

Responding to Liberalism

Key Skill:

Assessing the authority, reliability, and validity of Internet sources

Key Terms and Concepts:

- bourgeoisie
- collectivism
- communism
- democratic socialism
- government intervention
- Great Depression
- Marxism
- proletariat
- social programs
- socialism
- universal health care
- utopian socialism

Key Issue:

To what extent should we embrace an ideology?

Related Issue:

Is resistance to liberalism justified?

Chapter Issue:

To what extent are socialism and Marxism responses to classical liberalism?

Question for Inquiry #1:
What are the origins of socialist thought?

Question for Inquiry #2:
What have been some democratic socialist responses to classical liberalism in Canada?

There's an evenin' haze settlin' over the town
Starlight by the edge of the creek
The buyin' power of the proletariat's* gone down
Money's gettin' shallow and weak
The place I love best is a sweet memory
It's a new path that we trod
They say low wages are a reality
If we want to compete abroad

[chorus]

Meet me at the bottom, don't lag behind
Bring me my boots and shoes
You can hang back or fight your best on the front line
Sing a little bit of these workingman's blues

—Source: Bob Dylan, “Workingman’s Blues #2.”

*proletariat:
working class



▲ Figure 6-1 Singer/songwriter Bob Dylan

Bob Dylan wrote “Workingman’s Blues #2” in 2006. He was inspired by an earlier Merle Haggard song that also spoke of a hard-working man who finds it harder and harder to provide for himself and his family.

Dylan began writing and recording songs in 1962 and has achieved great success in both the folk and rock genres. Throughout his long career, he has written songs that have provided a voice for groups who feel marginalized (excluded or ignored) by society.

Imagine yourself in the position of Dylan’s workingman. You are a wage earner and a member of the working class. You have worked hard and helped the business you work for become a success. But recently you and other workers have been told that you will have to take a cut in pay because of a downturn in the economy. Who should be responsible for addressing this situation: the Canadian government, the owners of the business you work for, or you, the citizen and worker? Is this situation evidence of classical liberalism?

Chapter Issue:

To what extent are socialism and Marxism responses to classical liberalism?

As explored in previous chapters, the rise of classical liberalism and its economic and political systems, such as laissez-faire capitalism, helped to increase the gap between the people who were rich and the people who were poor in industrializing societies in the late 1700s and early 1800s. This inequality and focus on individualism prompted a variety of responses, such as the development of modern liberalism in Western societies in the late 1800s. In this chapter, you will consider the following issue: *To what extent are socialism and Marxism responses to classical liberalism?* To help you examine this issue, you will explore the origins and development of socialism and Marxism and their focus on the values of collectivism. As well, you will explore examples of socialism in Canada. As you read this chapter, continue your examination of the Related Issue for Part 2: *Is resistance to liberalism justified?*

The Origins of Socialism

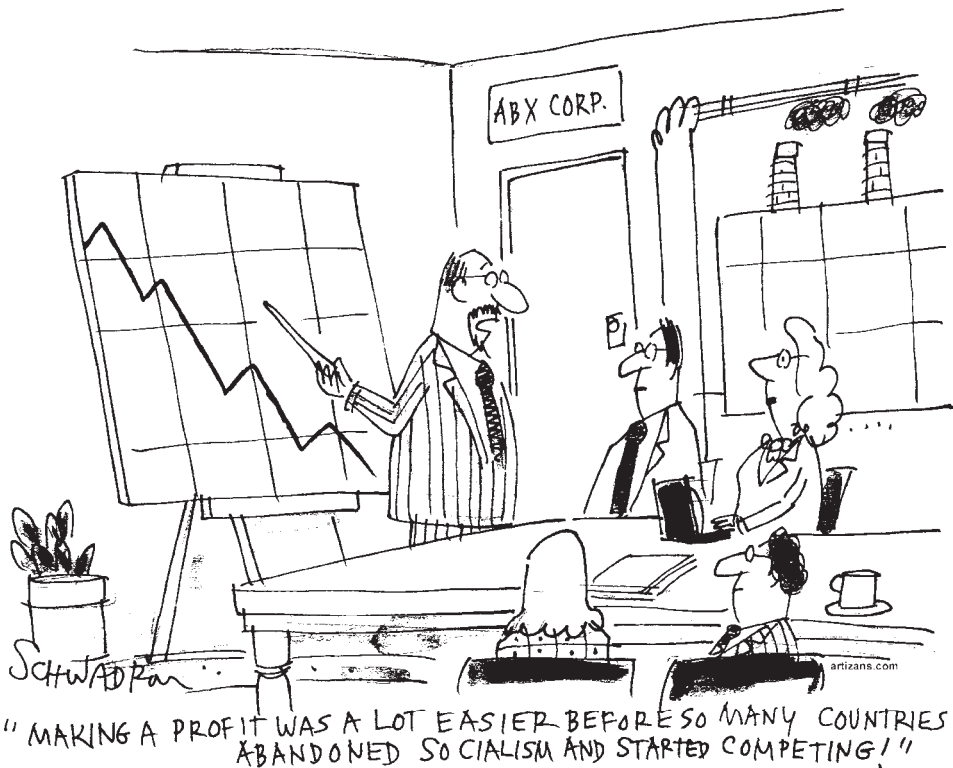
Question for Inquiry

1. What are the origins of socialist thought?

In this section ...



Figure 6-2 Cartoonist Harley Schwadron commented on the relationship between socialism (based on co-operation) and capitalism (based on competition) in this cartoon from 2005. What is his point of view about that relationship? Is your point of view similar to or different than Schwadron's?



PAUSE AND REFLECT

In earlier chapters, you explored some of the working and living conditions experienced by workers during the Industrial Revolution. Considering the effects of industrialization that you have examined so far, to what extent do you feel that classical liberalism created a fair society? Explain your answer and describe what you believe should make up a fair society.

As explored in Chapter 5, classical liberal policies during the Industrial Revolution in the late 18th and early 19th centuries resulted in the accumulation of wealth for a small group of business owners, and increased poverty and created poor living and working conditions for the majority of the population. In response, many people in Europe and North America began to question some of the practices in their political and economic systems, especially laissez-faire capitalism. Some people proposed changes to these systems to ensure that there would be equal opportunities for all individuals and a fair distribution of wealth. These “socialists” focused on

the idea of co-operation rather than competition, and placed a greater value on the group than on the individual. Despite sharing some core values, the types of changes suggested and how they would be implemented often varied greatly from one socialist group to another.

Socialist Values and Early Socialists

Robert Owen

Robert Owen (1771–1858) was one of the first British industrialists who felt that it was the responsibility of business owners to operate profitable and productive workplaces while also treating their workers well. As the owner of textile mills in New Lanark, Scotland, he improved living conditions for the workers in his mills and opened schools for children and adults. He established markets that provided good, nutritious food at reasonable prices. He also provided basic health care for his workers and allowed them to have a democratic voice in the operation of the mills.

Owen recognized the contribution that workers made to the profits of the owner. Without the workers, there would be no products to sell. He believed that it was the obligation of the owner to create a better community for workers. When he bought the New Lanark textile mills, he began to turn them into his idea of a better working community. He restricted working hours, raised wages, and refused to hire children under the age of 10—all the while making a profit. Owen believed that once people embraced socialist values, they could eventually progress to where they would achieve the perfect balance between satisfying economic needs and physical, social, and emotional needs.

Owen also pressured the government, unsuccessfully, to enforce an 8-hour work day at a time when even children in textile mills worked for 12 to 16 hours a day, 6 days a week. By 1810, workers in Owen's factories in New Lanark were working a 10-hour day.



Figure 6-3 This drawing from a book by M. Egerton, published in 1825, shows girls dancing at one of Robert Owen's schools for the children of workers in his textile mills. What impression does this image give of life in New Lanark? How does your impression compare with what you know about the lives of child workers in factories of that time?

Eight hours' daily labour is enough for any human being, and under proper arrangements sufficient to afford an ample supply of food, raiment [clothing] and shelter; or the necessities and comforts of life, and for the remainder of his time, every person is entitled to education, recreation and sleep.

—Source: Robert Owen, “Society for Promoting National Regeneration,” 1833.

Robert-Owen.com, <http://www.robert-owen.com/quotes.htm>.



Owen's New System

Robert Owen believed that education was the means by which long-lasting and beneficial changes could be made in society. He believed that, through education, people could create an ideal world, or a New System, in which they could live co-operatively.

“In short, my friends, the New System is founded on principles which will enable mankind to prevent, in the rising generation, almost all, if not all of the evils and miseries which we and our forefathers have experienced. A correct knowledge of human nature will be acquired; ignorance will be removed; the angry passions will be prevented from gaining any strength; charity and kindness will universally prevail; poverty will not be known; the interest of each individual will be in strict unison with the interest of every individual in the world.”

—Robert Owen, “Address to the Inhabitants of New Lanark,” January 1, 1816.

Infed.org, http://www.infed.org/archives/e-texts/owen_new_lanark.htm.

- 1 Why would Owen believe that education should be for all people, not only those who were privileged?
- 2 In his speech, Owen proposes that education will ensure that a “correct knowledge of human nature will be acquired.” How might someone who believes in the values of classical liberalism respond to this statement?
- 3 Is it reasonable to want to create an “ideal world”? Do you believe that the values of socialism meet the criteria for establishing and maintaining an ideal society? Explain why or why not.

New Lanark is commonly believed to be the birthplace of **socialism**, and Robert Owen has been praised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for his ideas on factory reform and for his humane working practices. In 2001, UNESCO designated New Lanark a World Heritage Site as a model industrial community with well-designed workers' homes and public buildings.

Charles Fourier

Charles Fourier (1772–1837) was a French socialist, who, like Owen, argued that a utopia, or “perfect place,” could be created where people could prosper and develop to their greatest potential. People who believed in these types of ideas, such as Owen and Fourier, are often called **utopian socialists**. Fourier believed that real benefits would come from arranging people in small, self-sustaining communities. Fourier believed that, with careful planning and regulation, these communities could be very successful in providing for the economic, political, and social needs of citizens.

“[I]n this new order, people possess a guarantee of well-being, of a minimum sufficient for the present and the future, and...this guarantee [will] free them from the uneasiness concerning themselves and their families.”

—Source: Charles Fourier, “Attractive Labour,” quoted in Bruno Leone, *Socialism: Opposing Viewpoints* (San Diego: Greenhaven Press Inc., 1986), p. 22.



◀ **Figure 6-4** The North American Phalanx was an experimental co-operative community located in New Jersey in the United States. It was based on the ideas of Charles Fourier and lasted from 1841 to 1856.

The ideas of the utopian socialists quickly spread to the industrializing United States, where groups attempted to establish co-operative communities based on utopian socialist values.

Karl Marx

Karl Marx (1818–1883) is considered to be one of the most significant socialist thinkers. Influenced by the socialist movement in France, his writings on the failings of capitalism and its negative effects on the working class inspired socialist movements around the world. Marx wrote his most recognized work, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), with fellow socialist Friedrich Engels. **Marxism** is a socialist ideology that evolved from interpretations of Marx's ideas.

In *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx explains that throughout history there have been revolutions led by oppressed people against their oppressors. One of Marx's key beliefs was that the struggle between the classes is the most important force in society.

Marx proposed that during his time there was a struggle between the **proletariat** (the workers) and the **bourgeoisie** (the business owners). He believed that the proletariat was oppressed by the bourgeoisie under the capitalist free-market system. He believed that the solution was for the proletariat to seize power from the bourgeoisie through a revolution and take control of the political, economic, and social systems to establish a socialist society. This society could then be free of class differences, with all people sharing in the production of goods and wealth in society. This “classless society” would be based on collective values and public ownership of property for the benefit of all people.



▲ **Figure 6-5** Cover of *The Communist Manifesto*

Marx believed that through revolution we move closer to a society that he called communism. According to Marx, communism is a classless society in which all people share in the production of goods and no government is needed.

According to Marx, a socialist society formed by the workers should involve such things as the following:

- the shift from private property to public property
- the creation of new factories controlled and owned by the government
- government control of all banking through a national bank
- government control of the means of transportation and communication
- free education for all children in public schools

The responses of early socialist thinkers to the conditions created by classical liberalism varied greatly. Some focused on how a more co-operative society could evolve from a competitive, capitalist one. Others believed that a revolution by the working class was the only way to free them from the oppression of wealthy business owners. All of the early socialist thinkers, however, shared the beliefs that there was a need to ensure equal opportunities for all individuals and a need to change how wealth was distributed in society.

Socialism as a Response to Classical Liberalism

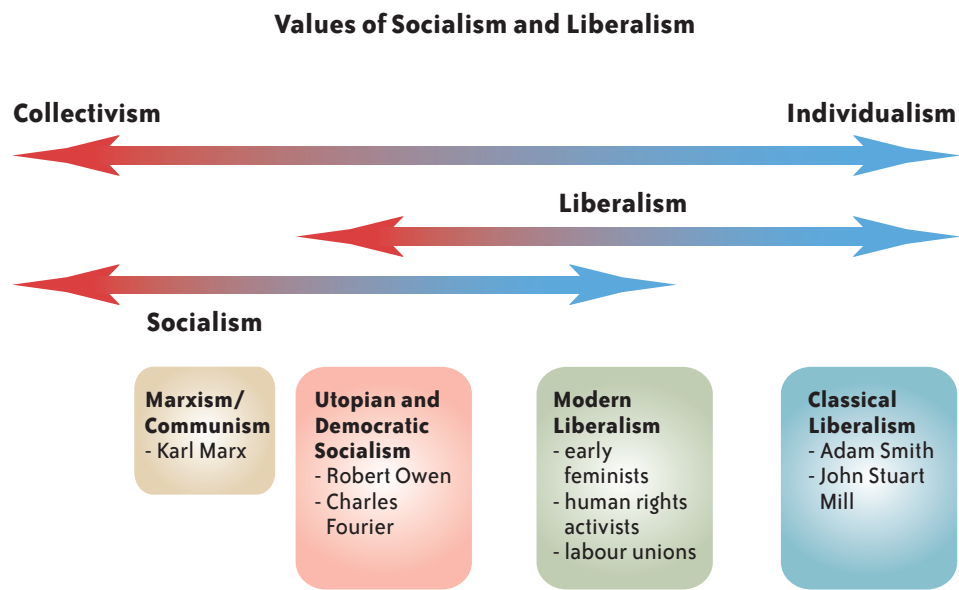
Socialism developed in Europe in the early 19th century as a response to the declining social and economic conditions of the working class during the Industrial Revolution. Early socialists thought that these poor conditions were the result of the practice of classical liberal ideas, such as individualism and laissez-faire capitalism, which created a vast inequality between the working class and the business-owning class. They felt that the economic benefits of classical liberalism were not being shared with most people in society. Socialists suggested that social and economic inequalities could be addressed by encouraging more government intervention in the economy. In doing so, they felt that wealth could be more evenly distributed to all, from the wealthiest to the most disadvantaged.

As you have learned, classical liberals during the Industrial Revolution embraced the idea of individualism, placing great importance on the individual and his or her rights and freedoms. Although many socialists shared a respect for human rights and freedoms and general democratic principles, they also embraced the idea of **collectivism**. As explored in Chapter 3, some of the key ideas of collectivism include collective responsibility, collective interest, co-operation, economic equality, adherence to collective norms, and public property. Socialists believe that values of collectivism should be the foundation for political, economic, and social life in society.

Think back to what you learned about individualism and collectivism in previous chapters and examine Figure 6-6 and Figure 6-7. What insight does this information give you into why socialism developed?

Values of Socialism (Collectivist)	Values of Classical Liberalism (Individualist)
Collective Interest: Humans should be co-operative, helpful, and compassionate.	Self-Interest: Individuals should act in their own self-interest.
Collective Responsibility: Society, through government, should be responsible for the well-being of its members.	Individual Rights/Responsibilities/Freedoms: Individuals should be responsible for their own well-being.
Economic Equality: Government should intervene in the economy—for example, by taxing profits and earnings and by offering social programs—to ensure a more equitable distribution of wealth among citizens in society.	Economic Freedom: The economy should be determined by market forces, such as supply and demand. The government should not intervene in the economy.
Public Property: The government should own major industries and run them on behalf of the people. Profits from these industries should be kept by the government and then redistributed throughout society.	Private Property: Individuals should have the right to own, buy, or sell property.
Co-operation: People should co-operate to achieve collective goals.	Competition: Competition benefits society when people work in their own self-interest, leading to innovation, motivation, and lower prices.
Adherence to Collective Norms: People should follow rules and norms that benefit society. Society should be structured so that there is equality among the people.	Rule of Law: No one is above the law, and each individual is accountable to the law.

▲ **Figure 6-6** Comparison of the values of socialism with those of classical liberalism



◀ **Figure 6-7** This political spectrum shows how some of the main socialist and liberal ideologies relate to collectivism and individualism: liberalism is most strongly represented on the right next to individualism, and socialism is most strongly represented on the left next to collectivism.



Socialism vs. Capitalism

With the establishment of laissez-faire capitalism arose a question: If you allow economic freedom, what is to stop people from acting purely on their own self-interest? Adam Smith might

say that although people act out of self-interest, their quest to earn more money benefits society as a whole. Many early socialists disagreed. They believed that because business owners were free to act as they pleased, they were allowed to place their desire for money above their regard for fellow citizens. The following are two early socialist arguments against capitalism:

What does competition mean to workingmen? It is the distribution of work to the highest bidder. A contractor needs a laborer: three apply.

"How much do you ask for your work?"

"Three francs, I have a wife and children."

"Good, and you?"

"Two and a half francs, I have no children, but a wife."

"So much the better, and you?"

"Two francs will do for me; I am single."

"You shall have the work."

With this the affair is settled, the bargain is closed. What will become now of the other two proletarians?

— **Louis Blanc (utopian socialist), *The Organisation of Labour*, 1840.**
Internet Modern History Sourcebook, Fordham University,
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1840blanc.html>.

While in former times the individual worker labored on his own account, with his own tools, and was the master of his products, now dozens, hundreds, and thousands of men work together in shops, mines, factories, etc., cooperating according to the most efficient division of labor, but they are not the masters of their products. The fruits of this cooperative labor are, in a great measure appropriated by the owners of the means of production, to wit: by the owners of machines, mines, land, and the means of transportation.

— ***Declaration of Principles of the Social Democracy of America*, 1897.** **Early American Marxism,**
<http://www.marxisthistory.org/history/usa/parties/spusa/1897/0618-sda-declopripinciples.pdf>.

- 1 Describe in your own words the arguments made here against capitalism. To what extent is your point of view about capitalism similar to or different than that in each of these sources?
- 2 Based on the information that you have about these authors and sources, can you say they provide reliable information and arguments about socialist responses to capitalism? Do they also contain biases? What additional research could you do to further confirm the validity of these sources? Please explain your answers.

READING GUIDE

To help you analyze the authority, reliability, and validity of Internet sources, use the following questions:

- When was the source written, what type of source is it, and what is its origin?
- Is it located on a reputable website about the issue, such as that of a relevant organization, or a newspaper/magazine/journal? Is it located on a more personal site, such as on a blog, in a chat room, or on a publicly alterable information site? (Note: the latter is not necessarily less reliable but is likely more subjective.)
- What background (biographical) information can you locate about the author or organization during an Internet search? What else has the author or organization written, and for what purpose? What does this tell you?
- Does the author or organization appear to have any biases? Does the author or organization have the authority to speak on this issue?
- Can you confirm the reliability of the information present in the source by locating at least three or more additional Internet sources from reputable sites, authors, or organizations that offer a similar point of view and information?

Early Democratic Socialism

Democratic socialism was developed during the late 1800s by socialists who believed that modern liberalism did not provide the type of government intervention that would address the collective interests of society. They embraced some aspects of Marxism, such as the idea of a classless society in which all people share fairly in the wealth of the country. In contrast to Marx, however, early democratic socialists (also known as Social Democrats) believed that political, economic, and social change could be achieved without revolution. Instead, they hoped to change things through democratic political processes, such as elections and reform.

By the early 20th century, democratic socialists began to organize political parties in Western Europe and North America, such as the Independent Labour Party of Great Britain and the Socialist Party of America. These parties wanted to create a society that included elements of both socialism and liberalism. In some ways, early democratic socialists tried to take what they saw as the best ideas in both of these ideologies and put them together. The *Declaration of Principles of the Social Democracy of America* of 1897, for example, includes ideas such as the following:

- Men are born free and have certain rights, such as the rights to life, liberty, and happiness. This idea reflects liberal beliefs and values.
- While citizens have the same political rights, this does not make them equal because of the vast economic inequality between the classes. Greater economic equality should exist in society. This idea reflects socialist beliefs and values.

Democratic socialists embraced certain classical liberal values, such as democracy, freedom, and individual rights; however, they believed that capitalism infringed on workers' rights and prevented many workers from actually being free. Their solution to this was to involve the government in the economy to ensure that all members of society were treated fairly. In doing so, most key industries would become publicly owned (owned and controlled by the government). In addition, the government would support labour rights and provide extensive **social programs**, such as unemployment insurance, health care, education, and child care.

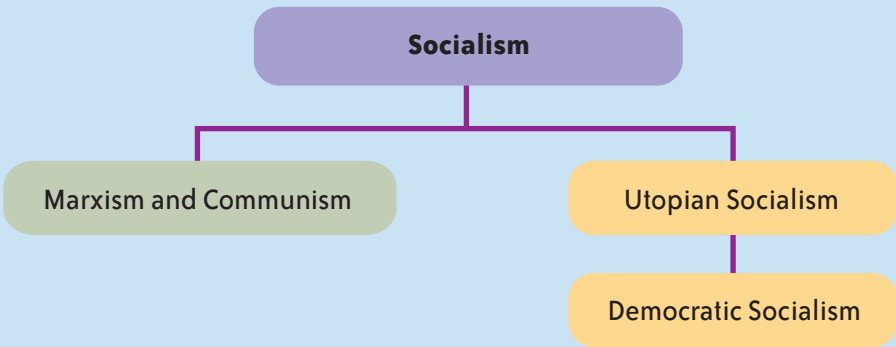
Many examples of democratic socialism have been and are still being practised around the world. In the section that follows, we will explore some examples of democratic socialism in Canada and the political and economic conditions that helped to create these movements.



▲ **Figure 6-8** This poster was used by the Independent Labour Party during the 1944 general election in the United Kingdom. What message does it send regarding the liberal economic policies of the time?

Figure 6-9 ►

Summary



Early **socialists** believed that the working population faced unacceptable conditions and that the main causes of these conditions were the practices of classical liberalism. In response, socialists decided to try to change the conditions by changing the way the economy and government operated.

Some early socialists, such as Robert Owen and Charles Fourier, proposed models for new **utopian socialist** communities based on co-operation rather than competition. Others, such as Karl Marx, proposed the need for a revolution of the working class, so that society could be restructured according to socialist beliefs. Later, **democratic socialists** proposed ways in which society should evolve through both socialist and democratic ideas and values, such as through elections and reform and established political parties that worked toward changing political and economic systems in Europe and North America.

Understanding the key values of **socialism** and how socialists wanted to change the structure of society will help you respond to the Chapter Issue: *To what extent are socialism and Marxism responses to classical liberalism?*

Knowledge and Understanding

- 1 Go through this chapter and identify the values of socialism that have been discussed. Create a three-column chart that states the values and provides both a social studies definition and a working definition of each value. A sample response has been provided in the chart below.

Values of Socialism	A Social Studies Definition	A Working Definition
Economic Equality	Governments have social programs to make sure that wealth is distributed fairly in society and to ensure the basic well-being of all individuals in society.	A mother makes sure that each of her children gets a piece of cake that is approximately the same size.

- 2 Summarize the main ideas of *utopian socialism* in a sentence or two. Do the same for *democratic socialism*. List some examples of individuals or groups that believed in each of these ideologies.
- 3 Describe how socialism could be seen as a response to classical liberalism by creating a diagram and writing a short description of this response.

Examples of Democratic Socialism in Canada

Question for Inquiry

2. What have been some democratic socialist responses to classical liberalism in Canada?

In this section ...

The Great Depression and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation

The Rise of Socialism in Québec and the Parti Québécois

It is likely that you already have or will have experience with Canadian social programs and legislation, such as student loans, unemployment insurance, child-care initiatives, the Canada Pension Plan, minimum wage, and universal health care. These programs and legislation were created due to the influence of social democratic movements, especially in Western Canada.

Socialism and socialist political parties have taken on many different forms in Canada. In this section, we will explore two examples: the development of one of the most well-known Canadian socialist parties, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), and the rise of socialism in Québec, in particular as reflected in the policies of the Parti Québécois.

The Great Depression and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation

During the **Great Depression**, when many families were suffering through very bleak times, people once again began to wonder whether the values of classical liberalism were valid. Some of these people believed that their government should take a more active role in managing the economy and helping them cope with the effects of the Depression.

Figure 6-10 One of the results of socialist influences in Canada is the development of our universal health care system. This system helps to ensure that all people have equal access to health care, regardless of their economic situations. In recent times, some Canadians have proposed changing this system so that medical professionals can operate privately and Canadians can choose to pay for medical services if they wish. These citizens are protesting against privatization of the health care system. What beliefs and values might influence how a person feels about this issue?

PAUSE AND REFLECT

Have you ever benefited from a student job creation program or from universal health care? How do you think these programs could be seen as a reaction to the practices of classical liberalism?





Figure 6-11 ▲ A crowd in Vancouver protests Canadian relief policies in 1937 during the Great Depression. Many people began to demand that the government step in and give more help to Canadians who were suffering economic hardships.

Figure 6-12 This picture appeared in a CCF election leaflet in Saskatchewan in 1938. What effect do you think the artist intended the images and words to have on the voters of that time? ▼



The Great Depression

October 29, 1929, marked the start of the Great Depression. It began with the “crash” of stock markets in New York and in all the major financial centres around the world. In Canada, the early years of the Depression brought economic hardships when companies went bankrupt, investors in businesses watched the value of their stocks disappear, and unemployment reached 27 per cent of the employable population.

Many historians and economists, regardless of their political orientation—conservative, liberal, or socialist—share the opinion that the stock market crash of 1929 and the Depression were the result of an unregulated economy. During the 1920s, investors had bought stocks and built companies thinking that the economy had no limits and could continue only in an upward and prosperous direction. But they learned that what goes up may also come down.

Recall what you know about the hardships that many people suffered during the early years of industrialization: poor working conditions, low wages, and unsanitary slums. Consequently, the prospect of a more equal and fair society was appealing to many people. Throughout many places in the world, socialism and increased **government intervention** were spreading as part of a political and economic ideology.

During the Depression, many Canadian industries and businesses came to a standstill, and there was mass unemployment. Some Canadians went through their life savings trying to survive, and others had nothing to live on, nowhere to live, and little to feed their families. More and more Canadians began to believe that their government needed to do something to support them.

Formation of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation

The CCF was founded in Calgary in 1932 during the Depression. The effects of the Depression were particularly harsh on people living in the prairies. There, the economy depended on ranching, farming, and mining, which were hit hard during the Great Depression, particularly due to drought that hit the Prairies. Some people did not have enough money to pay their bills. They had to abandon their farms, businesses, and homes to find what work they could elsewhere.

In 1933, CCF members met in Regina and elected J. S. Woodsworth as the party's first president. At this meeting, the CCF wrote the *Regina Manifesto*, which set out the party's goals and its plans for achieving them. The manifesto included goals such as the following:

- shelters for the jobless and homeless
- job creation programs
- pensions for those people who had worked for their lifetimes but could not be cared for by their impoverished children
- health services that would be subsidized by the government so that people could get medical help for a fraction of the normal cost

The power of the CCF peaked in 1944 when Tommy Douglas was elected premier of Saskatchewan by an overwhelming margin. Douglas and the CCF formed North America's first democratic socialist government and began a social welfare movement that influenced the entire country. The CCF itself eventually became the New Democratic Party (NDP). Although the CCF had little success in federal elections, the policies it proposed, such as social programs, job creation programs, and union support, are reflected in many Canadian government policies today.



PAUSE AND REFLECT

How did CCF democratic socialist programs challenge the values of classical liberalism?

The Rise of Socialism in Québec and the Parti Québécois

The Rise of Socialism in Québec

After the Second World War, Québec was led by Premier Maurice Duplessis. Like many other leaders at the time, Duplessis was strongly anti-communist and anti-union and promoted laissez-faire economic policies. Although a great supporter of Québec's independence from the Canadian federal government, he was also often accused of limiting the individual rights and freedoms of Québec's citizens. During his leadership, the Québec provincial government increased the role it played in the economy and engaged in many public works projects, such as highways, schools, and hospitals.



Woodsworth on Capitalism

J. S. Woodsworth was first elected to Parliament in 1921 as a member of the Manitoba Independent Labour Party. In 1933, he became the leader of the CCF.

"The Cooperative Commonwealth Federation believed that capitalism can be neither reformed nor restored. Profit for the few and prosperity for the masses are incompatible. The only permanent solution of our problems is to get rid of capitalism and replace it by a new social order, the cooperative commonwealth."

—J. S. Woodsworth, speaking in the Canadian Parliament, February 11, 1935.

- 1 What ideas or values about capitalism does Woodsworth criticize? What does he say is wrong with capitalism and how it has affected society?

After Duplessis's death in 1959, Québec saw a rise in socialism which was tied to a growing movement supporting the sovereignty of Québec. Québécois socialist groups, such as the *Groupe marxiste révolutionnaire* (Revolutionary Marxist Group) promoted the struggle for an independent Québec led by the working class. To many of these groups, the Canadian government represented an oppressive force, much like the business owners of laissez-faire capitalism.

By the early 1960s, parties that embraced socialist values came to power in the provincial government of Québec and began to implement policies and programs based on these values. For example, the Liberal government of Premier Jean Lesage intervened to provide greater access to health care and education, to introduce family allowances, and to take over all private producers of hydroelectricity. The rise in socialism during this period in Québec history, known as the Quiet Revolution, resulted in the creation of a welfare state.

In the 1960's, Québec, indeed the world, was agitated by powerful currents of change. Liberal and leftist forces everywhere questioned the social order that had been accepted for so long ... [E]qual and adequate accessibility for classes and regions to educational and social services, economic well-being for all, and the establishment of a social safety net were voiced and pursued strongly here [Québec], as they were in many other places.

—Source: Claude Bélanger, “The Quiet Revolution,” August 23, 2000.
Quebec History, Marianopolis College,
<http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/QuebecHistory/events/quiet.htm>.



▲ **Figure 6-13** Early in his career as Minister of Natural Resources, René Lévesque played a strong role in nationalizing hydroelectricity in Québec.

The Parti Québécois

One of the cabinet ministers in the Lesage government, René Lévesque, went on to found a new political party, the separatist Parti Québécois (PQ), which came to power as Québec's provincial government in 1976. While the main aim of the PQ was achieving sovereignty (independence) for Québec, it also embraced socialist values.

...le degré réel de civilisation nous est indiqué aussi par le traitement qu'on accorde à la multitude inorganisée et d'ordinaire silencieuse des gens les plus faibles et démunis: les vieillards, les enfants sans défense, les handicapés, les familles nombreuses à revenus modestes.

Translation: *...the real degree of civilization is also indicated to us by the treatment shown to the unorganized and usually silent multitude of the weakest and most disadvantaged people: the elderly, defenceless children, the handicapped, families with many children on a modest income.*

—Source: Parti Québécois, “La solution: Le programme du Parti québécois présenté par René Lévesque.” (1970), p. 38. Université du Québec à Chicoutimi,
http://classiques.uqac.ca/collection_documents/parti_quebecois/la_solution/la_solution.pdf.

In the late 1990s, Québec's PQ government introduced government-funded social programs, such as a public insurance program—pharmacare—

to insure the people of Québec for prescription drugs, a \$7-a-day universal child care system, and a generous parental leave program.

Whether or not the PQ continues to embrace democratic socialist values is the subject of some debate, in part due to cuts it made to social spending in the 1990s and early 2000s. What does the following excerpt from the PQ's official party platform of 2008 suggest about the party's values?

Nos valeurs sont claires. Ce n'est pas en continuant à tolérer la croissance des écarts de richesse entre les plus riches et les plus pauvres que nous progresserons...Il faut réformer l'État pour qu'il soit plus efficace et plus humain.

Translation: *Our values are clear. It is not by continuing to tolerate the widening gap in wealth between the richest and the poorest that we will progress...It is necessary to reform the state so that it becomes more efficient and more human.*

—Source: Parti Québécois platform document, 2008. Parti Québécois, <http://www.pq.org/plate-forme/annexe/>.



PAUSE AND REFLECT

Is it reasonable to expect a government to pay for social programs such as health care, family allowances, or child care? Would you vote for a party that supports such programs? Explain your answer.

Summary

Serious concerns about classical liberalism and its values were raised worldwide during the Great Depression of the 1930s, resulting in the development of modern liberal and more socialist responses to laissez-faire capitalism, such as that of democratic socialism and the political movement of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation and its contribution to the popularization of socialist values in Canada. In Québec during the 1960s and 1970s, democratic socialist values were also embraced by many and were reflected in the policies of the provincial government, as well as in the platform of the Parti Québécois. Today, the New Democratic Party and some other political parties in Canada continue to embrace some democratic socialist values.

Knowledge and Understanding

- 1 a) Compare the democratic socialist policies of the CCF and of the PQ with the beliefs and values of an early socialist thinker described earlier in the chapter.
- b) Create one Venn diagram for the CCF and one for the PQ to show the similarities and differences.

- 2 Reflect on the following statement: Socialist ideas gain popularity when people feel they are being treated unfairly. Use the Canadian examples in this section to write a response to this statement.

INVESTIGATION AND EXPLORATION

Tommy Douglas and Universal Health Care

Something to Think About:

Health care in Canada is sometimes a topic of heated discussion. Some people complain about long waiting times to see doctors, and other people complain about overcrowded emergency rooms. In Canada, health care is universal (paid for by Canadians through their provincial and federal taxes and made available to all people), unlike in many other countries, including the United States. Many people credit Canadian democratic socialist Tommy Douglas with providing the country with universal health care.

An Example:

One of the more active members of the CCF was Thomas (Tommy) Clement Douglas. During his career, he applied his democratic socialist beliefs and changed the way health care functioned in Canada.

Douglas was born in Scotland in 1904 and came to Winnipeg, Manitoba, with his family as a young boy. When he was 10 years old, he was hospitalized for a bone infection in his knee. Without the money to pay for treatment, he and his parents were told that their only option was to amputate his leg at the knee so that the infection would not spread any further.

Soon after the diagnosis, a surgeon visiting the hospital offered to pay for another kind of treatment that included an experimental surgery. The surgeon asked the permission of the Douglas family to allow aspiring medical students to be part of the procedure. In return, the surgeon would not charge the family for the surgery. The Douglas family agreed, the surgery was successful, and Tommy Douglas kept his leg.

Tommy Douglas carried this childhood experience with him into his adult life. When he became active in the CCF, he made universal health care a priority for the party.

I felt that no boy should have to depend either for his leg or his life upon the ability of his parents to raise enough money to bring a first-class surgeon to his bedside. And I think it was out of this experience, not at the moment consciously, but through the years, I came to believe that health services ought not to have a price tag on them, and that people should be able to get whatever health services they require irrespective of [without considering] their individual capacity to pay.

—T. C. Douglas, *The Making of a Socialist: The Recollections of TC Douglas* ed. Lewis H. Thomas (Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta Press, 1982), p. 7.

During his time as premier of Saskatchewan, Douglas worked hard to create a province that included many of the values of socialism. In a sense, he was creating his own New Lanark, but as a part of a democratic political system and on a province-wide scale. His government introduced legislation that improved working conditions. He established Canada's first public car insurance program and created programs to have roads paved and improve access to utilities such as electricity and sanitation. He also realized his most significant goal: the establishment of Canada's first universal health care program.

Although Saskatchewan was the first province to introduce universal health care, it was not the last. Today, all Canadian provinces and territories have universal health care or medical care programs that provide essential health services to all people regardless of their ability to pay for them.



Figure 6-14 ▲ In February 2006, at Edmonton's Stollery Children's Hospital, young Xander Dolski's life was saved when he received a heart transplant within hours of his birth. This photo was taken of Xander eight weeks later. Heart transplants can cost \$100 000 in some countries such as the United States. In Canada, they are covered by Canada's universal health care system.

Questions for Reflection

- 1 Tommy Douglas's childhood experience had an effect on his adult political viewpoints. Can you think of any experiences that you have had that may have shaped how you think about economics or politics?
- 2 In 1962, when the Saskatchewan government tried to bring in the last stage of Douglas's public health plan, two-thirds of the province's doctors went on strike. They objected to the idea of a medical plan controlled by the government. How might the battle between the Saskatchewan government and the doctors be seen as a struggle between the practices of classical liberalism and democratic socialism?
- 3 To what extent does providing universal health care for all citizens represent socialist and/or modern liberal values?

FURTHER EXPLORATION

- 1 The *New Internationalist* magazine is a socialist magazine. Go online to the *New Internationalist* website at www.newint.org. Print an article and summarize the socialist ideas contained in it. Once you have identified the socialist ideas, discuss with a classmate how a supporter of classical liberalism and laissez-faire capitalism might respond to them.
- 2 Some Canadians do not consider themselves to be socialists, and yet they support that their government provides universal health care. Why do you think that health care is a different matter for these people? Why might they oppose a government providing money for post-secondary education or ensuring a higher minimum wage but not oppose health care? How would you respond? What values of individualism and/or collectivism are important to you?
- 3 How has learning about the socialist response to classical liberalism helped you answer the Chapter Issue: **To what extent are socialism and Marxism responses to classical liberalism?** Please explain your answer and provide examples to support it. In your explanation, consider how past events and ideas can influence the development of new beliefs and values.
- 4 Using your research skills, find out which countries in the world today consider themselves to be socialist or have demonstrated socialist ideas in the past. Can you find any episode in their collective history that might support the idea that socialist values and practices are more widely accepted during times of economic hardship? Which information and point(s) of view about the histories of these countries and their socialist values are from the most reputable sources? Can you validate this information from three or more reliable sources?
- 5 Using the information in Figure 6-6, determine which value of socialism is best represented by each of the following socialist responses to the values of classical liberalism:
 - When individuals act in their own interests, some succeed, but many are left behind and need support.
 - All individuals should strive for the same goals and co-operate to achieve results that benefit the common good.
 - Society has become unjust, with some people having enormous wealth and others struggling to survive.
 - The result of economic freedom is the concentration of wealth in the hands of a small group of people.
 - Laws that are written to benefit one group of people over another should be challenged.
 - To make society more equal and fair, there must be public ownership of some key industries.

Chapter Summary and Reflection

In this chapter, you explored how **socialism** developed as a reaction to classical liberalism. Bob Dylan's "Workingman's Blues #2" is one of many songs that speak about how frustrated people can become when they work hard but cannot change their political, economic, and social circumstances for the better. For socialists, the values of socialism can provide a solution for people in such situations.

Robert Owen, who established the first modern socialist community, believed that business owners benefited from their workers' labour and should treat those workers well and pay them fairly. Owen and Charles Fourier are seen as **utopian socialists** who believed that the world would become a better place if socialist principles were put into practice. Karl Marx proposed a revolutionary response to the economic, political, and social practices of classical liberalism and influenced many forms of socialism. Support for **democratic socialism** grew during the turn of the 20th century, and democratic socialists proposed that a

democratic welfare state should evolve from the existing capitalist system, combining elements of democratic and socialist political and economic systems.

During the **Great Depression**, more people began to look to socialism for solutions to the dire economic and social circumstances of their lives. Canadian political parties, such as the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, and individuals, such as Tommy Douglas, began to advocate democratic socialist policies, including universal health care. Later, in Québec, such as with the PQ, socialist ideas were embraced by many and influenced the policies of the provincial government. Today, the NDP and the PQ political parties continue to embrace aspects of socialist values.

Using what you have learned, reflect and record your thoughts on how you will respond to the Chapter Issue: **To what extent are socialism and Marxism responses to classical liberalism?**, and the Related Issue: **Is resistance to liberalism justified?**