

Screenplay "Good Socialism"

By

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Continues on the scenario
Capitalism

INT PUBLIC TV STUDIO EVENING

Presenter Tom Lawson leads the discussion on the future changes in society. Underneath the sign "JTV" is the slogan "LET'S GO FURTHER". Participants are Patricia Green, Patrick Nelson and George Sullivan. About 200 spectators are in the theatre.

TOM

Dear viewers, good evening. As you can see the national leaders are visiting us. Here we have state president Patricia Green, Mr. Patrick Nelson, the President of Parliament and the President of the Humanistic Party, George Sullivan. My experience tells me that they have prepared something dangerous. (He smiles) We have titled this show: "LET'S GO FURTHER" on their request. Good evening dear guests!

GEORGE

Good evening.

PATRICIA

Good evening.

PATRICK

Good evening.

TOM

Mr. Nelson, where are we going further?

PATRICK

To a better future, of course.

PATRICIA

(Intrudes)

We have achieved the optimum we could in the capitalist system. Capitalism cannot be developed anymore.

TOM

Why?

PATRICIA

In order to survive, capitalism must earn profit, which is conditioned by constant growth in production. But this is not possible to achieve.

TOM

Why not?

PATRICIA

The growth of production is not necessarily needed because the volume of production we have today is already sufficient to meet our consumption needs. The consumption is maintained artificially by using propaganda. On the other hand, the growth in production is limited by natural resources.

TOM

So, what should we do?

PATRICIA

We need to rationalize consumption. But that is precisely what threatens capitalism. Besides, capitalism is an unstable system. A stable economy needs major changes. We will now start a discussion to explain to everyone where we should go!

TOM

Where should we go?

GEORGE

To socialism.

TOM

(Laughs)

I have just thought we ran away from socialism and it is here again!

The audience laughs.

GEORGE

We should not run away from socialism anymore because it is the only way out. We were running away from a system that might rather be called a dictatorship of "great leaders" (presents quotes by his hands) but it was not socialism.

TOM

What is socialism to you?

GEORGE

Socialism is a system that would give equal rights to people, more freedom, and a better life than capitalism.

TOM

How?

GEORGE

When people adopt it; socialism will win capitalism through a more productive and more stable economy.

TOM

Well, how would socialism achieve greater productivity than capitalism?

PATRICIA

We will introduce an open competition of workers for every public job post. A worker who offers more profit, produced goods, better, cleaner and cheaper production at any time will get the job.

TOM

Uh... are you sure that this is possible?

PATRICK

The realization of such a system is only a technical problem.

GEORGE

(Intrudes)

No economy can be more productive than the one in which each job gets the best available worker. Private companies will not be able to follow such productivity. This will be the end of capitalism.

TOM

Why do private companies not implement it?

GEORGE

Because the principle of free competition for each work position

(MORE)

GEORGE (cont'd)
is incompatible with the principle
of private ownership of the means
of production.

TOM
What will owners of private
enterprises say?

GEORGE
They will not say anything. They
will ask the state to buy their
companies and the government will
do it.

TOM
The state will require a lot of
money!

GEORGE
It will not. Companies will not be
redeemed with money but rather with
government stocks. We call them
humanistic shares.

TOM
I knew that you would propose major
changes, but you have surprised me
anyway.

GEORGE
(Laughs and adds)
You should never underestimate us.

TOM
(Smiles and thinks a little
bit)
The competition of workers should
be regulated, right?

GEORGE
Yes. Each position will have a
defined productivity in the
computer center. A worker who
offers a greater productivity for
the desired position immediately
becomes a primary candidate. If the
employed worker at the work post
wants to remain at his job, he must
accept the competitor's greater
productivity. If he is not able to
take on the new responsibilities or
does not want to, he must leave his
job to the competitor.

TOM

Just like that?

PATRICK

In principle, yes. We have actually developed the labor market. The same way as each commodity on the market gets its ideal customer, each job post will get its ideal worker. This will bring great progress to production and to society.

TOM

Are you trying to say that if the commodities market has developed capitalism, then the market of work will develop socialism?

PATRICK

Yes.

TOM

And what would we do with the people who lose their jobs?

PATRICK

People who lose their jobs will be provided economic care and will find a new job because there will be a job for every worker.

TOM

How will workers be provided by economic care?

PATRICK

All people will receive incomes.

TOM

Everyone?

PATRICK

Yes everyone

TOM

Can you tell us more about the distribution of income?

GEORGE

Incomes will depend on many factors. Perhaps now it is important to mention the price of work.

TOM
Please go ahead.

GEORGE
Normally a higher price of work provides a higher income. But the right to work at any workplace with a defined productivity will be given to workers who ask for a lower price of work.

TOM
The market will regulate the price of labor?

PATRICIA
Yes.

TOM
How do you think ...

Patricia interrupts him.

PATRICIA
Excuse me for the interruption. Can you imagine a situation in which a good commodity on the market is cheap and bad commodity expensive?

TOM
I cannot.

PATRICIA
Of course you cannot! But that's exactly what we have today in the division of work. There are pleasant, well-paid jobs and unpleasant, poorly paid jobs. This is the result of the lack of labor market. The labor market will balance work interest for all jobs with the help of the price of work.

TOM
Very interesting. (thinks a bit)
And production, how would production be organized in socialism?

PATRICK
We believe that all companies would merge together in one large company with centralized management. The

(MORE)

PATRICK (cont'd)
centralized system will enable more
effective coordination of labor and
more efficient production.

TOM
(Smiles)
You have just decided to raise a
revolution. (Seriously now)
Centralized management in socialism
could not have praised a high
productivity!

PATRICIA
Now we're talking about a system
where the most capable people take
any job. Production efficiency will
be secured by lowering the
competition from the level of
companies to the level of jobs.
This will fundamentally change
everything.

GEORGE
(Adds)
Today's computer technology allows
an efficient coordination of work
and an increase in productivity of
large manufacturing systems. That
is why private corporations grow.
It seems to me that the owners of
big capital are just working to
form one single company for the
whole world.

TOM
Why do you think it?

GEORGE
Once, the cities throughout the
world looked very different yet
today the same companies can be
found on all the streets of the
world. They are owned by a small
circle of people that seek to
achieve control over the whole
world.

TOM
Do you have evidence?

GEORGE

I do not, but I know that this group of people has such a great financial power that they could redeem or suppress competition from the market.

TOM

Then why do you think you'll beat them?

GEORGE

Because nothing can be stronger than the associated people especially if each job gets the best available worker.

TOM

You mentioned that the socialist production would be more stable than the capitalist one. Why do you think so?

GEORGE

When the needs of the consumers are known, the economy cannot produce losses. The associated economy will require consumers to plan their spending ahead. It will develop a democratic planned economy.

There comes a silence, then Patrick adds the following thought.

PATRICK

I would conclude our presentation as follows: When the workplace becomes accessible to every person at every moment, that would be socialism.

TOM

I hope that behind your big words stand great deeds.

PATRICIA

(Intrudes)

Production based on customer orders and the best worker in every workplace will ensure the most efficient production. This will form the best economy, the socialist economy.

TOM

Your introduction was impressive. I hope that you will successfully defend your socialism. Is there a question in the audience?

A male viewer in his fifties raises his hand.

TOM

Please go ahead.

MALE VIEWER

What you say sounds nice in theory but the practice of socialism was much weaker than its theory. Capital owners are responsible by their capital for their businesses. In socialism, nobody is responsible and that is why socialism failed. What if workers offer a far greater productivity than they could accomplish?

PATRICIA

It would ruin the system and we will not allow it. We have solved the question of responsibility of people by introducing new values which we called humanistic shares. The increase in realized productivity will reward workers with humanistic shares and failure to fulfill their obligations will be punished by humanistic shares.

TOM

Can you explain specifically what are humanistic shares? What will be the significance of them?

GEORGE

Humanistic shares will present how much a person has contributed to creating value in society. All that people do good will be rewarded with humanistic shares. And vice versa, all that people do wrong will be punished by humanistic shares.

TOM

Uh... can you explain the basic principles by which the rewards and punishments would be distributed?

GEORGE

Yes. Each person will receive an equal amount of humanistic shares at birth. Man to man should be the highest value and this attitude should be supported by the shares.

TOM

I am getting a little bit lost here... When a man is born he should be rewarded?

PATRICK

One can say that. Man is the base of society and is its greatest value.

Tom is surprised.

PATRICK

(Continues)

After that, people will receive humanistic shares for their private property.

TOM

Why would people change their ownership for humanistic shares?

GEORGE

People who collect more humanistic shares will be more respected in society. They will also receive a higher income, higher pension, and will be able to leave more to their successors.

PATRICIA

(Adds)

These shares will bring incomes to all and so they will also ensure the existence of all people.

TOM

Ah so! These shares would then be very important. (Thinks about it) Then will it be a big problem to determine the worth of a man when he is born in relation to the capital?

PATRICK

I agree, it will certainly be a big problem. We have regulated all the values people may achieve by the humanistic shares. We expect difficulties in adopting the regulation at state level, but in the end we believe we will find a solution acceptable to all.

GEORGE

(Adds)

Any crime could be punished with the loss of humanistic shares by using existing laws. For a very serious crime a man can lose all his shares and end up having a negative value. It could be more uncomfortable than prison, and prisons would no longer be needed.

Tom is surprised, but asks nothing.

PATRICK

(Adds)

It is possible to regulate the birth rate with humanistic shares.

TOM

Yes?

PATRICK

If the birth rate is too high it is possible to punish parents with more children with humanistic shares. This will reduce the birth rate.

PATRICIA

(Adds)

Humanistic shares will be earned and lost by the mutual evaluation among people. Then the evaluations will leave lasting effects on everyone.

TOM

What do you mean?

PATRICIA

When a person gets a negative evaluation in the amount of one dollar he loses just one dollar

(MORE)

PATRICIA (cont'd)
 this month. If he loses the share
 in the value of one dollar he will
 lose one dollar every month for
 life.

GEORGE
 (Intrudes)
 Humanistic shares will direct
 people to be responsible towards
 their environment, to create the
 greatest possible values and to
 eliminate the creation of any
 damage. In this manner a productive
 orientation of society will be
 ensured.

A female viewer in her forties raises her hand.

TOM
 Go ahead.

FEMALE VIEWER
 Mr. Nelson, if I understood you
 well, you plan to let the criminals
 out of jail?

PATRICK
 Yes.

INT PRISON EVENING

Inmates in their living room watch the television show
 "Let's go further," and open their eyes wide in
 astonishment.

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PATRICK
 (Continues)
 At first glance, the prisoners will
 be happy to accept freedom, but it
 would not be pleasant for them. If
 these people had committed a great
 crime they will get a negative
 value of humanistic shares. For
 such people we have prepared
 special clothes with horizontal
 black and white stripes. Everything
 like this from swimwear to coats.
 (Asks the director of the TV show)
 Can you please bring the images to
 the monitor?

On the monitor appear models wearing different clothing items all in horizontal black and white stripes.

PATRICK

(Continues))

Former inmates will enjoy freedom as everyone else but they will not be able to take off these clothes. These clothes will tell everybody what kind of people they are. It could be an even more uncomfortable punishment than prison. They will remove the clothes only when they realize positive values in humanistic shares. To do so they will have to try very hard to have good behavior in society. It will be a more efficient prevention of crime and more useful solution to society than prison.

FEMALE VIEWER

(Raises another question))

Among them there may be criminals who will continue to do evil in society.

GEORGE

If these people would exist they will be treated in centers for mental health.

A male viewer in his forties raises his hand.

TOM

Please go ahead.

MALE VIEWER

Good evening, I must admit that I would not like the value of human being and capital to be compared by the humanistic shares. It turns out that a man has a price.

TOM

Who will respond?

Patricia gives a sign with her hand.

PATRICIA

We can already see today what is the value of man. For example by the length of the sentence a killer

(MORE)

PATRICIA (cont'd)
 receives. This is not an objective
 value but an arbitration, which
 prevents killings and is therefore
 useful. If we define the value of
 man through humanistic shares that
 will not be an objective value as
 well but it will be very useful.

TOM
 Why?

PATRICIA
 If society accepts man as a value;
 each individual will do the same.
 People will have the means to bear
 responsibility to the society.
 People will respect each other
 more.

One spectator in his fifties raises his hand.

TOM
 Go ahead.

MALE VIEWER
 Will all jobs be subject to
 competition among the workers?

PATRICK
 No, the competition applies to
 public companies only. If it would
 apply to private companies that
 would practically be a robbery of
 private property. There is no need
 for it. Private companies will not
 be sufficiently competitive to the
 system of work competition, so that
 they will "voluntarily" (shows
 quotation marks with hands) join
 the public companies.

Male viewer in his thirties raises his hand.

TOM
 Please go on.

MALE VIEWER
 Will the work competition apply for
 the position of president of state?

PATRICIA

Elected public officials in general are not subject to labor competition. We may open the competition here as well, but we do not believe there would be candidates. The Head of State will take over the management of the economy of the state. The responsibility they carry will be so great that hardly anybody would dare apply for the president position, not to mention to take over someone else's' job. It will be a completely different situation than today.

TOM

Any more questions?

A viewer from the audience in his late fifties appears.

TOM

Please.

MALE VIEWER

There are jobs for which is not easy or even impossible to determine productivity. How will workers compete for these jobs?

PATRICK

Do you have an example?

MALE VIEWER

Well, for an example how to determine the productivity of the presenter of this show, Tom Lawson.

TOM

(Laughs)

Why did you pick me?

PATRICK

Even the most abstract productivity can always be displayed with the coefficient of productivity growth. Let's say a competitor to presenter Tom offers a higher viewing of the show by a certain percentage. If he does not realize the increased viewership of the show then he will lose humanistic shares. We have

(MORE)

PATRICK (cont'd)
developed a whole system that
regulates the responsibilities of
workers with humanistic shares.

TOM
Is that not too complicated?

GEORGE
It can be very complicated but it
can be extremely simple as well. It
is not necessary to define the
worker's productivity increase, it
is sufficient to accept that the
increase in productivity implies.
We have in fact created another
category that might affect
employment. We called it the
coefficient of responsibility.

TOM
What is this?

GEORGE
(Continues)
A greater coefficient of
responsibility increases the labor
competitiveness. If Tom's successor
offers doubles the coefficient of
responsibility he would double his
power to obtain the job. After
that, each positive evaluation he
gets from people he will bring him
two humanistic shares and each
negative evaluation would take them
from him. If Tom's successor
incorrectly assesses his skills and
gains one million negative
evaluations, he would lose 2
million shares and will most likely
get a suit in black and white
stripes.

PATRICK
(Intrudes)
Something like that would not be
expected because people will be
entitled to a limited number of
evaluations. The new presenter must
make a huge mistake to get one
million people to give him a
negative evaluation. The point is
that the system guarantees the
(MORE)

PATRICK (cont'd)
better worker to go ahead and
requires him to have great
responsibility.

TOM
Will your system not spread fear?

GEORGE
Not fear, but responsibility. Most
people will not get any evaluations
or will receive evaluations from a
few people only, but everyone must
know that the situation could
always change. Jobs will be
overtaken only by workers who are
confident they will perform the
jobs much better than the existing
workers. By the way, we believe
that the jobs will be changed
mostly by agreement between the
workers.

TOM
Very interesting. We have a
question over the phone. Please go
on.

MALE VIEWER
(Voice only)
Twenty years I've been doing the
job that I love, and tomorrow some
kid will come and tell me nicely
that he could do my job far better
than me and tell me to pick up my
things. That will not pass.

PATRICIA
No one can drive you away from your
job if you do not let them. If
someone offers more productivity or
responsibility or a lower labor
cost, and you accept it, you will
remain at your job. The labor
market will in fact introduce more
justice into the system of
production and distribution. It
will no longer be possible that
someone has a good job and earns
far more than someone who has a bad
job. The labor market will balance
interests for all jobs.

TOM

Do you think that people will equally want to be for example singers and miners?

GEORGE

There is no reason for it not to be so. Today many people want to be singers because it makes good money and brings glory and few want to be miners because it is a dirty and poorly paid job. The labor market will equalize interest in the singing and mining professions.

TOM

Good singers can earn millions of dollars. Do you think that good miners would earn the same?

GEORGE

Good singers do not earn much because they sing very well, but because people think that they deserve it. It is the fault of the system in which we live. A system that does not give us freedom. A system that imposes a dull life to us, so that we admire anyone who stands out. When we establish the working competition all that will be changed. We will work at jobs that we love and it would not come to our minds to idolize other people. Then people will realize that the best singers are not much better than others. They will be no more valued than others.

PATRICK

(Adds)

Miners will earn more and this will equalize interest in both professions.

TOM

We have one more question from the audience over video call. Here you go.

On the TV screen in the studio appears an image of the TV viewer in his forties who asks the question.

MALE VIEWER

Good evening. You have some very interesting suggestions here.

TOM

Thank you. What is your question?

MALE VIEWER

Today, education and work experience play a major role in employment. How are you going to harmonize it with the competition of productive offers on the labor market?

TOM

Mr. Nelson will you answer this question?

PATRICK

We think that anyone's employment should not be conditioned with the possession of a diploma. A diploma is not a sufficient guarantee of knowledge. The new system will develop such a huge responsibility for the performed tasks of workers that no one would dare to apply for a job for which they do not have enough knowledge.

GEORGE

(Intrudes)

I must point out here that today's accepted knowledge is a big obstacle for the development of humankind.

TOM

Why do you think so?

GEORGE

Because it is. Have you ever heard that a social theory has improved the world? The philosophers have only differently interpreted the world, but there is no value in it. If there was, society would be good.

TOM

Society is developing!

PATRICK

Only technically. We have never lived unhealthier, fed unhealthier, had more illnesses. Crime is increasing, wars, dissatisfaction in society is growing. Today's society is as aggressive and as it was a thousand years ago.

TOM

It just means that we have to develop sciences.

PATRICK

(Disapproves by shaking his head)

Scientists are unable to provide any solution to the problems of today's society. The social sciences are useless.

TOM

You are exaggerating a little bit.

PATRICK

No I'm too restrained. The scholars of social sciences are preventing the development of society just as the medieval priests did. The only progress is that they do not have the power to burn us at the stake.

Tom laughs.

GEORGE

(Intrudes)

There are few professions that cannot be mastered in a year of study or less, yet we have a compulsory education system, which lasts at least 12 years. We think that at least 90% of the knowledge that is taught in schools today is entirely useless.

TOM

Bold statement. Can you explain it?

GEORGE

The lesson that is taught in schools the most and rewarded is obedience to authority. Society cannot be developed this way.

TOM

Will you abolish schools?

PATRICIA

Of course not. On the contrary, we will provide access to each school for everyone. But schools should follow the students' interest and not vice versa. If students do not like school, then it is useless suffering which harms human development. We advocate that students take whichever classes they want. The practice will best show what knowledge is needed.

The camera catches a student in the audience who opens his eyes wide in surprise and then rubs his hands with satisfaction.

TOM

Any more questions?

One female in her forties raises her hand to ask a question.

TOM

Please go ahead.

FEMALE VIEWER

Schools not only prepare students for work but also for life.

PATRICK

(Sarcastically)

Oh that is exactly what they do. That's why we live in such a good society. (End of sarcasm) School has never successfully taught people the most basic rule: "One should not treat others in ways that one would not like to be treated." People have begun to learn it just recently with the help of mutual evaluation.

TOM

We have another question over the phone. Here you go.

MALE VIEWER

What if some lunatic says that he is a pilot although he has never been on a plane? Don't you think that diplomas will still be needed?

PATRICIA

We are committed to free access to all jobs that bureaucracy does not allow. We are convinced that our system of accountability which socialism requires would force people to have more than enough knowledge for the job they want. Here I talk about normal people. Madmen will be treated and will not be able to work in jobs that could endanger people's lives.

TOM

(Said with good intentions)

I'm not sure whether you will attract a lot of people to your side with such views.

PATRICK

We are aware that many of our stands may encounter resistance because we have turned upside down many of the principles on which people are accustomed to. But we have no choice. We need to show what is not good and work on what is good with the hope that people would accept it.

TOM

Do you think that they will accept it?

PATRICK

Yes. The labor market will eliminate privileges, corruption, immorality and evil in today's society. People will choose jobs they prefer and thus they would enjoy working much more than today. People will become a value to one other. Isn't it worth acceptance?

TOM

We are close to the end of the show. Can you give us some conclusion?

PATRICIA

We base our work on an individual human being. That is why we established the humanist party. We

(MORE)

PATRICIA (cont'd)
have developed an idea that would give a good life to every person. Such an idea needs to be developed into a system which works well. In this moment we ask people for support to allow funds for research and development of socialism. It would be necessary to precisely define socialism, the laws and test a large number of scenarios before the implementation.

TOM
Do you think people will support you?

PATRICIA
Yes, people would support our research but not immediately. Time is needed.

TOM
You need to attract people?

PATRICIA
Certainly. We believe that it will take a lot of discussion before it becomes clear to everyone what we're talking about.

TOM
You would call for the referendum?

PATRICIA
Of course. The referendum will be open until the option for or against the acceptance of the study wins. But we know that the opponents of socialism cannot collect enough votes. The process which we have begun is unstoppable.

TOM
When would you do it?

PATRICIA
From this point, in the center for social questioning, the new referendum is set for all people to decide whether they would accept the development of the theory of socialism?

TOM

And the implementation?

PATRICIA

The referendum will be implemented as well. The acceptance or refusal of socialism will require at least two-thirds of the votes of the number of people who vote and at least half the votes of all people. The victory of socialism is only a matter of time. Maybe we will need 5 or 50 years but we will succeed, because socialism is the only good solution.

TOM

Wouldn't you ask the Parliament?

Patricia lets George to answer it.

GEORGE

We shall, but we think that we would attract the Parliament to our side more easily than the people.

TOM

Why?

GEORGE

Our opposition is heavily influenced by capital. We believe that the new economy will force private capital to join us. They will thus become the largest shareholders of the humanistic shares in a stable socialist economy. So that it would be the best way to preserve the values they possess.

PATRICK

(Intrudes)

I would thus conclude: Socialism will save humanity from social evil. The influence of socialism on humanity will be so great that everything before the implementation will be called barbarism and everything after the implementation will be called civilization.

George waits a little bit to attract attention. He looks into the camera addressing all viewers.

GEORGE

Dear people, when you realize what you really need in your life you will allocate all your money from income for taxes. Then, all goods and services will become free. That will be communism, Heaven on Earth, the best possible social system. Humankind will become one big good family. Life will become more beautiful than in your wildest dreams.

There was silence in the study. The surprise is so great that Tom remains silent. He looks puzzled and moves his hands but even he does not understand why. No one has questions, no one responds. The silence lasts for a while and then appears the scrolling credits of the program.

TO BE CONTINUED.