



"The Welfare State is the best security against communism."

THIS PROPOSED DEFENSE against communism is not new, though we hear it afresh in 1961. It has circulated in various shadings since "the cold war" began. A similar excuse was used to finance socialistic governments abroad with American earned income under the give-away programs that by now aggregate more than \$78 billion: "Socialism is a good cushion against communism."

Such terms as communism, socialism, Fabianism, the Welfare State, Nazism, fascism, state interventionism, egalitarianism, the planned economy, the new deal, the fair deal, the new frontier are simply different labels for much the same thing. To think that there is any vital distinction between these so-called ideologies is to miss the really important characteristic which all of these labels have in common.

An ideology is a doctrinal concept, a way of thinking, a set of beliefs. Examine the above-mentioned labels and it will be found that each is identified with a belief common to all the others: *Organized police force—government—should control the creative and productive actions of the people.* Every one of these labels—no exceptions—stands for a philosophy that is opposed to the free market, private property, limited government way of life. The latter holds that the law and its police force should be limited to restraint of violence from within and without the nation, to restraint and punishment of fraud, misrepresentation, predation—in short, to invoke a common justice. According to this way of life—the libertarian ideal—men are free to act creatively as they please.

Under both the Welfare State and communism, the responsibility for the welfare, security, and prosperity of the people is presumed to rest with the central government. Coercion is as much the tool of the Welfare State as it is of communism. The programs and edicts of both are backed by the police force. All of us know this to be true under communism, but it is equally true under our own brand of welfare statism. Just try to avoid paying your "share" of a TVA deficit or of the farm subsidy program or of federal urban renewal or of social security or of the government's full employment program.

To appreciate the family likeness of the Welfare State and communism, observe what happens to in-

dividual freedom of choice. Under either label (the ideology is the same) freedom of choice to individuals as to what they do with the fruits of their labor, how they employ themselves, what wages they receive, what and with whom they exchange their goods or services—such freedoms are forcibly stripped from individuals. The central government, it is claimed, will take over. Full responsibility for ourselves is denied in order to make us dependent on whatever political regime happens to be in control of the government apparatus. Do these labels mean fundamentally the same thing? As an exercise, try to find any meaningful distinction.

Our planners are saying, "The Welfare State is the best security against communism." The Russians could say, with as much sense, "Communism is the best security against the Welfare State."

We call the Russian brand of governmental coercion "communism." They, however, refer to their collective as the "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics." The Russians call our brand of governmental coercion "capitalism." In the interest of accuracy and clarity, we, also, should call ours "socialist."

Socialism in Russia (communism, to our planners) and socialism in the U.S.A. (the Welfare State, to our planners) have identical aims: the state ownership and control of the means of production. Further, one as much as the other rests on the use of police force. In Russia the force is more impetuously applied than here. There, they pull the trigger and think later, if at all. Here, the government relies more on the threat of force and acquiescence of the citizen.

Alexis de Tocqueville predicted over a century ago the characteristics of the despotism [the Welfare State] which might arise in America: "The will of man is not shattered, but softened, bent, and guided; men are seldom forced by it to act, but they are constantly restrained from acting. Such a power does not destroy, but it prevents existence; it does not tyrannize, but it compresses, enervates, extinguishes, and stupefies a people, till each nation is reduced to nothing better than a flock of timid and industrious animals, of which the government is the shepherd."

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