

Socialism: The Threat Still Remains

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It is now nearly fifteen years since the fall of the Berlin Wall, closely followed by the liberation of Eastern Europe and the end of the Soviet Union. For the first time in many of our lives the world seemed safe for freedom, capitalism and the market. But even before these cataclysmic events, the world was moving in favour of the market, even though the word capitalism itself was still hardly mentionable in polite circles. Margaret Thatcher of Britain and Ronald Reagan of the United States, enthusiastically revived memories of the political economy of freedom which their respective countries had neglected or almost forgotten. Of course, Mrs Thatcher's achievement was the greater for even in the darkest days of socialism America was still something of a beacon for freedom and the market. Only the intellectuals there really believed in socialism but in other countries the disease was widespread. It is worth noting that capitalism was more eagerly grasped in the former communist countries,¹ where even social democracy

is likely to be treated with derision, than in the nominally free societies of the West. As we shall see, collectivism, albeit of a muted kind, still dominates public debate.

The passing of the Soviet threat also meant that defence ceased to be the main priority for the West and, theoretically, countries could concentrate on ridding themselves of the last remnants of socialism. The controversy now must be about the welfare state, economic rights, redistribution and social justice, the environment and social solidarity: issues likely to provoke between collectivists and individualists. Very few people believe in the nationalisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange, and old style Marxism only survives in Cuba and North Korea (whose abject poverty is a reminder of just how economically miserable socialism inevitably is) but a milder form of socialism survives. What is lacking in the free world is a thorough analysis of how dangerous even moderate socialism can be. For the purveyors of failed communism have re-emerged with a new, and allegedly gentle, version of the same dogma. The state versus the market debate is still with us and individualism needs to be defended. The market is as much threatened

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¹ See Norman Barry, 'Estonia Marches Confidentially to Freedom', forthcoming in *Ideas on Liberty*, May, 2004.

by its new friends, the reformed socialists, as by its historical enemies.

Socialist Ideology Today

The first feature of current left wing thinking is its intellectual paucity. Marxism may have been wrong-headed in every important respect but at least it provided a comprehensive explanation of the social world. It provided a general theory of man and society, with a place for economics, history and sociology. Its most coherent features were the economics it stole from David Ricardo. His theory of value was soon to be replaced by the marginalist-subjectivist economics of the 1870s (incidentally, something which Marx and his followers never understood). Hopelessly naïve and inaccurate though Marxism was, it did give libertarians, especially those who embraced the 'revolution' in economics, brought about by Walras, Menger and Jevons, a target and guaranteed Marx a place in the history of economic thought.

But I recently read a book of essays,² some by prominent authors, on contemporary, 'progressive', social democratic thought and was struck immediately by the absence of theory or, indeed coherent or original analysis of current policy. Yet it was a book that repeatedly stressed its relevance to current issues and promised a new statement of the values embodied in the democratic socialist and social democratic tradition. Patrick Diamond writes: 'We must have the courage to break free of the past, to sweep aside old political ideas and governing structures that no longer fulfil the public purpose³ The result was extremely disappointing for essay

after essay consisted of little more than a familiar repetition of ideas long ago discredited by neoclassical economics and libertarian social theory. Contemporary socialism has accepted some of the work in economics and analytical political theory but has made no contribution. Left thinkers today are likely to produce arguments for social justice and equality which are a little better than the dogmas of the past: for example, the naïve, yet confident, egalitarianism of R. H. Tawney and Richard Titmuss still lives.

The new material does not come from original socialist thought but is mainly derived from a prejudiced reading of John Rawls. The socialists do not go into the rather subtle theorising that is featured in the first 200 pages of his *A Theory of Justice*,⁴ which was a clever attempt to use social theory to show how a redistributive theory of justice could be derived from behind 'veil of ignorance', but simply seize on Rawls's second principle, the one that says that inequalities are justified if they are to the benefit of the least advantaged, and use it to justify the latest egalitarian fad.

The socialist obsession with equality remains and I shall refer to it later but it is important to point out those features of the new reality which erstwhile socialists have been forced to concede. Of course, the market is now part of the new collectivist ideology, indeed one would think that they had invented it, but it has been accepted in the context of 'social liberalism', not classical liberalism. Social liberals reluctantly acknowledge the significance of economic liberty in wealth creation but do not recognise its priority. There are always good reasons,

² Matt Brown and Patrick Diamond (eds), *Rethinking Social Democracy*, London, Policy Network, 2003.

³ See Diamond, 'Introduction', in *Rethinking Social Democracy*, p. 6.

⁴ John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1971.

from public good theories in orthodox micro-economics to brute egalitarianism in ethics, to modify the outcomes of the market. It was America that pioneered this version of liberalism and its Supreme Court has long refused to protect economic liberty.⁵ Of course, the familiar civil liberties, free speech, the separation of church and state, affirmative action and the right to abortion, have been defended rigorously, and extended beyond the strict wording of the Constitution, by an activist Supreme Court. Furthermore, the Liberal Government in Britain, elected in 1905, had already expunged economics from the litany of liberalism and introduced the first features of the British welfare state.

So the new socialists had many resources to draw upon in their dispute with capitalism. Since the collapse of communism, the new socialists have decided to use the market for the public good, not individual 'greed'. Therefore *regulation* of the private world rather than collective ownership has become the main aim of socialism. This does not at all imply a reduction in the size of the state but it does mean a change in its role. The rise of the regulatory state has also meant a drastic reappraisal of the European Union. At one time socialists, those in Britain especially, despised what was originally the European Economic Community. It was a 'capitalist club' and a desperate attempt by the capitalist class to form and sustain an international organisation to save itself from extinction by the collectivists. Capitalists in Britain and Europe took the opposite view. They thought that the advancement of socialism was irresistible in their own countries and that only European internationalism could save the market.

Now the situation is completely reversed. Socialists have abandoned the dream of socialism in one country after the failure of the Labour Government (1974-79) in Britain and Mitterand's attempt to socialise France in the early 1980s. Now socialists welcome the European Union and are eagerly implementing the regulatory state through its law. They delight in the rules that confine capitalism to tasks set for it by European socialist administrators and revere the international welfare state that is being established, often against the will of the member states. Most important is the abolition of jurisdictional competition so that member states are obliged to accept European-wide laws in many fields. There is a market for law, regulation and taxation and it is that competition that the European Union is anxious to suppress. The European socialists are succeeding and if the new Constitution is adopted it will be the official abolition of any serious jurisdictional competition. That competition would almost certainly lead to a reduction in taxes and regulation.

Of course, market theorists have seen the error of their ways and many, such as Margaret Thatcher, have openly said that they didn't defeat socialism at home only to see it re-introduced from Brussels. But many pro-capitalists saw from the beginning that European integration was secretly anti-market, despite the professed belief in the Four Freedoms (of labour, capital, goods and services) by the European establishment. Ludwig Erhard, who had pioneered Ordoliberalism in post-war West Germany, was an early Eurosceptic, as was Enoch Powell in Britain.

Thus the new socialists have accepted only a modified form of the market; and then used it to achieve their long term aims of more equality, if only the Rawlsian social

⁵ *United States v. Carolene Products* (1938).

justice version (perhaps as first stage towards full egalitarianism); and they have preferred more regulation instead of outright nationalisation. Yet the new socialists, the Germans especially, worry about unemployment. But they do not see that excessive regulation threatens jobs. Germany, the most heavily regulated labour market in Europe, has 10% out of work.

But there was a time when 'market socialism' was almost respectable. It was a valiant attempt to preserve the allocative efficiency of the market but without its entrepreneurial profit. It failed theoretically because its elimination of the capital market meant that the state would be responsible for all investment and the reduction of incomes to marginal productivity would suppress entrepreneurship and innovation. But it was a brave intellectual venture that did try to use at least some features of the neoclassical market. Contemporary socialists, however, have no ideas beyond an unformulated social liberalism and an instinctive affection for the state.

Public Choice

I have already indicated some important features of neo-liberal social and economic thinking that the new socialists have ignored but there is one item which presages all my criticism of their doctrine. I refer to public choice. This is perhaps the most innovative of all libertarian doctrines yet its impact on the social sciences in general, and socialism in particular, has been minimal. Yet, given the abiding socialist emphasis on the state, its perspicuity should have been obvious.

Briefly, public choice assumes that human behaviour is governed by the same principles in all circumstances: especially relevant here is the universality of self-interest.

Although the maximand, the thing to be maximised, may vary from situation to situation, that we are always maximising something is an indubitable truth about the human condition. Thus when people work for the public sector they don't become unbiased purveyors of the public good, or altruists where they were once egoists: they are always maximising their self-interest. They may not be directly pursuing profit or shareholder value but they are still acting for their own good. They may want big offices, pretty secretaries and, these days especially, large pensions (which are safer than those in the private sector). And public sector employees are voters, too. That is one reason why public spending rises inexorably in a democracy. In fact, without a proper market it is very difficult to motivate anyone to act for the public good. As Adam Smith said: 'I have never known much good done by those who affect to trade for the public good'.⁶

Yet the new socialists, just like their predecessors, are blissfully ignorant of all the work done in public choice. Their recommendations always involve increased state activity; as if there were a body of disinterested people who would act impartially and honestly for humanity. But in a democracy, public servants are mainly interested in non-market incomes and politicians primarily in votes.

What Do Socialists Believe In?

One thought there would never be a need to ask this question. It was once obvious: socialists believed in equality, they were against capitalism and had definite views on the class war. But now it is realised that you

⁶ *An Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, Oxford, the Clarendon Press, 1976, p. 456. First published 1776.

cannot have all these things and prosperity too. Certain economic and social changes have made the old nostrums irrelevant. Not only is old-style socialism dead but the class war does not exist anymore, if it ever did. In Britain, the 'blue collar' section of the workforce has declined, in less than twenty years, from 42% to 16%. Services have replaced manufacturing, which has moved to low cost areas overseas. Now 75% of the workforce are involved in the 'knowledge industry' in some capacity.

Trade unions and other working class organisations are normally a reactionary force in the economy; resistant to change and especially hostile to overseas competition. There was never a truly international working class organisation, much to the chagrin of the intelligentsia. In fact, working class organisations in the West have been enthusiastic supporters of protectionist measures that have harmed their 'brothers' in the undeveloped world.

But these changes in the economic and social world have not affected fundamental socialist beliefs. A slightly sanitised equality is still the core of socialism and, although it might have been made respectable by the addition of Rawlsianism, it is still the principle that marks socialism off from liberal capitalism. Although many now recognise the necessity for some inequality of reward if resources are to be allocated efficiently, socialists still want to increase opportunities for the worst off and to make sure that life chances are improved for the benefit of the deprived and to the detriment of the better off. The latter should have no right to pass on the benefit of their success, no matter how justly earned, to their children.

As regards income, socialists still think that a more just measure of reward can be

found than the decision of the market. It is not just that pop stars and stockbrokers earn too much money for producing little of social value, it is the fact that people go the market with the possession of unequal resources, so producing unnecessarily unequal outcomes. Whereas in the past, socialists would have confined their egalitarianism to the confiscation of unequal resources, especially cash, they are now even more radical in protesting at the bizarre distribution of natural talents.⁷ Following Rawls, socialists argue that no one deserves their natural talents, they are the random products of nature and can be redistributed without a loss in productivity. They argue that a large part of the income of the talented is economic 'rent', payment for a talent which they happen to have. If it were taxed away they would still do the same occupation.

The argument has some plausibility because it has a remote connection with the case for the taxation of land rent by the American writer and economist Henry George in the nineteenth century.⁸ Landowners contributed nothing to productivity, the land had little alternative use and the increase in its value was brought about by other community developments. The rent really was unearned. George thought that it could be taxed away with no adverse effect on productivity. Landowners would be entitled, in George's scheme, to the improvements they made to the land but not to the value of the land itself (rent). It is perhaps surprising that so few socialists have taken up George's

⁷ See D. Miller, 'Equality', in G. M. K. Hunt (ed), *Philosophy and Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 87-92.

⁸ Henry George, *Progress and Poverty*, New York, Robert Schalkenbach Foundation. 1987. First published 1882. See also Norman Barry, 'Some Feasible Alternatives to Contemporary Capitalism', *Social Philosophy and Policy*, vol. 20, 2003, pp. 176-203.

ideas, although a few did in the nineteenth century, for it is the only radical doctrine that combines justice with economic efficiency. Perhaps it was because in all other respects Henry George was very pro-market that ensured his lack of appeal to socialists.

But the similarity between the taxation of talents and the taxation of land rent is only superficial. For a liberal individualist *self-ownership* is the key concept. Our talents are just as much part of us as are our arms and legs. To tax them away is a form of slavery. But according to socialist theory, inequalities of earnings are to be allowed as long as they reflect efforts and not the possession of natural talents, which is the product of brute luck. Apparently, we are supposed to buy back our talents, say for music, business, science or law, in some form of ‘auction’.⁹ The very high tax paid by big earners is thought to be some pale reflection of the logic of the scheme. Inherited wealth will already have been taxed away.

Of course, the scheme is fanciful but it does reveal socialists’ ignorance of the market, for much of the wealth created by capitalism is due to entrepreneurship. Is that a natural talent, like musical ability? Can a government seriously calculate the difference between the wealth created by acceptable efforts and that owing to the possession of the natural talent for business? Any implementation of such a bizarre scheme would be the end of the market economy.

It is not often realised that the working of an efficient market economy will itself naturally lead to some natural equality. In perfect equilibrium every worker (and capital owner) will get his or her marginal pro-

duct, i.e. just enough to keep him or her in efficient employment. But, as we know, markets are never fully efficient and there are always opportunities for entrepreneurs to make a profit as they move the market towards equilibrium. But it is an equilibrium that is always likely to be disturbed by innovation or a change in tastes. To tax excess profit away would be to destroy entrepreneurship and hence prosperity.

Until socialists expunge the illusion of state-enforced equality from their catechism they will never have a feasible doctrine. Equality has its place in the legal structure of a market economy and in its ethical backdrop but any attempt to interfere with the working of an inherently unpredictable market must result in inefficiency and a loss in liberty. For equality and freedom are two rival principles and the implementation of ‘social’ justice must result in a loss of liberty.

But socialists have always been embarrassed by the loss of liberty that their doctrines would entail. They have always maintained that there is a harmony between freedom and equality. The famous German socialist, Willy Brandt, once said: ‘In case of doubt, our supreme value is freedom’. But what the socialists have done is to redefine liberty; so, for example, poverty comes to mean a loss of liberty which can only be relieved by state action and freedom in the market turns out to be a curious form of oppression. Apparently, a compulsory welfare state increases freedom. Most of this is, of course, verbal chicanery for undeniably the greatest losses of liberty, ordinarily understood, have occurred in socialist countries.

⁹ See R. Dworkin, ‘Equality of Resources’, in his *Sovereign Virtue*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2000, pp. 65-119.

The State

Socialists have always had an ambivalent attitude towards the state. Some radicals, and Marxists, have seen it as a source of oppression and the defender of the capitalist order against a potentially revolutionary working class. Furthermore, some early organisations, based on voluntary trade unionism, developed some welfare and health systems that preceded the welfare state.¹⁰ But, undeniably, the advance of socialism in the twentieth century has proceeded through the state. Its coercive power brought about a number of (still) popular measures that would not have occurred naturally. But the moderate statist Andrew Gamble still worries about the hostility some socialists still have to the state: 'It is a major obstacle to progressive politics'¹¹, he says.

Still, the events of the past forty years have compelled the socialists to rethink the state. Two things were very important: dissatisfaction with the vertical, hierarchical state models in industry and welfare. The 'command and control' methods of the state have offended some liberal socialists. Also, the undoubted success of the capitalist system in generating both prosperity and freedom has had some effect on socialists. This has led to the demand for devolution and decentralisation. The left want to bring government closer to the people, and to make choice rather than command influential on social processes.

But in vast areas of social life, especially in education, health and pensions, socialists are still reluctant to take the obvious step in

decentralisation: turn these matters over to the market. Again it is the fear of inequality and the belief in uniform standards that motivate the socialists. For although the state has largely withdrawn from the commercial economy it still remains a huge force in public administration, education and welfare. The state might be buying the consent of the people by providing zero priced services and protecting them from the vicissitudes of fortune by delivering various sorts of poverty relief schemes but sooner or later the people will realise that they have got a poor deal. They would do better if they bought these services privately.

Welfare

Even many conservatives still believe that the state should have a role in welfare and a free market economist like Milton Friedman¹² feels that the state has a legitimate, though minor, role in poor relief; but he doesn't believe in a welfare state. There is a difference between poor relief, which most societies have provided, however wastefully, with considerable public support, and the compulsory supply of education, health and pensions. These have become part of socialist territory which they are extremely reluctant to cede, whatever the strength of the opposition. But people have to pay in taxes what they get back in services. This leads to what is called 'churning' and it is extremely doubtful whether the people gain at all from the process. To see this, let us look at the services one by one.¹³

a) Education. Although most socialists do not forbid private education it still

¹⁰ See David Green, *Reinventing Civil Society*, London, Institute of Economic Affairs, 1993.

¹¹ See Andrew Gamble, 'Why Social Democrats Need to Rethink the State', in Browne and Diamond, p. 95.

¹² Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1963, p. 191.

¹³ For an account of welfare policy, see Norman Barry, *Welfare*, Buckingham, Open University Press, 2nd edition, 2000.

remains a small part of the total educational system. The compulsory state system exists for 90% of the population in Britain. Socialists object to private education mainly on grounds of equality: free choice here and the ability to pay arbitrarily privilege one part of the population and places others at a permanent disadvantage. Most of the claims here are bogus. Even under a non-choice system, rich (often socialist) parents do better for their children because they live in wealthy areas where even the state schools are quite good. They have to be because the middle classes are effective at protecting their own interests. Only if the state took complete control of family life could real equality of opportunity be achieved and even socialists don't want the loss of liberty that that would entail.

What is deeply disturbing is the socialists' opposition to increased parental choice *within the state sector*. There is a well-researched example of choice in education – the voucher scheme. Under this arrangement, parents are given an educational voucher which can be spent on any school of their choice. This can include private schools, and the state (or local authority) pays the fees. As in all markets, the best schools will attract the most parents and, in theory, those schools that don't attract enough pupils will go out of business. Children will be taught what they and their parents want, not what the unionised teachers think they ought to get. One could even build an element of egalitarianism into the scheme by varying the value of the voucher according to parental income.

The scheme has been introduced in various parts of America, often under parental pressure from the poorer parts of the community. However, it has come under relentless opposition from teachers' unions.

This is partly paternalism, professional educators do not think that parents are capable of rational choice about education (a most implausible argument) but the main reason can be derived from public choice. Teachers are heavily unionised (as is most of the public sector) and the last thing they want is any competition at all. Competition reduces rents, and sometimes leads to job losses. Yet the voucher scheme should satisfy the demands of the new socialists. It is competitive, involves decentralised decision-making and could be egalitarian without being inefficient.

b) Health. Securing consumer choice in health is even more difficult. Socialist medicine, on the British model, is the very totem of socialism. The National Health Service is beyond criticism in Britain and even conservatives have cravenly submitted to erroneous popular and intellectual opinion. What is not understood by socialists is that it is possible to have a public medical system without having the British collectivist model.

The first thing to notice about socialist medicine is the fact that expenditure on it is low. Although public spending in Britain is high from a libertarian perspective, in certain areas it is considerably less than would occur if people were left to spend their money privately. In Britain only about 7% of Gross Domestic Product is spent on health, in Germany and France the figures are 11% and 10% respectively and in America it is an astonishing 14%. In Britain, state health is entirely tax financed, so that it has to take its place alongside all the other interest group demands that are pressing on government.

But on most of the continent, health care, although subject to close central controls, is

financed by a complex and compulsory social insurance system via the employer. It is to an extent demand driven and although this raises non-wage labour costs it ensures that French and Germans get adequate health care. Furthermore, in these countries there are competitive health suppliers, some of whom are private. In Britain, the monolithic National Health Service (the NHS) is the biggest single employer in Europe, subject to no competition and, at the lower levels, dominated by trade unions. The situation would be even worse if there were not a small private sector setting standards. But if you go private in Britain you, in effect, have to pay price, with no tax deduction. At best, the NHS is an emergency service only, anything long term is subject to immense delay and queuing for treatment.

Why this should be the model for the future socialist commonwealth is mysterious. All sorts of clever sounding theories are used to justify a state monopoly (asymmetric knowledge between doctor and patient leads to oversupply, the insurance market is subject to moral hazard etc.). But as in all monopolies, output is reduced and price (tax in socialist health) is raised. Socialists like it because it is uniform and is not responsive to demand. The producers are in charge.

(c) Pensions. This is another area in which mistaken socialist policy produces deleterious social consequences. The developed world is facing a very serious pensions crisis because of falling populations, increased longevity and vastly under-funded state pensions. The governments have made promises to future generations which simply cannot be kept.

In theory, pensions are simply deferred wages; to be spent in the future, normally when the person is in retirement or can no

longer work. In a free market, what we save for old age is a function of time preference: how much we, as individuals, value the future over the present. Someone with a high time preference doesn't value the future very much and would rather spend his income now. Someone with a low time preference has the reverse propensity. Why should the state be involved in what is essentially a private decision? In Britain, the state created old age pensions in 1908 as pure welfare payments but they were later incorporated in the burgeoning national insurance system. This happened world wide, including America (in 1935). The bogus rationale for the state's involvement is the idea that people have too high time preferences and won't save for the future: hence compulsory national insurance.

As we know all too well, socialist national insurance rarely works and welfare payments end up being tax funded. The trouble with national insurance based pensions is that they rest on a fragile contract between the generations.¹⁴ This generation of workers agrees to pay for the present retirees on the assumption that a future generation will pay for it, and so on indefinitely. Funds are rarely built up. But what made it even worse was that states eventually began to pay earnings-related pensions. Britain is in a slightly better position since half the elderly are on funded, private pensions. In Europe, pensions are almost entirely tax funded and with a declining population an enormous crisis is looming. A solution will involve one generation having to pay twice; for the present retirees and for its own future through saving. It is not the people that have too high time preferences, it is the government

¹⁴ See Norman Barry, 'The State, Pensions and the Philosophy of Welfare', *Journal of Social Policy*, vol. 14, 1985.

that is imprudent. The time horizons of politicians rarely extend beyond the next election. And don't forget, the impending pensions catastrophe is the result of *moderate* socialism.

Of the three main areas of the welfare state, education, health and pensions, the results of state interference in private markets promise to be catastrophic unless remedial action is quickly taken. But the welfare state has survived and there is very little rethinking being done by the left. Indeed, all the writers in the Brown and Diamond collection think that the new prosperity brought about by the market economy should release funds for an *extension* of the public sector in welfare. That is quite an astonishing claim from people who claim to believe in freedom and autonomy. Given the poor quality of public services one would have thought that an opportunity to increase private consumption would have been welcomed. If the state cannot produce cars, clothes and hairstyles as successfully as the private market, why should it do better in education, health and pensions? The logic of production is the same. When socialists talk about certain things as being too important to be left to the market, we can be sure that the hidden agenda is the preservation of monopoly and job protection.

The only hope for socialists is to reform and revive some form of social, preferably private, insurance. Means tested benefits are inefficient and personally degrading and if socialists really believe in freedom and autonomy a properly funded social insurance system is one way of fulfilling these ideals. But it would all be done better if government taxed less and allowed people the freedom to pay for welfare benefits themselves.

Socialism: What's Left?

If we look at the revised socialist agenda there is nothing new or intellectually exciting. Fashionable phrases like 'civil society' and the 'third way' are bandied about without clear explication. Most reform proposals are simply moderate versions of the old dogmas. The attempt to find a middle way between capitalism and socialism always run counter to the laws of economics and society: these cannot be repealed by acts of parliament or the pronouncements of intellectuals. As Vaclav Klaus said of the 'third way', it is the 'third world'.

When we look at the rest of socialist agenda it seems to consist almost entirely of the agenda of 'social liberalism'. There is much about 'gender enhancement', which means non-market privileges for women, just at the time that they are starting to do well in the commercial world without any help from the state; and increased state expenditure on childcare facilities features strongly.

Of course, the environment is a big factor in the new 'theorising' that is going on in socialist circles. But the emphasis here seems to be more on attacking capitalism than on defending the natural beauty of the countryside. If they were really concerned about that they would take more notice of the fact that the most serious damage to the environment was in the communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Here, an unrestrained state, in the context of the complete absence of enforceable property rights, did untold damage to the environment in a desperate bid to industrialise rapidly.

Most of the scare stories about global warming and the environment have been refuted effectively: and not always by market theorists, regular scientists have done the

necessary work. Because they have departed from conventional wisdom their work has been suppressed by the establishment and their careers have suffered. Of course, the typical socialist response to the environmental problem is to tax and prohibit. If we took some of their suggestions seriously much of the industrialised world would be closed down. But there is a respectable body of

theory and practice on the subject. It has been shown that a proper application of property rights theory can preserve our industrial structure, which is necessary for prosperity, while averting some of the undesirable consequences of progress. But here, as elsewhere, the new socialists are unresponsive to original thinking.

Tek Parti İdeolojisiyle Demokrasi

Faruk Özgür

Türkiye, özellikle AB'ye girme yolunda hafif de olsa bir hız kazanmasına sebep olabilecek, demokrasi ve insan hakları konularında yaptığı anayasa ve yasalardaki değişikliklerle hukuk devleti olma yolunda olumlu adımlar atıyor; elbette eksiklikler yok değil, ama atılan bu adımlar umut verici bir görüntü arz ediyor... Ancak en büyük sorun demokrasi ve insan hakları yorumlarındaki zihniyet sorunu... Ve, maalesef, görüntü, bu değişiklikleri uygulayacak resmî kademelerde –az da olsa bir yumuşama olmasına rağmen- bu konularda hâlâ katı bir zihniyetin hâkim olduğu...

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