

# There Are Two Socialisms

*Editor's Pick. Written by Ernest Lesigne in the 19th Century.*

*There are two Socialisms.*

One is communistic, the other solidaritarian.

One is dictatorial, the other libertarian.

One is metaphysical, the other positive.

One is dogmatic, the other scientific.

One is emotional, the other reflective.

One is destructive, the other constructive.

Both are in pursuit of the greatest possible welfare for all.

One aims to establish happiness for all, the other to enable each to be happy in his own way.

The first regards the State as a society sui generis, of an especial essence, the product of a sort of divine right outside of and above all society, with special rights and able to exact special obediences; the second considers the State as an association like any other, generally managed worse than others.

The first proclaims the sovereignty of the State, the second recognizes no sort of sovereign.

One wishes all monopolies to be held by the State; the other wishes the abolition of all monopolies.

One wishes the governed class to become the governing class; the other wishes the disappearance of classes.

Both declare that the existing state of things cannot last.

The first considers revolutions as the indispensable agent of evolutions; the second teaches that repression alone turns evolutions into revolution.

The first has faith in a cataclysm.

The second knows that social progress will result from the free play of individual efforts.

Both understand that we are entering upon a new historic phase.

One wishes that there should be none but proletaires.

The other wishes that there should be no more proletaires.

The first wishes to take everything away from everybody.

The second wishes to leave each in possession of its own.

The one wishes to expropriate everybody.

The other wishes everybody to be a proprietor.  
The first says: 'Do as the government wishes.'  
The second says: 'Do as you wish yourself.'  
The former threatens with despotism.  
The latter promises liberty.  
The former makes the citizen the subject of the State.  
The latter makes the State the employee of the citizen.  
One proclaims that labor pains will be necessary to the birth of a new world.  
The other declares that real progress will not cause suffering to any one.  
The first has confidence in social war.  
The other believes only in the works of peace.  
One aspires to command, to regulate, to legislate.  
The other wishes to attain the minimum of command, of regulation, of legislation.  
One would be followed by the most atrocious of reactions.  
The other opens unlimited horizons to progress.

The first will fail; the other will succeed.  
Both desire equality.

One by lowering heads that are too high.  
The other by raising heads that are too low.

One sees equality under a common yoke.  
The other will secure equality in complete liberty.

One is intolerant, the other tolerant.  
One frightens, the other reassures.

The first wishes to instruct everybody.  
The second wishes to enable everybody to instruct himself.

The first wishes to support everybody.  
The second wishes to enable everybody to support himself.

One says:  
The land to the State.  
The mine to the State.  
The tool to the State.  
The product to the State.

The other says:  
The land to the cultivator.  
The mine to the miner.

The tool to the laborer.  
The product to the producer.

*There are only these two Socialisms.*

One is the infancy of Socialism; the other is its manhood.  
One is already the past; the other is the future.

One will give place to the other.

*Today each of us must choose for the one or the other of these two Socialisms, or else confess that he is not a Socialist.*