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POLITICAL ECONOMY

**A Textbook issued by the Economics Institute of the
Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R**

This textbook on Political Economy, prepared by the Economics Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., was first published in the U.S.S.R. in 1954. Regarding political economy as the science of the laws of development of the relations of production in human society, it deals not only with the capitalist economic system but also with pre- capitalist economic relations and, in considerable detail, with the economics of socialism. In their Foreword the authors stress that their aim is not dogmatic but scientific, and that they would welcome discussion and critical comments by all readers.

POLITICAL ECONOMY

**A Textbook issued by the Institute of
Economics the Academy of Sciences
of the U.S.S.R**

**1957
LAWRENCE & WISHART
LONDON**

This Soviet textbook on POLITICAL ECONOMY was first published in Moscow in 1954. A second revised and enlarged edition appeared in 1955, and a third edition is in preparation. The present translation has been made from the second Russian edition, and edited by C. P. Dutt and Andrew Rothstein.

Printed and bound in Great Britain by Jarrold and Sons Ltd., Norwich

FOREWORD TO THE FIRST EDITION

This textbook of political economy has been written by a group of economists comprising: Academician K.V. Ostrovityanov; Corresponding Member of the V.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences D.T. Shepilov; Corresponding Member of the V.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences L.A. Leontyev; Member of the All-Union Lenin Academy of Agricultural Sciences I.D. Laptev; Professor I.I. Kuzminov; Doctor of Economic Sciences L.M. Gatovsky; Academician P.F. Yudin; Corresponding Member of the V.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences A.I. Pashkov; and Candidate [Master] of Economic Sciences V. I. Pereslegin, Doctor of Economic Sciences V. N. Starovsky took part in the selection and editing of the statistical information included in the textbook.

In connection with the drafting of the textbook a large number of Soviet economists made valuable critical observations and contributed numerous useful suggestions concerning the text. These observations and suggestions were taken into account by the authors in their subsequent work on the book.

Of very great importance for the work on this textbook was the economic discussion organised in November 1951 by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. In the course of this discussion, in which hundreds of Soviet economists took an active part, the draft for a textbook of political economy submitted by the authors was subjected to a thorough critical examination. The proposals worked out as the result of this discussion for improving the draft of the textbook were an important source of improvement in the structure of the textbook and of enrichment of its content.

The final editing of the textbook was carried out by comrades K.V. Ostrovityanov, D.T. Shepilov, L.A. Leontyev, I.D. Laptev, I.I. Kuzminov and L. M. Gatovsky.

Being fully aware of the importance of a Marxist textbook of political economy, the authors intend to continue to work on further improvement of the text, on the basis of critical observations and suggestions which readers may make when they have acquainted themselves with the first edition. In this connection, the authors request readers to address their comments and suggestions on the textbook to the following address:

Institute of Economics,
U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences,
14 Volkhonka,
Moscow

FOREWORD TO THE SECOND EDITION

The first edition of the Political Economy textbook, published at the end of 1954 in over six million copies, was rapidly sold out. Besides the Russian original, there were versions in many of the languages of the peoples of the U.S.S.R., and the book was also published in a number of foreign countries.

The need has arisen for a second edition of the textbook. In preparing this edition the authors have made it their task to strengthen the text with new propositions and facts reflecting the steady growth of the socialist economy of the U.S.S.R. and the countries of People's Democracy and also the further intensification of the general crisis of capitalism.

The authors have endeavoured to take into account as fully as possible the experience gained in using this textbook in higher educational institutions, in Party schools and study-groups and for purposes of individual study. During the past year the book has been discussed in many university departments of political economy, and these have sent in their comments and requests. The authors have also received a large number of letters from readers, containing suggestions regarding the text. Broad conferences of economists were held in March and April 1955 to discuss thoroughly the first edition of the book, these being attended by research workers, teachers and business executives in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Minsk, Riga, Tallinn, Vilnius, Tbilisi, Erevan, Baku, Tashkent, Ashkhabad, Stalinabad, Alma-Ata and Sverdlovsk.

The authors have carefully studied all the critical observations and proposals regarding the textbook which have been made at conferences of university departments of political economy, at meetings of economists and in readers' letters, and have tried to use all of these that made for improving the book. At the same time they have maintained as their point of departure the need to keep to the present type of textbook, intended for the general reader, and not to allow its size to be enlarged to any considerable extent.

The final editing of the second edition has been carried out by comrades K.V. Ostrovityanov, D.T. Shepilov, L.A. Leontyev, I.D. Laptev, I.I. Kuzminov and L. M. Gatovksy.

Comrade V.N. Starovsky took part in the selection and editing of the statistical information contained in the book.

The authors express their thanks to all the comrades who helped in the preparation of the second edition of this textbook through their critical comments and suggestions. The authors intend to continue to work on the improvement of the textbook, and in this connection request readers to send their comments and suggestions to the following address:

Institute of Economics,
U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences,
14 Volkhonka,
Moscow
September 1955

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INTRODUCTION

Political economy belongs to the category of the social sciences.¹ It studies the laws of the social production and distribution of material wealth at the various stages of development of human society.

The basis of the life of society is material production. In order to live, people must have food, clothing and other material means of life. In order to have these, people must produce them, they must work.

Men produce the material means of life, i.e., carry on their struggle with nature, not as isolated individuals but together, in groups and societies. Consequently, production is always and under all circumstances social production, and labour is an activity of social man.

The process of producing material wealth presupposes the following factors: (1) human labour; (2) the subject of labour; and (3) the means of labour.

Labour is a purposive activity of the human being in the process of which he transforms and adapts natural objects so as to satisfy his own requirements. Labour is a natural necessity, an indispensable condition for man's existence. Without labour human life itself would be impossible.

Everything to which man's labour is directed is a *subject of labour*. Subjects of labour may be directly provided by nature, as, for example, wood, which is cut in the forest, or ore, which is extracted from the bowels of the earth. Subjects of labour which have previously been subjected to the action of labour (e.g., ore in a metal works, cotton in a spinning mill, yarn in a weaving mill) are called *raw materials*.

Means of labour consist of all those things with the aid of which man acts upon the subject of his labour and transforms it. To the category of means of labour belong, first and foremost, the instruments of production, together with land, buildings used for production purposes, roads, canals, storehouses, etc. The determining role among the means of labour is played by the *instruments of production*. These comprise the various kinds of tools which man uses in his working activity, beginning with the crude stone implements of primitive man and ending with modern machinery. The level of development of the instruments of production provides the criterion of society's mastery over nature, the criterion of the development of production. Economic epochs are distinguished one from another not by what is produced but by how material wealth is produced, with what instruments of production.

The subjects of labour and the means of labour constitute the *means of production*. Means of production in themselves, not associated with labour power, can produce nothing. For the labour process, the process of producing material wealth, to begin, labour power must be united with the instruments of production.

Labour power is man's ability to work, the sum total of the physical and spiritual forces of man, thanks to which he is able to produce material wealth.

¹ The name of this science, "political economy", comes from the Greek words "politeia" and "oikonomia". The word "politeia" means "social organisation". The word "oikonomia" is made up of two words: "oikos"-household, or household affairs, and "nomos"-law. The science of political economy received its name only at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Labour power is the active element in production, which sets the means of production in motion. With the development of the instruments of production man's ability to work also develops, his skill, habits of work, and production experience.

The instruments of production, by means of which material wealth is produced, and the people who set these instruments in motion and accomplish the production of material values, thanks to the production experience and habits of work which they possess, constitute the *productive forces* of society. The working masses are the basic productive force of human society in all stages of its development.

The productive forces reflect the relationship of people to the objects and forces of nature used for the production of material wealth. In production, however, men act not only upon nature but also upon each other.

"They produce only by co-operating in a certain way and mutually exchanging their activities. In order to produce, they enter into definite connections and relations with one another and only within these social connections and relations does their action on nature, does production, take place." (Marx, "Wage-Labour and Capital", Marx and Engels, Selected Works, 1950, English edition, vol. I, p. 83.)

The definite social connections and relations formed between people in the process of the production of material wealth constitute *production relations*. Production relations include: (a) forms of ownership of the means of production; (b) the position of the various social groups in production which result from this, and their mutual relations; (c) the forms of distribution of products that follow from the ownership of the means of production and people's position in production.

The character of production relations depends on who owns the means of production (land, woods, waters, subsoil, raw materials, instruments of production, buildings used for production, means of communication and transport, etc.) whether they are the property of particular persons, social groups or classes, which use these means of production in order to exploit the working people, or whether they are the property of society, whose aim is the satisfaction of the material and cultural requirements of the masses of the people, of society as a whole. The state of production relations shows how the means of production are distributed among the members of society and, consequently, how the material wealth produced by people is distributed. Thus, the determining feature, the basis of production relations is one or another form of *property in the means of production*.

The relations of production determine also corresponding relations of distribution. *Distribution* is the connecting link between production and consumption.

The products which are produced in society serve either productive or personal consumption. *Productive consumption* means the use of means of production to create material wealth. *Personal consumption* means the satisfaction of man's requirements in food, clothing, shelter, etc.

The distribution of the objects of personal consumption which are produced depends on the distribution of the means of production. In capitalist society the

means of production belong to the capitalists, and in consequence the products of labour also belong to the capitalists. The workers are deprived of means of production and, so as not to die of hunger, are obliged to work for the capitalists, who appropriate the products of their labour. In socialist society the means of production are public property. In consequence, the products of labour belong to the working people themselves.

In those social formations in which commodity production exists, the distribution of material wealth takes place through *exchange of commodities*. Production, distribution, exchange and consumption constitute a unity, in which the determining role is played by production. The particular forms of distribution, exchange and consumption so determined exert in their turn a reciprocal influence upon production, either facilitating its development or hindering it.

The sum total of the

"relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which' correspond definite forms of social consciousness." (Marx, "Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy," Marx and Engels, Selected Works, 1950, English edition, vol. I, p. 329).

Having come into existence, the superstructure exercises in its turn a reciprocal active influence on the basis, hastening or hindering the development of the latter.

Production has a technical aspect and a social aspect. The technical aspect of production is studied by the natural and technical sciences: physics, chemistry, metallurgy, engineering, agronomy and others. Political economy studies the social aspect of production, the *social-production*, i.e., the *economic*, relations between people. "Political economy", wrote V. I. Lenin, "is not at all concerned with 'production' but with the social relations between people in production, the social system of production." (Lenin, "Development of Capitalism in Russia", Works, vol. III, pp. 40-1.)

Political economy studies production relations in their interaction with the productive forces. The productive forces and the production relations as a unity constitute the *mode of production*.

The productive forces are the most mobile and revolutionary factor in production. The development of production begins with changes in the productive forces-first of all with changes and development in the instruments of production, and thereafter corresponding changes also take place in the sphere of production relations. Production relations between men, which develop in dependence upon the development of the productive forces, themselves in turn actively affect the productive forces.

The productive forces of society can develop uninterruptedly only where the production relations correspond to the nature of the productive forces. At a certain stage of their development the productive forces outgrow the framework of the given production relations and come into contradiction with them. The production relations are transformed from being forms of development of the productive forces into fetters upon them.

As a result, the old production relations sooner or later give place to new

ones, which correspond to the level of development which has been attained and to the character of the productive forces of society. With the change in the economic basis of society its superstructure also changes. The material premises for the replacement of old production relations by new ones arise and develop within the womb of the old formation. The new production relations open up scope for the development of the productive forces.

Thus an economic law of the development of society is the law of *obligatory correspondence* of production relations to the nature of the productive forces.

In society based on private property and the exploitation of man by man, conflicts between the productive forces and the production relations are expressed in the form of class struggle; In these conditions the replacement of an old mode of production by a new one is effected by way of social revolution.

Political economy is an historical science. It is concerned with material production in its historically determined social form, with the economic laws which are inherent in particular modes of production. *Economic laws* express the essential nature of economic phenomena and processes, the internal, causal connection and dependence existing between them.

The laws of economic development are objective laws. They arise and operate on the basis of definite economic conditions independent of men's will. Men can understand these laws and utilise them in society's interests, but they can neither abolish nor create economic laws.

The utilising of economic laws in class society always has a class character: the advanced class of each social formation makes use of economic laws to serve the progressive development of society, while the moribund classes resist this.

Each mode of production has its own basic economic law.

This basic economic law expresses the essence of the given mode of production and determines its main aspects and line of development.

Political economy

"must first investigate the special laws of each separate stage in the evolution of production and exchange, and only when it has completed this investigation will it be able to establish the few quite general laws which hold good for production and exchange as a whole". (Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, 1936, Lawrence & Wishart edition, p.165.)

Consequently, the development of the various social formations is governed both by their own specific economic laws and also by those economic laws which are common to all formations, e.g., the law of obligatory correspondence of the production relations to the character of the productive forces. Hence social formations are not only marked off one from another by the specific economic laws inherent in each given mode of production, but also are linked together by a few economic laws which are common to all formations.

Political economy studies the following basic types of production relations which are known to history: *the primitive-communal system, the slave-owning system, feudalism, capitalism, socialism*. The primitive-communal system is a pre-class system. The slave-owning system, feudalism and capitalism are different forms of society based on the enslavement and exploitation of the working masses. Socialism is a social system which is free from exploitation of

man by man.

Political economy investigates how social production develops from lower, stages to higher stages, and how the social orders which are based on exploitation of man by man arise, develop and are abolished. It shows how the entire course of historical development prepares the way for the victory of the socialist mode of production. It studies, furthermore, the economic laws of socialism the laws of the origin of socialist society and its subsequent development along the road to the higher phase of communism.

Thus *political economy is the science of the development of the social-productive, i.e., economic, relations between men. It elucidates the laws which regulate the production and distribution of material wealth in human society at the different stages of its development.*

The method of Marxist political economy is the method of dialectical materialism. Marxist-Leninist political economy is built up by applying the fundamental propositions of dialectical and historical materialism to the study of the economic structure of society.

Unlike the natural sciences -physics, chemistry, etc.- political economy cannot make use in its study of the economic structure of society of experiments or tests carried out in artificially created laboratory conditions which eliminate phenomena that hinder examination of a process in its purest form. "In the analysis of economic forms neither microscopes nor chemical reagents are of use. The force of abstraction must replace both." (Marx, *Capital*, vol. I, Kerr edition, p. 12.)

Every economic system presents a contradictory and complicated picture. The task of scientific research consists in revealing by means of theoretical analysis the deep-seated processes and fundamental features of the economy which lie behind the outward appearance of economic phenomena and express the essential character of the particular production relations concerned, abstracting these from secondary features.

What emerges from such scientific analysis is *economic categories*, i.e., concepts which represent the theoretical expression of the real production relations of the particular social formation concerned, such as, for example, commodity, value, money, economic accounting, profitability, work-day, etc.

Marx's method consists of gradually ascending from the simplest of economic categories to more complex ones, which corresponds to the progressive development of society on an ascending line, from lower stages to higher. When such a procedure is used in investigating the categories of political economy, logical investigation is combined with *historical* analysis of social development.

Marx, in his analysis of capitalist production relations, singles out first of all the everyday relationship which is the simplest of all and the most frequently repeated-the exchange of one commodity for another. He shows that in the commodity, this cell-form of capitalist economy, the contradictions of capitalism are laid up in embryo. With analysis of the commodity as his point of departure, Marx explains the origin of money, discloses the process of transforming money into capital, the essential nature of capitalist exploitation. Marx shows how social development leads inevitably to the downfall of capitalism, to the victory of communism.

Lenin pointed out that political economy must be expounded in the form of

the characterisation of the successive periods of economic development. In conformity with this, in the present course of political economy, the basic categories of political economy -commodity, value, money, capital, etc.- are examined in the historical order of succession in which they arose at different stages in the development of human society. Thus, elementary concepts concerning commodities and money are presented already when pre-capitalist formations are being described. These categories are later set forth in fully-developed form when capitalist economy, in which they attain their full development, is being studied. The same order of exposition will also be employed when socialist economy is dealt with. An elementary notion of the basic economic law of socialism, of the law of planned, proportional development of the national economy, of distribution according to work done, and of value, money, etc., will be given in the section devoted to the transitional period from capitalism to socialism. An expanded treatment of these laws and categories will be given in the section "The Socialist System of National Economy".

Political economy, unlike history, does not undertake to study the historical process of society's development in all its concrete variety. It provides basic concepts concerning the fundamental features of each system of social economy. Besides political economy there are also a number of other scientific disciplines which are concerned with the study of economic relations in the various branches of the national economy on the basis of the laws discovered by political economy-industrial economics, agricultural economics, etc.

Political economy studies, not some transcendental questions detached from life, but very real and living questions which affect the vital interests of men, society, classes. Are the downfall of capitalism and the triumph of the socialist system of economy inevitable; do the interests of capitalism contradict those of society and of the progressive development of mankind; is the working class capitalism's grave-digger and the bearer of the idea of the liberation of society from capitalism-all these and similar questions are answered differently by different economists, depending on which class's interests they voice.

That is just why there does not exist one single political economy for all classes of society, but instead several political economies: *bourgeois* political economy, *proletarian* political economy, and also the political economy of the *intermediate* classes, petty-bourgeois political economy.

It follows from this, however, that those economists are quite wrong who assert that political economy is a neutral, non-party science, that political economy is independent of the struggle between classes in society and not connected either directly or indirectly with any political party.

Is it possible in general for a political economy to exist which is objective, impartial and does not fear the truth? Certainly this is possible. Such an objective political economy can only be the political economy of that class which has no interest in slurring over the contradictions and sore places of capitalism, which has no interest in preserving the capitalist order: the class whose interests merge with the interests of liberating society from capitalist slavery, whose interests coincide with the interests of mankind's progressive development. Such a class is the working class. Therefore an objective and disinterested political economy can only be that which is based on the interests of the working class. This political economy is the political economy of

Marxism-Leninism.

Marxist political economy is a very important component of Marxist-Leninist theory.

The great leaders and theoreticians of the working class, K. Marx and F. Engels, were the founders of proletarian political economy. In his work of genius, *Capital*, Marx revealed the laws of the rise, development and' downfall of capitalism; and showed, the economic grounds for the inevitability of socialist revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Marx and Engels worked out in general terms the theory of the transition period from capitalism to socialism and of the two phases of communist society.

The economic teachings of Marxism underwent further creative development in the works of V.I. Lenin, founder of the Communist Party and the Soviet State, brilliant continuer of the work of Marx and Engels. Lenin enriched Marxist economic science by generalising the new experience of historical development, created the Marxist teaching on imperialism, revealed the economic and political nature of imperialism, provided the initial propositions for the basic economic law of modern capitalism, worked out the fundamentals of the theory of the general crisis of capitalism, created a new, complete theory of socialist revolution, and worked out scientifically the basic problems of the building of socialism and communism..

Lenin's great companion-in-arms and pupil, J.V. Stalin, put forward and developed a number of new propositions in political economy, based on the fundamental works of Marx, Engels and Lenin which had created a really scientific political economy.

Marxist-Leninist economic theory is creatively developed in the resolutions of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and of the fraternal Communist Parties and the works of the pupils and companions-in-arms of Lenin and Stalin-the leaders of these parties, who have enriched economic science with new conclusions and propositions on the basis of generalising the practice of the revolutionary struggle and of the building of socialism and communism.

Marxist-Leninist political economy is a powerful weapon of ideas in the hands of the working class and of all working mankind in their struggle for emancipation from capitalist oppression. The living strength of the economic theory of Marxism-Leninism consists in the fact that it arms the working class and the working masses with knowledge of the laws of the economic development of society, giving them clear prospects and confidence in the ultimate victory of Communism.

Part One

PRE-CAPITALIST MODES OF PRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

THE PRIMITIVE COMMUNAL MODE OF PRODUCTION

The Rise of Human Society

The rise of man belongs to the present, the Quaternary period of the earth's history, which science reckons as a little less than a million years. In various regions of Europe, Asia and Africa distinguished by their warm and moist climates there dwelt a highly developed species of anthropoid ape. As a result of a very long development, which included a number of transitional stages, from these remote ancestors there originated man.

The emergence of man was one of the greatest turning points in the development of nature. This turning point took place when man's ancestors *began to make implements of labour*. The fundamental difference between man and animal starts only with the making of implements, though they be the very simplest. It is well known that apes often use a stick or stone to knock fruit from a tree or to defend themselves from attack. But not a single animal has ever made even the most primitive implement. The conditions of their daily lives drove man's ancestors to make implements. Experience taught them that sharpened stones could be used for defence against attack or for hunting animals. Man's ancestors began to make stone implements, striking one stone against another. In this way a start was made in the making of implements. With the making of implements labour begins.

Thanks to labour the fore-paws of the anthropoid ape were converted into the hands of man. Remains of the ape-man—a transitional stage from ape to man—found by archaeologists afford evidence of this. The ape-man's brain was much smaller than the human brain, but his hand was already comparatively little different from that of man. It follows that the hand is not only an organ of labour, but also its product.

As hands became freed for acts of labour, man's ancestors acquired an ever more upright gait. Once the hands were occupied with labour the final transition to an upright gait took place, and this played a very important part in making man.

Man's ancestors lived in hordes, or herds; the first men also lived in herds. But between men there arose a link which did not, and could not, exist in the animal world: the link through labour. Men made implements jointly and jointly they applied them. Consequently, the rise of man was also the rise of *human society*, the transition from the zoological to the social condition.

Men's common labour led to the rise and development of articulate speech. *Language* is the means, the implement by which men communicate with one another, exchange opinions and achieve mutual understanding.

The exchange of thoughts is a constant and vital necessity, since without it the common activities of men in their struggle with the forces of nature, and the very existence of social production, are impossible.

Labour and articulate speech had a decisive influence in perfecting man's

organism, in the development of his *brain*. The development of language is closely linked with the development of thought. In the process of labour man's circle of perceptions and conceptions was widened, his sensory organs were perfected. Man's labour activities became conscious acts as distinct from the instinctive activities of animals.

Thus, labour is "the prime basic condition for all human existence, and this to such an extent that, in a sense, we have to say that labour created man himself". (Engels, "The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man", Man: and Engels, *Selected Works*, 1950, English edition, vol. II, p. 74.) Thanks to labour, human society arose and began to develop.

Conditions of Material Life. The Development of the Implements of Labour

In primitive times man was extremely dependent on his natural surroundings; he was completely weighed down by the difficulties of existence, by the difficulties of his struggle with nature. The process of mastering the elemental forces of nature went on extremely slowly, since the implements of labour were extremely primitive. Man's first implements were roughly chipped stones and sticks. They were like artificial extensions of his bodily organs: the stone, of his fist, the stick, of his outstretched arm.

Men lived in groups whose numbers did not exceed a few dozen persons: a greater single number could not have provided food for themselves. When groups met clashes sometimes took place between them. Many groups perished from hunger or became the prey of wild animals. In these conditions labour in common was for men the only possible form of labour and an absolute necessity.

For a long time primitive man lived mainly by means of *food gathering* and *hunting*, both carried out collectively with the help of the simplest implements. What was jointly obtained was jointly consumed. Cannibalism occurred among primitive men as a consequence of the precariousness of the food supply. In the course of many thousands of years, as though groping their way, by means of an extremely slow accumulation of experience, men learned to make the simplest implements suitable for striking, cutting, digging and the other very simple activities which then almost exhausted the whole sphere of production. The discovery of fire was a great victory for primitive man in his struggle with nature. At first men learned to make use of fire which had arisen naturally. They saw lightning set fire to a tree, observed forest fires and the eruptions of volcanoes. The fire which had been obtained by chance was long and carefully preserved. Only after many thousands of years did man learn the secret of making fire. With more advanced production of implements men observed that fire came from friction and learned to make it.

The discovery of fire and its application gave men dominion over specific natural forces. Primitive man had finally broken away from the animal world: the long epoch of his becoming human had been completed. Thanks to the discovery of fire the conditions of material life for man changed fundamentally. First, fire could be used to prepare food, as a result of which the number of edible objects available to man was increased: it became possible to eat fish, meat, starchy roots, tubers and so on prepared with the help of fire. Secondly,

fire began to play an important part in making the implements of production. Thirdly, it "also afforded protection against cold, thanks to which it became possible for men to spread over the greater part of the world. Fourthly, fire afforded a defence against wild beasts.

For a long time hunting remained the most important source of the means of existence. It provided men with skins for clothes, bones with which to make implements, and meat which influenced the further development of the human organism and primarily the development of the brain.

As his physical and mental development progressed man became able to perfect his implements. A stick with a sharpened end served for hunting. Then he began to fix sharpened stones to the stick. Stone-tipped spears, stone axes, scrapers and knives, harpoons and fish-hooks appeared. These implements made possible the hunting of large animals and the development of fishing.

Stone remained the chief material for implement-making for a very long time. The epoch when stone implements predominated, which lasted for hundreds of thousands of years, is called the *Stone Age*. Only later did man learn to make implements of metal; at first of native metal, in the first instance copper (but copper, being a soft metal, was not widely used to make implements), later of bronze (an alloy of copper and tin), and finally of iron. Thus, after the Stone Age the *Bronze Age* followed, and after that the *Iron Age*.

The earliest traces of the smelting of copper in Hither Asia date from the fifth to fourth millennia B.C. In Southern and Central Europe the smelting of copper arose in approximately the third to second millennia B.C. The oldest traces of bronze in Mesopotamia date from the fourth millennium B.C.

The earliest traces of the smelting of iron have been discovered in Egypt and Mesopotamia; they date from before 2000 B.C. In Western Europe the Iron Age began about 1000 B.C.

The invention of the *bow and arrow*, with the appearance of which hunting began to provide more of the necessities of life, was an important landmark on the road to improving the implements of labour. The development of hunting led to the origin of primitive cattle-breeding. Hunters began to domesticate animals. The dog was domesticated earlier than other animals, and later goats, cattle, pigs and horses.

The origin of primitive *agriculture* was a further great stride in the development of society's productive forces. While gathering fruits and roots of plants, primitive men began to notice that grains which were dropped on the ground sprouted. Thousands of times this remained uncomprehended, but sooner or later the connection of these phenomena was established in primitive man's mind, and he began to cultivate plants. Thus agriculture arose.

For a long time it remained extremely primitive. The earth was broken up by hand, at first with a simple stick, then with a stick with a hooked end, a hoe. In the river valleys the seeds were scattered on the mud which had been brought down by the river floods. The domestication of animals made possible the use of cattle for draught purposes. Later, when men learned to smelt metal, and metal implements appeared, their application made agricultural labour more productive. Tillage acquired a firmer basis. Primitive tribes began to adopt a settled mode of life.

The Production Relations of Primitive Society. Natural Division of Labour

Production relations are determined by the character and condition of the productive forces. In primitive communal society the basis of production relations is communal property in the means of production. Communal property corresponds to the character of the productive forces in this period. The implements of labour in primitive society were so crude that they prevented primitive man from struggling with the forces of nature and wild animals singlehanded. "This primitive type collective or co-operative production", Marx wrote, "was, of course, the result of the weakness of the individual and not of the socialisation of the means of production." ("Rough drafts of Marx's Letter to Vera Zasulich", Marx and Engels, *Works*, Russian edition, vol. XXVII, p. 681.) Hence came the necessity for collective labour, for common property in land and other means of production as well as in the products of labour. Primitive men had no conception of private ownership of the means of production. Only certain implements of production, those which were also implements of defence against wild animals, were their private property, used by separate members of the commune.

Primitive man's labour created no overplus beyond what was essential for life, that is no *surplus product*. In such conditions there could be no classes or exploitation of man by man in primitive society. Social property extended only to small communities which were more or less isolated from one another. As Lenin put it, the social character of production here embraced only the members of one community.

The labour activity of men in primitive society was based on simple co-operation. *Simple co-operation* is the simultaneous application of more or less considerable labour force to perform work of the same kind. Even simple co-operation gave primitive men the possibility of performing tasks which would have been unthinkable for a single man (for example, in hunting large animals).

In the extremely low level of development of productive forces which then existed the meagre food was divided equally. There could be no other division, since the products of labour scarcely sufficed to satisfy the most essential needs: if one member of a primitive community received more than the share which was equal for all, then someone else would be doomed to starvation and death. Thus, *equal distribution* of the products of common labour was inevitable.

The custom of equal division was deeply rooted among primitive peoples. It has been observed by travellers living among tribes at a low level of social development. More than a hundred years ago the great naturalist Darwin made a voyage round the world. Describing the life of tribes on Tierra del Fuego he relates the following incident: The Tierra del Fuegians were given a piece of canvas; they tore the canvas into completely equal parts so that each one should have an equal share.

The *basic economic law of primitive communal society* consisted in the securing of the vitally necessary means of existence with the help of primitive