

Seeking World Peace and the Ideal: Communists on Stamps

There has been a worldwide resurgence in the appeal of Communism, and the images of many of its leaders and supporters can be seen on the stamps of many nations. The concept may go back to the French Revolution. Here it did not take long for the Russian officials and journalists in observation to carry the new philosophy back to their home country. The French "Red Terror" of 1794 took countless lives. This exhibit will sample some of the 20th Century Communists from its leaders to its followers and activists.



↑ Mao Zedong (1897-1976) and Joseph Stalin (1878-1953) are pictured together on China 75 (1950) to celebrate the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance. As leaders of China and the Soviet Union, they "led their nations out of darkness into the 20th century." Between them they accounted for the death of untold millions of people (estimates ranging from 50M to 90M). They used execution, collectivization, planned famine & starvation, deportation, purges, revolution, gulags and prison camps, and forced labor among others. Zedong and Stalin retain ardent followers to this day both in and outside their respective countries.



← To take Russia out of the Great War and eliminate their Eastern Front, the Germans smuggled Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924) out of exile in Switzerland and home to Russia in 1917. Knowing that Lenin would stir up trouble, their gamble paid off for a fleeting moment, and the trouble he ignited was only the beginning. It is estimated that during Lenin's six-week "Red Terror" of 1918 alone, between 50K to 1M+ lives were taken. A very thorough first move! (USSR#2890, 1964)



← Depicted on Cuba (C313, 1964), Ethel (1915-1953) and Julius Rosenberg (1918-1953) were convicted of leading a communist spy ring which supplied top-secret information on American nuclear technology to the Soviet Union. While proclaiming their innocence to the end, they died at NY state's Sing Sing prison in Ossining on 19th June 1953.

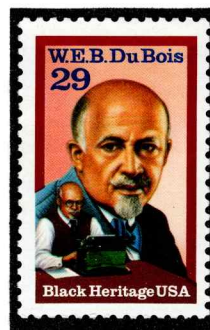
Frieda Kahlo (1907-1954, a self-portrait artist, was admired as a feminist icon and was considered one of Mexico's best female artists. Hiding neither her sexual prowess nor her disdain of the U.S., Kahlo and her husband Diego Rivera hosted Leon Trotsky in their home, however she abandoned his philosophy at the end in favor of Stalinism-even after the revelation of Stalin's reign of terror. Now a cult figure, some of her paintings sell for millions. →



(U.S.3509, 2001)



← Entertainer and activist Paul Robeson (1898-1976) was an outspoken supporter of domestic and int'l Communism. He first visited the USSR in 1935 and won the Stalin Peace Prize in 1952. Upon Stalin's death in 1953, Robeson wrote a eulogy entitled *To You My Beloved Comrade* that was published in the *New York Times*. He said "Through his deep humanity, by his wise understanding, he leaves us a rich and monumental heritage." (U.S. 3834, 2004)



A self-described agnostic and free thinker, socialist, civil rights advocate, author, and educator W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963) viewed communism as a solution for capitalism and racial problems. Communism was, he noted, the process that "set Russia on the road to conquer race, prejudice, and make one nation out of 140 groups without disrupting their individuality." Co-founder of the NAACP, Du Bois visited Mao Zedong in 1959. (U.S.2617, 1986)