

## Ability to Work, Will to Work, and the Threefold Social Order

Socialists tend to look upon the profit motive, which has functioned heretofore as the primary incentive to work, as something that must be eliminated if healthier conditions are to be brought about in society. For such people this becomes an urgent question: What will induce us to use our abilities with sufficient energy in the service of economic production, when egotism (which finds its satisfaction in profit) is no longer able to exert itself? This question cannot be said to receive adequate attention from those who are planning to institute socialism. The demand that in the future one shall not work for oneself but for the community, remains quite empty as long as one has no concrete idea how human souls can be induced to work as willingly "for the community" as they do for themselves. One may no doubt indulge in the notion that some central managing body will place each of us at his or her place of work, and that this organization of labor will also enable the central management to make a fair distribution of the products of the labor. Any such notion is, however, based on a delusion. While it takes into account that human beings have need of consumer goods, and that these needs must be satisfied, it does not take into account that mere awareness of the existence of these needs will not engender devotion to the work of production, if they are expected to produce not for themselves, but for the community. The mere awareness that one is working for society will not give any sensible satisfaction; accordingly it cannot provide an incentive to work.

It should be obvious that a new incentive to work must

be created the moment there is any thought of eliminating the old incentive of egotistical gain. An economic management that does not include this profit motive among the forces at work within the economy cannot of itself exert any effect whatever upon the human will to work. And precisely because it *cannot* do so, it meets a social demand that a large part of humanity has begun to raise in the present stage of development. This part of humanity no longer wants to be led to work by economic compulsion. They want to work from motives more befitting human dignity. Undoubtedly, for many of those who come to mind when this demand is raised, it is somewhat unconscious; but in social life such unconscious, instinctive impulses are of much more significance than the ideas people consciously express. Conscious ideas often owe their origin merely to the fact that people do not have the spiritual energy to see into what really goes on within them. If one deals with such ideas, one is moving within an insubstantial element. Therefore it is necessary to see through the deceptive ideas on the surface into the real demands (such as the one just mentioned), and to turn one's attention to these real demands. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that in times like the present, when social life tosses about like wild waves, that the lower human instincts, too, run riot. However, the above mentioned demand for a dignified human existence is *justified*; one cannot dismiss it by arguing the turbulence of our lower instincts.

If the economic system is to be organized in a way that can have no effect on our will to work, then our will to work must be stimulated in some other way. The threefold social order recognizes that at the present stage of human evolution, the economic sphere must limit itself exclusively to economic processes. The administration of such an economic order will be able, through its various organs, to determine the extent of consumers' needs, how the produce may best be brought to the consumers and the extent to which various

articles should be produced. However, it will have no way of calling forth the will to produce; neither will it be in a position to cultivate the individual abilities that are the vital source of the entire economic process. Under the old economic system that still survives, people cultivated these abilities hoping they would bring personal profit. It would be a dire mistake to believe that the mere command of an administrative body overseeing *only* the economy could arouse a desire to develop men's individual abilities, or to believe that such a command would have power enough to induce them to put their will into their work. The threefold social order seeks to prevent people from making this mistake. It aims at establishing within an independent, self-sustaining cultural life a realm where one learns in a living way to understand this human society for which one is called upon to work; a realm where one learns to see what each single piece of work means for the combined fabric of the social order, to see it in such a light that one will learn to *love* it because of its value for the whole. It aims at creating in this free life of spirit the profounder principles that can replace the motive of personal gain. Only in a free spiritual life can a love for the human social order spring up that is comparable to the love an artist has for the creation of his works. If one is not prepared to consider fostering this kind of love within a free spiritual-cultural life, then one may as well renounce all striving for a new social order. Anyone who doubts that men and women are capable of being brought to this kind of love *must* also renounce all hope of eliminating personal profit from economic life. Anyone who fails to believe that a free spiritual life generates this kind of love is unaware that it is the dependence of spiritual and cultural life upon the state and the economy that creates desire for personal profit—this desire for profit is *not* a fundamental aspect of human nature. It is this mistake that makes people say constantly, "to realize the threefold order, human be-

ings must be different than they are now." No! Through the threefold order, people will be educated in such a way that they will grow up to be different than they were previously under the economic state.

And just as the free spiritual life will create the impulses for developing individual ability, the democratically ordered life of the legal sphere will provide the impulses for the will to work. Real relationships will grow up between people united in a social organism where each adult has a voice in government and is co-equal with every other adult: it is relationships such as these that are able to enkindle the will to work "for the community." One must reflect that a truly communal feeling can grow only from such relationships, and that from this feeling, the will to work can grow. For in actual practice the consequence of such a state founded on democratic rights will be that each human being will take his place with vitality and full consciousness in the common field of work. Each will know what he or she is working for; and each will want to work within the working community of which he knows himself a member *through his will*.

It will be plain to anyone who understands the threefold social order that the vast syndicate with its state-like structure (such as the Marxist model) can supply impulses neither for the ability nor for the will to work. Anyone who understands will take care that the essence of human nature not be forgotten for the sake of the exigencies of outer life. For social thinking cannot reckon with external institutions alone; it must take into account *what man is and what he may become*.