

social theory, Marx' own life-long struggle to break the continuity of social tradition showed that he saw man's duplex nature both as individual and social being and conceived of him as a dynamic factor and the only purposive factor in the complex of blind social forces. In formulating his materialistic interpretation of history, Marx merely wished to put the world upon its feet, with its head, such as it is, right side up.

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In my previous discussion of the problem of social change, I have assumed a long transition period out of Capitalism. How long I have no idea, one reason for which is, that I do not know, nor does anyone else know concretely where we are going. The ideal society of the future is variously termed Communism, the Co-operative Commonwealth, the Great Society, etc. The first two terms at least give an impression of a more extended co-operative life than at present obtains. They express, as such, a recognition of and a reaction against the evil effects on human beings of the competitive conditions of the social life of our days. In fact, the social problem has been traced to its source as institutional; concretely, that of private ownership and control of social means of production and distribution in the interest of private profit and aggrandisement at the expense of the underlying population. In this scheme of things, the welfare of the community as a whole is a secondary, in fact solely an accidental eventuality. In the new order it is proposed to place the community welfare in the paramount position by placing the means of production within the control of the community, or, at least, those means of production upon which the community as a whole is dependent. The measure of private control and the measure of social control best serving the interest of the community will, I think, be a matter of expediency and constant adjustments until the end of time. The immediate aim of our day, however, is a greater extension of social control to eliminate the admittedly serious and menacing social conditions resulting from private control of economic powers. To a large extent ownership over the more socialized industrial and economic instrumentalities will be involved in order to make social control effective. Over other enterprises upon which the communities are less dependent control may be asserted in some other indirect manner. Various forms of social organization for the future have long been under discussion,—Collectivism, with the State as owner and employer, the defect of which, its opponents allege, is the danger of a huge bureaucracy; Guild Socialism, with the management downwards to the laborers in the trades guilds as virtual owners of the industry, having control of the industrial processes and conditions of work, and the State as the real owner and representative of the general public as consumer. Another scheme advocates two parliaments, one an industrial parliament with representatives from the various industries, and the other representative of the consumer and general citizenship interests. Whatever experience may dictate in the actual working out of the problem of organization, the preliminary discussions have great value so long as they are centred upon known and permanent factors common both to the present and the future—our common human nature, organized social life, the machine process, and a world economy of production and distribution. Otherwise, evil consequences arise from constructing "ideally" the future State out of imagination spurred by mere desire. We then are sure to construct a compensatory dream world, and living in it as an escape from harsh reality so become impractical in criticism and in action. Knowing of Confucius, Buddha, Jesus, Socrates, the wise, the great, the good, we are apt to model our future society for an abstract man who, all one undifferentiated interest, lives only for "humanity as a whole." It is perhaps forgotten that the reputation of those ancients has come down to us through the cults and kindly tradition, and that we shall never know them as their wives knew them or as their contemporary rivals in religious or philosophical theory knew them. With some lucky reputations, it is the evil that is oft interred with

men's bones while the good that men do lives after them—and grows and grows and grows.

Let us be practical, take a practical view of human nature, a thing of many interests, both individual and social and often only reconciled by sacrifice.

The beginning of wisdom, to quote from Beard's "Economic Basis of Politics," is to recognize that there is no rest for mankind, no final solutions of eternal contradictions, for of such is the design of the universe. Whatever may be the formula for the ownership of property, there will always be an agricultural interest, a railway interest, a transport interest, and an engineering interest, a manufacturing interest, a mining interest, a fishing interest, a public official interest with many lesser interests grown up of necessity in all great societies and divided into different classes actuated by different sentiments and views. The regulation of these various interfering interests is the task of the future and will involve the spirit of party in the necessary and ordinary operations of administration.

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I often hear it said in reference to Russia, "Oh, that is not Socialism," and as often wonder what the standpoint of estimation really is. I know it is sometimes necessary to imagine we have halted the continuous, flowing processes of life, compartmentalized, so to say, and put each section away under proper headings for reference. So here we have the patriarchal and patriarchal societies, and in succession the political societies, Feudalism and Capitalism. But here is hand-craft production and small trade carried on for a livelihood. Where? In both Capitalism and Feudalism! And here is large scale machine production, wage labor and production for profit also in both Capitalism and Feudalism. Yet production for a livelihood belongs characteristically to Feudalism, while production for profit dominates in Capitalism. It is whatever method dominates that gives its name to an epoch. Moreover, the question of distinguishing what is what of forms of society at certain transitional stages is still further complicated by the political aspect of things, for often in such a stage of social flux military or political power may not at all times lie in the hands of the same class who hold a predominance of economic power, or at least, the ratio of the distribution of these powers, may not be equal. So the landed aristocracy with their military power long lorded it over the bourgeoisie of Europe. The days, the months, the years, the centuries are arbitrarily fixed marks in time eras, but ages, epochs, periods and times, who shall delimit the twilight zones where they merge in the great procession of things and say which is which? But some will not see the world in process and their ready answer is always "Yea, Yea!" or "Nay, Nay!" Nevertheless, every form of society contains institutional furniture carried over from previous societies, while already within it are coming into existence embryo-like, those institutions which will serve men's purposes, in the next order.

To estimate progress in social change to a new order in Russia or elsewhere, I can not take my stand in some indefinite future in I know not what organization of things. Some there are who are surer of the social structure of the future than I am, but I question their foreseeing powers and the source of their conception. What is their standpoint erected out of for judging present progress—the future is always the prolific home of Utopia, the "wish" disports itself too freely in its spacious corridors. What is such standpoint worth for criticism? It might vary with every individual and by its very nature, in the absence of facts, it can not be a matter-of-fact standpoint but only one of a matter of opinion.

On the other hand, I am content to take my stand in the present and look backward to measure progress. I know where I am now and what we are trying to get away from. Here I take my stand on known ground and I can estimate advance by the character of the measures introduced, the evils overcome, the advances made in control, security and social well-being—say, for illustration, I drive a stake in at the year 1923 and ten years hence at 1933 when we get there, or any other period which the

pessimistic or optimistic reader may think fit, and size the interval up. Knowing what we are trying to get away from and the character of the ways and means adopted to do so, I am now all along dealing in known quantities, and the facts will check me up if I start romancing. As to taking a standpoint in the future to pass judgment on any decade of our days, we have no warrant in science or from the historic past to claim certitude that humanity could make the grade, or that it would be in its interests if it did so, to any of our best laid schemes for a time so far away over the horizon of the years. We never could and never will pour human kind into any mold of our preconceiving. The future is experimental, as many an all-powerful autocracy has found to its cost in the past. And I make the prediction that as the masses of the people throw off economic slavery and take a real directive control over their social life that by experimentation in progress conditioned on the material of the immediate situations rather than by preconceived dogmas they will create a life so amazing in variety and richness as to put to shame the best schemes our shabby and shoddy mentalities of today could conceive of. As I see it, it is for us here and now to deal with things within our reach and power and leave the rest.

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Mainly, for us of the working class, the question of progress is a question of control, a question of the gradual acquirement of control in order to influence the policies of the State. We may make bad use of such power as we may get at first and suffer for it, but we shall learn better from experience. And in that regard I differ with the old lady's advice to her daughter who asked her permission to go to swim:

Oh, yes, my darling daughter!
Hang your clothes on a hickory limb,
But don't go near the water.

However ignorant the working class may be of history, economics and politics, gladly would I see them take the plunge into the stream of political activity as an economic group, because, as any swimmer or blacksmith, farmer, seaman, housewife or administrator of whatever kind knows, there is a kind of knowledge that is only to be got from practical experience. Politics is not the land of romantic abstractions, but a branch of social engineering dealing with concrete human beings and the regulation and improvement of the conditions of their social life. In this practice of life, industrial and political principles can only act as guides to the working out of problems. Furthermore, the satisfying of working class needs today will drive them in the main to attacks in the foundations of capitalist class privilege. Every once in a while in history the needs of a submerged social class coincides with the historically developed need of society as a whole for fundamental change. So it was at the break up of the feudal system when the burgesses of the towns were the leading interests in the political struggles against feudal privileges. Shortsighted, ignorant of the further reaching consequences of their acts in a historical and wide social sense as such a class may be, yet their very immediate needs for the removal of a tithe, toll or impost on industry or trade led them in the direction of undermining and throwing down the established order. In the main, such a class can do no wrong for they have given to them, as it were, a true sense of direction once they become initiating factors in social change. It is so with the working masses of today.

I hope next issue to deal with the constitution of a Labor Party. C.

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