

WHO WILL PROTECT THE IMMOBILE?

Edward Luttwak

POSITION



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There is something new in the world, something which has been emerging for the last several years, and it is the transformation of capitalism into what I call turbo-capitalism, or accelerated capitalism. It is characterized by much more rapid structural change than before. The usual business of capitalism, which is the rise and fall of firms, companies, industries, technologies, has accelerated in the last ten years or so, maybe fifteen years, and this acceleration has changed the distribution of rewards.

People who work, even under-skilled professionals, are at a disadvantage, compared to the past, and **people who are very successful are people who are very agile and are able to move between countries, operate internationally, not just nationally**, and operate in different industries and change professions. What is happening is that the rewards, the pay-off, the money has been going disproportionately to people who are suc-

cessful in this way, not on the basis of performance but on account of their agility and ability to simply move and take advantage of different situations. This is all very elementary and very simple, but it has deep consequences on the distribution of income, because people who have a minimum agility, people who get a job in a factory or in an office and cannot move for personal reasons, for family reasons, because they don't know foreign languages or whatever, these people have become relatively poor, sometimes absolutely poor, compared to those who are more agile.

At first glance, everything is quite simple, but all of this has far-reaching political consequences. This has reduced, in effect, democratic support and voter support for the traditional parties of capitalism, whether the republicans in America, different European centrist parties, or the conservative parties like the British Tori and so on. They have all been losing support. The traditional capitalist left, which is the social democratic left and the left of trade unions, has also lost support because they haven't been able to deliver on their promises. And this has increased support for populist parties. The word 'populist' now has a negative meaning, but that is not the case. They are, in some ways, the most democratic parties, because people are not satisfied with what the center right and the center left are giving, they are not satisfied economically, and therefore they are looking for an alternative. **That's because most are unable to perform their profession internationally; they cannot go to Hong-Kong, cannot go to Shanghai, cannot move around, they do not have the agility, and their party does not give them this.** Their party is not protecting them against the unwanted social change caused by immigration.

In addition, and in Europe especially, there is the problem of immigration, of aggressive cultural change, because the immigration in Europe is coming from predominantly Muslim countries, and, therefore, you have a situation in Europe where a normal European gentleman, who before was voting for a

conservative party that was giving him a good life, now finds that everything has changed. So, he changes his point of view, because the conservatives cannot protect him any longer. It is quite natural that these people feel dissatisfied and turn for protection to right-wing populist parties.

And then the social democrats continue to talk in progressive language, fighting racism from morning till night, and therefore they are not doing anything for their people, who are working class or semi-working class or lower professional class people. These people are also not getting economic rewards, because they do not have agility or an ability to change professions and to change work. At the same time, **social democratic parties, instead of defending them against Muslim invasion, continuously attack anybody who even mentions the problem of immigration and the problem of Islam.** If you mention it you are a racist.

If we view the ongoing processes through the obsolete social democratic prism, then these changes can be called reactionary. But we are actually dealing with an authentic democratic self-expression here. The Tea-party in America is a democratic expression, a group of people not satisfied with the system demanding drastic change. But, of course, in America they are not racist and they don't care about immigration, because they don't have as much Muslim immigration. Nevertheless, the left calls them reactionary.

Social democrats can no longer be progressive. In England they cannot stop the drastic cut in public spending, and the firing of many public officials and employees of the state. They are not able to do their job, and that's why support has been growing for populist parties. They are actually successful, because, first of all, they recognize the problem. They don't say: 'Oh, it is forbidden to discuss the problem,' which seems to be the rule in almost all social democratic parties, and, in the traditional capitalist sense, in all the right parties as well. ■

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