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# **SOCIAL PARASITISM**

Theory of Human Society

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# I. INTRODUCTION IN SOCIAL PARASITISM

## 1. Biological and social parasitism

We are about to begin an inquiry into intriguing, complicated and controversial nature of such societal phenomenon as social parasitism. For the time being this field is not so abundantly covered by sociological research and the idiom of "social parasitism" has not yet received its proper place in the social science dictionary. Phenomenon of "social parasitism" is mostly being explored in relation to biological species or rather even in relation to a specific individual behavior within complex "collectivist societies" of various biological species as those of bees or insects. At the same time, nobody can claim any originality in application of this term to societal realities, for if we mention parasitism in the social context vast majority of people will generally understand what we are talking about, even though their perception will probably be rather different what concerns nature, definition and implications of this phenomenon.

We have to explicitly articulate right from the beginning of our inquiry that throughout this entire treatise we do not mean anything unambiguously negative under the term "social parasitism". Since social parasitism, as we shall see, is an objective phenomenon just like any other social phenomenon and for one reason or another exists in human society, we are concerned here exclusively with science and not with politics or moral of this appearance and will endeavor to analyze it impartially just like biologist is analyzing parasitism of biological species. Moreover, that social parasitism sometimes might be the only way to subsist and not just for concrete representatives of particular specie, but even for the specie as a whole. We will equally try to examine where social parasitism creates problems for the development of mankind, for social evolution or may be even threats for the very existence of human specie and where it is fundamentally or at least partially beneficial. Even if we will succeed in our attempt to exhibit an existence of this phenomenon in human society, this will not downgrade a bit either human nature or the nature of our society just like they are not at all diminished by human sexuality or by sexual instincts, which once used to be a similar subject of prejudices. Instead, on the positive side we will be able to consider a due course of actions and a due societal construction coming from particular type of human nature. In order to take due actions and apply adequate political, social and economic recipes we must perfectly understand who we are and base all policies and actions on what we really are, not on what we would like to be. Otherwise we are in the domain of idealistic, unsustainable and detrimental fairy tales.

For us here in this treatise the nature of social parasitism is crystal clear and overwhelmingly simple. One does not have to be a social scientist in order to analyze this phenomenon. Vice-a-versa, people, who are far from delicacy of the social science, probably much better understand this phenomenon in all its simplicity since they are not

constrained by various superficial considerations such as social science career or scientific and political correctness. Essence of social parasitism is easier presentable and comprehensible if we start to track it from self-interest oriented human nature. Since human nature, fortunately or unfortunately, is having a self-interest oriented character, it is reasonable to assume that it will not stop short of living on account of other people whenever opportunity arise. Social parasitism, in fact, is a logical continuation of egocentric and self-interest oriented human nature. Of course, due recognition of this fact might require some moral sacrifice. But... First of all, such moral sacrifice is nothing comparatively with parasitism of all our predecessor species, which have to eat each other in order to stay intact and which behavior is much more difficult to justify morally. Comparatively with them we are in a much better position on that account. And, second of all, human beings rather rarely realize that they are acting reproachfully – normally we have an enormous and unbelievable gift of self-persuasion as well as an exquisite social apparatus of ideological brainwashing in order not to notice such a minute moral inconvenience.

Indeed, entire biological world consists mostly or rather exclusively from parasites, which live, survive and multiply on account of other biological organisms. Animals, as we might be convinced by now, are unable to generate or recreate any energy or matter besides those of their own body, or humanly speaking they cannot produce anything and because of that they have to be predators (carnivore) or at least eat plants (herbivore). Therefore, they have to kill and maintain their own existence by destroying lives of other creatures. Human beings in this biological cycle are actually not very far from animals. We also eat plants and animals or destroy their lives in industrial purposes. We are definitely parasites on that account, even though biologists as well as sociologists would probably disagree with such a liberal or rather too wide-scale interpretation of biological parasitism in relation both to animals and to humans. However, what concerns us here in this treatise is not a biological parasitism abundantly described by representatives of this remarkable science, but exclusively social parasitism hardly ever described by representatives of far less advanced and far more controversial science of sociology.

Social parasitism being dreadfully simple means not just making a living on account of other people – but making a living on account of the other people relying on mechanisms of power and coercion. First part of this definition is unimaginable or unattainable without the second one. As to live on account of other people expropriating or redistributing their property is only possible relying on the mechanisms of force, power and coercion, otherwise nobody would voluntarily spare his property apart from considerations of charity. Even under an influence of the most brainwashing ideologies such redistributions are not infinite. But much more importantly is that any ideology itself requires enormous resources (first of all financial), which cannot be obtained under normal circumstances, but only relying on power and coercion. Voluntary charity, not associated with mechanisms and instruments of coercion, on the other hand, under no circumstances can be related to the phenomenon of social parasitism.

There is one serious and even essential advantage of social parasitism comparatively with biological one. Potentially under the social parasitism human beings can avoid eating or killing of each other. Even though such potential generally came to be realizable mostly after the World War II and mostly in modern economically developed countries only and even though for thousands of years social parasitism was indispensably associated with violence and oppression, we still have to indulge ourselves in recognition of a remarkable progress on this chapter comparatively with the animal world.

Social parasitism is much more extensive in time than just 20th and 21st centuries of modern age, a way more general than specifically European or American appearance and a far more fundamental social phenomenon than merely income redistribution for vulnerable parts of population. In fact if it would be limited by at least one of these three considerations – it would not worth a fundamental examination. Vice-a-versa, only as it represents a universally important and foundationally determinative part of human society – we will trouble ourselves to scrutinize it as deep down inside as we can.

## **2. Forms of social parasitism**

Generally speaking there are two ways to make a living on account of other people relying on mechanisms of power and coercion – one of them is income redistribution and another - exclusive rights.

Redistribution, of course, implies a further distribution of once already distributed income. In order to make something like that generally possible one certainly needs to apply mechanisms of power and coercion, otherwise it would be rather difficult to persuade people to give away part of their income or part of their property. For the time being, we are less concerned with justification or rationality of this process (we will deal with them later), but much more with its nature. What any income redistribution means in its absolute simplicity is a coercive transfer of resources from certain people to certain other people. Further developing such simplicity, income redistribution implies a partial (or even full) subsistence of certain people on account of certain other people, even though sometimes necessary or socially justifiable. Through a general notion of “living on account of other people” there is a straightforward parallel between income redistribution and social parasitism.

There are two forms of income redistribution – direct and indirect. Indirect income redistribution is a much more familiar phenomenon both to professionals and to general public. Indirect income redistribution implies redistribution of coercively expropriated resources from one group of people to another through intermediary of some social institution (State, chieftain, duke, etc.) and normally is relying on coercive instruments of this social intermediary. Indirect income redistribution probably is what vast majority of

people would understand under the overall simplified notion of “income redistribution”. Indirect income redistribution forming a corner stone of modern social policy is widely investigated by social science may be only except from the angle of view of social parasitism. Latter statement of things yet testifies that all theoretical analysis of the nature of income redistribution is mostly of superficial and idealistic character. At the same time, in order to be absolutely fair we must mention that a lot of economic investigations of the process of income redistribution bear purely applicative character related to its influence upon consolidated national, regional and local budgets and are not bound to go into deep analysis of this phenomenon. Indirect income redistribution is an enormously important and in the modern world probably even a key element for investigation of social parasitism since any instruments of coercion in our days are associated, are paid and exist only thanks to indirect income redistribution. Besides, today indirect income redistribution represents financially the most fulfilled and the most comprehensive form of social parasitism. At the same time consideration of the phenomenon of social parasitism and of its influence upon economy and society is absolutely unthinkable without examination of its two other forms – direct income redistribution and exclusive rights.

Direct income redistribution is different from widely familiar indirect kind since income is redistributed not through the state or through some other social intermediary, but is rather being channeled directly from the payer or from the “victim” of income redistribution to its beneficiary. At the same time, direct income redistribution just as indirect type is based exclusively on coercion, even though no social intermediary (while there is always at least one) is getting additional resources at its disposal, but is rather establishing overall conditions of the “deal”. For example, labor relations in modern economically developed countries are under a comprehensive regulation on behalf of the State, but not all employment regulation is based on income redistribution. Minimum wages or dismissal allowances, though are compulsory established by the state are being paid directly by employer to employee without any financial intermediation of the State. In fact, significant part of the state regulation of economy and society in the modern world falls under direct income redistribution. In this treatise implicitly under the notion of “income redistribution” we will generally understand both direct and indirect kinds, even though most of the time we will be making a distinction between the two for the sake of clarity and rationality.

Direct income redistribution is somewhat touching another fundamental social concept – understanding of exclusive rights. “Exclusive rights” is a far more difficult phenomenon than income redistribution, first of all, because it is a way more hidden within the social infrastructure. Exclusive rights mean exclusive, unreachable for certain other people or social groups possibilities to appropriate exclusive above-the-market income relying on mechanisms and instruments of coercion. Exclusive rights comprise everything what is based on coercion and particularly every source of income or revenue based on coercion starting from slavery, forcible expropriations in the aftermath of social revolutions,

monopolies based on coercion and ending with a small bribery for opening a kiosk in a profitable and convenient location and exactly in this sense they are somewhat overlapping with the concept of income redistribution, especially of its direct kind. On the other hand, exclusive rights form quite a separate phenomenon since in their nature they are not necessarily associated with income redistribution (either direct or indirect) and are rather leaning towards understanding of “income distribution”, though to the one based on power and coercion. For example, if we consider medieval or feudal property relations – a landlord or a baron is having exclusive (unreachable for certain people and social groups and first of all for his semi-dependent serves) social rights to possess land and even exclusive right to possess and to appropriate his serves’ labor if not their very life. He appropriates a product of his serves’ labor directly relying on his own instruments of coercion even though most of the time around there are other more or less powerful instruments of coercion associated with a higher level of societal structure, a general societal framework, general social conditions and even general laws reflecting those conditions, which are making such expropriation and appropriation possible. Normally our landlord also pays certain forms of taxes to the State or to his sovereign for making such societal framework to happen and therefore he participates in the process of indirect income redistribution through some social intermediary as well. Detailed analysis of exclusive property rights can be found in “The Property General Theory of the State and Social Evolution” of the same author, where majority of ideas presented herewith can be followed.

There is also an essential difference between income redistribution and exclusive rights in terms of their beneficiaries and of their justification. Exclusive rights under no circumstances can ever be justified and represent a pure negative detrimental to human society and social evolution phenomenon, which is emerging because there are socially strong people – beneficiaries of exclusive rights, and there are socially weak people – who are paying for exclusive rights. We cannot say the same about income redistribution even though income redistribution being impossible without coercion is always coupled with exclusive rights since any coercion always generates exclusive rights. Income redistribution besides benefiting socially strong people (even in fighting for social benefits and guarantees one needs to be strong enough), to certain extent also benefits the socially weaker and even vulnerable groups of people. Major problem with all-embracing influence of social parasitism upon human society is that we can hardly find any sustainable arguments in favor of a complete elimination of income redistribution. While an overwhelming spread of income redistribution, which is not encountering any arguments of its complete negation and being irreversibly driven by fundamental envies of human nature, is, as we shall see, beyond any frames of reason, rationality and decency.

### **3. Profiteers and “victims” of social parasitism**

Whether we like it or not, as their initial inclination human beings generally prefer to live on account of other people whenever an opportunity arises. Other things equal, living on coercively redistributed resources is easier than earning a living on our own. This is so, first of all, because all coercive expropriations and redistributions are the deeds of social instruments, mechanisms and systems, not of separate private individuals. Of course, at any point in time majority of people are weak or socially weak and incapable of direct coercion or saying it more scientifically – they are not associated with the mechanisms of power and coercion. This fact does not matter at all. These people are hardly even “free riders” since the people who are associated with mechanisms of coercion or simply those who are able to coerce and expropriate are always restrained, to one degree or another, by the voice of multitude or in modern scientific language – restrained by “public opinion” - even if it is a voice of the multitude of “sheep”.

The simplest, most secure and most certain way to deal with public opinion is to buy it. It is always bought and sold very easily even though the price sometimes may be too high. It is easily marketable not because people or human specie is generally “bad” – nothing like that - unfortunately much more profound and complicated reasons are involved. First of all, public opinion is very amorphous and divisible. Most importantly, however, is that as human nature is of the self-interest oriented character, the interests of various human beings are very different and quite often - opposite to each other. Under these circumstances to buy some of them against the other does not require any touch of genius. Besides, there is no any guarantee that public opinion is “right” about something; quite often it is “wrong” and intolerable.

Much depressed as it is, the voice of multitude still carries some weight and this weight is the better apprehended by the “wolves”, the more oppression and misery is fallen upon the “sheep”. Because of all that, throughout the entire human history “wolves” or people associated with mechanisms of power and coercion have to buy, in one way or another, the “sheep” conformity in order not to awake any “wolf” character in them. “Wolves” are normally watching very closely a frontier of tolerance of the weak multitude.

Now, of course, we can imagine that there is a social parasitism of “wolves” and a social parasitism of “sheep”. But who are those “wolves” and “sheep”? This is not an easy question and we will try to answer it throughout the entire treatise. For introductory part, however, we will satisfy ourselves with simplified definitions of people associated with the mechanisms of power and coercion and of people whom those people associated with the mechanisms of power and coercion for one reason or another are inclined to buy, or rather to buy their support, their tolerance or their conformity. People associated with the mechanisms of power and coercion (“wolves”) are usually among the socially strongest individuals in society, who have managed to get on top of the administration of coercive instruments, the most fundamental among the latter being the State. Worthwhile to mention that these people are not necessarily the strongest characters and the richest people in society, sometimes a right of birth or any fortunate occasion, chance is swinging

them on top of societal structure. They must be, however, most closely associated with the mechanisms of power and coercion where the entire process of income redistribution takes place. People "bought" by the people associated with mechanisms of power and coercion ("sheep") form a much more complicated and even much more illusory group. Whomever "wolves" intend to buy always depends on who among the "sheep" is most fitted to the task and who can be counter-posed to other "sheep" with a maximum benefit for the "wolves". Such group of people in no way can be defined as a constant one for all historical periods. Vice-a-versa, if there is anything constant about this group of people besides its definition – it is its variability. We can be much more specific and a way more conclusive about composition, nature and interests of "wolves", than about those of the "sheep". It is moreover so since it is exactly the former group or the "wolves" who select which "sheep" will be bought according to their subjective and sometimes even mistaken apprehension of utility of the selected group of "sheep" for their purposes.

Another issue, which consideration we will initiate in introductory part, is who are general and who are final victims of social parasitism? This is a rather complicated question, which we will also try to answer throughout the entire treatise. Of course, ideally or idealistically society as a whole must be a victim of social parasitism. But this is too general and too ambiguous first of all since normally nobody knows what society is. "Wolves", of course, are hardly ever victims of social parasitism or of the instruments of coercion, at most in terms of unclear and rather rare negative repercussions or sometimes even retributions on their posterity. In short- and medium-term they are definitely the principal beneficiaries exchanging their futility and inability to create any value for enormous personal and group incomes, which nature and composition we will examine in due course.

In order to throw some bits and pieces of social or rather of economic pie to certain groups of "sheep", "wolves" have to confiscate or to expropriate it from somebody else, as they are unable or incapable to generate any productive income under their function of supervisors of the mechanisms of power and coercion. Such situation might create a feeling that those from whom an income or a property are being expropriated for the purposes of income redistribution form the most exposed or the most burdened by social parasitism group of people. However, a huge problem with social parasitism, with its accelerating dissemination all over the world and with its overwhelming influence upon the entire society is that this is exactly not so. If we take money away from somebody and give it to somebody else, we are always at a risk to loose as much support in one place as we gain in another. Therefore the entire idea of buying "sheep" or of buying public opinion is to take preponderate amount of money from few and to give them to many if not to all or at least to create such an illusion. Something like that is generally possible when you take money from the wealthiest parts of population and redistribute them to the poorer. Even though rich and affluent people are normally less inclined to recourse to violent social actions and are much more tolerant to coercive expropriations than the poor, people associated with the mechanisms of power and coercion ("wolves") still have

to take into account and to be thoroughly cautious of the fact that rich people are usually among the strongest individuals in society and any attempts on their life and property at certain point might generate undesirable for ruling elite consequences. Rich people, of course, are generally less vulnerable to social confiscations and only partially because they have a great lot, sharing which is not so painful for them. Equally if not more important is that any property expropriations, redistributions and confiscations are coming together with preservation of the existing order of things as they are inevitably associated with diminishing pace of innovations, deterioration of market entry possibilities and with evading economic competition. Simply put, if we confiscate property of the rich and redistribute it to the poorer – we simultaneously increase consumption on account of property accumulation or on account of investments in capital and technology and reduce both economic and technological competition. This is a real “value for money” from the point of view of the rich people and not some mythical, mysterious and permanently inefficient public services.

Strange as it is, but ultimate victims of any property or income redistributions, as we shall see, especially in the long run are “sheep” themselves or socially weak and vulnerable groups of population in whose interests the entire income redistribution is seemingly originating. Under coercive redistribution of income and property they are finally paying for everything – for the entire “party” - for overall slowdown of economic growth in terms of their poverty and misery (sometimes of hunger); for lower quality goods and services, for societal absurdity and sometimes even repugnancy, which are finally hurting them more than anybody else; for slowdown in scientific discoveries and technological innovations; for degradation of social mentality; for inescapable under such order of things forthcoming social catastrophes, etc.

#### **4. Why classical liberalism fails**

Without understanding of the phenomenon of social parasitism it is very difficult to portray anything in society or in human history. Social parasitism is a far more profound phenomenon than what might be commonly imagined under this term. It explains such a great deal of social and historical events, of socio-economic and politico-sociological processes, that it would hardly be an overstatement to emphasize that the entire nature of any society - either of modern or in any historical retrospective - cannot be understood and explained without direct application of the concept of social parasitism. In fact anything social, sociality or society generally for that matter exist only when there is a coercive living on account of other people. Power and coercion is what society all about, while the term “social” applies only to something what is based on power and coercion. If there is no coercion and therefore no income redistribution and no exclusive rights, everything is pure economy and that is an outcome we all must strive to achieve. Classical liberalism is more or less all about such outcome. Throughout this entire treatise we will endeavor to analyze why we are unable to achieve this honorable outcome or

why historical and contemporary liberalism fails from one side and why we are stuck with extraordinary aggrandizement of pro-etatist ideologies and state domination in the modern socialist society of economically developed nations.

Adam Smith ingeniously described what happens with economy and society under self-interest oriented human nature and was followed in this noble task by not less brilliant liberal philosophers. They have introduced and advocated, as we all know, an understanding of laissez-faire and tried and are still trying to embed it in reality through a policy of limited government, individual freedom and free markets. Even though these attempts are very nice and noble and even simple for understanding, but unfortunately they almost always and everywhere fail. Pure laissez-faire with a free equilibrium of supply and demand and automatic price adjustment, without doubts had never existed in the history of mankind. Though more or less close to this definition societies and economies were put into practice and prospered mostly in anglo-saxon countries and dominions and mostly in 19th century only.

What classical liberal philosophers seem to miss or fail to realize in their ingenious but sometimes too idealistic philosophical constructions is paying attention to a simple fact that human nature is not just self-interest oriented, which postulate forms a corner stone of liberal and even of marxian societal assumptions, but is simultaneously having as its initial inclination a living whenever possible on account of other people or of society as a whole – a living on coercively expropriated and redistributed money. Unfortunately, such statement of things is bound to change the entire set of liberal and marxian societal assumptions and consequently any set of societal conclusions. Such human nature, in fact, means that human actions determined by unsurpassed envy of coercive redistributions and exclusive rights both on behalf of the “wolves” and on behalf of the “sheep” and driven towards unpleasant ideologies of imperialism, socialism, communism, nazism and nationalism are not merely a bend of lost uneducated souls, but are in absolute and direct harmony with the very fundamentals of human nature. It also means that laissez-faire is unattainable not only in practice, but hardly even in theory. What laissez-faire prescribes from political point of view (not from economic one) is a society without coercion. This generally suppose society without the state, while society without state is already an anarchist ideal, not a classical liberal one. Basically it is only under the stateless society markets can bounce whichever way they want, otherwise, to one degree or another, they are always socially monopolized or dominated by the mechanisms of power and coercion. Realization of laissez-faire under the self-interest oriented human nature would probably deem feasible and might even be embedded in the latter, but realization of laissez-faire under the human nature inclined to living on account of other people through coercively redistributed resources is unthinkable. Moreover, as we shall see, the laissez-faire society owing to such human nature is scarcely comprehensible under democracy, which means nothing else as permanent and constantly accelerating income redistribution from richer minority to poorer majority with a good share of the state bureaucracy. Such is a simple arithmetic of “one man – one

vote" where the poorer (not just poor, but poor and middle income people with envy for social guarantees) are always in absolute and even vast majority.

We are being trapped by even superior problem. Historically, there was always a hope for liberals that masses of population are undereducated, under-intelligent and are over-influenced by etatist ideologies, the latter being against their real true interests and that with the time passing by, people will become smarter, more intelligent and more knowledgeable. They will recognize their real true interests and one true societal theory and it will be impossible to sell them any ideological garbage. As we see – this is not happening - even with sophisticated education, economic affluence and abundant intelligence of modern economically developed society. Vice-a-versa, the further we are, the more and more a preservation of comfort, affluence and job security are dominating average personality, while any tunes of self-sufficiency, individualism and personal independence are playing less and less loud. Under modern comfort people are becoming softer, more gentle, weaker and less capable to earn money completely on their own and equally to fight for anything in this life. Deep down inside they do recognize all that and are not just afraid, but are even inclined to panic about any changes. Not only education and intelligence are hardly producing desirable by classical liberals effect, but much worse than that - human nature is becoming much more susceptible to penetration and incubation of social parasitism.

## II. HISTORY OF SOCIAL PARASITISM

### 5. Ancient Rome

Real true story of human nature starts, of course, at the beginning of human history. Our inclination to live on account of other people is equally initializing itself in prehistoric times together with the human nature. More than that we inherit it from our predecessor species who live, survive and multiply on account of other biological organisms. Of course, realization and influence of social parasitism in prehistoric times and in primitive societies is rather negligible since one of the fundamental preconditions for its expansion and prosperity is missing – a certain initial level of economic development. In order to take away something from people, even if they are weak, these people at least have to have this minor surplus comparatively with what they need for survival. Otherwise, they will simply prefer to fight to the last since they cannot subsist without a certain essential minimum in any event, while by fighting they acquire a chance. This does not mean, however, that inclination and envy for social parasitism is not embedded in human nature already at the earliest stages of human history – it is simply poorly realizing itself under particular social conditions. Further we will see that there were other periods in human history when level of social parasitism in society was comparatively low.

Much more illustrative and comprehensive picture of social parasitism is exemplifying an ancient history and particularly a history of ancient Rome. Roman Empire generally is so relevant for us and illustrative in all dimensions that we can hardly indulge ourselves in omitting any single part of its history if we are at least a little bit concerned about what is happening with our modern society and where it is going. A parallel between ancient Rome and modern economically developed countries is so overwhelming that it hardly escapes attention of sociologists, philosophers and historians. On a surface of such similarity lie, of course, all superficial and more profound attributes of architecture, culture, jurisprudence, science, philosophy, etc. All these manifestations, though being fascinating and important are of little use for our purpose in this treatise. What we are rather interested in is a deep down resemblance of our modern society with the Roman world in terms of societal structure, human mentality and societal processes

Naturally, it is out of our design here to narrate the history of Rome. Instead, we will concentrate on the most important for Roman history and particularly interesting for us societal processes. Roman society, as it is well known, after a certain while since its origin became to be a democracy. Democracy in Rome in fact was quite specific. It does not seem to fall in absolute similarity with our modern representative democracy. First of all, what Rome really was, even in times of its utmost prosperity before Julius Caesar started to usurp democracy and build an empire and before his nephew Octavius Augustus has succeeded in this task, is an aristocracy of slave-owners under the title and distinction of “citizen of Rome”. Aristocracy, of course, is merely a more dispersed form of dictatorship

comparatively with totalitarian dictatorship of one single person. Any democracy had existed exclusively for free citizens, while from the point of view of slaves Rome rather was the most severe dictatorship. So under strict definition, a governance system in the republic represented a rule of aristocracy or of Roman citizens, who completely dominated deprived of any rights and enslaved people of other nations forcibly brought in Rome or existed in misery in military occupied Roman provinces. But even for citizens of Rome incorporation in this "democratic" scheme was conditioned by various circumstances. First of all, there was a long civil war or at least long civil counteraction between patricians and plebs, which finally ended in more or less equal political rights for all citizens. However, the most fundamental account of equality of Roman citizens lies in the fact that society and economy were almost exclusively built on the mechanisms of power and coercion – on coercion of slaves and conquered nations. Entire society and whole social and economic structure were bound by coercion. People were getting on top of societal structure including in Senate, were getting merits and distinctions, were becoming prosperous and therefore able to embrace fruits of education and civilization not as a result of productive or business activity, but predominately owing to their association with the mechanisms and forces of coercion. Such imperfect democracy was bound to degenerate in personal dictatorship of the worst kind. Later embedded in roman mentality principles of democracy only harmed Rome in fact, not allowing to consecrate a ruling dynasty and keeping an emperor's crown to be a prize of an armed gamble and of bloody civil wars.

More interesting for us in our envy to analyze social parasitism are the conditions, which brought in Rome an empire or a complete military totalitarian dictatorship. One of the fundamental reasons for emergence of empire in Rome was a general decline of power, capacities and of prestige of the Senate and at large of democracy as a whole. Fundamental social change lead to the emergence of empire was a transformation of Roman people into mob, which easily exchanged democracy and human dignity for a consumption of military conquests. The entire history of Roman Empire in fact is fundamentally grounded on and is embraced by social parasitism based on consumption of military conquests. History of Roman transition from republic to empire is the history of transition of Roman populace from free people to mob, from free citizens to a herd of local and foreign parasites. Roman mob of an epoch of Julius Caesar was only partly composed from roman citizens – it has rather represented an important blend of various nations (including slaves, emancipated slaves and immigrants) and characters living up to a current minute sympathies and emotions as well as of either victims of the coercive mechanisms of Roman republic or of people incapable to find their place within those mechanisms. Two reasons only existed for annihilation of democracy in ancient Rome – overall societal structure based on coercion related to military conquests and redistributing inclinations of Roman mob. Both of them were finally based on social parasitism – first one on the social parasitism of "wolves" while the second – on social parasitism of "sheep".

If redistribution benefits of military and hierarchical nobility ("wolves") are crystal clear, understandable and besides are significantly complemented by exclusive property rights on slave's labor, one can really wonder from what actual benefits consisted at that time the social parasitism of "sheep". Indeed, not only benefits of the "sheep" are less familiar to general public, but they are, on the whole, somewhat obscure – one need to dig deeper and to apply an analytical approach in order to identify them - as standards of living of the mob and moreover those of the slaves were rather low for our modern comprehension. Let us start with the most visible manifestations of social parasitism benefits for the "sheep". First of all, even before empire - in more advanced history of Roman republic when influx of revenues from foreign conquests is acquiring permanency and adequate proportions, citizens of Rome were excused from paying taxes or were tax exempted – fact, which meaning and importance is understandable for us in modern times with abnormal state appetites, but which was much less important for Romans before emperor Diocletian started to multiply Caesars and before great Constantine started to build eastern empire and its brand new capital of Constantinople and elevated taxes significantly simultaneously starting to levy them regularly from all citizens of Rome. Second, but much more important for Roman mob was an access to "bread and circuses" in exchange for freedom and dignity, where "bread" meant constant distribution of corn, oil and wheat and occasional distribution of wine, olives and of more exquisite food, while "circuses" meant literally gladiator circuses – the only "fun game" of Roman empire, where Roman mob was able to watch something even more repulsive than loss of freedom and dignity – the loss of blood. Rather important in later roman history seems to be incomes and benefits of house or servant slaves (on the contrary to exhausting labor of farm and mine slaves) and the ones of semi-dependent emancipated former slaves, which only knowledge of life comes from former master's house and which dependency on master lasted long after emancipation.

We might still praise and admire an internally inbuilt strength of Roman society, mentality and spirit of freedom and democracy, which degenerating in absolute coercion and permanent civil wars in strive for power and being surrounded by enemies on every single mile of the border were able to maintain nation for four hundred years after the termination of democracy. If social parasitism of "wolves" or of military commanding officers was a driving force for introduction of totalitarian military dictatorship in Rome, the social parasitism of "sheep", of roman mob and of degenerated aristocracy was major factor, which melted down a roman character and a roman spirit of earlier years. Degradation of Roman aristocracy, even though was significantly conditioned by the way of living on coercively extorted labor of slaves, seems as even more can be attributed to a complete subordination of the entire Roman society to considerations of military conquests, to maintenance of conquered territories and to defense of frontiers against foreign enemies as well as to coercion of human resources obtained in consequence of military conquests. Hardly any society or any aristocracy anywhere and at any time would be able to rise to the spirit of people like Marcus Junius Brutus (even if we do not approve his actual deeds) under such a military structure. Militarism simply was much

more important than construction of society. Moreover, militarism was indispensable, as not only it provided a major source of short-term (spoils of war) and long-term (slaves) revenues, but it was able to defend and to preserve at least some kind of society, even though a degenerate one, in the world where military conquests were the main driving force.

Most important consequence of social parasitism both for us in this treatise and for the history of ancient Rome is, of course, a complete dissolution of country and nation. We are less concerned with immediate consequences of extraordinary social parasitism in Roman society such as arbitrary governance and totalitarian dictatorship of military leaders, permanent civil wars, moral and cultural degradation, etc. On the last chapter, however, we can mention that a major grandeur of Roman culture was probably erected yet in the times of republic and the golden age of Roman culture ended almost completely after the reign of Octavius Augustus, while following cultural decay has finally resulted in a complete annihilation of cultural supremacy of Rome and in afterwards rising cultural superiority of Grecian provinces of the empire and, first of all, of Athens. We will also not go too much into manifestations of moral degradation except to say that in society built almost exclusively on social parasitism there is a little place for decent interaction between human beings. Parasitism and moral just like parasitism and freedom are opposite both in their nature and in their manifestations. Our main concern is that massive and all-embracing social parasitism including exclusive property rights on slaves' labor was the one and the only reason for the ultimate dissolution of Roman Empire.

## **6. Feudalism, renaissance and liberalism**

Feudalism, renaissance and liberalism of 18th-19th centuries are probably the simplest and the most straightforward periods in the history of social parasitism. We will not delay our reader for too long with consideration of these periods, within which manifestations of social parasitism are rather explicit and unhidden either by complicated social structure, by time boundaries or by lack of available to us knowledge.

First thing, which is drawing our attention if we are examining the three periods in their integrity or in their comparative characteristics is that both their historical and logical dynamics are leading to a noticeably diminishing level of social parasitism in society. In a feudal society manifestations of social parasitism, connected first of all with exclusive property rights on land as a production factor of land barons and land aristocracy, are rather widespread and overwhelming. During renaissance social parasitism is being significantly and successfully counteracted leaving little grounds either for massive income redistribution or for exclusive rights by 19th century – the one and the only period of flourishing liberalism and of more or less pure capitalism, which even at that

time have existed almost exclusively in Europe and North America and even there they were not equally developed in every single country.

It is clear that feudalism was soaked in social parasitism of "wolves" with bloody wars, not even civil wars, but literally wars of every single baron against all his neighbors, accompanied by regular devastations of land and property, servitude close to slavery, almost complete lack of human dignity and even of the lust for freedom on behalf of the masses of serves, by depressed and servile trade and business, etc. Such societal structure was probably even more destructive for states and nations than the Roman one. Therefore it was not able to exist for too long and first cracks in it started to appear yet in 13th-14th centuries. Three important and fundamental types of cracks they were – gradual abolishment of slavery and servitude throughout Europe, culture and ideas of renaissance and unification of the entire nation in one single state - each of them being directed at elimination of the mentioned above destructive characteristics of feudal society. These three developments have finally ruined classical feudalism and introduced in old system of social and property relations a new system of governance - absolutism, which major characteristics was a transition from domination in society of exclusive rights and privileges of separate feudal landlords towards supremacy of income redistribution through the state in favor of crown and land aristocracy. Mechanisms of "exploitation" became much more complex and have integrated in their every single element the State, leaving little grounds for personal "exploitation" of peasants by the landlords. It was not until those renowned European revolutions, which have introduced a fundamentally different type of society initially in Netherlands, then in England and afterwards in France, that overwhelming social parasitism of "wolves" started to evaporate from European society. Social parasitism of "wolves" and their coercive living on account of "sheep" was a single cause, which has destroyed both feudalism and absolutism (absolute monarchy). Luckily enough for those countries, this destruction was less cardinal and moderately bloody comparatively with dissolution of Roman Empire and comparatively with later similar destructions of social parasitism in our modern history. But most importantly is that this destruction and these revolutions have lead at the end to something better for those nations as newly emerged social order was generally more just and more efficient than the previous one. We cannot say the same about dissolution of Roman Empire as well as about other similar deeds of social parasitism in 20th century, which we will examine later.

Ultimately a fight for economic and political freedom initiated yet at a dawn of renaissance has lead to a significant triumph of liberal ideas, first of all ideological and later on to political one, earlier in Netherlands and in England and later in the rest of Europe and in United States. Consequentially all manifestations both of income redistribution and of exclusive rights were fundamentally reduced to an absolute minimum in the history of mankind. The most interesting subject for inquiry in this sense is not why liberalism and free markets eluded so fast, but rather how their triumph, even though not entirely perfect and a rather short one, was at all possible under embedded in

human nature envy for living on coercively redistributed income and whether there is no any inherent contradiction between a rather complete realization of liberal ideal in 19th century and social parasitism intrinsic to human nature.

There is always one potential problem for benefactors and beneficiaries of any income based on coercion. Of course, somebody has to work hard in order to assure that other people can consume the fruits of social parasitism. This is not a problem as far as people have some property or income and moreover if they have a bundle or a fortune and it is not so painful for them to "share" or rather such sharing is not so bitter for them in order to recourse to plain violent counteraction. The real problem is that only free people of property can be "caught" by such considerations. It is much more difficult to impose submissive toleration of coercive redistributions on people who are not free and who are deprived of any property even of the one on their own life and labor. These people not only will be unable to materialize their own social (based on power and coercion) inclinations, but will have to pay for social parasitism of certain other people not only with their misery but often even with their life. Such is a benevolent blessing on human beings that social parasitism cannot manifest itself at least up to this point; otherwise we all will be sunk in them. Besides sinking in our social inclinations, we are sometimes motivated by the ideal of freedom and this is a major reason why liberalism was so popular once as a banner for freeing people from the chains of feudalism. What vast majority of people were motivated by under the classical liberalism struggle against feudalism is not a notion of laissez-faire, which is too complicated both for understanding and moreover for its practical implementation, not independence, abstract liberty and moreover self-sufficiency, not even by justice and fairness of society. People were mostly motivated by the notion of personal freedom and by taken to an edge of extremity reluctance to share their last piece of food with oppressing them social parasites. If we look at the liberalism in a history of mankind under such an angle, we will not be wondering that it eluded so fast - right after personal freedom contrary in its nature to feudal servitude was irrevocably assured, right before social freedom, civil liberties and personal independence started to evaporate from society.

## **7. Social parasitism and socialism**

As soon as a threat of return to feudal and absolutist servitude was abolished human nature took its due course. People forgot the entire idea of tough, rough and insecure liberalism and returned in the arms of sweet social parasitism. However, they were facing two fundamental difficulties before embracing this course, which is much closer to our hearts and to our nature. First, people had to rehabilitate an institution of state, which they have significantly disparaged in their fight with feudalism and absolutism. And secondly people had to find a new ideological banner corresponding to their social inclinations in order to replace a vacuum left after ruins of absolutist monarchies and after refutation of liberalism. Right away they have found not one but several ideologies.

All of them, however, can be united under the one term of "etatism". "Sheep" being socially weak and rather incapable to realize their ideal on their own – looked for a suitable social institution and social ideology in order to recruit coercion in their service. Being rather limited in their choice, they have rediscovered and rehabilitated that old sacred cow of the State for implementation of their "big idea". Of course, initially champions among pro-etatist ideologies were nationalism, absolutism, imperialism and militarism, but very soon their advocates had to realize that these ideologies are unable to recruit in their ranks not only former liberals, but educated and intelligent people all together. This was rather unsafe as any ideology or any social order not supported by majority of intelligentsia is only a provisional social order. Then came up a universal solution combining almost all aspirations of our human nature, of etatist ideologists and those of the vast strata of intelligentsia– socialism, the one and the only – for all times and nations and in such a tender and affectionate harmony with our human nature. It put everything in proper perspective and in a much more logical place. "Wolves" are managing mechanisms of coercion or otherwise managing our knight in shining armor – the State. "Sheep", though weak and incapable to coerce on their own, are able to coerce being in absolute majority under the representative democracy and universal suffrage. And would be the "victims" of social parasitism – major value generating parts of population though affluent and strong personally are in absolute minority and besides being still well off after coercive "sharing" of their income - unwilling of any revolts. "Wolves" look after the "sheep" expropriating money from rich and from affluent, while "sheep" are compliant and tolerant if not of the concrete personalities among "wolves", then definitely of the system as a whole, which is good enough for "wolves". Everything is nice and simple and so far we do not intend either to criticize this system or to praise it. For now we are only interested in historical events related to social parasitism and in their roots.

Socialism in all its diversity, including national-socialism, war socialism, communism or socialism of Soviet style, etc., has emerged as a response to ideological vacuum left after dissolution of feudalism and also owing to a resentment of other pro-etatist ideologies, such as militarism and aggressive nationalism, on behalf of intelligentsia. Not even an emergence of socialism as of ideology can we attribute to envy for social parasitism. If we date its appearance from socialist utopians such as Owen and Fourier, definitely we cannot ascribe to those people any sinister motive or any other purpose except care for general benefit and envy for fair society. The only remote reproach we can address them is idealism, which is very pleasant in private life, but might be rather destructive in a public one. And even though we can suspect a hunger for power, money, popularity and other egocentric motives with certain later promoters, still we cannot ascribe an initial popularity of socialist ideas spreading in 19th century exclusively to social inclinations of the "sheep", but rather to their envy for fair society, to really disastrous social conditions of working class at that time, to shining and attractive ideals, to adherence of intelligentsia (first of all as major ideologists of socialism) and to rather successful political strategies adopted by socialist "wolves" i.e. by socialist leaders.

Real social parasitism of the socialist leaders can not develop, of course, until socialism becomes a political power and is starting to get one or another degree of association with the mechanisms of power and coercion or with the power of state as we remember that social parasitism without association with those mechanisms is unthinkable. Real social parasitism of "sheep", on the other hand, was able to develop only in direct correlation with a gradual introduction of universal suffrage – of democracy - as it is only under democracy that "sheep" are getting the closest ever in human history association with the mechanisms of power and coercion. Gradual abolition of any disenfranchisement conditions (property, sex, age, race, etc) and universal suffrage did it all – opened the gates and showed the way for a complete domination over society of the social parasitism of "sheep". Now, not only people were attracted by idealistic schemes of better and fair society in some distant future, but much more importantly they were able to taste fruits of redistributed income already this very day and to make their living, partially or entirely, based on socialism and democracy as from now on they are always in majority voting for coercive expropriation of other people's income and property – expropriation sealed with the power of state, democratic society and free people. This treatise in its essential part is dedicated to investigation and analysis of social parasitism under the modern socialist society and therefore we will end our historical excursion in socialism here.

## **8. Social parasitism and communism**

Communism or socialism of soviet style is the most hideous, the bloodiest and the most destructive accomplishment of social parasitism in the history of mankind. Of course, throughout the entire history we have witnessed such destructive consequences of social parasitism as dissolution and disintegration of human societies – of ancient Rome, of absolute monarchies in England and France, of Spanish rule in Netherlands, nazi rule in Germany, but none of those was even remotely comparable with the bloodshed of communist society. Communist society per se as well as its installation were not exclusively the consequences of social parasitism, not even to an extent of modern socialist society of economically developed nations. Communism just like any socialism was significantly bound by idealistic standards of fair society. But, nevertheless, it has allowed unimaginable before and unthinkable afterwards interference in societal affairs of the instruments of coercion.

Even if its entire ideal is founded on the social parasitism of "sheep", communist society itself was built on such an enormous degree of power, coercion and social parasitism of "wolves", that the latter have to be really dull in order to allow any remote interference with their power and with their revenues on behalf of the social inclinations of "sheep". Before communist society was completely established, "wolves" were at no intention to incorporate in their service any social parasitism of "sheep" as they have created

construction with such a minute level of real ideological opposition and with such an exquisite absolute power, which are barely conceivable in any human society and which are much more suitable for a thoughtless animal world.

All these facts, however, hardly explain earlier popularity, worship and humility of “free people” in economically developed countries in front of the most repulsive and inhuman society in the history of mankind. Other motives were dominative here. First of all, really different driving factors were determining an apprehension of socialist society in “western countries” and in Soviet Union. Economically developed countries in times of the Soviet Union were completely dominated ideologically and later also politically by the social parasitism of “sheep” and were lacking a wide-scale perception of the social benefits of “wolves”. More importantly, social parasitism of “sheep” or their fascination with social guarantees under our mild socialist society has never yet come in the West to an open conflict with the mechanisms of coercion. More than that, as people envying social parasitism in socialist era were always represented by a majority in any national parliament, they were easily drawn to an illusion that they are the real masters of societal order. Under these circumstances western “sheep” were, of course, much impressed by a superficial expression of social guarantees for their fellow “sheep” in later Soviet Empire, where coercion, indeed, has much evaded comparatively with an initial period of Soviet history. They saw only fruits of social parasitism both in Soviet empire and in their homeland, but were much ignorant of its price and they still are in fact. Of course, a lot of historical fascination with Soviets came from their role in defeating the Nazi in World War II and from their image of an ally created by internal propaganda in western countries. Victory of Soviet Union in the World War II, however, in reality was a victory of the bloodiest state ever in the history of mankind, while it was hardly any victory at all for the Soviet people, whose enslavement and imprisonment in concentration camps in their homeland continued long after the war and hard to say whether it was a better or worse enslavement than would be the Nazi one and if Soviet concentration camps were more “human” than the Nazi ones or less. On the other hand, a loss of Nazi Germany in the World War II was only the loss of Nazi state and simultaneously an enormous gain for all German people.

It was not until Khrushchev’s initial design to elucidate a price of the regime as masses of people in western countries started to get in their senses about the nature of communist society, while a total repulsion with Soviet regime not came until the break-up of Soviet Union, as people are usually deaf in front of reality and reason in their envy for social parasitism. With a forthcoming “stability” after Khrushchev’s revelations and finally after his complete annihilation of Stalin’s terror, the social parasitism of “sheep” is becoming widespread in Soviet Union. After elimination of Beria and of his political allies – elimination, which forestalled a threat of continuation of the Stalin’s regime – wide-scale social parasitism is becoming one of predominant if not the most predominant factor in Soviet society, in domestic policy as well as in external and internal propaganda. Wide-scale social parasitism of “sheep” was unable to develop and to realize itself under Stalin

because of the two key factors – first, very limited resources were channeled to consumption and second is a fear of terror both by the “sheep” and even by the “wolves”. Indeed even social parasitism of “wolves” was somewhat suppressed by the fear of terror and of tough measures for enforcement of efficiency, though not a social parasitism of the main “wolf”, who literally owned the entire country while all the people were literally his slaves. When those barriers were removed, social parasitism started to manifest itself not only in concrete practical initiatives and decisions of the government, but has occupied a priority place in social mentality similar to the one it holds in economically developed countries. It was only and exclusively social parasitism (both of the “sheep” and of the “wolves”) through its horrendous inefficiency what has finally destroyed and exterminated Soviet Union and not any coercive oppression, which was rather insignificant in late soviet history.

### III. SOCIAL PARASITISM AND STATE

#### 9. Social parasitism under dictatorship

Definition of social parasitism introduced in the first part of this treatise consists of two integral components – living on unearned redistributed income and coercion. In this part we will concern ourselves with the second element of this definition – with coercion related to social parasitism, which in modern society as well as in any historical retrospective mostly comes from the State. In the next part we will examine first element of our definition - what groups of people and in what way are benefiting from redistribution and exclusive rights. Simplifying this even further, though at a certain cost of accuracy, we can say that in this part we will examine expropriation of income, while in the next part - its distribution and redistribution.

Dictatorship is a society of “wolves” on the contrary to democracy, which is a society of “sheep”. This sounds very nice and simple but to keep it more scientific we must say that dictatorship as a governance system or as a property regime attached to the state property means not only direct private property rights of a dictator upon the entire state property and upon the entire state revenues, but what is much more fundamental, dictatorship means private property rights of dictator upon the mechanisms of power and coercion. The latter statement of things generally suggests that coercive possibilities and social parasitism of “wolves” are virtually unlimited, while claims of “sheep” upon any parts of redistributed income are virtually nil. Of course, in reality everything is much more complicated than that and both strength of the “wolves” and strength of the “sheep” are bound by concrete social circumstances.

Generally speaking, in any society the most powerful individuals are those whose association with the mechanisms of power and coercion is the closest and not any other groups of people such, as for example, the richest individuals or the better educated ones. Association with mechanisms of power and coercion of the latter groups is much weaker and of indirect character. Rich people, even outstandingly rich individuals, are almost always losing any power battle to the people intimately connected with mechanisms of power and coercion for one exceptionally simple reason. Utilizing mechanisms of power and coercion one can obtain much more money than any economic activity will ever permit. State budgets everywhere and at any times are enormously exceeding any fortunes of the richest individuals in society and for the people closely associated with mechanisms of power and coercion it is much more profitable to serve the entire coercive machine or the State as such than any private interests of rich individuals. Moreover that they represent any interest for the rich people only as long as and in so much as they are administering those mechanisms of power and coercion. This is particularly valid under a governance system of dictatorship.

Dictatorship, just like democracy, if it wishes to maintain itself, has to take into most serious consideration "public opinion" or rather a general disposition, spirit and ideas of the masses of population and first of all of the "sheep", who are in majority in any society. Neglect to do so is always disastrous for dictators and quite common it is as well. Major problem in maintenance of dictatorship is not even injustice and coercion themselves, but much rather an inability to comprehend real societal conditions and real threats to power. Democracy is much more successful in this sense as it presumes collegial decision making, which is much less blinded by private tastes, prejudices, emotions, passions and therefore is much less blinded by arbitrariness of dictator. Following a disposition of "sheep" is not an easy task for dictator because this disposition is rather volatile, stochastic and quite often changes without being based on real societal considerations, but rather on emotional apprehension of social sufferings and on emotional characteristics of their tolerance.

In order to take into account the considerations above and to avoid undesirable for them social consequences, the most wise among dictators and particularly those whose power is based on long dynastic inheritance adopted a preemptive approach for softening and smoothening an affliction and dissatisfaction of people. Just like democracies they have introduced social benefits, even though much smaller ones in quantitative or financial expression. There are certainly fundamental differences between social benefits under democracy and under dictatorship. Under full-fledged representative democracy social payments or income redistribution are inbuilt in the power mechanisms of "one man – one vote" and form inevitable nature of society, without which society is essentially unthinkable. Under dictatorship social benefits are not immanent to the structure of society and are rather exceptions formed according to an arbitrary judgment, prudence and free will of dictator.

Under typically minuscule social benefits of dictatorship it is rather difficult to perceive any significant manifestations of social parasitism of the "sheep", most fundamentally because under dictatorship an outstanding affluence of private individuals (except for dictator and his associates) rarely takes place and all redistributed income is normally collected (directly or indirectly) from very those most oppressed people. They bear the entire burden both of authoritarian political regime and of social parasitism as usually there are very few rich people under dictatorship and even those rich are often living exclusively on account of the poor not being engaged in any productive activities, as for example did feudal landlords. It is basically only representative democracy allows a wide-scale subsistence of poor and poorer people on account of the rich ones.

## **10. Social parasitism under democracy**

Social parasitism under representative democracy or under our present societal construction is naturally of an utmost interest for us here in this treatise. Democracy, first

of all, is fundamentally changing comparatively with dictatorship a structure of property relations attached to the state property. The most important change is that property rights upon mechanisms of power and coercion cease to be private as they are under dictatorship. Under democracy more people are getting an access both to administration of those mechanisms and to distribution of their fruits – of state revenues. These people are representatives and top-level state bureaucracy (sometimes there is no difference between the two). Plus to that a significant number of people are getting an indirect influence of different extent upon administration and management of the mechanisms of coercion and of the state revenues. Those are lobbying and special interest groups, media, powerful non-government or non-profit organizations, unions, etc. Less influence are acquiring common people, which basic involvement with mechanisms of coercion and state revenues is limited to a political voting.

Voting, of course, represents a certain manifestation of power. However, being performed once in four years or even less often, voting is definitely not allowing any administration of the mechanisms of power and coercion, which requires daily attention. What voting at most allows is a remote, superficial and indirect check upon those mechanisms. Voting, instead, is allowing a higher influence upon state revenues. In fact, under democracy, a major influence of voting is reduced to the pressure for massive income redistribution. At length people do recognize, either explicitly or implicitly, that they hardly have any influence or even too much interest in political decision-making and in political process, but what they really can and want influence is social benefits, social guarantees and income redistribution. Income redistribution is a major or even a single bone being throne to the masses in order to attach people to democratic governance and to maintain an illusion that they are a source of sovereignty and that they can make a difference.

In terms of income redistribution, of “public” finance and of social benefits, an internal mechanics of democracy is rather simple. Vast majority of population in any society are poor and middle-income people and only a small minority is affluent and a tiny minority is rich. Proportion of poor and middle-income population varies significantly from society to society and from one historical period to another, but in this treatise we are not interested at all in such proportion. Under the “one man – one vote” or under universal suffrage, poorer majority (poor and middle-income people) without any struggle, conflicts and revolutions can get virtually unlimited and lawful income redistribution in their favor from a small minority of affluent and rich people. That is the simplest if not a single nature of democracy. Such nature of democracy is in a tender accord with socialism and always leads to it. On the other hand, capitalism and democracy are antipodes; we can either have capitalism or representative democracy. Universal suffrage unavoidably takes us away from capitalism and leads to socialism. Capitalism or societal construction close to definition of *laissez-faire* or of free market, as we have mentioned before, seems to be in direct contradiction with human nature – with human nature susceptible to living on account of the other people and because of that always tends to

dissolve. Socialism, on the other hand, is much closer to our human nature and this is a plain matter of fact – neither positive nor negative by itself.

Of course, in reality everything with introduction of socialism happens in a much more complex and sophisticated way and not so fast. There are certain delays and time lags, as people first need to realize their voting power and its influence upon income redistribution. Then they have to overcome and overshadow some considerations of pure reason displaying how much are escalating under socialism state domination, bureaucracy and corruption together with income redistribution through the state and how poor is performing “public” sector. People need to realize that they have to vote for those parties, which offer more social security, social protection and more of the other “free” benefits. Besides, they certainly need to counteract some opposition and reluctance on behalf of rich and affluent individuals. They have to discover benefits of progressive taxation, which withdraw nothing from poor, little from middle-income, a lot from affluent and almost majority of income of the rich. They have to overcome prejudices of their education in freedom, independence and self-sufficiency. They have to get used to lust and comfort up to a degree, which will silence any intrusive anti-socialist ideologies and, sometimes, even a plain reason and common sense. As a result of all benefits automatically guaranteed to them by socialism and democracy, they have to become weaker, softer in character and in spirit, unable to earn money exclusively on their own and unable to fight for anything except for social guarantees. Finally, they have to realize that there is something else besides social benefits no matter how elevated, comprehensive and incomparably larger than average salary in a great majority of countries in the world they are – something else where they need guarantees and protection. There is also a job security. Job security, of course, puts companies in enormously difficult conditions on wild and competitive markets. Solution is ready right away – regulate (i.e. limit) the markets; impose regulation on companies, on the entire economy. Unfortunately, there is also international competition, which is much more difficult to control. Nonsense! Collect more taxes to use political power of the State to promote national interests, to lobby contracts for our companies and to buy foreign governments so that they can serve our interests. Of course, all this has its price and not only financial one, but who cares about the long-term price!

It is hard to say where democracy and associated with it massive income redistribution would end if not for the international competition. If democracy would be left to itself in a closed economy, in all probability it would lead to redistribution of almost entire national income and to all-embracing economic regulation or what is the same would lead to the socialism of Soviet style or to complete totalitarian dictatorship. We have several historical examples of similar ending – ancient Rome with democracy degenerating in infinite civil wars and military dictatorship; French revolution when newly established democracy unable to keep up with a necessity to feed people, who where unable to feed themselves, degenerated in dictatorship of Robespierre; Germany after the World War I was equally unable to maintain its democratic institutions

degenerating in Nazi dictatorship; majority of former Soviet republics after a break-up of Soviet Union are experiencing the same fate. Of course, all these societies were under different social and geopolitical circumstances. What is uniting all of them is that democracy by itself is a rather fragile construction, fragile because it contains a lot of inherent to social parasitism economic inefficiency. Our modern representative democracy of economically developed nations so far has much more financial resources in order to stay intact. However, the only reason for that left is international competition, which for the time being is not allowing elevation of inherent to representative democracy social parasitism up to the dangerous for maintenance of societal structure levels.

As democracy is allowing for an immense part of national income (40-60% in modern economically developed countries) to be redistributed relying on instruments of coercion, it probably makes a governance system, which incorporates social parasitism to one of the highest levels in the history of mankind. Yet we cannot say that democracy is the most inefficient societal construction as there are three parts of efficiency or alternatively of inefficiency of any society. First is a level of coercive income redistribution. We can call it macro-financial or resources utilization efficiency (taking account of all the resources including in terms of opportunity costs of their alternative utilization). Second - much dependent upon the first one is macroeconomic efficiency or stimulation (alternatively indeed "hampering") of economic activity and economic growth. And finally the third one is economic wealth existing in a particular society at particular point in time. On the second and third chapter, democracy is not so overwhelmingly behind dictatorships, rather even ahead. Even though a lot of modern dictatorships (China, Russia, Venezuela, Cuba, several former Soviet Union republics, etc.) are growing much faster than western democracies, such growth can rather be attributed to a backlog in terms of economic development and to a successful copying of modern practices and innovations than to the efficiency of dictatorship. Modern representative democracy though, in terms of economic growth, scientific discoveries and technological innovations is behind the capitalism of 19th century, which circumstances we will consider later in details.

What is drowning any society in any historical retrospective is not an economic poverty and not even macroeconomic inefficiency, but exactly the inefficiency in utilization of available resources. Several sufficiently prosperous, but rather inefficient in terms of resources utilization societies were destroyed throughout the history – ancient Rome, England in 1649, France in 1789, Germany in 1933, Russia in 1917, even Soviet Union in 1985. Those were not at all poor societies; in their historical time period they were either among rich or the richest ones. They all were, however, rather inefficient in utilization of available resources, which basically means that they allowed higher levels of resource redistribution as normally any redistribution of resources through the State is inefficient, even though sometimes necessary. Most essential problem with elevated social parasitism is not that it is immoral or economically inefficient or unfair, but that it cannot be maintained for too long. No any known to us society built on excessive levels of social

parasitism (either of the "wolves" or of the "sheep") was able to subsist and no such society dissolved peacefully.

## IV. COMPONENTS OF SOCIAL PARASITISM

### 11. State and State bureaucracy

In this part of treatise we will examine fundamental elements or components, from which the entire social parasitism is formed. Even though these components are mostly pertinent to modern representative democracy or to modern socialism of economically developed nations, at least in their rudimentary form they can also be identified within dictatorships and within modern dictatorships, which have to compete with modern democracies, in particular. We are not talking yet about outcomes, manifestations and influences of social parasitism, but only about its elements inherent to any modern society.

Everything related to the social parasitism of "wolves" in modern society is expressed in deeds and revenues of representatives and of state bureaucracy, particularly of the top-level state bureaucracy. Strangely enough, these people acquiring the closest association with mechanisms of power and coercion consequentially are the socially strongest individuals in society. "Strangely" because under democracy and under modern socialism these people owing to a variety of social circumstances quite often are rather weak as human characters or as persons. This can be explained by an early addiction to comfort as those people are usually of "good" affluent families, by fine education and following permanent financial prosperity through a lifetime, by requirements of our political system much rather for diplomacy than for any skills, by a complete lack of responsibility within their governmental positions or rather by a lack of direct and even of indirect connection between their responsibilities, their income and financial results of their activity, etc. All these circumstances are creating sufficiently soft, weak and often even pleasant personalities. As persons or as human beings these people are normally weaker than entrepreneurs, particularly than private entrepreneurs (not hired executives), who have to earn their money and on top of that have to fight with the state, state bureaucracy and with dominating in society social parasitism. Under modern representative democracy we can observe quite an interesting phenomenon when weaker characters are socially strong, while strong personalities are weaker socially. Valid question would be - if those people in power are humanly weak how can they get in there? The answer is even simpler and more straightforward than the question. Under the well-developed socialist democracy you need to be as flexible as possible and without any principles, ideas and "bones" in order to please people and to please various emotional, irrational and rather contradictory to one another current moment preferences of the "sheep", which make majority of voters, as well as in order to defeat your more scrupulous colleagues and to squeeze your way on top. You do not have to produce, to create or even to seriously fight anything or anybody; you just need to please. Such requirements are not for the strong people, who are not strong enough socially in order to bear the pleasing of social parasitism.

Besides the need to please, there is another fundamental proficiency required from modern representative and from modern “civil servant” – ability to expropriate and to redistribute income and property. This task necessitates some prudence, which being complemented by diplomacy forms a natural quality of rather flexible and sufficiently educated in modern officialdom of social science state bureaucracy. Prudence is necessary essentially in order to avoid two extremities. First, in order not to cross an edge of tolerance of the rich and affluent people. This would threaten not to the state or to societal structure, but merely to particular political career and besides is virtually impossible. Secondly, politicians and bureaucracy need to be especially careful in order to avoid economic calamities, which might represent a blow on the entire structure of social parasitism. One does not need any personal intelligence here as he can employ experts in the field, who unfortunately cannot predict anything, but instead can recommend measures of relieve or at least how not to make things worse. On this particular point, politicians have to be really careful as economic cataclysms represent a potential threat not only to concrete representatives and political parties, but also to the societal structure if they acquire an extensive proportion and start to mess with the entire system of social parasitism, which needs a constant stream of fixed revenues.

This is fine, but so far we cannot see where exactly is a concrete monetary expression of the social parasitism of “wolves”. What is it that “wolves” want and acquire and how do they do it? Easy and simple! State bureaucracy and representatives, of course, earn money directly as “public” employees and like all other people they receive salaries, bonuses and other direct benefits, which, of course, are incomparably higher than an average salary per economy. But these direct incomes of representatives and top-level state bureaucracy, large as they are per person, would hardly contribute to wide-scale social parasitism, as they are quite tolerable for economy as a whole, if it wouldn't be for the indirect benefits of our humble servants and representatives. Their indirect benefits represent a much more complicated, obscure, camouflaged by social infrastructure and probably a much bigger portion of social parasitism of the “wolves”. What comes to mind, glancing at a variety of their possibilities and not targeting this subject specifically in this treatise, are paid expenses for luxurious offices, luxurious cars, luxurious traveling, luxurious wining and dining, luxurious banquets and receptions, etc.; vast employment possibilities for friends and relatives (either in public sector or in dependent from the state bureaucracy private one); contracting and bargaining power (associated with enormous public procurement and state regulation) including potential possibilities of perfectly legal and camouflaged bribing or exchange of favors; lobbying and promotion of affiliated political parties, affiliated non-governmental organizations, affiliated private companies and various private interests; power and influence upon private sector (associated with economic regulation and public procurement) leading to a variety of benefits including after-the-office employment; international power and acknowledgement potentially realizable in a variety of after-the-office benefits and possibilities; etc., etc., etc. For simplicity we are not even touching here any illegal

possibilities of income appropriation, some of which might be virtually non-punishable under the high office. We also have to take into account that these indirect benefits coming from top of the governance structure or from representatives and top-level state bureaucracy then persist and multiply at every level of the state hierarchy producing all together an accumulating scale and velocity. Simply and roughly put, if being member of a parliament I succeed in promoting my old friend to be a head of some governmental agency, my friend has his friends and getting, thanks to myself, his position as a state executive, afterwards he will be able to employ his friends as well, though in a lower rank. And his friends naturally have their friends. Of course, the further we are from the top – the smaller are the benefits, both direct and indirect, but mechanics of “public” administration is always the same.

All benefits and incomes, which any particular “civil servant” and state bureaucracy as a whole obtain, are one hundred percent correlated with two fundamental dynamic factors – first, with an overall state financial resources or with total income redistribution through the state and, second, with a scale of their responsibilities or with the level and degree of state regulation and interference in economy and in every single aspect of social life. Under the lack of any efficiency indicators for state bureaucracy, only by more tasks, functions and responsibilities they can justify higher incomes and more comprehensive benefits. In these circumstances “wolves” are always keen for more income redistribution and for more comprehensive economic and social regulation. Such correlation signifies a remarkable, touching and absolute coincidence of interests of “wolves” and of “sheep”.

Significant part of the state related social parasitism is represented by various exclusive rights based on power and coercion and coming therefore from the state, as there is no any other source of coercion in the modern world. Among their major beneficiaries are mostly organizations serving interests (including ideological ones) of the State or of the State monopoly such as unions, non-profit organizations, “public” associations, universities and academics, media, special interest and lobbying groups as well as certain commercial undertakings. Not all of those, however, are getting such rights (even if they all fancy them), but only the strongest. Normally people in charge of those “strongest” organizations form close alliance with the top-level state bureaucracy starting from merely friendly business relations and ordinary favors and up to more complicated exclusive rights obtained thanks to their friends and relatives among top-level state bureaucracy and representatives.

## **12. Social benefits**

Social benefits and protected employment are two major components of social parasitism of the “sheep” in socialist society. Under social benefits we basically understand an entire variety of payments made by the state and related to indirect income redistribution or to income redistribution realized through an intermediary (of the State) such as disability

payments, employment insurance, medical insurance, child payments, pensions and retirement benefits, free education and paid by state scholarships, all nominal compensations and one-single time lump-sum payments, free of charge services provided by the state and payments in-kind, special separate facilities such as homes for elder people and for mental patients paid by the state, etc., etc., etc. This component is considerably more investigated by official social science, by statistics and by applied sociology than probably any other. The reason for that is crystal clear – income redistribution forms the foundation of democracy and the nature of socialism – our dominant ideology, social theory and a single political force represented in parliaments of economically developed countries. All modern political parties represented in parliaments are certainly nothing else, but socialist in their actions and nature (even the ones called “conservative”), otherwise they will loose all votes of poor and middle-income majority envying social benefits and social guarantees.

Most likely, social benefits is what people will generally understand under the term “social parasitism”. If somehow we would be able to identify the really needy people in some objective way – in a way not connected with people or with human society and similar rather to objective indicators of the market, for example – there will hardly be anything questionable about social benefits. However, the problem is that identification of such people is based on enormously biased, partial and financially motivated private interests underlined by self-interest oriented and inclined to living on account of other people human nature.

Major societal problem with social payments, social income or with social welfare is that on the contrary to economic income and economic welfare they are based on coercive redistribution of property and are underlined by coercion rather than by any value creation process. Major economic or financial problem with social welfare is that under universal suffrage the latter is virtually infinite surpassing any boundaries of real necessity, logic, reason and sometimes even of decency. There is no limit for wants, unfortunately – moreover for wants of poor people in affluent society, where they see so much luxury around them. Because of all that, social benefits being rather abused degenerate in pay offs and in pay offs not to the most needy citizens. Major ideological or even major moral problem with social payments is that indeed there are people in any society, which cannot live on their own without social support, even though comparatively much less of such people reside in affluent socialist societies of economically developed nations. In any event, it is really hard to find arguments in favor of a complete elimination of social benefits, just as it is really hard to find arguments in favor of a complete elimination of the State. But one fundamental consideration related to social benefits we have to take into account. In modern socialist democratic society it is absolutely not the compassion to needy people, what is initiating, delivering and motivating any social benefits, compassion merely more or less facilitates this process. Major, if not the single, driving force of social benefits is universal suffrage and the lust for higher income redistribution both on behalf of the “wolves” and on behalf of the

“sheep”. Really needy people in modern affluent socialist society, who indeed are few in numbers, rather represent a very convenient ideological pretext in order to to facilitate and escalate social parasitism.

### **13. Protected employment**

Protected employment, actually, can also be referred to the same category of social benefits, if it would not be for two rather essential differences. First is its separate importance for particularly numerous and imperative in terms of voting power group of people – employees, and second is that it represents a rather direct income redistribution from employer to employee without financial intermediary of the State, even though based exclusively on State coercion.

Protected employment and its more common in modern world varieties, such as for example coercively established constraints for firing personnel or lifetime employment for civil servants, on the contrary to the State and therefore also to the state bureaucracy and on the contrary to social benefits do not have any justification per se or any theoretical validation, except for powerful human interests. It represents a pure product of power and a pure consequence of coercion under the universal suffrage.

Sometimes protected employment and its price (salaries and wages), though to a smaller degree and also indirectly, are attributed to Unions' activity. Nature of Unions especially in their relation to social parasitism both of “wolves” and of “sheep” makes, in fact, quite an interesting subject for inquiry, which is out of the scope of our rather general treatise. We will only mention that the entire power of Unions is based exclusively on socialist democracy and on consequential social parasitism both of “wolves” and of “sheep”. It is not that we have exhaustive employment benefits because Unions are strong; vice-a-versa we have seemingly strong Unions because universal suffrage and social parasitism are unleashing lust and possibilities to obtain any social benefits including employment ones. Unions as well as their influence are merely the consequences of socialist democracy. Wherever there are no Unions, hardly employees are much worse off or even worse off at all – that would be a big threat for Unions and an indication of their potential decline. Unions, however, are very important in another aspect. State simply delegates to Unions part of its coercive power related to employment in particular companies, where because of their numbers it has limited capacities and resources to interfere, but where pleasing employees as its allies in social parasitism and as a majority of voters is enormously important politically. State normally regulates an overall framework related to employment such as minimum wages, conditions for dismissal, maximum working hours, etc., leaving all particular aspects of sector or enterprise employment such as sector and enterprise specific wages and salaries, overtime, working conditions, leaves, who and how should be employed and dismissed, etc., to the coercion of Unions.

Protected employment equally corresponds to the lust of top-level state bureaucracy for more tasks, responsibilities and regulations (in this particular case – for regulation of labor relations) or to social parasitism of the “wolves”. In fact, interests of employees, Unions and of the state bureaucracy are in a tender unity as always. Because of so many powerful promoters employment policy is quite comprehensive. Such an important place of labor policy is explained, of course, by the fact that employment income is still a core income of voting majority. And being of such political, economic and social importance it is bound to be incorporated in the very heart of social policy. What is also contributing to importance of labor policy – is that no matter how extensive and comprehensive are the social benefits – they are still rarely competing with the size of employment income, which is a rather encouraging fact by itself. Labor policy and labor relations, of course, are much wider than just protected employment. They equally embrace the entire spectrum of issues – wages and salaries, bonuses, working hours, over-time, unemployment insurance, training, deductions, labor conflicts, unions, minimum wages, etc. Not always all these issues fall under direct or indirect income redistribution. Generally speaking, employment per se is not at all and should never be in any way related to the phenomenon of social parasitism. Employment based on free market norms or unregulated employment is an absolutely decent and honorable occupation. It loses its decency when it starts to rely upon mechanisms of coercion and starts to forcibly impose both itself and its price.

#### **14. Business dependency upon the state**

Business is hampered in socialist society by two elementary factors. First is extraordinary taxation, which is withdrawing resources from much more efficient private sector and channeling them in ludicrously inefficient public one, simultaneously subtracting funds from capital accumulation, technological innovations and scientific discoveries. Consequentially, of course, all these mean lower salaries as only capital accumulation and resulting rise in productivity of labor elevate salaries. Second factor is state regulation and interference in economy, which is further diminishing efficiency of particular companies and of the entire economy projecting inefficiency of public sector upon the private one.

Entire regulation of modern business and of modern economy is sufficiently bind by labor regulation as over-regulated owing to socialist democracy labor markets and labor price far exceeding market level (incorporating also indirect payments such as employment insurance and retirement contributions, depressed labor competition, expensive dismissal, etc.) create a lot of essential problems for business making it less competitive and even less proficient. Question might arise - as rules of the game are established by law, doesn't it mean that all companies are in equal conditions and at least competitiveness is not suffering? First of all, there are still less regulated international markets and international competition based inclusively on differences in social systems

and in economic regulation. But even domestically this is not entirely so, as besides state coercion and regulation there is also a discretionary coercion of unions and of various other pressure groups. Because of all that, business needs constant protection and possibly even promotion as since it is now dependable, not self-sufficient anymore and cannot compete on its own, it makes all the sense to use persuasive and coercive power of state in order to promote it internationally or to sell national business on international arena – sort of “new imperialism” policy.

Concrete instruments of regulation or even simply modern state functions underlying business dependency are well known and sufficiently investigated by economic science. Essentially, business is experiencing an overwhelming dependency upon the state because the latter is a major economic player, major buyer, single income expropriator and single economy-regulating agent. State and more generally comprehensive influence of socialist democracy are constantly downgrading business and embracing it into an orbit of social parasitism through its involvement in squandering state revenues and getting addicted to such squandering; through its dependency upon the state for artificial protection from internal, external and global competition; through operating in over-regulated environment and total dependency upon the state, etc. All mentioned manifestations of business dependency incorporate, of course, a real financial expression and resources underlining social parasitism such as direct subsidies including for salvage of strategically important companies on the edge of bankruptcy; reduced competition owing to extensive economic regulation and slower capital accumulation and therefore more expensive and lower quality goods and services; international business promotion paid by taxpayers; lobbying and promotion of business interests leading to a waste of resources on power battles and to biased coercive regulation in favor of particular victorious private interests; tariffs and barriers for international trade; artificial regional development; export subsidies, etc., etc., etc.

Business dependency or social parasitism of business just like protected employment is unjustifiable from the point of view of social and economic theory. It is based, however, on two rather important considerations. First is coming from the conditions in which business is put under socialist democracy - by employment policy pertinent in order to keep majority's compliance or rather by employment policy, which is a direct consequence of universal suffrage. Second is an outcome of the same policy, but applied in international dimension. Under the “new imperialism” policy involving states worldwide, it is virtually impossible to leave national business handicapped by coercive employment regulation face to face with foreign competitors, which are normally getting support of their governments. Therefore, the entire international competition under socialist democracy is starting to manifest itself in a rather peculiar form - as a competition between coercive powers rather than the free market economic competition.

Another question might arise - what about businesses and entrepreneurs themselves, aren't they are lobbying for their interests as well? They certainly do and sometimes they

even succeed, but in the socialist world under universal suffrage democracy they are not adequately strong socially in order to obtain relying only on their own power any benefits based on coercive instruments, with which they have no any direct association. They are not strong enough socially, first of all, because under universal suffrage they are in a vast minority, especially taking into account that business executives often being merely high paid employees are somewhat less attached to business interests than business proprietors or real entrepreneurs per se, and also because business itself is much downgraded spiritually and ideologically by dominating socialist ideology.

## **15. International social parasitism**

Rather interesting and quite separate phenomenon represents an international social parasitism. We have already embarked on consideration of international applications of domestic social parasitism mentioning the “new imperialist” model for modern world. International social parasitism, however, is much wider than that and is based on more fundamental and important societal assumptions than merely business interests. Besides business interests, under our socialist model of society we have to promote a variety of other pertinent to societal balance of power or pertinent to voting majority interests. First of all, we have to please idealistic inclinations of the voting majority and to promote our seemingly global societal “values” to begin with our socialist democracy. This is not an easy task as our values and our socialist democracy, being not entirely “perfect”, raise a lot of serious counter-arguments and sometimes even indignation internationally, and the further the more. However, what we are much more interested in for the time being is that all promotion of our societal values and of our business interests has no any other recipe or no any other policy as to buy foreign governments, international organizations and international law. As we do not know any other recipe, every year we have to pay more and more since underdeveloped countries are getting richer and richer on account of much higher than ours economic growth. In a short while we might even go bankrupt with such a strategy. Nothing else we can offer. First, because our politicians are rather weak and seriously limited by considerations of our domestic social parasitism and social idealism in order to lobby for anything internationally. Second, because less and less people worldwide believe in our social “values”. And third, because by and large we have to defend ourselves not only internationally, but also at home as we are losing power battle even domestically - losing it to foreign cultures, to immigration, to terrorism, but first of all to our own highly elevated domestic social parasitism and unsustainable social idealism.

International social parasitism mainly stands in redistribution of financial resources from one state to another based on their domestic coercive expropriation. It certainly forms a rather unique type of social parasitism as part of national income of one country is spent by residents and citizens of another country. Specific part of international social parasitism makes international development, which is the easiest way to buy our world

be allies and supporters, at the same time significantly irritating internal and international opposition to this particular country's political regime. To buy more affluent countries is much more difficult, of course, as this requires much more financial resources, which we might not have. Fortunately, so far all affluent or all economically developed countries are allies among themselves or at least are not enemies and therefore they do not have to buy each other too extensively. What is not so fortunate is that underdeveloped countries are becoming richer and richer every year and require more and more financial resources in order to buy them. Besides, pure buying or free supply of financial resources either directly or indirectly by means of international aid, there are other ways to buy our "friends" and "allies". Among most common of them are trade exemptions, which are unilaterally facilitating bilateral trade, basically meaning lower or zero level import tariffs and abolition of non-tariff barriers for import from particular country. Specific problem with direct and indirect buying of foreign governments is their jealousy of one another in view of our favors and an eternal weakness of our socialist governments (based on domestic social parasitism and social idealism) to counteract such jealousy. As we risk to loose our "friend" or at least our "partner" if we grant facilities to his rival and do not grant equal facilities to him, even if he is less of our "friend" than his rival. At the end of the day, everyone expects us to pay without taking into account whether he is our "friend" or our potential, ideological or even real "enemy".

International social parasitism, similar to guaranteed employment and to business dependency upon the state, does not have any theoretical justification; it is based exclusively on biased interests, power and coercion. The only consideration explaining it is that our international competitors will use it anyway just as they will use anyway the international promotion of domestic business interests.

## V. INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL PARASITISM

### 16. Social welfare

So far we tried not to indulge ourselves in any judgment of the consequences and effects of social parasitism. If we did, it was unintentionally, dictated by the necessity of narrative description and occasionally. We will equally try to further avoid judging social parasitism from any moral perspective as moral is something biased and partial. Social parasitism as such is neither good nor bad, neither moral nor immoral, neither acceptable nor unacceptable - it is simply objective and existing beyond our will. In this part of the treatise we will examine its influence upon society and economy.

Major explanation and the very basis of embedded in human nature inclination to live whenever possible on account of other people, if not its entire justification, lies in the weakness of human nature. We are really weak, vulnerable and dependent on a large variety of outer things and external occurrences in this life, even the strongest amongst us or those who consider themselves strong and independent. At this stage we are living in sufficiently mild and yielding societies – in socialist democracies – inherited from our ancestors and built mostly by their sufferings. Everything is more or less smooth and well founded in our society including interpersonal relations, social cohesion and even justice in its superficial expression. Of course, the most important part is our financial prosperity, which makes it all happen, while economic growth even depressed by excessive income redistribution is maintaining our hopes and aspirations for the future. We are getting a feeling that it is exactly us who rule the world and build our own life and consequently usually we do not consider ourselves as being weak.

However, even if we are playing god, exchanging one true real God for deity and idolatry of the State or even of ourselves as gods, we are still weak and vulnerable, may be even weaker than ever before both as spoiled by modern comfort human beings and as a society weakened by extraordinary social parasitism, while even minor social cataclysm might reveal our inability and ignominy. We worship our state and our quite controversial societal system and imagine that we are independent and free with our boundless dependence on the domestic coercive power of state and on the socialist democracy, which is unleashing social parasitism to its height. We are thinking just like people in the former Soviet Union before its collapse. Hardly we have more strength, independency and self-sufficiency than they did – we are merely the humblest slaves of our modern deity – the State. Minor fall of this god and we are meek in front of the rough and tough societal realities of non-socialist world. We can only pray for that our socialist god might stay intact a bit longer than the communist one did.

We as human beings and our entire society both dictatorships and democracies much rather deserve pity than admiration. Leading our objectively rather meaningless (though

subjectively, of course, pleasant and meaningful for us life) with a very little hope and even with a very little consolation that somebody will remember us one hundred years from now. And what about a million years from now – hardly anybody will be still here in order to remember the very existence of human specie. Our single hope, fate, sense and trust is in God, for without the God everything – our thoughts, ideas, brainpower, feelings, passions, zeal, philosophy, knowledge, history, arts, culture, science, technology, even our very life - is absolutely futile and worthless (at most enjoyable) and will be erased by a natural order of things in a certain period of time.

We cannot be too judgmental of our social (based on power and coercion) inclinations as that who sits in judgment of social parasitism, first of all, is judging himself and questioning the entire human nature, which is hardly a lucrative exercise. However, equally we must not adhere to an opposite extreme – worship of social parasitism. We have much more fundamental and much more complicated task – to build an adequate founded on such human nature society. And we probably need something much more sustainable than the socialist democracy, which only hope is international competition between separately inefficient and fragile societies.

It is absolutely out of the purpose of this treatise to analyze extensively or even to analyze at all the entire variety of manifestations, effects and influences of social parasitism. Such an ambitious undertaking will probably require tons of written volumes and extraordinary amount of time. In this treatise we will basically limit ourselves to two key objectives - first is to emphasize the most important effects of social parasitism upon our society and second is to define those effects from the point of view of social parasitism and to propose several preliminary assumptions for their analysis.

There seems to be two fairly positive effects of social welfare. First is that among tons of rather controversial and hardly justifiable social benefits, the really needy people are still getting their small share. And second is social cohesion. Apart from those two returns there is a whole lot of problems related to social welfare. The most important being that it is based exclusively on coercion and therefore has a strong inbuilt potential to be, in one way or another, both inefficient and unfair. Another problem with social welfare stands in that it is never objective but is always biased, partial and relying on material and financial interests of self-interest oriented human beings. Besides all that, social welfare is not something independent or a thing in itself. It completely depends on economic welfare or on welfare created in real economy without interference of the mechanisms of coercion. This dependence is both direct and indirect. Direct, since we can redistribute only something already produced in the real economy. Indirect, since our inclination to redistribute scarce financial resources including our sense of justice, fairness and compassion is absolutely contingent upon affluence of our society or upon its financial prosperity. In poor medieval society, for example, existed very little redistribution and generally it is not until capitalist opulence that the entire idea and even the entire philosophy of wide-scale income redistribution emerged.

## **17. Equality**

There are two types of equality, which are almost antipodes – equality in consumption and equality in opportunities. Normally more equality in consumption is being based upon higher implication in society of the mechanisms of power and coercion and therefore upon simultaneous reduction in equality of opportunities especially in the short run. But even such equality in consumption is an absolute illusion as it simply implies an elevated consumption in places, which you can neither see, nor investigate. Simple and most instructive example in this sense is a former Soviet Union where unhidden but deceptive equality in consumption (or rather equality in poverty) among vast majority of population was a mere illusion on the background of concealed but enormously elevated consumption of the communist party leaders. Under the modern socialist democracy equally extraordinary elevates consumption of the top-level state bureaucracy and representatives, all forms and aspects of which considered before in this treatise are hardly less disguised than the consumption of their fellow politicians under communism.

Equality in consumption has little value by itself except that it stimulates a social cohesion. Social equality in consumption represents a rather controversial effect or outcome of social parasitism, as any equality besides equality in opportunities is superficial, artificial, hardly justifiable, economically unfair and inefficient. Equality among people as it is generally understood by socialist ideology and by socialist policies or equality in income and consumption can only be a consequence of income redistribution and represents a product and a value of socialist society. Since under economic injustice we basically understand unearned income based on the mechanisms of power and coercion, socialist equality is economically unfair because it is based on coercive redistribution of income and on a variety of specific, unearned and socially distributed benefits. Whether equality in consumption is fair socially we leave to the reader's judgment. Strive for socialist equality is economically inefficient because it favors something less efficient or less qualified on account of something more efficient or more qualified. More specifically in order to make equality in consumption to happen we simply need to expropriate resources from producers and production and channel them to consumers and consumption or to discriminate more efficient people and economic agents in favor of the less efficient ones.

## **18. Social cohesion**

Social welfare and social equality are stimulating social cohesion. We cannot define social cohesion so clear economically or numerically as for example economic efficiency. Social cohesion on the contrary to social welfare and moreover on the contrary to income redistribution rather represents a result or an outcome than phenomenon or process.

Social cohesion, taken purely as it is, seems as a predominately positive thing since it suppose to diminish probability, scale and number of social conflicts. Poorer people, who form an overwhelming majority of population, enjoying social protection and experiencing equality in consumption, are much less inclined to provoke any social revolts. While rich and affluent people, though are paying entire social parasitism are less inclined to produce any violent opposition as even after paying all gigantic taxes they are still left with a good fortune in consolation. Another thing is what price we are paying for social cohesion built on social parasitism and ultimately on the instruments of coercion. Much more important though is that general welfare, social cohesion and equality both in opportunities and in consumption are incomparably more relying on the wealth of our economy than on socialist democracy and on associated with it social policy – of economy, which is barely subsisting in a permanent struggle with our inefficient societal construction.

## **19. Social idealism**

Social idealism or idealization of social system and social relations in particular society is certainly not an exclusive effect of social parasitism. Any personal wealth tends to justify and to praise society were particular private interest was raised to economic prosperity. What extraordinary income redistribution of socialist democracy is adding to this phenomenon is, first of all, a mass scale generated by higher equality in consumption, social cohesion and affluence of society. But most fundamentally incomes based on coercion tend to conceal and to cover up a comprehensive and permanently accelerating involvement in society of the mechanisms of coercion employed for purposes of massive income redistribution. People are persuaded to forget that their entire social welfare, social cohesion, equality and the whole society are founded on coercion. Such statement of things complemented by other “fruits” of social parasitism generates mostly idealistic and distant from reality political, social and economic views dominating any society built on immense income redistribution. More than that, it produces illusory and imaginary perception not only of our own society, but also of the one in underdeveloped countries, unrealistic vision of global social values and social principles and even idealized images of people and society in historical retrospective.

## **20. Economic equilibrium**

Not so much social parasitism per se, but rather the entire set of leading to it political, economic and social recipes of socialist society is generating a permanent economic disequilibria, which is an absolutely natural consequence of elevated interference of the coercive instruments always accompanied by rigid prices, rigid wages and massive state interventions in economy. Economic disequilibria in socialist society is abundantly described by economics, particularly by classical liberal economics and is sufficiently

simple and straightforward as the entire economy and all particular markets can freely bounce according to the conditions of supply and demand and produce absolute economic equilibrium only under the laissez-faire or under free market economy. And the further we are from laissez-faire, the more socially (based on mechanisms of power and coercion) monopolized is economy, the more regulations exists, the more we are departing from any equilibrium and the closer we are to intensifying chaotic recessions and depressions, to artificial financial support of the economy and to bail out deals for “strategically” inefficient companies. Major economic problem with social parasitism is that it enormously strengthens the largest social monopoly or the largest monopoly on coercion ever – the state - and therefore is moving us further and further away from the free market economy and from any economic equilibrium.

## **21. Social and economic incentives**

There are three major prices, which we are paying for coercive welfare, artificial social cohesion and coercive equality in our society. First is slowdown in capital accumulation and technological innovations, second is evaporation of social and economic incentives and the third is consolidation of the state domination in society. Evaporation of economically efficient incentives or of incentives conducive to economic efficiency is embracing virtually all categories of population and is a sufficiently wide-scale phenomenon. Large business and hired executives are more inclined to master public relations and to please governments rather than to dedicate themselves to production activities as a lot of their revenues depend on governmental regulation, taxation and on public procurement. Small business is striving real hard barely subsisting under a pressure of competition (unhampered market competition in our days exists almost exclusively for small business), taxes, inspections and regulations. Employees, including “civil servants”, are much more preoccupied with employment guarantees and job security than with their job responsibilities. Consulting companies reorienting towards highly profitable and less demanding international development industry loose all domestic business qualifications and being directed and supervised by even less competent and less efficient governments never understand and never need to understand the nature of underdeveloped countries. Unemployed have all the disincentives to work with extensive social benefits to back them up. Young people displeased with low initial salaries besides basic social benefits are having their parents with money and shelter. Significant loss of efficient incentives is, first of all, explained by the fact that free economy, free business and creativity as such are being more and more crowded out by the role and influence of coercive social institutions and by general over-regulation of economy and society. Another essential source of disincentives certainly represents an extraordinary level of taxation.

## **22. State domination in society**

Social parasitism developed to such a height and particularly income redistribution through the state and based on the coercion of state, as well as state regulation of economy and society cannot be realized without critical elevation of the state's role, significance and overall presence and interference in every aspect of social and economic life. Whether it is good or bad we leave to everyone's own conclusion. What we have to take into account investigating role of the State in modern society is that State per se is a conventional commercial enterprise with its own interests, bias and partiality, which is normally acting exclusively in the interests of its real true managers or rather even proprietors - of our "representatives" and of top-level state bureaucracy. Just like any commercial enterprise it is generating revenues through taxation; paying costs mostly expressed in social benefits, business and economy related costs and in international "bribing" and making its profits in the form of previously examined incomes and benefits of representatives and top-level state bureaucracy. Much worse is that at the same time State is a social monopoly (monopoly based on instruments of coercion) and indeed the final instance of coercion in society with all its revenues coming almost exclusively from coercion. Therefore, State as any social monopoly is economically unfair getting exclusive above and beyond the market revenues based on coercion and economically inefficient generating less value than would be created through an alternative mode of resources utilization (which we will examine later). More specifically, economic inefficiency coming from the State is manifesting itself in the subtraction of scarce financial resources from more efficient private economic agents, in state's inability to compete with normal unregulated private sector, in plain waste of economic resources, in deterioration of economy through economic "regulation", etc. Of course, no one economic agent would deem necessary or its existence would be justifiable under such circumstances - either by the market or by people's judgment. What about the State? State does not fall under the market judgment since it has no any dependency on market whatsoever subsisting exclusively on coercive non-market revenues. What concerns people's judgment - we leave it to our readers.

## **23. Political freedom and democracy**

There are two essential components or two determinative factors of political freedom. The most important one is economic freedom. It is only economic freedom conducive to economic wealth what makes political freedom and any democracy to happen. While permanent deterioration of economic freedom under an influence of modern socialism and social parasitism are leaving less and less grounds for any political freedom including freedom of expression. Social parasitism is deteriorating political freedom through enormous withdrawal of financial resources from private individuals in favor of instruments of coercion (in favor of the State), through downgrading of power and competitiveness of the non-coercive economy, through constantly accelerating state

control and “regulation” of economy and society, through imposing of wide-scale social idealism and various unsustainable idealistic prejudices, through obliteration of any personal independence and through conversion of almost entire population into absolutely dependent upon the state “sheep”. Second component of political freedom is power of social counteraction, which is based on previously accumulated experience in fighting for one’s rights. Social counteraction is significantly diminishing under the influence of social parasitism owing to an ever-growing reliance of people upon instruments of coercion. In this sense social counteraction being based on economic power of particular individuals is dependent and inferior to economic freedom. Evaporation of economic freedom undermines social counteraction. Of course, such evaporation is not happening right away and at one particular point in time, but is a rather continuous process and therefore even under significant limitations of economic freedom people are still maintaining previously acquired abilities, skills and knowledge of social counteraction for a certain period of time.

Democracy is merely a part of political freedom and not yet the most important and most influential part, such as for example are economic freedom and property. Democracy under the influence of social parasitism and of unsurpassed envy for income redistribution is degenerating in various violations of property rights including massive property expropriations (taxation) and comprehensive property rights limitations (state regulation). Since society is only about power, coercion and money and about nothing else, any kind of management of societal affairs is reduced to a sheer control over these three factors and does not bear anything romantic, poetic or anything noble in it. Vice-versa it is a rather deceitful, rough and repugnant process. Even representative democracy through arithmetic absurdity of “one man – one vote” is merely channeling resources from few (minority) to many (majority) based on instruments and mechanisms of coercion and because of an ever growing involvement of coercion in society, it is all set to degenerate in various limitations for both personal and political freedom.

## **24. International relations**

Social parasitism in international relations basically means a partial subsistence of foreign countries on financial resources coercively expropriated from our taxpayers by our state. Generally speaking buying foreign governments either directly through subsidies and international aid or indirectly through various economic facilities, incentives and political support is much better than to fight them in open war. We certainly have an enormous progress on this chapter comparatively with our previous history. There are a variety of reasons why we need to buy foreign countries or rather foreign governments. More strategic and straightforward reasons would be related to promotion of our economic, business and political interests. But there are a lot of less strategic interests (though to some people they might be even more important than the former ones) such as global considerations including environmental concerns, preventing trafficking of human

beings, humanitarian relief, fighting terrorism, counteracting international crime, etc.; facilitating presence of our citizens abroad including solution of their problems in foreign countries; intelligence and security; etc., etc., etc.

There are, however, several complications related to international “buying” of our “friends”. First one is already mentioned scarcity of financial resources complemented by constantly elevating wealth of underdeveloped societies (we assume that all economically developed countries are our allies and we do not have to buy at least them). Problem associated with such statement of things is a relative diminishing of our contribution to national income or to national budgets of underdeveloped countries on account of constantly rising in these countries GDP and therefore also our diminishing influence, even though there is to our help such thing as investments of our companies abroad or foreign investments. Another complication is that we are buying in bulk almost all countries in the world without differentiating between our real true friends and temporary or even permanent enemies. We have also mentioned already that “buying friends” internationally, we are mostly buying the governments, which situation might very much offend people in these countries. As vast majority of underdeveloped countries are dictatorships, semi-dictatorships or at most are countries with cosmetic democracy, interests of the government and those of the people rarely coincide there. Finally, the most fundamental problem we are facing internationally is that it is getting more and more difficult to sell to underdeveloped countries our rather deteriorated social values almost exclusively based on hardly exciting, even if justifiable, social parasitism.

## **25. Economic growth**

Situation with economic growth under the influence of massive income redistribution is not entirely straightforward primarily because economic growth still exists in socialist economy and there are only two things, which we can generally discuss and analyze in its relation to social parasitism. First is giving away opportunities in terms of economic growth, opportunity costs of socialism or simply how much higher will economic growth be if we would have some other social and economic system. Second is a slowdown in economic growth on account of socialist economy and elevated income redistribution. Slowdown in economic growth is more evident and less complicated phenomenon than the giving away opportunities. In a very recent history of economically developed countries after the 1970 and comparatively with after-the-war period (till 1970), the slowdown in economic growth seems evident based on statistics. In Europe, for example, economic growth on average is almost of the former Soviet Union level. And it is only a bit higher in North America. This is moreover disturbing in comparison with a very impressive economic growth in large underdeveloped countries (China, India, Russia, Brazil, etc), which suppose to stimulate our economic growth as well.

How much higher would be economic growth under different circumstances is a rather theoretical or even speculative question as we cannot experimentally construct alternative economy and alternative society. On the other hand, even though several modern dictatorships are growing much faster than democracies we cannot say that this is happening because of their inherent societal advantages, but rather because they are far behind economically developed countries, while catching up employing existing business practices and technology is much easier than to develop new ones. At the same time, all our socialist policies significantly downgrading business efficiency and performance as well as withdrawing enormous resources from business in favor of state consumption, can hardly be absolutely efficient and stimulate any economic growth. There are, however, counter-arguments to all that. Under the modern structure of international relations and according to the nature of contemporary society, loss of business efficiency is compensated partially or entirely by domestic protection and international promotion of national business. This is only partly true. Under the international battle between various national interests we cannot have unlimited protection and business promotion is quite difficult as well both on account of competition between economically developed countries and on account of our diminishing influence upon underdeveloped ones. However even in as much as this statement is true, such practice makes a vicious circle or rather a vicious spiral. Business is losing its efficiency owing to state regulation and heavy taxation and therefore needs constant protection and promotion. While, protection and promotion are further on producing more incubated and less competitive business. There is another counter-argument against any alternatives – a stronger one. It is exactly the current structure of society what is making business generally possible and generates all our financial prosperity and economic growth. This is not so straightforward either since financial prosperity, even stronger economic growth and much better conditions for business have existed under the capitalism in 19th century. Still there is one more and the strongest counter-argument. Alternative structure of society under self-interest oriented and susceptible to social parasitism human nature is not possible. The only answer we can give at this stage – it does not have to be like that.

## **26. Wars**

Social parasitism is a major cause of any wars as it merely represents a continuation of domestic coercive expropriation of income in international environment where any particular State does not possess a power of coercion and has to acquire or to win such power. It is not true that wars are not benefiting anybody – either winner or loser, either government or people – at least not true in the short-term. If it would be so, we are hardly so stupid as to kill each other without any hope for gains. Wars certainly have at least short-term benefits for the victorious part – benefits related to social parasitism both of the “sheep” and of the “wolves”. Roman Empire, for example, led it to an extreme and made its living almost entirely on account of military conquests and even in the long-term perspective. Fundamental benefit for the State coming from wars is income

redistribution from loser to the winner, which is formed from short-term redistribution such as spoils of war including lump-sum contributions and long-term redistribution in the form of taxation on annexed territories. Another important type of gains represent obtained military, political and economic advantages, which are materializing themselves in more opportunities for domestic business of a victorious nation and therefore in more employment and more tax revenues. There are also less important considerations (though sometimes they acquire decisive significance) such as various ideological motives, necessity to prevent internal social revolts and even simply to employ people particularly important if large masses of population are staying unemployed. The more of tax and non-tax revenues receive particular state, the more maneuvering it has in maintenance and consolidation of its power. "Wolves" are always getting more income with rising state revenues including higher salaries, bonuses, non-salary benefits, bigger budgets for state departments and subdivisions, more influence and power, more possibilities for promotion of their special interests, etc. Significant portion of taxes collected on annexed territories is usually spent in the core part of victorious State including for buying "sheep" in order to keep them happy and away from potential rebellion. Besides, most profitable economic activities on annexed territories are usually reserved for companies of the victorious side additionally increasing domestic employment. Therefore, wars are adding to domestic social parasitism, social parasitism on account of annexed territories, on account of various spoils of war and on account of acquired as military gains international privileges and advantages. Of course, in our days in economically developed countries we are at an absolutely fair apprehension that none of those gains cost human victims of war - either victims among military personnel or among civil population.

Wars, of course, take place throughout the entire history of mankind and it is hard to distinguish any particular more peaceful or more aggressive period in overall universal history. Yet it seems to be true that countries close to laissez-faire and to classical liberal idea of society relatively rarer pursue military ambitions than societies built on state domination and on elevated levels of income redistribution as free market societies hardly imagine at all making a living through social parasitism of any kind and probably do not see or do not apprehend as important the military gains above. They simply make much more money, influence and power through business and economic activity than they can expect from wars. On the contrary, societies built on comprehensive income redistribution are never satisfied with its current level and are always eager to invent new ideological justifications for its elevation including justifications projected towards international environment. Two most bloody wars in the history of mankind so far (World War I and II) were initiated by countries with significantly escalated state domination in society and driven by highly pro-etatist socialist ideologies – state militarism or military socialism in 1914 and national-socialism in 1939. Those wars were taking place during a historical period when socialism in different forms, but in one glimmering yet vague idea, started to unleash and to gain its power throughout the

globe. Of course, we cannot say precisely how much of their victims fall on advanced military technology and how much on dominating socialist ideas.

## **27. Science and technology**

Examining history of scientific discoveries and of fundamental technological inventions we might be caught by an apprehension that vast majority of essential scientific discoveries and particularly of essential technological innovations were made before the global financial crisis of 1933, which led to a spread of socialist policies worldwide, or even mostly during a period of 18-19th and beginning of 20th centuries. Technological innovations in 18-19th centuries were less abundant than during our later history as economy was much smaller, but they were a way more strategic so that further innovations mostly followed and led them to perfection rather than were generating essentially new ideas. Particularly interesting is that in 18-19th centuries, innovations were predominantly related to capital or to production technology, while in 20th century a significant share of discoveries and innovations falls on consumption items and military technology. Inventions in consumption items, of course, are equally important, but such a trend says a lot about what exactly is being financed and where money flows. All this, in fact, is even more relevant for scientific discoveries. Actually a significant number of crucial scientific discoveries were made yet far back in history even before the 18th century. Nevertheless 18th-19th centuries and beginning of 20th century are booming with the strategic discoveries as well, while rather few of them were made after 1933. This is moreover notable since science in the 20th century, particularly theoretical science, was getting significant financial resources from the State and was financed by State incomparably more abundantly than in 18th-19th centuries.

Is it a coincidence that science and technology were developing more impressively and faster during a prevalence of classical liberalism under capitalism and particularly in societies close to laissez-faire (as very few of those discoveries and inventions were made by German or Russian nationals in absolute monarchies, while vast majority by British and Americans) and that with a spreading of socialist domination worldwide after the Great Depression, we are witnessing a less impressive evolution, not to say "slowdown", in discoveries and innovations? Seems like not. With resources being subtracted from capital accumulation and production in favor of consumption, inventions related to industrial technology are having much less motivation. While with over-regulated and heavily taxed business it is getting more difficult to arrange adequate favorable environment, to generate ideas, to test, to register and to implement innovations. Plus to that, inventions and discoveries are seriously threatening to all components of social parasitism as they suppose significant changes everywhere and all the time including bankruptcies, lay offs, reshuffling of input and output structures, etc. They are a clear-cut threat to the entire system of social parasitism and therefore need to be kept on leash in the interests both of employees and employers, not even mentioning the state

bureaucracy. One objection might arise on our time comparison for inventions and discoveries. Aren't they having their natural limit and everything what is possible to discover is already mostly discovered and everything what is possible to invent is already more or less invented and needs only permanent improvement? Probably, this is a way of thinking of all our ancestors starting from prehistoric times and up until now. This thesis is hardly a legitimate one since even if scientific discoveries more or less presume a detection of objectively existing trends and laws (whether they are limited in numbers we cannot say), innovations are in their nature something, which was not before, something completely new and therefore they do not have any limits or ends except limits established by inefficient societies.

In the conclusion we ask reader's kind permission to step aside a little from our purely theoretical perspective and bring a more prosaic practical example. Reading various popular science fiction books or watching science fiction movies written and filmed twenty-thirty-forty years ago, one could not help but notice them always drawing a picture of the end of twentieth century with people traveling to other planets, meeting extraterrestrial civilizations, being surrounded everywhere by robots, being spared from any toiling and annoying work, just thinking, engineering and discovering. None of these is happening and we do not see them happening in the near future. Why? We are leaving this to reader's judgment.