



DECLARATION V. MANIFESTO

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I have several times referred to the principles of the Declaration as a pledge to the future. How and to what extent has that pledge been fulfilled?

If the pledge had not in some measure already been fulfilled, the Declaration could not compete today with the Manifesto on a global scale; the political liberty guaranteed by constitutional gov-

ernment could not win out against the economic welfare that socialist programs offer those in dire poverty and suffering serious deprivation in the Third and Fourth Worlds. However, the pledge implicit in the principles of the Declaration has been largely fulfilled in the political sphere. In some measure, it has been fulfilled in the economic sphere. That work of fulfillment—accomplished mainly in this century—is far from complete.

In the political sphere, the fulfillment of the pledge implicit in the proposition that all men are by nature equal and consequently equal in their possession of natural rights began with the abolition of slavery. It has continued with the advances which have been made toward truly universal suffrage. Now all capable of giving consent and of participating in government may do so. Our government has finally become what it was not at the beginning, but what it had to become in order to be fully just—a constitutional democracy.

In the economic sphere, the fulfillment of the pledge implicit in the principle that a just government must secure rights to the external goods or conditions that human beings need to pursue happiness did not begin until this century. It began with the economic reforms of Theodore Roosevelt (for which, by the way, T.R. was denounced as a socialist); it was carried forward by Woodrow Wilson; and it was greatly extended by Franklin Roosevelt in the New Deal which created the mixed economy and the welfare state of socialized capitalism.

Our eighteenth-century Bill of Rights—the first ten amendments to the Constitution—was concerned with rights only in the political sphere, mainly the natural right to liberty. It was not until the twentieth century that economic rights were acknowledged to be as indispensable as the rights to life and liberty.

The formal declaration of those economic rights was made in 1944, in Roosevelt's State of the Union address. Here is how Roosevelt introduced what he called a second Bill of Rights:

This Republic had its beginning, and grew to its present strength, under the protection of certain inalienable political rights—among them the right of free speech, free press, free worship, trial by jury, freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures. They were our rights to life and liberty. As our nation has grown in size and stature, however—as our industrial economy expanded—these political rights proved inadequate to assure us equality in the pursuit

of happiness.

We have come to a clear realization of the fact that true individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence. 'Necessitous men are not free men.' People who are hungry and out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made. In our day these economic truths have become accepted as self-evident. We have accepted, so to speak, a second Bill of Rights under which a new basis of security and prosperity can be established for all—regardless of station, race, or creed.

Roosevelt asked Congress to implement by law these economic rights:

The right to a useful and remunerative job in the industries or shops or farms or mines of the nation.

The right to earn enough to provide adequate food and clothing and recreation.

The right of every farmer to raise and sell his products at a return which will give him and his family a decent living.

The right of every businessman, large and small, to trade in an atmosphere of freedom from unfair competition and domination by monopolies at home or abroad.

The right of every family to a decent home.

The right to adequate medical care and the opportunity to achieve and enjoy good health.

The right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident, and unemployment.

The right to a good education.

(A substantially similar enumeration of economic rights is set forth in Articles 23 through 27 of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights.)

During Roosevelt's time, the Supreme Court held that Congress had not exceeded its authority to enact legislation to promote the general welfare, which was conceived as the economic welfare of the people, and, as such, indispensable to the pursuit of happiness.



The Communist Manifesto contains nothing like the statement of principles in the Declaration involving the notions of liberty and equality, justice and rights. In fact, with the exception of freedom, none of these notions appears in the Manifesto. Later Marxist literature—especially an important commentary on the Manifesto, Lenin’s *The State and Revolution*—heaps scorn on equality, justice, and rights as typically bourgeois notions that have no relevance to the ideal society that will be achieved in the last stage of the revolution. But freedom is referred to in the last sentence of Chapter II of the Manifesto: “In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and its class antagonisms, we shall have a society in which the free development of each is the condition of the free development of all.”

According to the Manifesto, the ideal of freedom will be fully realized only in the ultimate, not the penultimate, stage of the revolution—only when the revolution passes beyond the dictatorship of the proletariat to the withering away of the state.

In the paragraph immediately preceding the above paragraph, the Manifesto says this quite plainly: in the first stage of the revolution, the proletariat will overthrow the bourgeois by force and “make itself the ruling class.” The Communist countries of the world represent the achievement of that first stage, in which the dictatorship of the proletariat, as a ruling class, operates through the Communist Party as its political organ. If the revolution were to stop there, the freedom mentioned by the Manifesto would be entirely a pledge to the future—a future which will come about, according to Karl Marx, only when the proletariat “will have abolished its own supremacy as a class,” and the Communist Party will cease to function as a political dictator.

I must say, simply and plainly, I do not think that pledge to the future will ever be fulfilled. Defenders of the Manifesto may point out that I have acknowledged it took almost two hundred years to fulfill, in whole or in part, the pledge implicit in the Declaration. Why should we not allow a similar length of time for the Manifesto to fulfill its pledge, in another hundred years, more or less? My answer rests on my philosophical conviction that the Manifesto’s pledge will never be fulfilled, given endless time, because it cannot be.

It envisages a utopian impossibility—a society of human beings

living harmoniously and freely with one another in the absence of any government which exercises coercive force to secure the rights of individuals against their infringement by others. It envisages men living peacefully, freely, and happily in a state of anarchy.

The philosophical arguments against the anarchic society as an alternative to civil society under civil government are, in my judgment, irrefutable. They support the truth of the Declaration's proposition that civil government must be instituted to secure human rights, among which is the right to political liberty and individual freedom. If that proposition is true, then its contradictory—the proposition advanced by the Manifesto—must be false.

Although the Declaration's pledge to the future is not yet completely fulfilled, there is no intrinsic reason why it cannot be.

If we reject the Manifesto's hope for anarchic freedom, then the present stage of the Communist revolution is really its ultimate, not its penultimate, stage. This means that the dictatorship of the proletariat, through the despotism of the Communist Party, will continue as long as it is needed to enforce and carry out the economic reforms advocated in the Manifesto. That being the case, the Manifesto cannot compete with the Declaration in the political sphere. Devoid of a fulfillable pledge to the future, its endorsement of a dictatorial or despotic regime as a political necessity means the nullification of the right to liberty. Furthermore, there is no political equality between citizens who are members of the Party and those who are not. The latter might just as well be disfranchised because their suffrage remains politically ineffectual.

In the economic sphere, the Manifesto, adhering to the goal of socialism to be achieved by Communist means, offers a program to establish economic equality and to secure the economic rights of every individual. Here, the principles of the Manifesto need not be read as a pledge to the future; they are in large measure operative now.

Though the Manifesto does not use the word "justice," that concept lies behind words it does use, such as "exploitation" and "unearned increment." The injustices connoted by those terms are to be removed by the abolition of the private ownership of the means of production, which is the basic economic principle of the Manifesto. All means of production, or capital instruments, will be operated by the state. This transfer of property to the state concentrates economic along with political power in the bureaucratic organs of the state, and results in the totalitarianism that Alexis de

Tocqueville feared would arise from the effort to achieve an equality of conditions. Tocqueville thought that the striving for equality, especially economic equality, would diminish or destroy liberty, especially political liberty.

The Manifesto is silent with regard to the distribution of economic goods. For that, we must go to Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program*, which states the principle of distribution: "From each according to his abilities; to each according to his needs." That principle is reiterated by Lenin and is enshrined in the Soviet Constitution.

If—and this is a large "if"—if the word "needs" is here used in the same sense that I have assigned to it—i.e., desires that are truly needs, not wants; desires that are inherent in human nature and so are the same for each and every human being—then the formula "to each according to his needs" outlines a program for fulfilling economic rights, rights to a share of economic goods, that is substantially similar to Roosevelt's bill of economic rights and the U.N.'s Declaration of Human Rights.

The economic equality that is aimed at by socialism, whether it is achieved by the Communist program or by reforms introduced by socialized capitalism, consists in every human being's having what any human being needs in the sphere of economic goods in order to live a decent human life.

Socialism and democracy are compatible only if the goals of socialism—the welfare state and economic equality—can be achieved without abolishing private ownership of the means of production and without concentrating economic as well as political power in the central government of a totalitarian state. To show that a constitutional democracy in the political sphere can also be a socialist democracy in the economic sphere, it is necessary to show that equality in both spheres is compatible with liberty in both. That is what I now propose to do.



What is most characteristic of our century—all over the world as well as in our country—is the drive toward what Tocqueville called "an equality of conditions," which goes far beyond all forms of political equality to an equality of economic conditions, an equality in standards of living and in quality of life. Even in the United States—though less so than in England and on the Continent—the dominant confrontation is between the rich and the poor.

In the world as a whole, there is an even more threatening confrontation between the rich and the poor nations. In the United States, we have seen, for the first time, a society which has a privileged majority and an oppressed and deprived minority. But in the world as a whole, a vast, overwhelming majority lives under conditions of extreme deprivation alongside a very small, privileged minority concentrated in the developed countries.

Liberty and equality have traditionally been thought incompatible. To maximize one, it has been thought, leads to encroachment on the other. Alexis de Tocqueville, John Calhoun, William Sumner, and others feared that the demand for an equality of economic conditions would inevitably result in the sacrifice of political liberty and freedom of enterprise. Others, however, held that unlimited freedom of enterprise in the economic sphere—stressing only an equality of opportunity—must result in a serious inequality of conditions, with many suffering poverty, deprivation, and destitution.

In contemporary writings on the subject, many share the fears of Tocqueville, Calhoun, and Sumner that attempts to establish an egalitarian economy, or to enforce an equality of economic conditions, will require the exercise of despotic or dictatorial political power and lead to the demise of constitutional democracy and the loss of political liberty.

I think these fears are not justified. Liberty and equality are not incompatible. Constitutional democracy and political liberty need not be sacrificed in order to secure economic rights for all.

The solution of the problem is clear in principle, once we recognize that neither liberty nor equality is the sovereign value to be protected. It is justice that is sovereign. When justice regulates our attempt to maximize liberty and equality, both can be achieved as fully as they should be.

Men should have only as much liberty as justice allows, only as much as the individual can use without injuring others or the community itself. Likewise, men should have only as much equality as justice requires, only as much equality in the conditions of their lives as they need in order to lead decent human lives. As much liberty as justice allows is a limited liberty that does no injury to others. As much equality as justice requires is a limited equality, an equality only in the things to which all men have an equal right. When liberty and equality are thus limited by justice, they cease to be incompatible with one another.

There is no difficulty about understanding a limited as opposed to an unlimited liberty. But what is meant by a limited equality?

Since political equality is easier to think about than economic equality, let us begin with that. Men are politically equal when they enjoy an equality of political status—the equality of citizenship with suffrage—even though this is accompanied by an inequality of political power, as, for example, between citizens out of public office and citizens in public office. Political equality exists when all are haves in the sense of having basic political powers and rights, even though among these haves, some have more and some have less power. Men enfranchised and women disfranchised are politically unequal, as haves and have-nots are unequal. But when both men and women are enfranchised, those in office and those out of office are unequal only in the degree of political power that all of them have.

Now how much economic equality does justice require? It does not require that all have the same amount of money or income. That would not only be more equality than justice requires, it would also be an equality that could never be established; or, if ever established, it could not be preserved for more than a single day.

Neither does justice require that all must be equal in getting whatever they want in the form of economic goods. Justice requires the satisfaction of needs, not wants.

A just economic equality, like a just political equality, consists in securing rights—in this case, rights to the economic goods that men need to lead decent human lives. There is a just economic equality when all human beings have what they need, when all are haves and no one is deprived or a have-not. A just economic equality exists in a society—or in the world—when all citizens, or all peoples, are above the line of deprivation with regard to things needed for a decent human life.

The establishment of a society in which all are haves and none are have-nots does not preclude differences in degrees among the haves. Just as in the political order, all have political liberty and power when all are citizens with suffrage, even though citizens in public office may have more political power than citizens out of office, so in the economic order, when all are haves, some may have more economic goods than they need to lead decent lives. Some may have more than others, but all have enough.

Khrushchev added a principle of unequal distribution to Marx's principle of equal distribution. To each according to his needs calls for the economic equality that exists when everyone has what anyone needs. But Khrushchev said, to each according to his contribution, and that calls for differences in degree among the haves; some will have more because they have contributed more, some will have less because they have contributed less.

The second principle is no less a principle of justice than the first, but it is strictly subordinate to the first. To say that those who contribute more should, in justice, receive more than those who contribute less must not be interpreted to mean that every one who has more than he needs or than others have is necessarily an individual who has justly earned that excess of wealth. But it is to say that inequality in degrees of wealth can be justified if it occurs within the framework of a basic equality in which all have what they need for a decent human life.

Also, though justice does not require the elimination of differences in degree among the haves, it does require that such residual economic inequalities should not be allowed to result in the exercise of illegitimate political power by those who have much more wealth than they need and much more than their fellow citizens have.



To sum up:


It is possible to achieve as much liberty and as much equality as men should have without sacrificing either one to the other.

It is possible to realize the ideals of liberty and equality in both the political and the economic sphere.

In their competition on the global scene, the Declaration should prevail over the Manifesto because its principles are sounder and because the pledge to the future inherent in those principles is more capable of being fulfilled.

Only by meeting the demands of people everywhere for both equality and liberty in both the political and the economic sphere can the promise of a good life and a good society for all human beings be fully realized.

To take the lead in moving toward a realizable ideal, we Ameri-

cans must have a clear understanding of our own basic principles, be creative in carrying forward the advances still needed to fulfill the pledge inherent in those principles, and have the courage and integrity to uphold the commitments those principles require us to honor in our dealing with all the other peoples on the earth. 

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