



Good Day to You..... A question...What is the difference between **socialism and communism**. Both are economic and political structures that promote equality and seek to eliminate social classes. The two are interchangeable in some ways, but different in others. In a **communist society** the working class owns everything, and everyone works toward the same communal goal. There are no wealthy or poor people all are equal **in theory** and the community distributes what it produces based only on need. Nothing is obtained by working more than what is required. Communism frequently results in low production, mass poverty and limited advancement. Poverty spread so widely in the Soviet Union in the 1980s that its citizens revolted. Like communism, **socialism's** main focus is on equality. Workers earn wages they can spend as they choose, while the government, not citizens, owns and operates the means for production. Workers receive what they need to produce and survive, but there's no incentive to achieve more, leaving little motivation. Some countries have adopted aspects of socialism. Both are the opposite of **capitalism**, where limitations don't exist and reward comes to those who go beyond the minimum. In capitalist societies, owners are allowed to keep the excess production they earn and competition occurs naturally, which fosters advancement. Capitalism tends to create a sharp divide between the wealthiest citizens and the poorest with the wealthiest owning the majority of the nation's resources. Capitalism is an economic system in which the means of production and distribution are privately or corporately owned and the operations are funded by profits.

Now most of us have been raised in a '**Capitalist society with a conscience**' in Australia and this nation's real wealth has grown. Australians are well fed and relatively content and can reach for the sky if they choose. No communist or socialist government and society has ever succeeded and **democratic socialism** is no different. An example of abject failure is Venezuela which has completely collapsed with people starving and leaving the country by the million. The Washington Post reports their inflation rate will be about 1 million percent this year with disastrous consequences. Yet Venezuela's wealth is in the ground and is immense including the world's largest oil reserves. How can this be you ask, well the country is a socialist regime and some argue it's a **democratic socialist** model. However it is nonetheless socialist and there is little incentive to work or manage the nation's resources carefully because the government has just given the people free stuff and now it's broke. People can vote as they wish but only for a centralised socialist government which thwarts ambition and personal incentive.

This idea of **democratic socialism** and central control appears to be growing across the world because of over population and dissent within the working class. People feel left behind and in part this is because we have the foolish idea that growth is limitless which of course it isn't. While the world has yet to come to the realisation that only sustainable growth is desirable and until then the desire to fall back to centralised planning will continue to grow at the peril of this nation and many others. Australian Labor has a socialist platform. Capitalism needs constraint and oversight else greed drives business as seen with the banks recently but otherwise it's a good proven model where people can take up risk and win or lose and they are responsible for the result. That promise underpins capitalism with the promise of building a better life but the responsibility is the individuals. ***Put simply we have entered the age of the 'politics of free stuff'***. The party or politician that offers a 'free ride' to the people should be treated with suspicion because there simply is no such thing as a free lunch.

**Until next time this is Kent Bayley**