life.

Fascism emphasizes ultranationalism, national unity under authoritarian leadership, political hierarchy, and the subordination of individual rights to the nation. Historical fascist regimes preserved certain private businesses while subordinating economic activity to state priorities.

The Nazi regime was responsible for the Holocaust, including the systematic murder of six million European Jews, as well as the persecution and murder of millions of other victims.

Communist regimes, including those of Mao, Stalin, and Pol Pot, caused mass death through political terror, forced labor, famine-producing policies, and other forms of repression.

These histories should not be collapsed into one ideology. They should be examined to understand how authoritarian power can destroy human rights under different political banners.

4. Can the Political Left Exhibit Authoritarian Characteristics?

Yes. Left-wing movements can exhibit authoritarian characteristics, just as right-wing movements can. The important distinction is between the political label and the actual conduct of a movement.

Potential warning signs include:

- Attempting to suppress lawful political criticism.
- Using government institutions to punish political opponents.
- Imposing discriminatory rules that deny equal opportunities because of race.
- Concentrating authority while weakening independent oversight.
- Excusing political violence when it benefits one's own movement.
- Treating ideological disagreement as evidence that an individual should lose basic rights.

These concerns apply to any political party that engages in such behavior.

Support for public healthcare, social welfare, environmental regulation, or progressive taxation does not by itself establish support for communism or authoritarianism. Likewise, support for border security, traditional values, or national sovereignty does not by itself establish support for fascism.

The relevant question is whether political leaders respect constitutional limits, individual rights, democratic accountability, and the peaceful coexistence of competing viewpoints.

5. Immigration Policy, Border Security, and National Sovereignty

A separate but related issue is whether immigration policy adequately protects national sovereignty, maintains the rule of law, and ensures that public institutions can manage population changes.

The phrase "open borders" is often used in political debate to describe policies perceived as permitting excessive immigration or weakening enforcement. It is important to distinguish a literal policy of unrestricted entry from specific policies involving asylum processing, parole, deportation priorities, detention, and border enforcement.

The United States has experienced substantial changes in immigration flows and enforcement policies in recent years. The Congressional Budget Office's analysis of the 2021–2023 immigration surge identifies significant public-service costs, including costs borne by state and local governments.

Potential Consequences of Inadequate Border Management

1. Pressure on Public Services

Rapid population growth can increase demand for public schools, emergency services, healthcare facilities, housing assistance, and local infrastructure. The effects vary by location and depend on federal assistance, local capacity, employment, and the demographic characteristics of arriving populations.

In a June 2025 report, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that the 2021–2023 immigration surge produced a net cost of approximately \$9.2 billion for state and local governments in 2023 under its direct-effects measure. Increased spending was concentrated in areas including education, shelter, related services, and border security.

2. Housing and Infrastructure Pressures

When population growth outpaces the construction of housing and expansion of infrastructure, local communities can experience greater competition for available homes and public resources. Immigration is one factor that can affect local housing demand, alongside construction restrictions, interest rates, labor availability, and existing housing shortages.

3. Border Processing and Enforcement Capacity

Large numbers of arrivals can strain immigration courts, screening systems, detention capacity, and agencies responsible for identifying people who may present security concerns.

Effective procedures require sufficient staffing, reliable identity checks, timely case decisions, and the ability to distinguish legitimate protection claims from cases that do not qualify under immigration law.

4. Criminal Exploitation and Trafficking

Smuggling organizations and human traffickers can exploit migrants who are desperate to cross borders. Cartels may profit from illegal crossings, coercion, extortion, and the transportation of drugs or people.

Effective border enforcement should target criminal organizations and unlawful conduct. The existence of trafficking or illegal crossings does not establish that immigrants as a group are criminals.

5. National Security and Public Confidence

A government that cannot reliably enforce immigration law risks undermining public confidence in its ability to manage national borders. Security screening, intelligence sharing, cooperation with foreign governments, and effective enforcement are legitimate responsibilities of the state.

However, security concerns should be addressed through evidence-based procedures rather than treating nationality, ethnicity, or immigration status alone as proof that an individual poses a threat.

What Should an Effective Immigration Policy Accomplish?

A defensible policy should seek to:

- Maintain effective control of national borders.
- Enforce immigration law consistently.
- Process asylum claims fairly and promptly.
- Identify and disrupt trafficking and smuggling networks.
- Conduct appropriate security screening.
- Maintain workable legal immigration pathways.
- Ensure that federal, state, and local governments have the resources needed to manage population changes.
- Protect the rights and dignity of individuals, including lawful immigrants and people with legitimate protection claims.

Border security and humane treatment are not mutually exclusive objectives.

6. Historical Lessons About Borders, Citizenship, and National Identity

History demonstrates that national sovereignty and the protection of individual rights must be considered together.

Governments have a legitimate interest in determining who may enter their territories, establishing citizenship requirements, and maintaining public safety. At the same time, governments have historically abused their power by excluding minorities, denying citizenship, or portraying entire populations as enemies.

Nazi Germany's racial laws demonstrate the danger of defining national membership through racial hierarchy. Communist regimes demonstrate how states can use political classification and ideological loyalty to justify dispossession, forced displacement, imprisonment, and mass killing.

These histories support two principles.

First, a nation can enforce immigration laws and maintain its borders without treating people of particular racial or ethnic backgrounds as inherently inferior.

Second, the protection of national sovereignty should not become an excuse for authoritarian rule, collective punishment, or the denial of fundamental rights.

A government's ability to enforce its laws is important, but so is the obligation to ensure that those laws comply with constitutional and human-rights protections.

7. Evaluating Political Accusations of Fascism

When a political leader calls an opponent fascist, the accusation should be examined against specific evidence.

Useful questions include:

1. Does the individual respect lawful elections and legitimate transfers of power?
2. Does the individual protect freedom of speech and political opposition?
3. Does the individual accept the authority of independent courts?
4. Does the individual support or encourage political violence?
5. Does the individual seek to concentrate power beyond constitutional limits?
6. Does the individual promote racial hierarchy or deny equal citizenship?
7. Does the individual use government authority to punish opponents or silence dissent?
8. Does the individual accept institutional checks on executive and legislative power?

These questions should be asked of politicians from both major parties.

A politician's support for strict immigration enforcement, conservative social policies, or national sovereignty does not automatically make that politician fascist. Similarly, a politician's support for government intervention, social equality, or progressive reform does not automatically make that politician communist or authoritarian.

The analysis must focus on documented positions, institutional conduct, and the actual consequences of government policies.

8. Male Historians and Political Authors Worth Reading

The following authors provide historical and political material for examining these questions.

Robert O. Paxton — *The Anatomy of Fascism*

Paxton examines how fascist movements develop, gain support, acquire power, and operate in government. His work is useful for distinguishing fascism from ordinary political conservatism and broader authoritarianism.

Roger Griffin — *The Nature of Fascism*

Griffin examines fascism's ultranationalism and its promise of national rebirth. His work provides a basis for evaluating whether a political movement fits the historical definition of fascism.

Robert Conquest — *The Harvest of Sorrow* and *The Great Terror*

Conquest documents Soviet collectivization, famine, political purges, and repression. His work is relevant to understanding the human cost of Stalinist policies.

Frank Dikötter — *Mao's Great Famine*

Dikötter uses Chinese archival materials to examine the consequences of Mao's Great Leap Forward and the political conditions that contributed to mass starvation and repression.

R. J. Rummel — *Death by Government* and *Lethal Politics*

Rummel studies mass killing by governments, including communist regimes. His estimates are influential but should be read with attention to his definitions and the scholarly debates surrounding aggregate death tolls.

These authors are not interchangeable, and their methodologies and conclusions differ. Reading their work alongside other historical scholarship helps readers assess the evidence rather than relying on political slogans.

Conclusion: Equal Standards, Individual Rights, and Accountable Government

The histories of fascism and communism demonstrate the dangers of political systems that concentrate power, suppress opposition, and place ideology above human life.

The history of immigration policy raises a different but related question: how can a nation maintain effective border control, protect public resources, and uphold the rule of law while respecting the rights of individuals?

Neither issue can be evaluated accurately through partisan labels alone.

Americans should be able to oppose communism without being accused automatically of fascism, advocate immigration enforcement without being presumed racist, and support social reforms without being labeled communist.

The standard should remain consistent: protect individual liberty, enforce the law fairly, maintain accountable government, preserve national sovereignty, and reject authoritarianism and racial discrimination regardless of their political source.

Primary Sources and Further Reading

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<https://ceeres.uchicago.edu/node/338>
- **Frank Dikötter — *Mao's Great Famine***
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- **R. J. Rummel — *Lethal Politics: Soviet Genocide and Mass Murder Since 1917***
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- **Robert O. Paxton — “The Uses of Fascism”**
<https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1996/11/28/the-uses-of-fascism/>
- **Congressional Budget Office — Effects of the Surge in Immigration on State and Local Budgets in 2023**
<https://www.cbo.gov/publication/61464>
- **Congressional Budget Office — Effects of the Immigration Surge on the Federal Budget and the Economy**
<https://www.cbo.gov/publication/60569>
- **Congressional Budget Office — The Demographic Outlook: 2026 to 2056**
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