

MICHAEL KAZIN INTERVIEW

In this interview, Michael Kazin talks about socialist ideals in America and the parts that Samuel Gompers and Eugene Debs played in shaping national discourse about socialism.

The United States doesn't have much of a socialist movement anymore. But it did in the early 20th century. Why?

Well, certainly the United States seemed like a promising place for socialism to sprout. There was a large and growing working class. There was a large gap between rich and poor, between skilled workers and unskilled workers. Americans were politically active and had been mobilized behind political parties and so it seemed as if the more advanced capitalist nations would also be the first ones to embrace socialism. That was Marx's theory of what should happen, and to a degree it had happened in some of the nations of Western Europe and Central Europe.

Why didn't the working class in America take to socialism as a movement, as it did in Europe?

The most important reason why socialism failed to become a mass movement in the United States, I think, is the heterogeneous composition of the working class itself. The United States has always been an immigrant country. It's always been a country divided, racially. Before the Civil War, of course, it was a country where slavery was as healthy a system as in any place in the New World and where slavery was such a healthy system that it had to be destroyed in the Civil War, which did not happen anywhere else in the New World.

And on through the golden years of socialism in Europe, in the United States there was a mass immigration, which led to a clash of identities, really, for many workers. Were they workers? Were they proletarians without property, who needed to organize as workers, have class consciousness and oppose the bosses? Or were they Irish, Italian, Polish, African-American, Japanese, and so forth, seeking a sense of community with their own people across class lines? Well, it's the latter. The ethnic identities and the racial identities and the racial antagonisms and ethnic antagonisms became the primary way that American workers thought of themselves, rather than class consciousness. And I think that's the largest reason.

What other conditions in America were inhospitable to the development of the socialist movement?

There are many other reasons as well why America failed to develop a really strong, socialist movement. One of them is that class lines in the United States were, to a degree, more fluid than they were in Europe and especially in political terms. There was not the exclusion of workers from the franchise, from the right to vote, that you had in Europe throughout most of the nineteenth century and in some countries into the twentieth century. American male workers, white male workers, who were the majority of workers, got the votes before the Civil War. Most of them by the 1820s and by the 1840s, all white, male, adult workers already had the vote. Whereas in Europe, in no country was that true. So before a socialist movement really got off the ground -- a

socialist movement which in Europe demanded the right to vote for all regardless of occupation, regardless of whether a man had property or not -- American workers already had the right to vote.

So the socialist movement, which grew strong in Europe in part as the voice of the excluded, those who were excluded from the franchise, those who were excluded from the political system, those people were already in a political system -- they were already quite active in the political systems, especially in the Democratic Party. So, that's a big reason I think why socialism failed to develop here, because the political system already gave them inclusion. Or, they didn't have to have a separate class-conscious movement to demand it. For other reasons too.

Did the labor movement and the socialist movement have anything to do with each other in America? Did they develop separately, or hand-in-hand?

In the United States, the labor movement began long before there was a socialist movement. And the labor movement began as primarily a bread-and-butter kind of movement demanding high wages, shorter hours, that the police not be used to break up their strikes. And these were very practical demands, and they were demands which organized labor, especially the craft unions of organized labor, the skilled workers, were quite adept at making, long before there was a socialist movement.

So, socialism came to the American labor movement much more really from outside the ranks of the workers themselves, much more from intellectuals like Robert Owen, Daniel de Leon, [and] others who had the idea that workers could only be emancipated by forming a party of their own, and who saw trade union work as much more piecemeal, ameliorative. They would only be able to make small changes around the edges in workers' lives. But most trade unionists had seen that the trade unions, in prosperous times at least, had been able to make changes for workers, the workers who were members of them, at least, which was only a minority of workers, and many trade unionists believed that that was enough. They didn't need an overarching radical philosophy to emancipate them.

Who was Samuel Gompers and what is his significance?

Well the irony about Sam Gompers is that he was a Marxist who forged an anti-Marxist labor movement. Gompers was born in a poor family in London and moved to the United States in his teens. Becomes a skilled cigar maker. Helps to form a union, which is one of the strongest craft unions in America. And all this time he is a socialist. He's reading Marx. He's reading Engels. He's reading other classics of European socialism and he believes that the best way to organize workers, to demand their emancipation, the best way to achieve socialism, is by making the trade unions themselves stronger. And in this he's basing himself on Marx's own writings. Because Marx said famously that the emancipation of the working class will be the work of the working class itself. And, Gompers thought that's what he was doing. And he opposed the socialist comrades, you might say, who believed that only through a socialist party, only through a political party could the workers gain that kind of strength.

Gompers believed that the best way for workers to gain power was through their trade unions. By making demands on the political system which, when he was a socialist, he believed the political system would not grant. And so eventually, the

workers would take over the society, but because of the strength they had in their unions.

So he began his working life and his political life as a socialist. He supported their parties. He voted for the Greenback Labor Party, which was a radical reform party in 1876. In 1880, he worked for a radical reformer named Henry George, to be mayor of New York in 1886. And really, through the 1880s into the early 1890s, Gompers was a socialist. But he disagreed with those socialists who believed that it was politics that would emancipate workers rather than their own efforts fighting through the trade unions.

How was Gompers initially exposed to the ideas of Socialism?

Well, Gompers, when he was a cigar maker in New York City in the 1870s, was a member of a socialist club of workers and there [were] other immigrants like himself, other European immigrants, who were a part of this club. [T]here was a guy named Adolph Strasser, who was an immigrant from Austria. There was a very important older figure in the cigar maker union, Ferdinand Laurell, who was an immigrant from Sweden. And cigar makers were a particularly intellectual trade because it was a very quiet kind of work, sitting at a bench and rolling cigars, using your hands, sometimes using a mold, and it was a sort of boring, kind of repetitive skilled labor. And so, in this country and everywhere around the world where cigar makers worked, they were read to by a boy or sometimes a fellow cigar maker so they got an education at the workbench. And Marx had preached that a strong union was the most necessary thing that workers could have. Really the battles that they got involved in, in the 1870s, were battles between different groups of socialists.

What was the Tompkins Square riot?

Well, this Tompkins Square riot takes place during the depression of the middle of the 1870s, which was the worst depression America had ever suffered. There had been a plan to hold a rally to protest joblessness and to demand public-works jobs from the city of New York. At the last moment, the march was denied a permit by the authorities in New York but the socialists who had planned the march, who were not part of Gompers' own group of socialists, wanted to go ahead with the march anyway to defy the authorities. There was a lot of violence. People were put in jail. Some heads were cracked. Gompers saw this, and he always had a great fear of disorder, I think. He always had a great fear of radicals or workers, whether radicals or not, trying to achieve their end without being well-organized, without having the planning that he felt was absolutely necessary to go up against very powerful forces, especially among employers in the business class.

So he saw it, he was there, watched this riot, felt it accomplished nothing, felt that socialists, who he didn't agree with, had concocted this idea of going up against the authorities and defying the authorities without having planned it. Because they had an idea in their head, he believed, that workers showing their militancy, showing their anger itself was somehow going to achieve their ends. And so, after this, as he writes in his autobiography, he had an aversion to intellectuals from outside the labor movement telling workers how they should behave, floating pretty visions of militancy or other kind of romantic socialism that they then tried to sell to the workers.

Gompers was always intensely class-conscious. In fact, many socialists later on who disagreed with Gompers said he was more class-conscious than they were, because he always believed that workers themselves were the best judges of what they needed, what they wanted. And workers themselves, he thought, suffered from disorganization, suffered from spontaneous violence and just sort of acting out their anger. He wanted that anger to be channeled. He thought it could only be channeled through existing trade unions, which would have to plan very carefully the kind of demands they would make on their on their class opponents. Because, if they didn't plan carefully, they would be smashed as they were during the riot in 1874.

Did American socialists get along with each other?

Well, socialists are always splitting. I mean socialism was a kind of church, a Protestant Church as opposed to a Catholic Church, and there are lots of sects, lots of divisions sometimes between individuals, more often between parties that were surrounded around individuals.

There were several significant splits. The biggest issue that split apart socialists in the 1870s and 1880s probably was the issue of whether the developing labor movement of the time should be part of the socialist movement or whether the two should be separate. The LaSallians, who were very strong in Germany in the Socialist Democratic Party, believed that the unions and the socialists should work together, [that] unions should urge their members to vote socialist. Socialist party officials should support the unions. When they [get] in the government they should help to fund the unions whenever possible and that the political arm and the union arm of the socialist movement had to work together. These were two ways of emancipating the working people.

Whereas, Gompers and his allies in the trade unions believed that this was a very bad idea. First of all, because they believed that a government under capitalists could not be trusted to help unions, and so socialists, if they get into government as a minority, would not be able to accomplish very much. And also they believed that many of the socialists who were stressing political action were ambitious themselves and really wanted to get into government and stop being workers. And they had this class-conscious resentment of careerist politicians who they thought would almost always sell out the working class once they got into office.

The difference, however, in Europe was that the socialist parties in most cases had begun before there was a strong trade-union movement, and so it was socialists who formed the first trade unions in order to be the economic arm of the political party, and that continued to be true down through the twentieth century.

I just want to point out, by the way, Gompers' famous statement. In 1912, Gompers hosted the leader of the German trade unions and he said at one point, in an interview, that if he'd been a German, [he] would have been in the socialist party of Germany. But in the United States it made no sense to be a socialist. The socialists would always be a small minority and America was just not ready for socialism.

Where did the American labor movement draw its inspiration?

Well, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) that Gompers becomes the leader of really actually patterns itself on the British Trade Union Congress, the TUC. The

major goal of the AFL unions was to endure, to stay organized, which earlier trade unions in America had not been able to do. So, that means they have to have high enough dues so they can support a leadership. They have to have accident funds. They have to have strike funds. They have to have permanent officers who do not have to work at the trade, but are career officials of those unions. So, Gompers is always afraid that the trade unions will disappear, will be attacked by the bosses and will not be able to make it, because that had been the history of trade unions before in the United States. And so that was really the basis, I think, of everything else that he does in organizing the AFL. He wants to make sure that skilled workers are organized because those are the ones who have the most at stake in their jobs. In a sense, their skill is their property. They are not going to give up that skill. They are going to continue to work at the trade. They won't move from one trade to another. And once you organize the skilled workers to demand a better life, then that'll be a base to organize the rest of the working class. That's what he strongly believed and he opposed efforts by industrial unionists of various kinds to organize the workers who were the worst off first. He believed that they should be organized eventually but the most important people to organize were the skilled workers because they would stay organized and they would be able to be sort of officers of the working-class army, if you will.

Did Gompers successfully keep the AFL out of politics?

Well, in 1890 Gompers opposes the entrance of the Central Labor Union of New York City into the AFL because the Central Labor Union of New York City is controlled by the Socialist Labor Party and they want to push the rest of the AFL, which is a very young organization at this time to become an arm of the Socialist Labor Party. And Gompers, as he always does, wants the political activities of the members of the AFL to be separate from their trade union activities. He encourages workers to vote, whether socialist or not, but he says that they ought to be two completely separate organizations. And to mix them is to invite conflict, to invite opposition from workers who are going to continue to vote Democratic and Republican as, of course, most workers do throughout American history. And so he believed this was impractical. A very bad idea, and he opposes it steadfastly and manages to defeat it.

Does Gompers make some sort of peace with socialism or does he refute it altogether?

Gompers ends up rejecting socialism as a guiding philosophy for the American labor movement because he believes, in the end, that it's not a philosophy that the workers themselves want and need. He believes that by fighting in the trade unions, by being strongly organized in the unions, they can gain a better life without the need for an overarching radical ideology.

He has a famous debate with a socialist, Morris Hillquit in front of a congressional committee, in fact, in 1914 where he's asked by congressmen, "What do you want. What is your vision?" And he says, "We want more. More education, more housing, better wages, more of the good things of life." And he accuses the socialists of being more limited. Because he says socialists know exactly what they want and they want to convince workers to want what the socialists want.

Gompers wants the workers to fight for what they actually want. And he believes American workers are not intensely ideological, they're not intensely philosophical, they really want a better life in the here and now, and want to join an organization which will fight for that better life in the here and now. And so that gets called "pure-and-simple unionism." Which I think is a little too simple, because Gompers never opposed political activity. In fact, the American Federation of Labor was intensely involved in political activity but never in support of socialism –always endorsing individual candidates who were pro-labor and opposing individual candidates who were anti-labor. So his politics was a very practical politics. It wasn't a visionary, radical politics.

His byword was, "In politics, reward your friends and punish your enemies." That motto actually led the AFL to support the Democratic Party in every election from 1906 to 1920 and then from the 1930s on until the present. But the AFL would never have told workers, you should vote for the Democratic Party because it's the only party which could ever possibly represent your interest, which is what European socialists told workers to do.

Who was Eugene V. Debs?

Eugene V. Debs is really in many ways the opposite of Gompers throughout their life histories. Gompers begins as a socialist and ends up as a pragmatic, reformist labor leader.

Debs goes the other way around. He begins as a pragmatic labor leader of one of the more conservative unions in America, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, and he ends up being a revolutionary socialist. So, he defies the idea that you should be a socialist in your youth, but you're a fool if you're still a socialist in your forties. He goes the other [way] around. He's a working-class man from Terre Haute, Indiana, the industrial heartland of America. His parents were immigrants. He is a Democratic Party operative and [was] in the Indiana State Assembly when he was quite young, and becomes an important labor leader of a very conservative union. And he's really radicalized by railroad strikes, which were the most important strikes in America in the late nineteenth century, because the railroad industry was the most important industry in America, and it was the first really national industry in this country. And as part of one of the biggest railroad strikes was one that his union, the American Railway Union, an industrial railway union, organizes in 1894 -- the famous Pullman strike, which shuts down the railroads in large parts of the country. Debs is the leader of that union. He's actually at first reluctant to go along with the strike. He thinks it will lose. It does lose and it loses in part because the federal government intervenes to make sure the trains run on time, to make sure the mail gets to its destinations, and also to make sure the strike fails because the federal government is very much in bed with the railroad companies at that point in American history.

The failure of that strike convinces Debs that workers will never be able to change their conditions without changing the political system. He believes that the government will always oppose workers' interests. They will always bust their strikes when they feel there's a national interest to do so and that gradually leads him to become a socialist, by 1898.

Debs is a fascinating figure, because he's one of the perennial candidates who runs for office many times and is more popular than the party he runs with. He runs for president five times, as a socialist party candidate. He achieves at most, six percent of the vote, which he gets in 1912. He's an enormously popular, charismatic figure, much more than Gompers ever was. He had a very big heart. He was a very eloquent speaker. He would lean forward from the platform when he was speaking, holding out his hands as if to bring workers into this cooperative commonwealth that he talked about. He really was in many ways a secular Christian, if you will. That is, his vision of socialism was of a large, beloved community of brothers and sisters who would cooperate with one another because they loved one another, and that vision, which is basically a Christian vision, I think, was very much Debs' vision. And he also believed that the ideals of America demanded a cooperative solution to the problems of the industrial revolution. And so he, in many ways, was a much more American-bred and Christian idealist than his non-socialist opponents like Gompers.

Did World War I make the world more receptive to socialism?

World War I is, I think, the most important event in the twentieth century, and this is true for socialism and the labor movement as well. Because, in World War I, socialists in this country and around the world had to decide -- will they support their individual nations in the war or will they support the international socialist brotherhood and oppose the war of workers against other workers? And the American socialist party, unlike the European socialist parties, decides to oppose the U.S. government and to oppose World War I. And most trade unionists, [with] Gompers as their leader, support the war. And the ranks of the trade unions grow tremendously during the war. They almost doubled during World War I. And this is a really important dividing point between the socialists and trade unions because afterwards, non-socialist trade unions would never quite trust socialists, or later on, communists, again. They always feel that their main loyalty will be to their vision of an international movement instead of to the loyalties of American workers towards their country, and towards the trade unions, which involve workers from all political backgrounds and with all kinds of political party loyalties.

So that's a very important dividing line, there. And of course during World War I, the Bolshevik Revolution takes place, which draws a very sharp line between reformist socialists, the kind of socialists who have been in the majority before World War I in this country and elsewhere in the world, and communists, who want a revolution to overthrow existing capitalist governments as soon as it is possible to do so. And that cold war within the labor movement and within the socialist movement, too, is one that one can't be neutral in that war, as it was very tough to be neutral in the Cold War later on. And the American labor movement for the most part sides with, of course, the anti-communist side. Gompers had been one of the first unionists to see the dangers of communism and to warn against them for much the same reason why [he] always warned against socialism before. He believed it was an outside ideology trying to sell a bill of goods to the workers.

Did government authorities censor or repress socialist parties and other socialist organizations during World War I?

The repression after World War I and during World War I [was] damaging to the Socialist Party. During World War I, the socialist press was in effect banned from the mails, which was never a good thing for an organization which lives on propaganda and disseminating its message. At the same time, European socialists were faced with worse repression, under fascism for example, and survived and sometimes even prospered after it ended. So, I think repression is overstated as a reason for the failure of socialism in America. Far more important was the split in the socialist movement in this country between socialists and communists, who battle each other furiously in the trade unions, as well as outside, in the 1920s. And that certainly furthered a mistrust of people who should have been on the same side in those unions, against their employers.

In general, repression I think is overstated as a reason for the failure of socialism. Repression only works when a party, a socialist party [has] a large constituency that is loyal to it, that is willing to stick with it [through] thick and thin, is willing to risk their lives to bring about socialism. And in this country, the number of people who were willing to risk their lives for socialism was always very small, and that was not true in Europe, and that's a far more important reason why repression had the impact it did have. Because the party didn't have the base to back it up.

I mean, I always point to what happened to the Italian communists, for example, who were all put in jail and killed under Mussolini. After World War II, they emerged as the strongest party in Italy. The same for the German communists, of course. They set up East Germany and so forth and socialists in Germany were also repressed, and they'd become the governing party in West Germany. So repression alone is not a good enough reason. And even the repression communists faced in this country was nothing compared to the repression communists faced in other countries.

So was it a positive thing for America that the labor movement distanced itself from the socialist movement?

I think it would have been better if the American labor movement had been more infused with the vision that socialists had of workers needing to demand class equality rather than just better wages. I think workers infused with a vision are willing to undergo more sacrifices to bring about a better life for themselves. But I also deeply believe that, in many ways, Americanism, proved to be a substitute for socialism for a lot of workers. After all, Americanism has always stood for the average person being able to make it, that class equality is something that should be true and that the American standard of living is something that all Americans should be able to enjoy. And so the idea of class equality is something that undergirded socialism in Europe but it's always been part of the American vision, as well. So in many ways Americanism trumped socialism and made socialism unnecessary as a vision for a lot of American workers.

Now, I should add that this was almost always true only for white American workers. African-Americans, to a certain degree Latino and Asian workers, until really recent years never really were part of this Americanist vision. There was always an "except for non-whites" part of Americanism which is important to realize. And the unions of Gompers, if they didn't exclude non-white workers, they put them in sort of a segregated category, either segregated locals or the so-called Federal Unions, which were sort of an *ad hoc* kind of union that didn't have very much power and usually didn't

last very long. So it's important to realize that the American labor movement that Gompers founded was in practice, if not necessarily in theory, a white-only labor movement for a long, long time.

What do you think is the legacy of socialism?

I think the most important legacy of socialism is that every human being should have a decent life, that no human being is better than another human being. And that the experience of working should be a experience that enriches one's life, not degrades one's life. That work itself should be a creative activity; should be an activity that gives someone a decent living and a sense that they are making a life that is better than a life that their parents had.

I think socialism was the first ideology in human history to preach equality and really mean it. That is, to really mean that there should be no difference in privileges between someone born rich and someone born poor, that they all should have an equal part in the making of a republic, [that] all should have an equal part in the making of society, the making of culture; and if there should be any privilege it should go to those who are worst off and have the hardest time rather than those who are better off. So, that morality, that sense of a sort of a democracy "of all and for all," I think was first preached by socialists and remains a very important part of a legacy of socialism, even though there aren't many socialists around anymore to preach it.

Where can we see the influence of Socialism as a movement today?

Well, the welfare states, either full-welfare states, as in some parts of western Europe, or very partial welfare states as in the United States, owe a great deal to socialist agitation. It was socialists who first in a major way in this country argued for unemployment insurance, argued for old-age benefits which became Social Security. It was socialists, as we've discussed, who were the builders of the first trade unions. It was socialists who argued also for the major political parties to pay attention to the demands of workers rather than just the demands of small businessmen and larger businessmen and farmers. The eight-hour day, the weekend off from work, all these were demands that socialists originally raised, sometimes within labor movements, sometimes outside the labor movement.

And many leading intellectuals from John Dewey to Richard Rorty, W.E.B. Du Bois were either socialists themselves or were deeply affected by the ideas of socialism. So the ideas of socialism and the demands of socialists have I think been more influential than the socialist parties themselves. It's really impossible to think about the history of American intellectuals without thinking about the American left, and of course at the core of the American left there's always been Marxism and the idea of socialism.

Did socialists have any allies in their struggle to get these reforms passed?

Well, of course socialists didn't do it by themselves. They weren't large enough to push these reforms by themselves. But Progressivism grew up, in part, in response to socialism, as a way to bring about reforms without revolution, to bring about the kind of reforms that in Europe were being carried out by labor and socialist parties, to have these reforms be carried out by people at the heart of the political system in this country.

But leading reformers like William Jennings Bryan and Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt and Robert La Follett were quite candid about the need to reform the political system and the economic system to bring about more justice for the ordinary American so that they would *not* turn to socialism. Because they feared that the United States would go the way of Western Europe, would have a large, powerful socialist movement, which would threaten the future of America's capitalist democracy. And so they carried out reforms in order to forestall that movement towards the left.

What were the biggest problems with socialism, as you see it?

I think the problems of socialism in the twentieth century stemmed more from the Bolshevik Revolution than anything else, to be honest with you. I think it was the Bolshevik Revolution which implanted in the minds of many people in the world that *this* was socialism. That socialism meant a party taking control in a fairly backward country economically, and carrying out through force and repression the establishment of a new kind of society. And that had a *ruinous*, a ruinous impact on socialism in western industrial countries like the United States, because it gave people the idea that this was the only way to bring about socialism, that the real socialists who began to call themselves communists after the Bolshevik Revolution consolidated itself, with those who followed the path of Lenin and Trotsky and Stalin and Mao and others. And that was a ruinous thing because in the United States, Americans and through Western Europe, French and British people, Italians, were not going to give up the democratic institutions that they had been able to build for this vision of a dynamic new kind of socialist society.

And so communism, for many people, began to equal socialism. And so they didn't want *either* of those ideas, for that reason. But in a real sense, I think of socialism as a reformist creed, as a creed that believed that workers were moving gradually, slowly, with the help of socialists, towards a better life, did triumph in Western Europe, to a *degree* in the United States, in Canada, in Japan, in parts of Latin America. So in that sense socialism did *not* fail, even though the ultimate dream of a society controlled by the workers in which there would be no classes obviously did not triumph.

Does socialism have a future?

I think the dream of socialism, the dream of an international brotherhood, sisterhood, of working people will always exist. People who have jobs that are terrible and are part of an increasingly globalized culture will always look to other people who are in similar situations and wonder where there might be some possibility of a cooperative commonwealth being built, that we get people away from these horrible lives. Intellectuals who have that vision, of course, will also continue to use the vision of socialism, but it probably won't be called socialism very much in the future because that word itself has been sullied by its long association with communism and the so-called socialist countries, which were never the kind of societies that Marx and Engels really envisioned.

I think in that sense that socialism will continue to be the name of people's desire for a completely different kind of world, even though the reality of the world will never really come up to their dream, to their desire. But that's true of radical visions of all kinds, including religious ones.

Did the failure of socialism to take root in America contribute to its failure in the larger world?

I don't really think the failure of American socialism was as vital to the failure of socialism worldwide, because the socialist movement was very strong in Europe, and when socialists fought amongst themselves over whether to support their countries in World War I, the American socialist movement was fairly small in comparison. The United States was not yet "the power" in the capitalist world that it later became. It certainly would have helped the cause of socialism if the American socialist movement would have been larger, but I don't believe that socialists were really hampered in a major way in Western Europe, for example, in building welfare state because the United States did not have a strong welfare state. So I think that argument has to be at least severely qualified. I think certainly communism was hampered by having the United States be its primary opponent in the Cold War. That's certainly true. But then of course, most socialist parties after World War II were on the American side in the Cold War.

So again, I think it's the splits during World War I that are really the deciding point in the history of socialism, and deciding that socialism as a revolutionary ideology will not succeed in the Western world. And in the end, because it would not succeed in the most advanced countries in the world, would not succeed in other countries either, once they became more advanced. The richer a country gets, the less it wants socialism and the more people in poorer countries look to the richer countries and see that they are rejecting socialism, the more difficult it is for socialists to convince people in those poorer countries to wait for the future, somewhere off in the distance where they also will enjoy the fruits of their labor.