

will not allow private property which is the source of exploitation. As Marx and Engels (*Communist Manifesto*) have further noted:

Communism deprives no man of the power to appropriate the products of society; all that it does is to deprive him of the power to subjugate the labour of others by means of such appropriation.

Abolition of private property will result in the abolition of classes and class antagonism, and it will pave the way for the free development of all. So Marx and Engels conclude:

When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared, and production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character. Political power, properly so called, is merely the organized power of one class for oppressing another . . .

In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.

This picture of the classless society is quite fascinating. But the problem with this view is that it treats the possession of private property as the only source of class distinctions. In actual practice, class distinctions may reappear on the basis of possession of political and bureaucratic power, even after the abolition of private property, giving rise to new forms of injustice. So the problem of injustice must be tackled at many more subtle levels.

IV

DEMOCRATIC-SOCIALIST PERSPECTIVE

Tenets of Democratic Socialism

While Marxism seeks to bring about socialism through revolutionary method, democratic socialism prefers evolutionary or democratic method. The supporters of democratic socialism pay equal importance to democracy and socialism. They believe that the goals of democracy and socialism are not separable from each other: both stand for the amelioration of the ordinary man. In effect, democratic socialism signifies use of the democratic method for achieving the socialist goal. It seeks to modify Marxian socialism in some important details.

Partial Socialization of Production and Distribution

Democratic socialists hold that socialism does not require wholesale socialization of the means of production and distribution. Instead, if some essential means of production and distribution are placed under state ownership so as to ensure the supply of essential goods and services for the bulk of the population, this would be a substantial achievement in the direction of socialism.

Satisfaction of Moral as well as Material Needs

Democratic socialists seek to expand the goal of socialism. They insist that socialism should not be confined to satisfying the material needs of human beings. It should also take care of their moral, intellectual and emotional needs so as to ensure a fuller development of the personality of each individual. Hence, the state should take care not only of food, clothing and shelter for the masses, but also for their education, entertainment, art and culture, etc.

Freedom of Thought and Expression

According to democratic socialists, an atmosphere of freedom is essential for the development of personality. Even if a society has abolished private property, put an end to economic exploitation and managed to satisfy the material needs of all individuals, such conditions will not be conducive to the fuller development of personality without ensuring the freedom of thought and expression, freedom of religion and worship, freedom of movement, and other similar democratic freedoms.

No Form of Dictatorship

Democratic socialism is opposed to all forms of dictatorship, even if it is a 'dictatorship of the proletariat' as expounded by the Marxian theory of socialism. Dictatorship of any kind leads to the suppression of personality, and is hence not conducive to human happiness.

Free Competition for Power

Democratic socialism treats democratic structures—free competition for power among political parties, freedom of pressure groups, parliamentary institutions with an effective role for the opposition, etc.—as essential for achieving the ends of socialism.

Among modern thinkers, Harold J. Laski (1893–1950) has made important contribution to the theory and practice of democratic socialism. Laski has, in fact, sought to combine the ends of socialism with the democratic method of liberalism. In many of his famous works, particularly in his *Liberty in the Modern State* (1930), *State in Theory and Practice* (1935) and *A Grammar of Politics* (1938), Laski has made a brilliant attempt to combine the concept of liberal freedom with the goal of socialist justice. Then, E.F.M. Durbin, in his *The Politics of Democratic Socialism* (1940), has competently elaborated the tenets of democratic socialism. Many countries of the world today are following the path of democratic socialism. Among these the Scandinavian countries—Sweden, Norway and Denmark—are the most notable. India also claims to follow the path of democratic socialism.

Conclusion

Democratic socialism seeks to provide for democratic rights and civil liberties as well as socio-economic rights of citizens—a difficult combination indeed! If this

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could be achieved, it would serve as an ideal scheme for social justice. But democracy is a matter of procedure; it does not prescribe the goals of state policy. Adoption of the goals of social justice in a democratic state largely depends on two factors:

- (a) Prevalence of a strong and discerning public opinion in favour of the goals of socialism so that those committed to these goals win majority in elections and they have a strong political will to implement their programme; and
- (b) A strong resource-base for the state which enables it to provide for elaborate public services and social security without resorting to coercion and undue taxation.

If the leadership of a nation is able to motivate the people to work hard to raise production and mobilize resources, democratic socialism will have a good chance. This needs cultivation of a sense of duty, work culture and patriotism among citizens in general—a difficult task indeed! On the other hand, if the leadership resorts to heavy taxation of the relatively well-placed sections, who have improved their standards of living by dint of their talents, efforts, enterprise and frugality, it might mar the incentives and thereby impoverish the resource-base of the nation. This will erode the chances of democratic socialism.

V

ANARCHIST PERSPECTIVE

Tenets of Anarchism

Anarchist perspective on justice is based on the theory of anarchism. Anarchism holds that society should be organized without coercive power of the state. In its view government is intrinsically evil. Men are benign.