

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT MARX WHILE SITTING IN THE COLD

There is always talk about some politician being a Socialist or Marxist. Since 2008 I have examined the Socialist side of the question and also considered the Public Intellectual side of Galbraithianists. Now in the midst of a rather cold period my mind wandered to Marx. The following are those thoughts put to paper. Copyright 2014 Terrence P. McGarty, all rights reserved.

*Terrence P McGarty
White Paper No 109
January 2014*

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1 WHY MARX IN THE COLD?

The week between Christmas and New Years has always been a bit of a strange period. Most people do not work, schools are out, it used to be when you studied for your January Finals but that is no longer the case, so it is a week that just sits there alone with nothing to do. Thus at the behest of a grandson who is inspired to write about Karl Marx I thought I would spend some down time reminiscing about the old carbuncle. Unlike Karl who saw the world as complete certainty, a certainty that he had discovered the makings of, my view is a world of abject uncertainty, of random events which we respond to.

On the other hand, Karl did have some points worth considering. Thus I took it upon myself, after all what else did I have to do, my house power was impaired by a severed neutral feed under the street, and after all I could help my inquisitive grandson out by letting him become aware of my weighty thoughts. So here we go.

The following topics which we will discuss from Marx are as follows:

1. Dialectical Materialism; this is the Marxian process of conflict between classes that will result in the worker's paradise. The proletariat is the working class, and for Marx the essence of true progress is class warfare, the battle between those who have the capital and the workers whose labor is exploited.
2. Means of Production and Economics: Marx is at heart one who believes in the inevitable. There is no room for random events in Marx's world. For Marx the societies or classes upon which he predicates his necessary evolution are the result of changes in the means of production. Change the technology by which we produce and we shall, perforce of Marx's view, see a change in the class of society. Perhaps there is a bit of truth here. As we shall argue, we are at a time of massive changes in the means and methods of production. More automation is not only driving labor on a global scale but it is driving labor out of the equation totally. One can envision production with de minimis labor content, and all the human input is intellectual content. Marx never foresaw that change and his theory seems to be built upon feet of sand since it collapses without the proletariat as elements of production.
3. Marxist Leninist Elements: Understanding Marx also requires understanding where it has gone. One of those roads was and still is Marxist-Leninism. Thus we discuss this area somewhat and this provides us a window to the world on the current political elite in certain circles.
4. The Non Existence of the Individual and the Totality of the Class: For Marx, there was no individual, no single mind, there was only the Class. The class was the ruling class, the bourgeoisie, and the proletariat. Ther Classes had homogeneity, the worked as if in some form of intra-class collusion. One could not move from class to class. We examine this in some detail, since we believe that this is also a major flaw in Marxian thought.

We will try to then examine how these are being interpreted and by whom in the current day.

2 DIALECTIC MATERIALISM

Everyone knows or should know the basic idea of Marx; dialectic materialism. The problem often is; just what do the words mean? Dialectic is to a degree a Hegelian tripartite; thesis, antithesis and synthesis. But it is not really that type of structure for Marx. For Marx, the dialectic is a societal process of give and take, a back and forth movement, a thrashing between classes, not individuals. It is not a logical inter-exchange for Marx, it does not involve the individual, and it is not a process of the mind.

For Marx, it would be the bourgeoisie class versus the proletariat class, and whatever bilateral “conflict” that could and would occur. For Marx, there were two distinguishing characteristics of his dialectic: (i) it was a never ending process; it kept repeating albeit with differing sides, there was no ending, (ii) the protagonists were specific groups, and it was the group as an embodiment of a material entity, not ideas, and not individuals. For Marx there was no individual, only classes or groups.

For Marx, it was essential to have class warfare, the warfare was the essence of his dialectic, his conflict between classes, for it would only be through this conflict that rule by the proletariat would result. A fundamental belief, therefore, inherent in each Marxist is the need for class warfare and the litmus test perhaps for true Marxists is the commitment to the necessity for class warfare.

But what makes this society that Karl so clearly sees? From Heilbroner¹:

According to this conception, the ultimate causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in the minds of men, in their increasing insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the mode of production and exchange; they are to be sought not in the philosophy but in the economics of the epoch concerned." The reasoning is powerful. Every society, says Marx, is built on an economic base—the hard reality of human beings who must organize their activities to clothe and feed

The means of production make the society. Society does not make the means of production but the means of production will create this society, an ever changing society. We will return to this concept in a bit. Yet it is a critical observation of Marx which is of some significant import today.

3 MARX AND LENIN

Lenin was a strong proponent of Marxist theory, seen through the lens of Russian society. Lenin was also like a rate carrying the plague thrown into the closed environment of Russia by the Germans in 1917. Lenin’s form of Marxism, his Communism or Marxist Communism, spread like any plague across the land, a land already collapsing from a brutal War and a totally incompetent government.

¹ Heilbroner, Philosophers, p 144.

As Palmer has stated²:

Lenin adopted Marx's governing ideas:

- 1. That capitalism exploited the workers,*
- 2. That it necessarily produced and preceded socialism,*
- 3. That history was logically predetermined,*
- 4. That class struggle was the law of society,*
- 5. That existing forms of religion, government, philosophy, and morals were weapons of the ruling class.*

Marx's theory is the objective truth. Following the path of this theory, we will approach the objective truth more and more closely, while if we follow any other path we cannot arrive at anything except confusion and falsehood. From the philosophy of Marxism, cast of one piece of steel, it is impossible to expunge a single basic premise, a single essential part, without deviating from objective truth, without falling into the arms of bourgeois-reactionary falsehood.

Lenin was a convert. He discovered Marxism; he did not invent it. He found in it a theory of revolution which he accepted without reservation as scientific, and on which he was more outspokenly dogmatic even than Marx himself. His powers of mind, which were very great, were spent in demonstrating how the unfolding events of the twentieth century confirmed the analysis of the master.

Thus we see that historically there has been an acceptance of this class struggle but in the case of Lenin he was able to develop a strong political force which dominated Russia for almost a century. How much of this is being practiced by the current political forces? Take just the destruction of religion, as tools of the “ruling class” and now this is meant the conservative capitalists. Destroy religion; use it as a battle ground. Attacks religion’s fundamental beliefs, even to the case of Christmas, and one attack the old ruling force. This attack is part of the dialectic; it is an essential part of the push of history.

The principle of history being predetermined has always been a cornerstone of Marxist and in turn Communist belief. It was inevitable that there be a takeover by the proletariat. That is why Marxists have disavowed such theories as Quantum Mechanics and Random Process Theory. Both theories, demonstrated in nature again and again, demonstrate that reality is a random process, not predetermined, and true both in the small and the large.

² Palmer, R., A History of the Modern World, Knopf (New York) 3rd Ed 1965. Palmer was at Princeton when he wrote this first in the early 1950s and then in the mid-1960s. It is doubtful that anyone at Princeton would write this today, in fact one could readily assume they would likely agree with Marx!

Capitalism exploited the workers. That made sense when the workers were a major element of production. However as we have seen the content of produced goods and even services contains less and less labor and more and more creativity. This was a major failing of Marx, he eschewed the creativity of the entrepreneur, and he discounted any such input, and at best put it on par with an equal amount of “labor” from the proletariat. But in today’s world we see massive sea state changes in how production progresses. Labor is de minimis, it is at best a small lingering element. Those who do not create do not produce is a mantra for the current age.

4 MARX AND GOVERNING

The early Marx is often of interest. In contrast to Capital, the Communist Manifesto is a simple read and it contains many key insights. Thus let us begin to examine the governing principle from the Manifesto. Marx and Engels state their ten point plan:

- 1. Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes.*
- 2. A heavy progressive or graduated income tax.*
- 3. Abolition of all right of inheritance.*
- 4. Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels.*
- 5. Centralization of credit in the hands of the State, by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly.*
- 6. Centralization of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State.*
- 7. Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the State; the bringing into cultivation of wastelands, and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan.*
- 8. Equal liability of all to labour. Establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.*
- 9. Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country, by a more equable distribution of the population over the country.*
- 10. Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of children's factory labour in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production.*

Well we are not there yet but perhaps we can judge the progress by examining the actions of our Politicians but more importantly of our Government Administrators.

For just a few of the above we now have some as below:

1. Centralizing Credit and Banks, well we are on our way there.

2. Centralizing means of communications, well the NSA has really helped out there.
3. Excess taxation and transfer of wealth.
4. Taxing inheritance to de minimis values.
5. Establishment of Government forces to various areas such as teaching and farm work.
6. Taking over of factories and business such as the banks and auto companies.
7. Cultivation of Wastelands, that has been the EPA, Marx never asked for productive "cultivation"

Mao tried the "all to agriculture" thing in the "Great Leap Forward". I find it interesting that perhaps we could get all those folks in DC out in the fields working crops. Just a thought as we move towards a new year.

5 MARX AND THE ECONOMY

Marx had a view of economics which was predicated on his class view of society. He was hardly an advocate of Smith and he clearly had no understanding of the day to day process of setting a price. Then again he was in the midst of the 19th Century and even today in the early 21st Century most macroeconomists are clueless. For today's macroeconomists they have lots of theories now added by senseless mathematics but failing to be fundamentally a science by their inability to predict.

For Marx, his basic premise was that price was set by the contribution of capital plus labor, labor as input not labor as cost. Labor had substantial value for Marx and it was the capitalist who benefitted by the difference between price less true cost of labor less capital and the profit was according to Marx merely the difference between the price related value of labor less the cost the capitalist paid for that value, usually substantially lower³. Namely the proletariat was being abused.

Now we can return to examining Marx and his political theories. Let us begin with a long discussion from Marx⁴;

To prove to him on the contrary that they have proved it, we shall cite only Ricardo and Lauderdale Ricardo, the head of the school which determines value by labour time, and Lauderdale, one of the most uncompromising defenders of the determination of value by supply and demand. Both have expounded the same proposition:

³ See Bober Chapter X.

⁴ pp 81-82, Marx, Poverty.

“By constantly increasing the facility of production, we constantly diminish the value of some of the commodities before produced, although by the same means we not only add to the national riches, but also to the power of future production. ... As soon as by the aid of machinery, or by the knowledge of natural philosophy, you oblige natural agents to do the work which was before done by man, the exchangeable value of such work falls accordingly. If ten men turned a corn mill, and it be discovered that by the assistance of wind, or of water, the labour of these ten men may be spared, the flour which is the produce partly of the work performed by the mill, would immediately fall in value, in proportion to the quantity of labour saved; and the society would be richer by the commodities which the labour of the ten men could produce, the funds destined for their maintenance being in no degree impaired.” (Ricardo, pp. 166 and 172.)

Lauderdale, in his turn, says:

“There is no part of the capital of a country that more obviously derives its profits from supplanting a portion of labour, a portion which is beyond the reach of his personal exertion, than that which is vested in machinery. . . . The small profit which the proprietors of machinery require, when compared with the wages of labour which the machine supplants, may perhaps create a suspicion of the rectitude of this opinion. Some fire engines, for instance, draw more water from a coalpit in one day than could be conveyed on the shoulders of three hundred men, men assisted by the machinery of buckets; and a fire engine undoubtedly performs its labour at a much smaller expense than the amount of the wages of those whose labour it thus supplants. This is, in truth, the case with all machinery.

All machines must execute the labour that was antecedently performed, at a cheaper rate than it could be done by the hand of man. ... If such a privilege is given for the invention of a machine, which performs, by the labour of one man a quantity of work that used to take the labour of four; as the possession of the exclusive privilege prevents any competition in doing the work, but what proceeds from the labour of the four workmen, their wages, as long as the patent continues, must obviously form the measure of the patentee's charge; that is, to secure employment, he has only to charge a little less than the wages of the labour which the machine supplants.

But when, the patent expires, other machines of the same nature are brought into competition and then his charge must be regulated on the same principle as every other, according to the abundance of machines. . . . The profit of capital employed in foreign trade, though it arises from supplanting labour, comes to be regulated, not by the value of the labour it supplants, but, as in all other cases, by the competition among the proprietors of capital, and it will be great or small in proportion to the quantity of capital that presents itself for performing the duty, and the demand for it.” (Op. cit., pp. 119, 123, 124, 125, 134.)”

Finally, then, so long as the profit is greater than in other industries, capital will be thrown into the new industry until the rate of profit falls to the general level. We have just seen that the example of the railway was scarcely suited to throw any light on his fiction of the person, Society. Nevertheless, M. Proudhon boldly resumes his discourse:

“With these points cleared up, nothing is easier than to explain how labour must leave a surplus for each producer.”; (Vol. I, p. 77.)

What now follows belongs to classical antiquity. It is a poetical narrative intended to refresh the reader after the fatigue which the rigour of the preceding mathematical demonstrations must have caused him. M. Proudhon gives the person, Society, the name of Prometheus, whose high deeds he glorifies in these terms:

“First of all, Prometheus emerging from the bosom of nature awakes to life in a delightful inertia, etc. etc. Prometheus sets to work, and on this first day, the first day of the second creation, Prometheus product that is, his wealth, his well-being, is equal to ten. On the second day, Prometheus divides his labour, and his product becomes equal to a hundred. On the third day and on each of the following days, Prometheus invents machines, discovers new utilities in bodies, new forces in nature. . . . With every step of his industrial activity, there is an increase in the number of his products, which marks an enhancement of happiness for him. And since, after all, to consume is for him to produce, it is clear that every day's consumption, using up only the product of the day before, leaves a surplus product for the next day.”

Now one of the most telling observations by Marx is the relationship between the means of production and society. From his work *The Poverty of Philosophy* we have⁵:

M. Proudhon the economist understands very well that men make cloth, linen or silk materials in definite relations of production. But what he has not understood is that these definite social relations are just as much produced by men as linen, flax, etc. Social relations are closely bound up with productive forces. In acquiring new productive forces men change their mode of production; and in changing their mode of production, in changing the way of earning their living, they change all their social relations. The hand-mill gives you society with the feudal lord; the steam-mill, society with the industrial capitalist,

One should carefully examine this statement. The mill “gives” you a Feudal society and the steam engine “gives” you the industrial capitalist. The term “gives” means just what he wants it to mean, it gives, creates, establishes, or whatever word one wants to be causal.

6 WIENER AND THE WORLD

Norbert Wiener was the person who inspired my first writings and indeed my first book. Not that I am in any way a mathematician, for I am an engineer at heart, nor am I even a table top philosopher, but Wiener being both a great mathematician and a well versed student of philosophy had many insights half a century ago which are worth sharing.

In a paper he wrote in the mid-1950s (as quoted by Masani in his book on Wiener) Wiener is quoted as saying:

⁵ Marx, K., *Poverty* p 92.

"Suppose, now, that a sum of money at the time of Christ had been left at 2% compound interest; for example the thirty pieces of silver off Judas. By what factor would it have multiplied up to the present time? We are approaching the year 2000 and in order to express our result in round numbers let us suppose that we are at the year 2000. Then one dollar at the time of Christ would amount, at 2%, to a quantity with over ninety-seven zeroes. At any conceivable scale of evaluation one cent at the time of Christ put in a bank at 2% compound interest would amount to something like 10 to the 84 times all the value of the goods in the world at the present time. This is ridiculous, but it still has meaning."

He continues:

"The sums earned by money put out to interest have been wiped out time and time again by wars, famines, plagues, and other catastrophes. These catastrophes have been great enough to wipe out every single commercial undertaking of antiquity of thousands of years, and if they had not taken place. The rate of interest for long term investment could scarcely be two tenths of a percent."

Masani then states Wiener's conclusion:

"It follows that modern capitalism is able to offer attractive returns on private investments in long term undertakings only by its condescension of bankruptcies during down phases of its periodical trade cycles. For the well off the resulting losses are often on paper, but they are painfully real to poorer people thrown out of work. Thus the system is not socially homeostatic."

Wiener had a practical insight that many in today's complex world of macroeconomics should consider. For Wiener was a true mathematician, one of the best of the 20th century, and unlike these economists who attempt at mathematics to hide a swath of frailties Wiener made primal contributions, the Generalized Harmonic Analysis and Brownian motion being two which have affected the current world.

In the early 1950s Norbert Wiener wrote a readable version of what Cybernetics may bring forth. For those not in the know cybernetics is what has happened to manufacturing, robots, computers, and little need for people as workers.

Wiener said:

Let us remember that the automatic machine, what-ever we think of any feelings it may have or may not have, is the precise economic equivalent of slave labor. Any labor which competes with slave labor must accept the economic conditions of slave labor. It is perfectly clear that this will produce an unemployment situation, in comparison with which the present recession and even the depression of the thirties will seem a pleasant joke. This depression will ruin many industries, possibly even the industries which have taken advantage of the new potentialities. However, there is nothing in the industrial tradition which forbids an industrialist to make a sure and quick profit, and to get out before the crash touches him personally.

Thus the new industrial revolution is a two-edged sword. It may be used for the benefit of humanity, but only if humanity survives long enough to enter a period in which such a benefit is possible. It may also be used to destroy humanity, and if it is not used intelligently it can go very far in that direction. There are, however, hopeful signs on the horizon. Since the publication of the first edition of this book, I have participated in two big meetings with representatives of business management, and I have been delighted to see that awareness on the part of a great many of those present of the social dangers of our new technology and the social obligations of those responsible for management to see that the new modalities are used for the benefit of man, for increasing his leisure and enriching his spiritual life, rather than merely for profits and the worship of the machine as a new brazen calf. There are many dangers still ahead, but the roots of good will are there, and I do not feel as thoroughly pessimistic as I did at the time of the publication of the first edition of this book.

Wiener was quite prescient at the time. He saw machines replacing humans in factories. I have had conversations with many who say the US is declining because we no longer "make" anything. Frankly, in a Wienerian sense, no one else is also, despite the Chinese.

The Cybernetic threat poses a difficult conundrum. We have had a society where we could put people to work on farms and then factories. Now the best we seem to do is get them iPhones and iPads, the soma of our current society.

What is needed in a Cybernetic Age is creativity and productivity, developing value added elements with intelligent workforces not just bodies.

I am always amazed as to the sudden realization that there has been a systemic change to our workforce. After all it was no surprise. It also is a continuing trend of history. Just go through New England mill towns, and what do you see, old mill factories which 100 years or so ago made fabrics, then became abandoned and then became high tech start-ups and now house health care establishments! The trend is just read by the signs on the buildings (see Lowell, MA for example). But that trend is frightening.

Robots replace manual labor and for a while entrepreneurs came in, then they left and are replaced by Health Care, namely innovation replaced by overhead! That should be the concern. We are not getting healthier, we are just spending more.

Now Friedman of the NY Times seems always to bring his new insights to the table. Frankly I never seen any true insights but alas he is what the masses of the left have to rely upon. They would be better off driving about I-495 in Boston and reading signs. From Friedman in the Times we have⁶:

When you hear the insane notion of "legitimate rape" being aired by a Republican congressman — a member of the House science committee no less — it makes you wonder some days how we became the world's richest, most powerful country, and, more important, how we're going to

⁶ <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/26/opinion/sunday/i-made-the-robot-do-it.html?hp>

stay there. The short answer is that, thank God, there's still a bunch of people across America — innovators and entrepreneurs — who just didn't get the word. They didn't get the word that Germany will eat our breakfast or that China will eat our lunch. They didn't get the word that we're in a recession and heading for a fiscal cliff. They're not interested in politics at all. Instead, they just go out and invent stuff and fix stuff and collaborate on stuff. They are our saving grace, and whenever I need a pick-me-up, I drop in on one of them.

I did just that last week, visiting the design workshop of Rethink Robotics, near Boston's airport, where I did something I've never done before: I programmed a robot to perform the simple task of moving widgets from one place to another. Yup, I trained the robot's arms using a very friendly screen interface and memory built into its mechanical limbs. ...

The Rethink design team includes ..., the product manager of the Apple LaserWriter — as well as 75 other experts from Russia, Georgia, Venezuela, Egypt, Australia, India, Israel, Portugal, Britain, Sri Lanka, the United States and China. "It is all made in America," ..., but by "the best talent" gathered "from around the world."

This is the company of the future. Forget about "outsourcing." In today's hyperconnected world, there is no "in" and no "out." There's only "good, better and best," and if you don't assemble the best team you can from everywhere, your competitor will. ...

The Rethink robot will be unveiled in weeks. I was just given a sneak peek — on the condition that I did not mention its "disruptive" price point and some other unique features.

This is the march of progress. It eliminates bad jobs, empowers good jobs, but always demands more skill and creativity and always enables fewer people to do more things. We went through the same megashift when our agricultural economy was replaced by the industrial economy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Therefore, what this election should be about is how we spawn thousands of Rethinks that create new industries, new jobs and productivity tools. Alas, it isn't. So I'm just grateful these folks here in Boston didn't get the word.

Sarcasm as required starts his "insights" but he seems to have not read history and moreover has not truly thought through what he opines upon. Robots replace humans; it is akin to the plow, the tractor, and the changes in farms a hundred or so years ago. But now there are no big cities to go to. Furthermore these robots have been around for ages and there is no secret sauce that gives the US any sustainable advantage. Friedman clearly had not gotten the "news" about robots; they have been around for more than 70 years! But this is classic Friedman, and classic NY Times. Make a statement, any statement, conjoin it with a political rub, and voila, one has "news". Yet the truth is that we have been changing the means of production, ever so slowly, but ever so consistently. If Marx is right here, and I believe he may very well be, then we should expect the result to be a massive change in the classes of society. Just what the outcome is may be in doubt.

Now in reality the message was originally sent by Norbert Wiener. In 1947 he wrote his first warnings about this change and in 1961 he repeated it. From Wiener, *Cybernetics*, 2nd Edition, we have:

Long before Nagasaki and the public awareness of the atomic bomb, it had occurred to me that we were here in the presence of another social potentiality of unheard-of importance for good and for evil. The automatic factory and the assembly line without human agents are only so far ahead of us as is limited by our willingness to put such a degree of effort into their engineering as was spent, for example, in the development of the technique of radar in the Second World War⁷.

I have said that this new development has unbounded possibilities for good and for evil. For one thing, it makes the metaphorical dominance of the machines, as imagined by Samuel Butler, a most immediate and non-metaphorical problem. It gives the human race a new and most effective collection of mechanical slaves to perform its labor. Such mechanical labor has most of the economic properties of slave labor, although, unlike slave labor, it does not involve the direct demoralizing effects of human cruelty. However, any labor that accepts the conditions of competition with slave labor accepts the conditions of slave labor, and is essentially slave labor. The key word of this statement is competition.

It may very well be a good thing for humanity to have the machine remove from it the need of menial and disagreeable tasks, or it may not. I do not know. It cannot be good for these new potentialities to be assessed in the terms of the market, of the money they save; and it is precisely the terms of the open market, the "fifth freedom," that have become the shibboleth of the sector of American opinion represented by the National Association of Manufacturers and the Saturday Evening Post. I say American opinion, for as an American, I know it best, but the hucksters recognize no national boundary.

Perhaps I may clarify the historical background of the present situation if I say that the first industrial revolution, the revolution of the "dark satanic mills," was the devaluation of the human arm by the competition of machinery. There is no rate of pay at which a United States pick-and-shovel laborer can live which is low enough to compete with the work of a steam shovel as an excavator. The modern industrial revolution is similarly bound to devalue the human brain, at least in its simpler and more routine decisions.

Of course, just as the skilled carpenter, the skilled mechanic, the skilled dressmaker have in some degree survived the first industrial revolution, so the skilled scientist and the skilled administrator may survive the second. However, taking the second revolution as accomplished, the average human being of mediocre attainments or less has nothing to sell that it is worth anyone's money to buy.

The answer, of course, is to have a society based on human values other than buying or selling. To arrive at this society, we need a good deal of planning and a good deal of struggle, which, if the best comes to the best, may be on the plane of ideas, and otherwise—who knows? I thus felt it my duty to pass on my information and understanding of the position to those who have an active interest in the conditions and the future of labor, that is, to the labor unions. I did manage to make contact with one or two persons high up in the C.I.O., and from them I received a very

⁷ Fortune, 32, 139-147 (October); 163-169 (November, 1945).

intelligent and sympathetic hearing. Further than these individuals, neither I nor any of them was able to go.

It was their opinion, as it had been my previous observation and information, both in the United States and in England, that the labor unions and the labor movement are in the hands of a highly limited personnel, thoroughly well trained in the specialized problems of shop stewardship and disputes concerning wages and conditions of work, and totally unprepared to enter into the larger political, technical, sociological, and economic questions which concern the very existence of labor.

The reasons for this are easy enough to see: the labor union official generally comes from the exacting life of a workman into the exacting life of an administrator without any opportunity for a broader training; and for those who have this training, a union career is not generally inviting; nor, quite naturally, are the unions receptive to such people.

Those of us who have contributed to the new science of cybernetics thus stand in a moral position which is, to say the least, not very comfortable. We have contributed to the initiation of a new science which, as I have said, embraces technical developments with great possibilities for good and for evil. We can only hand it over into the world that exists about us, and this is the world of Belsen and Hiroshima.

We do not even have the choice of suppressing these new technical developments. They belong to the age, and the most any of us can do by suppression is to put the development of the subject into the hands of the most irresponsible and most venal of our engineers. The best we can do is to see that a large public understands the trend and the bearing of the present work, and to confine our personal efforts to those fields, such as physiology and psychology, most remote from war and exploitation.

Wiener was ages ahead of Friedman. Wiener was not only the visionary but the oracle of what was to happen, and in addition the one who started the whole process. Perhaps Friedman should read more of Wiener and add that to his insight.

What Wiener was truly recognizing in this time was the change in the means of production, well known to him in the late 1940s. This change was the core of Wiener's cybernetics. It allowed him to see decades into the future. It was a change driven by an idea, not by some class of people. It was a change in production that drove out the element of labor, and thus if one were to follow Marx, since the profit of the capitalist is the margin it makes on the value of labor, it should drive out the capitalist as well. In fact just the opposite is occurring. Thus is unemployment as we have been examining it just a natural course of this process of massive productivity change?

7 THE SOURCE OF CHANGE

Change is something we can see from historical records. There have been various views of the causes of change and there most likely will continue to be new ones proposed. One of the classic examples is the virulent pro-monarchist and virulent anti-Catholic view of the Fall of Rome by

Gibbon. This attempt to establish a unique cause to bolster his state religion is replete with error, but it is not our intent here to detail them. Instead we use this as but one example that what Marx was doing at the same time period was a common exercise.

Let us examine a 20th Century analyst but in a different area. We here consider McLuhan and his views on media and knowledge. Drucker, in his biographical sketches of his contemporaries, remarks on his first encounter with McLuhan. It was during a presentation that McLuhan was making on the results of his do doctoral studies. His presentation reflected upon the impact that the printing press has had upon the university system in the late Middle Ages. He contended that the modern university came into being in the sixteenth century because of printing, which changed not only the method of instruction but, more importantly, what the university intended to teach. He further contended that the cultural results of this period had little to do with the Renaissance and was all a direct result of the printing press.

To quote Drucker, who paraphrased McLuhan⁸;

"Did I hear you right," asked one of the professors in the audience, "that you think that printing influenced the courses that the university taught and the role of university all together." "No sir," said McLuhan, "it did not influence; printing determined both, indeed printing determined what henceforth was going to be considered knowledge."

Thus this led to McLuhan's famous phrase that the medium is the message. Specifically, as we developed a new medium for human communications, we dramatically altered the nature of the information that was transferred and the way in which the human perceived what "truth" was and what was not. The television generation of the 1960's was a clear example of the impact of television versus film in portraying the war in Vietnam as compared to the Second World War. The perception of these two events was determined by the difference of the two media that displayed them to the public masses. Television allowed for a portrayal that molded more closely to the individual human's impact of the events as compared to films overview of the groups involvement's. Both media deal with the same senses but they are different enough to have determined two different outcomes of the wars. This conclusion is a McLuhanesque conclusion but is consistent with the changes that McLuhan was recounting in the 1960's in his publications.

How does McLuhan relate to Marx? Simply; McLuhan said that the medium would define the message, the "truth" if you will, and for Marx, the means of production would define the society, the classes. For McLuhan as the medium changed so did what we see as "truth" or "knowledge" and for Marx as the means of production changed we saw the reorganization of society into different classes. Materialistic change in both cases was the basis for changes in "truth" and in "society".

8 MARX AND THE INDIVIDUAL

⁸ It is interesting to note the book by Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*. In this work, Eco, a semiotist by profession, examines what knowledge meant to the 14th Century using William of Ockham as his foil.

Marx eschewed the individual. To him there were only classes, large classes. Marx was quite clear as to this proposition. Let us examine two views, that of Marx and that of the current President. For Marx,

"Society does not consist of individuals, but expresses the sum of interrelations, the relations within which these individuals stand."

Note this strong disavowal of the individual. Dialectic for Marx is not a dialectic as one would look at Plato and Socrates, but it is a conflict between these alleged classes. It is a conflict stirred up by the means of production and their changes. Thus the never ending conflict, never ending dialectic, albeit directed towards an ultimate and predictable resolution as a victory for the proletariat.

Now consider a comment by the current President:

"If you've got a business, you didn't build that. Somebody else made that happen." Current President 2012

Does one see some similarity? As we have argued the Individual and their ability to perform goes to the heart of any entrepreneurial culture, and its destruction will lead inevitably to that culture's destruction. Yet it was Marx who abhorred the entrepreneur, Marx saw the entrepreneur as the capitalist, the ultimate suppressor of the proletariat. Marx frankly did not understand business, not even a candy store. Mid-19th century England was the England of Dickens, a class ridden society in the midst of massive social upheaval, but restricted by rules of behavior yet to change. Marx fell into the classic trap of looking at his present and assuming it went backwards and forwards with the same trajectory. He saw an ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny from his small part of the London library.

9 CHILDREN OF MARX

There is an article in the NY Times arguing the Rawlsian nature of the Anti-Capitalism Demonstrators who have taken up residence in public spaces around the country⁹. They state:

Rawls's boldest claim — that inequality in society is only justified if its least well-off members fare better than they would under any other scheme — could provide a lodestar for the protests. Rawls was no Marxist: this "difference principle" acknowledges that a productive, free society will be home to at least some degree of inequality. But the principle insists that if the rich get richer while wages and social capital of the poor and middle class are stagnant or falling, there is something seriously wrong.

Now the above is somewhat slight from the mark. Rawls was a redistributionist and his view was to maximize the social and economic benefits to all by taking from the producers and given to the consumers, my words. In my work on *Individualism and Neo Progressivism* I discussed this

⁹ http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/10/21/rawls-on-wall-street/?hp&_r=0

in detail¹⁰. This country was for years a bastion of individualism. This was recognized by de Tocqueville, and most likely was a direct result of the fact that the immigrants performance of the vacantness and isolation of the country were forced to be that way, and the result was the strength of this country.

The counter to Rawls was his Harvard colleague Robert Nozick who looked towards individualism.

Nozick establishes his "entitlement" rules for the Lockean distribution of property by the individual.

Specifically Nozick states them as:

1. An individual acquires property via the principle of justice in acquisition is then entitled to that property;
2. An individual who acquires property via the principle of justice in transfer is then entitled to that property;
3. An individual who acquires property via the principle of justice in retribution is then entitled to that property.

These were true elements of individualism. Now the Times continues:

Inequality becomes injustice when the cooperative nature of society breaks down and a significant segment of the population finds itself unable to thrive, despite its best efforts. Rawls does not prescribe particular policies to heal the divide, but structural changes in campaign financing, the banking system and the tax code are natural places to begin the discussion. Whatever platform Occupy Wall Street adopts, Rawlsian principles might help clarify the values of the movement and navigate it away from divisive or intellectually bankrupt rhetoric.

"Unable to survive", it hardly looks as if these people are unable to survive, for one wonders who is supporting them now. What significant percent of the population? In many ways the people appear and lost but bound together by a rhetoric that is divisive, lacking focus, and perhaps a metaphor for their own lives, lives without positive self-direction, lives rejecting the challenge of individualism. They are children of Rawls, as Rawls was a child of Marx.

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