**1.** [**Capitalism**](http://capitalism.org/capitalism/what-is-capitalism/) is a social system based on the principle of **individual rights**. Politically, it is the system of **laissez-faire** (freedom). Legally it is a system of objective laws (**rule of law** as opposed to rule of man). Economically, when such freedom is applied to the sphere of production its’ result is the **free-market**.

2. Capitalism: An economic system based on the private ownership of the means of production and distribution of goods, characterised by a free competitive market motivated by profit.

**Wage labour and class structure**

[Wage labour](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wage_labor) refers to the class-structure of capitalism, whereby workers receive either a wage or a salary, and owners receive the [profits](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Profit_%28accounting%29) generated by the factors of production employed in the production of economic value. Individuals who possess and supply financial capital to productive ventures become owners, either jointly or individually. The owners of the means of production and suppliers of capital are generally called *capitalists*. The description of the role of the *capitalist* has shifted, first referring to a useless intermediary between producers to an employer of producers, and eventually came to refer to owners of the means of production. The term *capitalist* is not generally used by supporters of mainstream economics.

"Workers" includes those who expend both manual and mental (or creative) labor in production, where production does not simply mean physical production but refers to the production of both tangible and [intangible](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_capital) economic value. "Capitalists" are individuals who derive income from [investments](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Investments).

[Labour](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Labor_%28economics%29) includes all physical and mental human resources, including entrepreneurial capacity and management skills, which are needed to produce products and services. [Production](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Production_%28economics%29) is the act of making goods or services by applying [labour power](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Labor_power).

Can you summarise what capitalism is?

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Which character represents a capitalist ideology in ‘An Inspector Calls’?

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Can you summarise what socialism is?

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**J. B Priestly.**

Many of his works have a socialist aspect. For example, *An Inspector Calls*, as well as being one of Priestley's ["Time Plays"](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._B._Priestley%27s_Time_Plays), contains many references to socialism — the inspector was arguably an alter ego through which Priestley could express his views. Priestley’s ‘Inspector Calls’ appears to simply tell the story of a young girl called Eva Smith and her tragic suicide. However, in reality it is much more than that. It 'hits you over the head' with his views on socialism'.

During World War II, he was a regular broadcaster on the [BBC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Broadcasting_Corporation). The *Postscript*, broadcast on Sunday night through 1940 and again in 1941, drew peak audiences of 16 million; only [Churchill](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winston_Churchill) was more popular with listeners. But his talks were cancelled. It was thought that this was the effect of complaints from Churchill that they were too left-wing; however, Priestley's son has recently revealed in a talk on the latest book being published about his father's life that it was in fact Churchill's Cabinet that brought about the cancellation by supplying negative reports on the broadcasts to Churchill.

Priestley chaired the [1941 Committee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1941_Committee), and in 1942 he was a co-founder of the socialist [Common Wealth Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_Wealth_Party). The political content of his broadcasts and his hopes of a new and different England after the war influenced the politics of the period and helped the [Labour Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Labour_Party_%28UK%29) gain its landslide victory in the [1945 general election](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom_general_election%2C_1945). Priestley himself, however, was distrustful of the state and dogma.

Priestley's name was on [Orwell's list](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orwell%27s_list), a list of people which George Orwell prepared in March 1949 for the [Information Research Department](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information_Research_Department), a propaganda unit set up at the [Foreign Office](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foreign_Office) by the Labour government. Orwell considered these people to have pro-communist leanings and therefore to be inappropriate to write for the IRD.

He was a founding member of the [Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Campaign_for_Nuclear_Disarmament) in 1958.

**Socialism,** social and economic doctrine that calls for public rather than private ownership or control of property and natural resources. According to the socialist view, individuals do not live or work in isolation but live in cooperation with one another. Furthermore, everything that people produce is in some sense a social product, and everyone who contributes to the production of a good is entitled to a share in it. Society as a whole, therefore, should own or at least control property for the benefit of all its members.

There are many variations of socialism and as such there is no single definition encapsulating all of socialism. However there have been common elements identified by scholars. Angelo S. Rappoport in his *Dictionary of Socialism* (1924) analysed forty definitions of socialism to conclude that common elements of socialism include: general criticisms of the social effects of [private ownership](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Private_ownership) and control of capital – as being the cause of poverty, low wages, unemployment, economic and social inequality, and a lack of economic security; a general view that the solution to these problems is a form of collective control over the [means of production](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Means_of_production), [distribution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Distribution_%28economics%29) and [exchange](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Means_of_exchange) (the degree and means of control vary amongst socialist movements); agreement that the outcome of this collective control should be a society based upon [social justice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_justice), including social equality, economic protection of people, and should provide a more satisfying life for most people.

What does this source tell us about Priestley’s political views?

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Give an example of how he expresses these views in ‘An Inspector Calls’.

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Socialism and Capitalism