

must be judged in terms of their consequences. Social change is essentially a learning process, and the learning process cannot be short-circuited. To posit this does not mean gradualism, compromise, but just the opposite: uncompromising theory and uncompromising analysis of *all* "classes," *all* means. If "politics" be defined as the creation of "myths" to "win" the masses—what Marx called "names, battle slogans, and costumes"—then what we will eventually witness is not the reform of but the abolition of politics.

The second criticism was that these concepts do not arise out of the work of analysis itself but are efforts to battle with false problems from the metaphysical past. Such is the problem of "interests": the problem exists at all only because two words, "self-interest" and "general welfare," happen to exist. Such is the problem of "rights": who has what rights and how they are to rank in case of conflict is not an issue for intelligence to solve but an affair of *ipse dixit*.

What little we have to be thankful for in social discussion today is precisely due to the fact that social theorists are forgetting these problems and others like them. In a famous article A. F. Bentley once asked physicists who were getting excited about the "philosophical" ravings of Jeans and Eddington: "What difference can it make to the physicist whether 'ideas,' 'concepts,' 'minds' really 'exist' or not, or whether anybody else thinks they exist or not?" Somebody ought to say to the Leftists: "What difference can it possibly make to you whether 'classes' or 'rights' or 'interests' really exist or not? Get on with your work."

*New York University*