

# THE FALLACY OF TECHNOCRACY

## ARTICLE II

If a publicist starts with the assertion that his writings are "above classes and class struggle" we can take it for certain that he is developing a new apologia for capitalism. The Technocrats are no different.

First they "proved" that the cause of unemployment is the machine, not capitalism. According to them that gave them a purely scientific (technological) approach, free from "economics and politics". Having thus disarmed their audience they now proceed to lead them into the arms of the boss class. Their process of thought is a classic of bourgeois logic.

Marx, almost 100 years ago, pointed out that the development of capitalism was making the capitalists non-essential to society, in fact they were becoming harmful by their continued existence because they blocked further progress. In the early days of capitalism the owners of industry were very essential because they were the organizers and leaders of the productive process. To-day they are pure parasites. They are rentiers, that is coupon clippers—people who do nothing useful but have vast incomes purely by clipping the interest and dividend coupons from their bonds and stocks. They are able to do this because the workers as we have already shown in the first article produce surplus value, which capitalists acquire through ownership of the industries represented in the stocks and bonds. Thus the class of capitalists are today useless to production, and are a debit to society as a whole.

### "WORKERS NOT ESSENTIAL".

But Howard Scott and his Technocrats "prove" the exact opposite. We do not find one word about the non-essentialness of the capitalists—but we find an elaborate theory to prove that the workers are non-essential. In their official statement they say:

The importance of man as a worker has dwindled and is dwindling even more rapidly now.

And further:

Consider the shoes that you put on in the morning. They are made from leather, the hide

## Technocratic Logic Makes Labor Not Capitalists Non-Essential To Production — The Theory of Energy — Lenin's Explanation of Technological Decay — Technocracy Betrays the Engineers — Capitalism Has a Dream.

By SAM DARCY

of a cow that ate grass to provide the heat to warm her body and the energy to chew yet more grass. The grass itself, received by way of the chlorophyll in its blades, energy from the sun. Removed from the cow's back, the hide was tanned, put into a car built of steel smelted by heat energy and transported over a railroad using steam or electric energy. It arrived at a factory and with machines driven by electric or steam energy, was made into shoes. When you eat your breakfast, consider the source of your bacon and eggs, consider your newspaper, how it was made and what it was made of, consider the street car or automobile in which you go to work, how they were made, of what they were made, and how they do their work. EVERYWHERE ENERGY, THE SOURCE, THE ONE AND ONLY SOURCE of life, is applied to matter, and behold the wonder is apparent.

All of this sounds very learned and very new. It is neither. The worker will never become non-essential to industry. The capitalist is already non-essential. If you read Scott's description of the productive process, you cannot find anywhere mention of the existence of a worker. He speaks, in mystic tones about "energy" which when "applied to matter" bring about production. He has overlooked one important factor—who does the applying? Certainly it is clear that, machines, railroads, bacon of themselves do not produce themselves. His overlooking that factor is not accidental—it is necessary for his theory of proving the non-essentialness of the workers.

### SCOTT NEVER READ MARX

Had Scott read Marx, he would have found in volume one of Marx's Capital a sentence reading:

It is as clear as noon-day, that man, by his industry changes

the forms of the materials furnished by Nature, in such a way as to make them useful to him.

This truth, is the key to the question. Water power has significance ONLY AFTER MAN WITH HIS LABOR HAS HARNESSSED IT. All the billions and trillions of any measure of energy going over the precipice at Niagara Falls is meaningless for the productive process unless man has labored and created the means of its utilization. All the energy contained in the wood of the forest, in the minerals and metals underground, and in the vegetation on the surface has no significance in modern production except if labor power is applied to make it utilizable in the productive process.

### AUTOMATIC ENERGY AND CLASS RELATIONS

No matter how automatic machinery becomes, labor will be necessary for its maintenance, for its replacement, and for its proper control. If machinery however,

becomes highly automatic under a socialist society, it will not abolish labor but will emancipate man from labor. It will make man master of the machine, the machine will give man more leisure for cultural pursuits. The development of the automatic machine under capitalism makes man a greater slave to the machine. To-day automatic machinery increases overproduction, and creates unemployment. The competition on the world market then forces the various capitalist groups to undersell each other. For this purpose they cut wages increase hours and thereby make man a greater slave to the machine. Our problem is not in the field of natural energy. This is a more or less settled factor. Our problem lies in the relations between men and men in human relations, in the economics and politics of life, which determines what the effect of the technological changes shall be.

### FAIL TO CONSIDER CLASS RELATIONS

Because the Technocrats do not un-

derstand this they have produced their fallacious theory of energy in production, and either perverted or completely omitted the factors of class relations. Consider for example the facts they give about the suppression of inventions by big corporations. They do not realize that this has its source in the development of capitalism into its monopoly stage which is also in its dying stage, imperialism. They attribute this condition therefore to the fact that some corporations have reached "a stage of complete mechanization." Were this true then under a socialist society there would also be stagnation in technology when industry reaches the same degree of "complete mechanization" that capitalist industry had reached. Yet we know that is not so. The Soviet Union not only takes over every invention it can from capitalism but strives with every force to advance inventing to the Nth degree. What then causes technological stagnation under capitalism? Lenin answers:

However, like all monopoly, this capitalist monopoly (imperialism) infallibly gives rise to a tendency to stagnation and decay. In proportion as the monopoly prices become fixed, even though it be temporarily, so the stimulus to all progress tends to disappear; and so also arises the economic possibility of slowing down technical progress. For instance, in America, a certain Mr. Owens invents a machine intended to revolutionize the manufacture of bottles. The German bottle manufacturing trust buys the patent from Mr. Owens and keeps it in its strong rooms, thus holding up its utilization. Certainly monopoly under capitalism can never completely and for a long time set aside competition on a world market. Certainly the possibility of diminishing the costs of production and increasing profits by introducing tech-

nical improvements is an influence in the direction of change. Even so the tendency to stagnation and corruption which is characteristic of monopoly continues to make itself felt, and in certain spheres of production, in certain countries, for certain periods of time, it takes the upper hand.

(Imperialism: Last stage of Capitalism)

### TECHNOCRACY IS BETRAYAL

Scott & Co. don't like this conclusion because it inevitably means the destruction of capitalism in its imperialist stage and the establishment of a social society. Thus for the engineers, the chemists, the physicists, etc., the solution lies in sphere of Marxist economics, in the Communist way out, in freeing their talents from the striffling hand of a dying capitalist order. To the engineers and other technicians, Technocracy is a betrayal, since it leads them into the camp of their enemies, the capitalist class.

We have already said that Technocracy has for its role, an explanation of the crisis without reference to class relations. It is for this purpose that they quietly "bumped off" the entire working class by the simple process of declaring that their role in industry is approaching "close to zero". It is also for this purpose that they worked out their theory of "electric dollar" or "erg measurement" as a measurement of value and as a solution to the crisis.

Such a solution has the appearance of being purely scientific, because it leaves out labor-time the measurement of value in the exchange of commodities, and thereby eliminates the role of labor time also in exchange. Its scientific character is of course false—it is the reactionary utopian dream of capitalist idealism which can find no comfort in the materialist realities of life, which feels its life ebbing, knows it is losing in its battle against the working class and dreams of a world without a working class.

(We are forced to stop at this point in this issue but will conclude in the next, where we examine the question of exchange—Editor).

## Final Installment NEXT WEEK!

Three Systems of Exchanges:  
CAPITALIST "DOLLAR"  
TECHNOCRATIC (Capitalist) "ERG"  
COMMUNIST "NEEDS"

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