

Essential Principles of Socialism, Fascism, and Democracy

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THE development of socialism and fascism into concrete forms of government means the decline of democracy. Accordingly, the growth of state control and the trend away from the system of private ownership towards a system of public ownership, the consequences of which are tantamount to an upheaval in world politics, constitute the most acute problem of today.

When the governing body of the American Academy of Political and Social Science chose the problem of Socialism, Fascism, and Democracy as a general topic for its Thirty-ninth Annual Meeting it fulfilled a noble duty, inasmuch as all mental forces must be centered on the solution of the foremost problem of our era as long as the possibilities of such a solution are not satisfactorily elucidated.

THE PEAK OF HUMAN CULTURE

Democracy is a stage in the cultural evolution of mankind. Socialism and fascism, though they also are stages of cultural evolution and serve as correctives of democracy, are but the consequences of democracy's decline. Only on the foundation of democratic principles was human culture able to scale its present lofty heights, from which it may proudly gaze into the twirling maelstrom of struggling convulsive forces. In fact, mankind reaches the peak of its culture when the principle of a *man's value in itself* becomes recognized, when the *necessity of human activity's continual manifestation* becomes universally ac-

cepted, and when the *reasonableness of things* becomes a starting point.

Man's value in itself means the acknowledgment of the fact that man is not an accidental—and therefore not a superfluous—part of Nature, but an independent divine factor, as stated in the Jewish prophecy where it is laid down that man is the ally and collaborator of God, and besides Him, the only important factor in the universe.

The continual manifestation of human activity means not only the acknowledgment of man's free will, but also the assured possibility of expressing the latter. To transform everything which Nature offers him according to his will and in conformity with his objective is the vocation of man; in other words, when rising above Nature, he must not only subjugate Nature, but conquer his own instincts first.

Man is not born for inactivity, but to show the world his ability and his importance. Therefore he must believe in the reasonableness of reality and in the rationality of the universe. On the cultural stage of democracy we rely upon this principle because that alone can enable us to continue our creative activity.

Unhappily we have at present reached the turning point at which collective life is gradually obliterating in us the sense of independence, when we see mediocrity asserting itself in every respect. It is painful to us to see that those who have the opportunity to be leaders are unwilling to be strong individualities, and to see our-