

Developmental states should not be confused with social democratic states which have a broader social and political objective. Totalitarianism is very much a twentieth-century phenomenon--associated, in particular, with Nazi Germany, Stalin's Soviet Union, and East Germany--although Liberal democracies--such as the USA, the UK, and Germany--are characterized by free and fair elections involving universal suffrage, together with a liberal political framework consisting of a relatively high degree of personal liberty and the protection of individual rights. This failure, it is argued, has hindered the social democratic project because greater social and economic equality is greatly assisted by general economic prosperity which provides a great deal more resources to redistribute. Here, a useful distinction is to be made between liberal democracies, illiberal democracies, and authoritarian regimes (Hague and Harrop, 2007: 7-9). Illiberal democracies--such as Russia and Malaysia--are characterized by elections but relatively little protection of rights and liberties, and state control over the means of communication. The political elites in such regimes can derive from the military, royalty, ruling parties, or merely be individual dictators. One of the criticisms of post-1945 British political and economic development is that Britain adopted a social democrat approach but neglected the developmental aspect (Marquand, 1988).