

From :

Speeches At Public Meetings, Bangalore, May 29, 1949

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The most conclusive testimony is, of course, that of Milovan Djilas, former communist Vice-President of Yugoslavia, which is to be found in his book, The New Class, first that you cannot have democracy or freedom where all economic ownership and power is concentrated in the hands of the State and secondly, that you cannot have social justice or equality where you have surrendered political democracy even for the purpose of achieving those desirable objectives. As Djilas says, the only beneficiary of the kind of socialist pattern that has been in existence in Yugoslavia for the last fourteen years is the New Class of commissars, bureaucrats and technicians who are today exploiting the peasants and workers and are living on the fruits of their labour through their control of the state machinery. What you have got, in other words, is a class of state capitalists, more ruthless and exploitative than the private capitalist who preceded them.

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To the worker, the bureaucrat will say : "I know what is best for you. Do the work you are told and don't argue about wages." To the investor he will say : "This is all you can earn on your investment and no more." To the consumer he will say : "I shall tell you what you may or may not buy."

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The socialist and communist parties are not opposition parties, but only satellism of the Congress. For a man who believes in liberal democracy, the choice between a Congress, a Praja Socialist, Lohia Socialist and Communist candidate is Hobson's choice, because all of them favour policies which he holds in abhorrence.

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It was Karl Marx who once said that those who own property are free and those who do not are not free. How right he was ! Yet, illogically, he concluded that freedom would expand through the abolition of property !

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Among my esteemed friends, there are some who in all good faith believe that state capitalism or socialism is consistent with political democracy, and I would not therefore lightly brush aside this view. It does appear to me, however, that all one's experience of history and knowledge of human nature warn us that such a belief is not founded in reality but in wishful thinking which is dangerous.

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There is no known example in the world's history private property in land and industry has been abolished, where ownership and control of the instruments of production, distribution and exchange have been nationalised and where democracy and individual liberty have yet survived. The case of England, Sweden or New Zealand is altogether irrelevant because in these countries private ownership is still the rule in agriculture and is still predominant in industry. The countries from which the lesson can be learnt are the Soviet Union, Communist China and the captive countries of Eastern Europe.

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It is a fact that socialism is on its way out, that the debacle of world socialism is spreading from country to country and its approach in our midst is creating panic among Marxists, whether they are of the Congress variety or the G.P.I. Brand (vide its Central Executive Committee Resolution "on the current situation" of April 10).

The German socialists are not the only ones who have dropped the dead weight of State Socialism from their ideological baggage. Socialists all over the world are trying to draw appropriate conclusions from the bad odour in which their doctrines and dogmas find themselves today, which has led Professor D. W. Brogan to conclude that "in 1959 the prospects of what is now the traditional 'Left' look bleaker than they did in 1919 or 1945."

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The Dutch Labour Party adopted in 1959 a new programme which defines socialism in terms of a set of social and ethical values. Specifically, rejecting "State Socialism and the bureaucratic assumption of power", it declares that "ownership of the means of production should be made subservient to the well-being of the nation..... It is desirable for different forms of publicly-owned and privately owned undertakings to exist side by side Public control must be exercised over the privately-owned undertakings if this should prove to be necessary in the interests of the community.

The Swedish Social Democratic Party will have before it at a Party Conference in June 1960 a new programme prepared by the Prime Minister of Sweden and some of his colleagues. According to this draft, "social democracy supports the demand for public ownership or public control to the extent that this is necessary in order to safeguard important public interests.....(it) wants to stimulate private enterprise in those provinces where it shows that it can combine efficiency and progressive thought with responsibility towards consumers, employees and the community.

The Swiss Social Democratic Party adopted a new programme in June 1959 which declares that "in the case of monopolistic enterprises, we

either establish the conditions necessary for fair competition or place them under public control or actually transfer them to public ownership.

The new German Social Democratic Manifesto adopted at a special convention last November makes clear the direction in which enlightened and progressive socialist thought is moving when it says : "Free choice of consumer goods and services, free choice of working place, freedom for employers to exercise their initiative and free competition are essential conditions of a social Democratic economic policy. The autonomy of trade unions and employers associations in collective bargaining is an important feature of a free society. Totalitarian control of the economy destroys freedom. The Social democratic party therefore favours a free market wherever free competition really exists. Where a market is dominated by individuals or groups, however, all manner of steps must be taken to protect freedom in the economic sphere. As much competition as possible - as much planning as necessary."

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In our own continent of Asia, 54 members of the Japanese Diet - 38 from the lower and 16 from the Upper House- have broken away from the orthodox Socialist Party to form a Democratic Socialist Party in disgust with the unrealistic and sterile nature of traditional socialist thinking and the increasing public impatience and irritation with it. In its declaration of policy, the new Democratic Socialist Party says : "Our purpose is to realise a society based on human freedom and equality.....The new Party will campaign not only for a special class but for the happiness of the nation as a whole.....We recognise that the society we live in today is a capitalistic one. We do not propose to overthrow it overnight, but to try to change it gradually by patiently adding one small reform and improvement to another.

When it all adds up to is that in the minds of enlightened Socialists the bond is being broken between a society of free men and the outdated techniques of ownership and management which Karl Marx and other 19th Century thinkers advocated

Influenced by these massive facts, public opinion in the democratic countries of the world has, in the fifteen years since the end of World War II, moved slowly but consistently away from the shibboleths of state socialism and communism and back to the fundamental values of individual liberty and people's enterprise.

So too, in vindication of these principles, the Socialist Party in Germany, one of the leaders of world socialism, has all but jettisoned its socialist baggage, lock, stock and barrel.

Now let us see what socialism is. I think the aims were best stated by Lenin as "a free and equal society". I think it is a legitimate aim. I would still accept it as a valid ultimate objective. The methods of socialism are spelled out in the Oxford Dictionary, which reads as follows : "The principle that individual liberty should be completely subordinated to the interests of the community, with the deductions that can be drawn from it, namely, the State monopoly of land and all capital.

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The only countries where socialism has been fully tried out are the communist countries.

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The saddest failure of Soviet socialism has been in agriculture, which is of more interest to us in India than it may be to those in Europe.

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The other claim made for socialism is equality. Never mind if we are not prosperous, we at least can all be equal. There again, the results do not justify the hopes some of us had, that socialism would deliver the goods so far as equality is concerned.

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So socialism does not deliver prosperity. It does not produce equality. Does it give freedom ? Of course not. The loss of liberty is the most obvious thing in the socialist countries.

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The biggest victim of socialism is the lower middle class, the educated man with a small income, the clerk, the schoolmaster, the shopkeeper.

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Equality ? Even the advocates of socialism themselves compla'

that every time a Five Year Plan is put across, it creates more inequalities, for the reason I have just explained.

The workers are no longer as happy about socialism as they were 15 years ago.

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The best summary of the situation was given by none other than Mr. Nehru. It is amusing that he gave his judgement in another country than his own. Mr. Nehru was in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal in 1959. Speaking from the superior heights of life in India, Mr. Nehru said in Kathmandu, at a public meeting, something that summarizes what I have been saying "Socialism in a poor country can only mean that it will remain permanently poor."

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The world trend is away from communism and socialism and towards liberal democracy. This is not surprising because, after all, human intelligence wins in the end.

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From "Who Is Outdated?" - Hindustan Times, August 26, 1965

How decisive is the turning away of British youth from the outdated concepts of socialism is shown by the following break-down of the British House of Commons by age groups :

Age Group	Conservatives	Labour
20 - 29	9	1
30 - 39	62	16
40 - 49	140	55
50 - 59	118	106
60 - 69	35	57
70+	3	20

It is precisely because I am anti-totalitarian that I refuse to accept present-day Russia as a socialist State.

To each according to his work, is characteristic of socialism and that judged by this test, socialism has been established in Russia. This definition of socialism is of course a vulgarisation of the socialist ideal and an attempt to bring it in line with the prevailing realities.

It is one of the utmost importance, if the ideal of socialism is to continue to move the minds and animate the deeds of men, that a clear dissociation should take place between that ideal and the State which in 1939 was expelled by a unanimous vote of the League of Nations Assembly.

Hence a reconsideration of socialism is what is needed. Such a reconsideration by socialists will lead, for each according to his own light, to the rejection of certain parts of the theory and its manifestations, to the questioning of some others and to the even firmer belief and re-affirmation in what remains.

If the socialist ideal is to be saved from distortion and vulgarisation in the minds of men, it is necessary that it should be categorically dissociated from its Russian caricature.

In the context of today, only he is a socialist who insists on having both liberty and planned economy.

If individual liberty and political democracy are as essential a part of socialism as economic equality, it is necessary that the methods of achieving socialism should fit in the end.

Socialism can only be achieved by clean means and with clean hands.

A wag has said that nowadays "all isms have become wasms". There is

socialists do not constantly re-examine their assumptions and re-dedicate themselves to their ideal on the basis of newer and sounder foundations.

— "The Social Revolution" by H. M.