

## MARX'S CONTRAST OF CAPITALISM AND COMMUNISM

from *The German Ideology*, 1845:

“From the moment labor begins to be divided, each man has an exclusive and definite sphere of activity which is imposed on him and which he cannot leave; he is a hunter, a fisherman, a shepherd, or a critic, and he must remain one if he does not want to lose his means of livelihood; whereas in the communist society, where each man does not have an exclusive sphere of activity, but can perfect himself in whatever field he likes, society regulates general production, thereby making it possible for me to do one thing today and another thing tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, raise sheep in the evening, and practice criticism after dinner according to my whim, without ever becoming a hunter, a fisherman, or a critic.... This does away with that fragmentation of social activity, that consolidation of our own product into an objective force which dominates us, eluding our control, thwarting our expectations, reducing our calculations to nothing.”

from *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*:

Capitalism, the form of political economy which ushered in the industrial revolution is “a truly moral science, the most moral of all sciences. Its principal thesis is the renunciation of life and of human needs. The less you eat, drink, buy books, go to the theatre or to balls, or to the public house, and the less you think, love, theorize, sing, paint, fence, etc. the more you will be able to save and the greater will become your treasure which neither moth nor rust will corrupt – your capital. The less you are, the less you express your life, the more you have, the greater is your alienated life and the greater is the saving of your alienated being. Everything which the economist takes from you in the way of life and humanity, he restores to you in the form of money and wealth. And everything which you are unable to do, your money can do for you....”

Communism is the positive abolition of private property as human self-estrangement [or alienation], and hence the true appropriation of the human essence [nature] through and for man; it is the complete restoration of man to himself as a social -- i.e., human -- being, a restoration which has become conscious and which takes place within the entire wealth of previous periods of development. This communism, as fully developed naturalism, equals humanism, and as fully developed humanism equals naturalism; it is the genuine resolution of the conflict between man and nature, and between man and man, the true resolution of the conflict between existence and being, between objectification and self-affirmation, between freedom and necessity, between individual and species. It is the solution of the riddle of history and knows itself to be the solution.