

other ruptures.

Thirdly, there is **welfare liberalism**. At first sight, this appeared a paradox: how could liberalism, with its emphasis on free competition and its opposition to state interference, include a welfare dimension? The paradox is resolved if we understand that, just as universal franchise amplified the principles of universalism and liberty contained in classic liberalism, the **welfare state** proved compatible with the liberal idea that competition and individual acquisitiveness need to be regulated in the interests of wider harmony. It should be added that the welfare state concept originated with the un-liberal Bismarck regime in nineteenth century Germany; it was only later welded to the liberal state both via explicitly 'liberal' parties (eg the British Liberals, the US Democrats), and via the parties linked to the working class (Britain's Labour Party, West Germany's SDP). Though at times portrayed as superseding capitalism - especially by social democrats - it has been shown that the post-war welfare statism of the advanced centres is compatible with the reproduction of capitalist relations. Its essential effects have been to extend the scope of state intervention to include the maintenance of the working class and the management of capitalism's economic and social crises.

The definition of liberalism is further complicated by the existence of hybrids. In Latin America, liberalism often refers to the philosophy of landed oligarchies opposed to state interventions designed to serve independent industrial development.

The matter is compounded also by the fact that liberalism can be classified along a qualitatively different plane, according to its degree of willingness to reconcile with the existing order, versus its determination to transform it. In the French Revolution, for example, constitutional monarchists faced the opposition of more militant Republicans. The liberalism which began to sprout in Germany after 1848 was *conservative enough to be neutralised by Bismarck through the co-optation of its adherents with growth-promoting economic measures*. By contrast in Nicaragua the liberal-democratic bourgeoisie tried to take the lead in the struggle to overthrow the Somoza dynasty in the late 1970s. A

great deal depends on the strength or the extent of grievances present in the urban-based bourgeoisie, which in turn usually provides the main support for liberal political and economic reform. This need not, however, be the decisive factor, as the more radical liberals may sever their ties with the bourgeoisie altogether, and cement alliances with the masses.

Finally, it should be mentioned that 'militant' or 'radical' liberals may be **coherently** and philosophically liberal (and inter alia 'anti-communist'),

or may have an **ambiguous** attitude to socialism (this is true especially of social democrats). This ambiguity is notably present in the 'progressive nationalism' of many third world movements (including ZANU in Zimbabwe). One may wish to question the analytical wisdom of treating European social democracy - committed as it frequently is to 'socialism' and linked to the unions - as 'liberal'. The label, however, has much greater resonance in third world contexts where social-democratic currents have traditionally not been linked to working class movements, and have concentrated on 'universal' demands for 'democracy' and

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