and to engender as much flexibility and mobility within the division of labor as possible.

Finally, the array of public institutions we identify nowadays with the welfare state would exist, but the principles governing them would be those of social citizenship. To retrieve Jaurès's maritime metaphor: citizens would see themselves in the same boat, and not just politically.* This would be expressed in the type of society fashioned, its values (I stress the plural), its social and human relations—a community, but without a reified *endziel*.

A caveat. The fate of Sweden's economy, which is heavily export oriented, will be substantially dependent on current processes of European integration, even though Sweden is not a European Community member. The only alternative scenario is, to say the least, implausible: an egalitarian autarky, which would likely require both authoritarianism and plummeting living standards—a nordic Albania, as it were. Consequently, the future of socialism in Sweden, no less its welfare state, will be conditioned by the general complexion taken on by Europe as a whole in the coming years.

* For a somewhat different application of Juarès's metaphor to Sweden, see Adam Prezeworski's *Capitalism and Social Democracy*, Cambridge University Press.

Lewis Coser

The term "scientific socialism" is an oxymoron. Science pertains to the study of what is, whereas socialism is a vision of what can or should be. To deny scientific status to socialism is not to denigrate its central importance. It provides indispensable guiding images without which our lives would become appallingly drab, and hardly worth living. Utopian visions are not merely frosting on the cake but a major part of its substance.

Socialism, its Marxian forebears notwithstanding, is one of a variety of utopian ideas. Utopia is, of course, nowhere, but ever since Plato's Republic, the counterimage of a perfect society has served to provide regulative ideas for a society more decent, more just, more fraternal than the present. Each society produces the utopia it deserves.

One of the least appealing aspects of contemporary society is its technocratic fixation and its lack of social vision. August Bebel once complained about what he called the damned wontlessness of the poor. In our days, it is not only the poor who lack transcending vision, but even intellectuals have largely deserted their mission to provide utopian images that transcend current habits of thought. They are for the most part timid souls who are scared to stray too much from the well-trodden path. In America, the utopian image has been in retreat since the early days of the New Deal. What has been initial retreat has now become a full-scale rout. It seems that, according to the major current thoughtways, anybody who strays from the common paths as theorized by Milton Friedman leads us straight to the gulag.

The greatest challenge to the idea of socialism at the moment does not just come from doctrinaire defenders of the alleged benefits of free markets. It comes from large sections of intellectuals who have of late emerged in Eastern Europe. These men and women have suffered for many years from totalitarian regimes that had the effrontery to call themselves socialist. It is hence not astonishing that many of these intellectuals have turned away from what they conceive socialism to be and have come to extol the free market. Free and unhampered market enterprise is, to be sure, found only in textbooks. What these East European intellectuals perceive as the essence of a free-market society may well be a fatal distortion, but it still has the power to do untold harm to the idea of socialism and of a good society.

Some thirty-five years ago Irving Howe and I wrote an essay for *Dissent* that was meant to provide rough guidelines to what we believe to be the main components of a good society. We called this paper "Images of Socialism."

"God," we quoted Tolstoy, "is the name of my desire," I see no reason why we should surrender this pregnant hope to all the current Eastern and Western enemies of social promise. Socialism is a guiding and regulative idea. It cannot as such ever be realized fully, but it can serve as a measuring rod for comparing the present with what can be attained through a politics of democratic participation in a fraternal self-governing society. The image of socialism is a yardstick that keeps us honest when we attempt to assess the ailments and tragic consequences of the here and now. The Utopian image of the "good society" can serve as a stimulant for constructive moral change, even though it cannot be fully implemented. At every step on the road we will discover new tasks, which come into view when some of the old goals have been attained. The utopian socialist vision can spur us on even as it leads us to discover new challenges along the way.

Bogdan Denitch

Without an imaginative utopian dimension, socialist thought remains excessively rooted in the present. It ends up as something very worthwhile, that is, the reform of the existing system; but it remains restricted to what is "realistic" within the existing order. The borders of the possible are not even tested. That kind of "realism" has almost destroyed West European socialism, leaving behind reasonable but dull administrators of a more humane capitalism within welfare states.

The problem in thinking about a socialist society or program is how to make such a society seem possible and desirable to human beings who have been shaped by the present culture and social order. This is a major problem, because the cultural hegemony of the capitalist order is now probably stronger than it has been at any point since the industrial revolution. To be sure, the Social Democratic parties increasingly solve that problem by not worrying much about any kind of socialist future and meanwhile doing what they do rather well, that is, defend the welfare state.

Mass literacy and state-controlled education, combined with a commercialized mass culture, successfully hasten the retreat of the autonomous cultures that had been built up by the industrial working class. The autonomy provided by homogeneous working-class neighborhoods, with their pubs, clubs, political organizations, and associations linked to left parties and unions, is for the most part, throughout Western Europe and North America, either vanishing or disintegrating. The majority of even left voters in advanced industrial societies today have been socialized to accept a whole range of assumptions of a capitalist civilization about what is possible and desirable, how one should live one's life, and what is the necessary minimum of material goods. Traditional solidarities of class, occupation, and workplace are replaced by possessive individualism. Left politics increasingly resorts to talking about resentments of segments of the population and the unfairness in the distribution of the benefits of increased productivity rather than raising universalist egalitarian demands and a vision of a radically different organization of production and leisure. To raise such demands is considered unrealistic, but failing to do so destroys the moral and emotional basis of the movement.

Mass socialist politics in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries had been rooted in an autonomous working-class subculture, which, whatever its inadequacies, provided an alternate political socialization for generations of socialist, trade unionist, and broadly radical democratic activists. The present urban community, by contrast, is atomized, collective goals are mobilized in the service of the existing order, and the idea that the common good may require sacrifice and effort is replaced by notions of self-fulfillment, often through individual advancement and accumulation of possessions. This process extends to all organizations of citizens in the modern capitalist democracies, so that parties, voluntary associations, and unions become goods to be