

**Where it has been:** Any question concerning the whereabouts of global democratic socialism requires some up-front clarification, as global democratic socialism, understood as an actual feature of politics, has gone nowhere, as it has never been fully applied. Nevertheless, a lot of thought and talk has been devoted towards global democratic socialism, relatively prominently for example by the Fabian Society, founded in 1884, which laid the philosophical foundation for Great Britain's Labour Party.

Another important distinction has to be drawn between democratic socialism and Marxism. Democratic socialism will be described in more detail later on, but at the core the difference lies in the rise of the new order through evolution versus revolution. Marxists believe that capitalism will never transform to socialism by reason, democratic socialists instead see socialism as a result of successful capitalism. For Marxists, the only path towards a new world order includes a violent and abrupt revolution by the workers, the proletariat. To think otherwise contradicts the capitalistic pattern of behaviour, which includes intimidation and repression in the face of socialist pressure.

Members of the Fabian Society in Great Britain or the Revisionists on the continent opposed the idea of a violent overthrow of the capitalistic system. This, as Robert Owen laid out in 1849, would turn into a contest between false principles and evil spirits versus pretty much the same. As the majority of people prefers a "safe" depotism over anarchism, Marxist followers would never be able to secure mass-participation in any massive and imminent upheaval. Instead, the "reign of liberty, equality and fraternity" (Owens) would evolve on its own if the contradictions between potential and actual political power of the working class were overcome. Universal suffrage was seen as the ultimate cure-all for the entire ills of capitalism. As capitalism was seen as exploitative by nature, the orthodoxy which held that private ownership of the means of production would ultimately prove beneficial to all was strongly opposed. Equally, notions of a minimal state, laissez faire and thus liberalism had to be contained.

By definition (Fabian Society), a socialist industrial democracy would be the control of the publicly-owned industry by professional managers accountable to the community through supervision by an elected parliament, local authorities and consumer cooperatives. Private ownership of means of production would be granted in the name of innovations up to a certain threshold. Quite naturally and peacefully, such an order would result from universal suffrage. Workers, the majority, would elect representatives representing working class interests. These would differ from elitist interests and lead to an evolutionary redesign of society. Fabianists saw history "as a river flowing slowly yet inexorably towards socialism". No reform would ever mark the end of history, but the cumulative effects would be more and more socialist. Bernstein, the most famous Revisionist, believed that a more developed humanity would possess steadily increased control over social forces. This would result in diminished economic forces upon society and a higher devotion to a favourable ideology in the name of fraternity and humanity.

**Where it has gone:** In the light of current developments, it seems obvious that the evolution did not occur along the prescribed lines. The world's governments do not act as exclusive employers, producers and providers of welfare, have not done away with their violent nature and are not rested on services for the majority. Not nationally, and definitely not internationally. If Don Brash refers to New Zealand as a country reformed by Hayekians, and other OECD-nations such as Germany try to learn from the positive short-term results New Zealand seems to have enjoyed since 1984, the whole concept of democratic socialism has seemingly gone down the drain. Universal suffrage exists, but as issues the Fabian Society would have deemed most pressing are not advocated by most major parties, who often allow the voter a limited choice between comparable elitist representation (in the worst cases this planet has to offer cloaked behind "issues" such as gay-marriage or the integrity of state leaders too close to their female interns), the system seems to fail to deliver its promises.

The previous statements might be slightly exaggerated, as most nations in the world still act as welfare states, albeit limited. In addition, the path of dominating policies along the lines of neoliberalism indicates that elements of global democratic socialism become increasingly obsolete. On the other hand, the accelerated trend towards globalization has given birth to increasingly widespread attitudes such as anti-globalisation and anti-capitalism, ideologies sparsely found during the "Golden Age of Capitalism" thirty years ago. Global democratic socialism might just exist at the contemporary margins, but it has not been flushed fully down the drain. It might even creep up again, if Marxist prophecies, neglected by Revisionists or Fabianists, come to bloom over the course of the 21st century and capitalism finally fails to bribe its true victims by the means of ever-increasing living standards.

Currently, there is limited air to breathe for democratic socialist ideologies, as market- and political failures in the field of international money and banking are choking governments worldwide. The globalized banking system has not only drained funds from productive investments towards speculation and concentrated huge sums in such endeavours, but also denied governments the use of a number of effective tools to control investment, employment, money stability, balanced exchanges and greater equality within society. As long as banks discipline governments and these are deprived of the opportunity to act on behalf of social-democratic principles, plain simply because the international financial community would immediately pull the plug, democratic socialism, whether nationally or internationally, is no rational political choice but rather political suicide. It seems safe to argue that under current conditions increased investments into elements resembling socialist thinking, such as the regulation of some economical sectors or welfare, would have quite the opposite long-term effects. As the world's capital is racing towards the highest returns achievable, governments have to race towards the bottom in order to foster much-needed capital. As no economy functions without money, the current faults of the world capital market leave little hope for immediate improvement, unless the open international money markets get restricted and allow nations to control their own fate once more. Members of the original Fabian society would be shocked to witness a democratic tolerance of continuous and worsening elitist representation under the now-global mantra of neo-liberalism. It seems safe to conclude that in the developed world the means of concentrated media corporations and little curricular representation of different ideologies in most kinds of education have nurtured the masses into believing ends violating their true, own interests, while the undeveloped world just gets structurally reformed by global institutions such as the IMF or World Bank.

**Conclusion:** In conclusion, global democratic socialism has not turned out to be a compulsory result of universal suffrage and democratic evolution. Even though many people on this planet have a right to vote, the Marxist idea of capitalistic elites referring to threatening propaganda (e.g. "Axis of Evil") or marginalizing "real issues" in the face of "danger" has become reality. Consent gets manufactured (Chomsky). Recently, the world has been forced to abandon positive influences of think tanks such as the Fabian Society, which shaped political parties and resulted in satisfactory welfare states. At the core of the problem, the ongoing economic deregulation in the name of neoliberalism, especially in the field of global finances, pushes any notion of democratic socialism towards the margins of political feasibility.