

## The Surest Road Is Shortest

REVOLUTIONS have not brought about any lasting change in our economic structure because the successful revolutionists never applied themselves to this problem. They merely broke up the bric-a-brac of the political order and always left the economic edifice intact.

Indeed the history of revolutions seems to be a chronological record of changes in political overlordships. The "outs" throw out the "ins," re-arrange the political furniture in the belief that the new arrangement (say, a constitution, or a bill of rights, or a system of checks and balances) will somehow safeguard social and economic life against political abuses. The new "ins" then ensconce themselves in the comfortable seats of power, wherein are hatched, in spite of the safeguards, the very abuses which the revolution had promised to eradicate.

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Thus, every revolution has sown the seed of its successor. To say that each revolution has advanced the cause of mankind is to put a limited value on the word "advance." It assumes that the diffusion of political power in some way makes for greater happiness; whereas much can be said for the greater happiness prevailing in certain periods of history when political power was centralized. But, even by the standard of democratizing political power, revolutions seem to have failed, for the roundelay of revolutions has culminated in our time not only in a return to centralization, but also in a popular idealization of it. The modern trend is toward the apotheosis of pharaoh-ism.

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If history throws any light on the future, a new series of revolutions is in store for mankind. In time the misery brought about by present regulatory scheming will result in a demand to break up its political furniture and drag back the democratic rococo. In a thousand years—

But, maybe men can learn. In the physical sciences they have shown remarkable ability to

snatch from nature eternal truths, and to utilize this knowledge for their well-being. While it is true that predatory interests do, and for a long time will, prevent by legal and pedagogical chicanery the understanding of natural law in social relationships, the very futility of revolutions may force an inquiry into this field. True prophets are always possible.

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And since life is always a preparation for living, there is always the possibility of a revolution which will leave the political order completely out of consideration, but which will apply itself only to building an economy based on natural law. How will that novel revolution—that genuine revolution—come about? Only through popular understanding. We cannot build unless we know how.

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You who have faith in political documents as security for human happiness, witness how these parchments throughout the ages have failed you. How constitutions, written with the blood of decapitated despots, have given rise to new tyrannies. How pacts to end wars have been merely the instruments for new blood-letting. How political plans, drawn with consummate human ingenuity and sealed with every known device to insure durability, have never succeeded in abolishing the slavery of mankind. Can you still have faith in politics?

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Let us not waste another thousand years, or destroy more millions of lives, in the futile effort to gain human happiness through the constant rearrangement of the political state.

Let us take that still untried route which seems logically to lead us to our desired goal. Let us teach ourselves how we can be free—economically free—so that the promise that is in each of us can be realized. Education, not power politics, is the road. It is the surest road, the shortest road.