

POLITICAL PHILOSOPHIES

Communism: An economic or political system based on the sharing of all work and property by the whole community and of communal ownership of all property.

Socialism: A system based on public ownership of the means of production and distribution of wealth by collectively controlling the means of production (industry).

Conservatism is a major political philosophy supporting traditional values or an established social order; advocating the preservation of the best in society and opposing radical changes.

Liberalism is an ideology which strives to maximize individual liberty through rights under law: favours progress and reform; an economic theory advocating free competition and a self-regulating market.

Fascism is a movement emphasizing national and racial superiority and a centralized, autocratic government (stringent social and economic control) headed by a dictator who allows no opposition, promoting an aggressive nationalism and often racism.

FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

Totalitarianism -a form of government in which the political authority exercises absolute and centralized control over all aspects of life (eg. Nazi Germany, Communist China); a centralized government that does not tolerate parties of differing opinion and that exercises dictatorial control over many aspects of life.

Democracy -government by the people, exercised either directly or through elected representatives (eg. Canada, Japan); government by the people or by their elected representatives; the supreme power lies in a body of citizens who can elect people to represent them.

“-ISMS”

- Socialism:** You have two cows. Give one cow to your neighbour.
- Communism:** You have two cows. Give both cows to the government and they may give you some of the milk.
- Fascism:** You have two cows. You give all of the milk to the government, and the government sells it.
- Nazism:** You have two cows. The government shoots you and takes both cows.
- Anarchism:** You have two cows. Keep both of the cows, shoot the government agent, and steal another cow.
- Capitalism:** You have two cows. Sell one cow and buy a bull.
- Surrealism:** You have two giraffes. The government makes you take harmonica lessons. 😊
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Look up the definitions for socialism and communism.

Do the “fun” definitions above help you to better understand the concepts?

Why/why not?

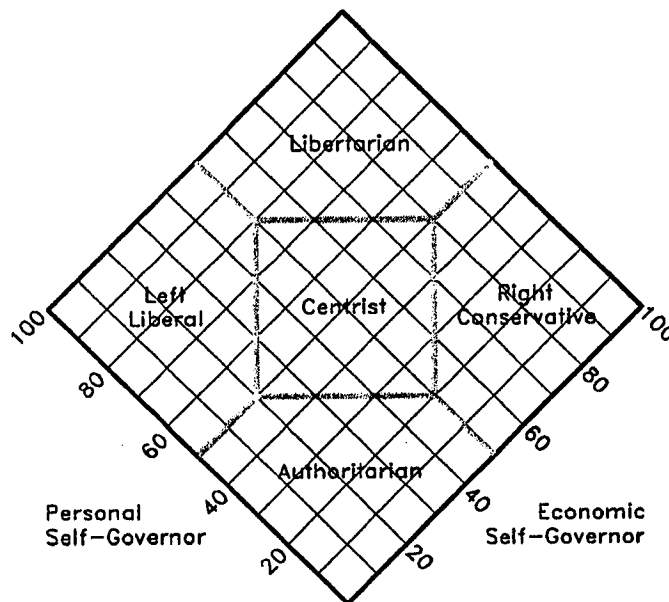
Worlds Smallest Political Quiz

Examine the following 10 statements.
Respond with Y if you agree, M for maybe or sometimes, and N if you disagree.

Personal Issues	Y	M	N
Military service should be voluntary (no draft).			
Government should not control radio, TV, the press, or the Internet.			
Repeal regulations on sex for consenting adults.			
Drug laws do more harm than good. Repeal them.			
Let peaceful people cross borders freely.			

Economic Issues	Y	M	N
Businesses and farms should operate without government subsidies.			
People are better off with free trade than with tariffs.			
Minimum wage laws cause unemployment. Repeal them.			
End taxes. Pay for services with user fees.			
All foreign aid should be privately funded.			

For the personal issues, figure 20 points for each Y answer, 10 points for each M, and 0 points for each N.
Figure a separate score for the economic issues (20 for each Y, 10 for each M and 0 for each N).
Using your two scores as indications of your level of self-government in personal and economic issues, find your location in the political grid below.



Centrists favor selective government intervention and emphasize practical solutions to current problems. They tend to keep an open mind on new issues. Many centrists feel that government serves as a check on excessive liberty.

Libertarians are self-governors in both personal and economic matters. They believe government's only purpose is to protect people from coercion and violence. They value individual responsibility, and tolerate economic and social diversity.

Left-Liberals prefer self-government in personal matters and central decision-making on economics. They want government to serve the disadvantaged in the name of fairness. Leftists tolerate social diversity, but work for economic equality.

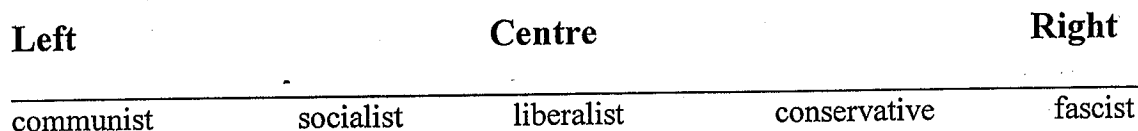
Right-conservatives prefer self-government on economic issues, but want official standards in personal matters. They want the government to defend the community from threats to its moral fiber.

Authoritarians want government to advance society and individuals through expert central planning. They often doubt whether self-government is practical. Left-authoritarians are also called socialists, while fascists are right-authoritarians.

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The Political Spectrum Activity

Read each of the statements below. Plot the number of each statement on the political spectrum line where it is best suited. Refer to the Political Spectrum Chart to help you.



1. A person who believes that convicted murderers should be hanged.
2. A person who believes that the school strap should be abolished.
3. A person who is racist.
4. A person who believes in a higher minimum wage.
5. A person who believes that the police should be able to wiretap telephones.
6. A person who believes that Canada should restrict immigration.
7. A person who believes that the Canadian military should acquire more sophisticated weaponry.
8. A person who believes that Canada should send aid to Third World countries.
9. A person who believes that women should stay home and be mothers.
10. A person who believes that First Nations should have self-government.
11. A person who believes that all major industries should be owned by the state.

Life in Totalitaria

Totalitaria is a beautiful tropical island. One could call it a paradise. It's handsome people live in a land of perpetual and lush vegetation that provide for every human need. One of the most attractive aspects of life in Totalitaria is the absence of problems and worries!

Nobody frets about selecting a job or career since the Government selects a job for you that is right for you and tells you what work to do. Not only that, but you don't need unions or strikes because the Government decides your wages, your hours and your conditions of work. Freed of such concerns, the people can enjoy life more.

Every boy and girl get 5 years of basic schooling and then, in their great wisdom, the Government decides whether more schooling will suit a child or whether the child would be happier in a trade school, learning a practical, useful skill. As you can see, all the worry over decisions is lifted from the shoulders of the young.

Totalitaria has one newspaper, one radio station, and one television channel and all the news and programs are nice because the Government, which is very wise, decides what can be seen or read or heard. Since there is nothing to complain about and since bad news only upsets people, this is very sensible in that no one has to suffer through criticism of Totalitaria or its Government.

The Government is, actually, three very wise men. With great compassion and kindness, they seek to ease the problems of the people. An example is the new law that requires parents to get permission before having a baby. Too many babies were being born, so now, parents have to apply for a licence to have children.

No history of Totalitaria is taught (only the "three wise men" know the past) and little information is allowed in from the outside world. This is good because people might get worried or confused by knowledge of the past or recent news. There is no need to know about anything by modern Totalitarian life. Since some important people of the past had "bad" ideas no one has heard of them. The people of Totalitaria simply concentrate on the present and the future. "Live for today" is a popular Totalitarian slogan.

All the books in Totalitaria are nice books with happy story plots and acceptable ideas. The favourite book by far (there's one in every barracks) is "The Wise Thoughts of the Chairman Three." This provides all the guidance the people really need. Music, art, and theatre are all selected and directed by the Government.

In most countries, there are conflicts because various groups think differently. In order to avoid this unpleasantness, Totalitaria has abolished the family. All the children are raised in state nurseries with equal love and equipment so that they share the same values and attitudes. The older people live in barracks and eat together and share everything they have. Everyone gets along well and nobody argues or fights. As in every society, there are some "sick" people who have weird ideas but Totalitaria helps these unfortunates by placing them in special mental homes for "re-programming."

As you can see, this a perfect society. Everyone wears an attractive uniform but the colours differ – mechanics wear navy blue, office workers wear mauve, farmers wear orange, etc. So wonderful is Totalitaria that one wants to travel outside (unless they are weird) and no one is allowed in because they might import "wicked ideas" and up set the perfect balance and peace that exists.

Questions

1. List FIVE things the government controls in Totalitaria.
2. List THREE ways the government ensures that no violence or rebellion exists.
3. Who are the government?
4. What are the benefits of life in Totalitaria?
5. Would you like to live in Totalitaria? Give one reason why and one reason why not.