

the scientific way? That is to say, if they would leave their passions and interests out of it, and look at the facts, as any technician would look at a mechanism which has got out of adjustment, with a view to discovering where the maladjustment is. The whole thing seems to me to be just such a technician's problem, and a careful scrutiny of the facts as to the economic consequences of power production gives us, I think, all the data necessary for making the readjustment.

What power production does is to give us goods and services by the measure of other powers than the time-energy measure of the human services rendered in production. We get from it an immensely increased flow of all the things we need with less and less usage of human time service for every unit of output. And our distributive economy still remains essentially unchanged and unadjusted to these new conditions, an economy which gives to the working mass of mankind no right whatever to use or consume even a sustenance ration of this plenty except by rendering the time-energy services which the producing system no longer requires and cannot utilize. As a direct result of this failure to bring our distributive procedure into accord with our new producing procedure, over a hundred millions of the world's people—breadwinners and their dependents—stand today, according to the latest estimate of the League of Nations, scrapped, unutilizable, superfluous to the producing requirements of the world, and therefore, within our anachronism of a distributive system, disabled as customers for our output, without any recognized or accredited right to share in the use and consumption of our abundance; so that we have to burn or plough in the goods for which this system distributes no purchasing power. Apart from the widespread human tragedy of it, is there any technician who instinctively does not revolt against such an attempt to run the car of civilization with all its engines, its producing powers, full out, and its brakes jammed hard on distribution so as to prevent any transmission of that power into a movement of human advance? Is it any wonder that, with such an internal friction of purposes, the whole machine should break down?

There is, I think, not the least hope in looking for remedies for this maladjustment by trying to devise schemes for ensuring work and steady employment for the displaced people. That is clean contrary to the discernible purpose of our new production powers. What they offer to us is not more employment, but more leisure: the release of the world's life from drudgery. And they do not merely offer leisure and abundance to us. They cannot work to any other end than the creation of leisure and abundance. By the very law of their nature, if we use them at all, they force leisure and abundance upon us. That is what they are for, and they can do no other.

Now, leisure and abundance are great and good gifts which a sane race of people should be able to take sanely and to use for the purposes of a general cultural life. But if we do not choose so to receive them, none the less we are compelled to receive them in some fashion so long as we use these power methods in production. And so we get the leisure forced upon us as resourceless unemployment, and the abundance as congested stocks—unless we cease producing and work below the capacity of our new powers—for which there is no available market. These great powers cannot be used for the narrow purposes of a class society without thus turning into curses and disasters the great and good gifts of which they might be the carriers to the life of all mankind.

And if you will look, with any penetrative scrutiny at all, at this distributive procedure which in this way persistently thwarts our hopes of the enlargement of human life, the secret of the maladjustment stands revealed clearly enough. Our earliest knowledge of man reveals him as a nomadic savage living in a sort of primitive communism. But as a more settled habit of

life began to appear, that primitive communism faded out, and gave rise to a new sort of social structure altogether. And for a very plain and obvious reason. It was an age of scarcity; of meagre returns for the unremitting labour of men in their struggle with Nature for sustenance; and in the world's ages of scarcity, communism, while it would have meant equality, would only have meant an equality of drudgery and of hard and bare living.

But there are other things in human life than drudgery. There are desires and impulses in human nature that began to manifest themselves at a very early stage in human development: reachings out toward a higher cultural life. And in the ages of scarcity, no release of the general life of mankind from drudgery into a life of cultural opportunity was possible. It was imperative, if the physical basis of life was to be kept supplied, that the mass of men should be engaged in continuous labour. The escape from that doom of drudgery was only possible for the few, and only for them in one way: the way of securing control and command over the lives and labour of the mass of their fellow men.

The new structure of society for the purpose of such beginnings of human cultural life was therefore a class structure, in which, whether in the crude form of slavery or in the more refined form of property systems controlling the working community's opportunities to live, the door of escape into another life than participation in the common lot of drudgery was opened for the few. It was a social structure which arose under conditions of scarcity, was entirely related to such conditions, and served a real purpose in human cultural development as the then only available means of fostering it.

What power production has done is to give us slaves other than human to do our drudgery for us, and to enable us to make a general liberation of life into cultural opportunity. The old unhappy class breach in human life has become obsolete. Human life need no longer be divided against itself in that way. The attempt to perpetuate, in this new world of plenty, the old device of the ages of scarcity, is no longer possible without bringing our civilization to catastrophe. The leisure and the abundance which are the inevitable consequences of power production cannot be distributed by the old scarcity age procedure of setting a class form for cultural development and putting the opportunities of the general community to live under their command and control. What the new powers are demanding from us, in all the confusion and demoralization of life that they inflict upon us so long as we do not comply with the demand, is a new distributive system adjusted to their requirements of leisure and abundance.

Dimly as yet, but with a steadily growing clarity, this purpose is shaping itself in the minds of men as the discernible purpose of civilization under the changed conditions of production. That the detailed planning for it is as yet crude and makeshift; that most of the conceptions of it are like the conceptions of things only half seen in the shadows of the hour before the full dawn; that in the actual event it will probably take shape other than our present crude perceptions of it; that many processes of trial and error, of experiment and failure, will mark its development: all that is probably true enough. But none the less it is to this new conception of human life and human relationships that the compelling consequences of power production are shaping—and in their essential character must shape—the life of the world. Is it too much to hope that the mind and the temperament for which you stand in human affairs, having given us the means to this end, having set loose the forces in which this end is implicit, may complete its task by helping us to understand how to use its gifts with the ordered and discerning intelligence which thus far has been so tragically lacking in the world's reception of them?

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