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Science in the Service of the Human Person: An Anniversary Note

WHEN THIS JOURNAL made its first appearance in 1941, the project was the result of a rallying together of social scientists and moral philosophers on the basis of a manifesto that represented a common denominator of their tested conclusions and deeply-held convictions. That manifesto has stood the test of five years, and hence it may be repeated today as a statement of what this project stands for.

THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF ECONOMICS AND SOCIOLOGY has been founded by a group of specialists in the social sciences and in moral and social philosophy, in association with men of affairs, to serve as a stimulus to investigation of special types of problems in these fields and as a medium of publication for such studies. Its interests are confined to problems that gain recognition in the growing awareness of the scientist and the scholar of his added social responsibility in a time of world-wide cultural crisis.

The progress of science, once the center of man's hopes for the orderly amelioration of material conditions, has produced the horrors of total war and of mass and technological unemployment. The tremendous multiplication of specialized knowledge and the irreconcilable divergences of social tendencies characteristic of our era have caused a decline in the prestige of philosophy. This loss of leadership has been shared by the social sciences, for, dealing in their problems of policy with ends and purposes, these must look to philosophy for guidance upon the consequent judgments of value.

Yet, developed with reference to human needs and human practical controls, the technological powers of science offer the material for a rational social and economic organization. Founded upon recognition of the dignity of the human person and of man's unique rôle in society, the philosophical disciplines generate ideas that inspire and direct thinking in the fields of the social studies. Paced by moral and practical development and dominated by consideration for human values, the social sciences comprise man's best hope for social improvement.

The conditions imply a special dedication of the scientific method and the philosophical process. Contemporary opinion seems agreed that social improvement must be sought in the rational control of disease, of poverty and of inequitable economic arrangements—arrangements that find no sanction in reason or morals—of social and political tension and of war. The conviction is spreading that the solution involves the development of practical means for improving the spirit of society, its social ethic; for abolishing the quasi-monopoly of man's natural environment; for bringing order into the chaos of the tax system; for abolishing industrial monopolies and all special privileges; for aiding the experiments in voluntary co-

operation which provide the only substitutes for State paternalism—in a word, means for liberating the free spirit of man.

In this conviction the founders have established this quarterly review to foster study and discussion of the problems and issues involved in that rational control from the point of view of the relevant social sciences and philosophical disciplines by providing a suitable medium of publication devoted entirely to these special studies.

Pre-supposed in the common denominator of its collaborators' varying viewpoints is a tendency toward a modern social reform orientation. Its founders, being predominantly Americans, and therefore susceptible to American tendencies in social and philosophical thought, are very largely drawn from among those who have been influenced, to some degree, by the social rationalism projected into American social studies by the social philosopher, Henry George. The interests of the review will reflect this tendency. Its founders have welcomed to their circle specialists of divergent tendencies as a stimulus to fruitful inquiry.

What the project amounts to, then, is a venture in co-operation between the social sciences and related disciplines toward constructive synthesis in social thought. Whether this synthesis can best be achieved by a unified approach or by a collaboration in specialized approaches is left to the collaborators to discover. For the need of such co-operation one need not plead beyond the aim of specialized inquiry, reproduction of the structure of reality; the concept of reality knows no specialist borders. The Journal will serve its purpose if it gives ample voice to those specialists who are trying to cope with the challenge that modern society presents to them.

IT IS TRUE, of course, that we have not succeeded in fostering study and discussion of all the problems in which we should be interested. We can only hope that it will be said that we have done the best job we could do under the circumstances. To all our collaborators—on the editorial and business boards, on the board of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, our contributors, our readers and critics, among the editors of other scientific journals who have been so hospitable to us and so gracious in their aid, among scholars and policy-makers in business and government generally—we extend our heartfelt thanks. May the results we achieve in the future be worthy of their efforts.

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