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Life of Freedom May Be Short

THE trend around the world is against freedom. Less than one-fifth of the world's people now are classified as free. About 35 per cent are called partly free, and 45 per cent are not free.

Waving the banner of socialism and promising government solutions to problems, demagogues have led nation after nation into the trap of dictatorship, with little chance of escape.

Current terminology includes such expressions as "pluralistic democracy" but whatever it may be called, the government that becomes the master of the people instead of their servant is not for a free nation.

India once called itself "the world's biggest democracy" but now it is an authoritarian government. Communism is undermining European democracies. Nations of Asia and Africa threw off colonialism only to become bloody dictatorships.

Great Britain's freedom fell when labor bosses gained control and brought in socialism. Now Britain is among Europe's poorer nations

and is in danger of losing the independence that accounted for her former greatness.

The United States is moving much more rapidly toward socialism than we like to admit. The perils of the route we are following were pointed out in a widely quoted speech by a Tennessee lawyer, Malcolm McDermott, in 1943. He called this procedure "Twelve Steps to Serfdom":

1. The people must be made to feel their utter helplessness and inability to solve their own problems.

2. The principle of self-government must be wiped out.

3. Centralized government, while appearing to represent the people, must register the will of the leader or group in power.

4. Constitutional guarantees must be swept aside.

5. Public faith in the legal profession and respect for the courts must be undermined.

6. The law-making body must be intimidated and, from time to time, rebuked, to limit public confidence therein.

7. Economically, the people must be kept ground down by high taxes, bringing capital and credit under control.

8. A great public debt must be built up so that citizens can never escape its burdens.

9. A general distrust of private business and industry must be kept alive.

10. Governmental bureaus must be set up to control practically every phase of the citizens' lives.

11. Education of the youth must be taken under control so that all may be inoculated at an early age with a spirit of submission to the system and reverence for the leaders.

12. A steady stream of government propaganda must be kept flowing.

This warning of a dangerous route came 34 years ago, when we were engaged in one of our wars for freedom. Our memory is short, and our life of freedom may be getting short, too.