

THREEFOLD SOCIAL ORDER

FROM THE BASIC IDEAS OF RUDOLF STEINER

ON

THE THREEFOLD SOCIAL ORDER

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Historical Commentary.

At the end of the World War [1914-18] when enthusiasm for President Wilson's ideas was at its height, Dr. Rudolf Steiner emphasized their theoretical and abstract character. He pointed out that those ideas had no true connection with the real nature of the situation of the European countries, and would therefore remain unfruitful. Europe would have to confront Wilson's theories with an idea of its own.

The truth of this has since been clearly demonstrated. Wilson's theories of the National State have not been put into practice. Almost all European States contain even today several nationalities within their borders. This fact must be taken into consideration.

The solution offered by Dr. Steiner in his book, *The Threefold Commonwealth* (New Order of the Relationship between the Spiritual-Cultural Life, Rights-Life, and Economic Life within each State), was first brought to the notice of leading personalities in Europe by Count Otto Lerchenfeld and others.

Shortly before the collapse of Austria, in which country the problem of dealing with numerous nationalities was particularly acute, a *Memorandum on the Threefold Social Order* (1917) was placed before Emperor Karl of Austria. (See *Memoirs of Premier Graf Arthur Polzer-Hoditz*, p.620, published by Amalthea Verlag, Zurich, Leipzig, Vienna, in 1929). But those responsible at that time lacked the necessary courage to risk a new solution. Thus followed the collapse of Austria. Extracts from that Memorandum are included in the text which follows.

Experts, including leading European statesmen, were acquainted with the contents of the Memorandum and were convinced of the soundness of the new solution offered. Dr. Rudolf Steiner's proposals aroused much interest not only in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, but also in England, Scandinavia and other European and American countries. Leading newspapers published detailed (1) references and discussions on the subject. *The Threefold Commonwealth* was discussed throughout Europe and every thinking person on the Continent was talking about it.

The European statesmen however in the prevailing chaos of that time shirked a concrete application of a solution which they themselves recognized as being right. So President Wilson's imported ideas prevailed and the problem remained unsolved. To-day one knows from subsequent experiences that a right and healthy solution of the situation is still lacking.

It must be particularly emphasized that what is put forward in this book has no political coloring but is mainly intended to lead to the recognition and solution of social problems. Any statesman having the courage to put into practice a solution on the lines indicated in this book could bring about epoch-making developments.

I

Extracts from Dr. Steiner's Memorandum of the Year 1917.

It is necessary to confront the abstract theories of President Wilson with a program based upon facts, *i.e.*, one which does not place the emphasis on what is *desirable*, but presents a simple description of what Europe is able to do because she possesses the capacity to do it. This requires recognition of the following:

"1. That a democratic representative assembly is only qualified to deal with the affairs of pure politics, defence, and police. These must necessarily have developed historically. If they are represented independently in a parliament and administered by a civil service responsible to it, they necessarily develop a conservative tendency. This is evidenced by the fact that since the Great War parties other than the conservative parties have, in this respect, become conservative. Moreover, they will become increasingly so the more they are forced to recognize that democratic assemblies can really deal only with political, military, and police affairs.

"2. All economic affairs should be dealt with by separate self-governing bodies and a central economic council. Once these are freed from all political and military influence they will be able to develop (2) their business in a manner suitable to the needs of the moment, and according to the laws of economic life itself.

"3. All judicial, educational, cultural, and spiritual affairs should be left to the free choice of the individual. In this sphere the State should have police duties only but no right of initiative. What is here meant is drastic only in appearance. It could be objected to only by those who refuse to face facts with an open mind. The State would leave it to vocational, professional and national bodies to establish their own courts, schools, and churches and the individual be left free to choose for himself a church, school, and even a judge. At first this would have to be confined within certain territorial limits, but it contains the possibility of composing in a peaceful manner conflicting national and other interests. It contains, in fact, the possibility of achieving something real in the place of the nebulous decisions of the present so-called international courts of justice. . ."

In another Memorandum of the same period Dr. Steiner refers to this matter as follows :

"Human affairs in general and questions relating to the freedom of peoples now demand as a starting point the *freedom of the individual*. In this respect one cannot even make a beginning so long as one believes it to be possible to solve the problem of freeing peoples in some way other than by freeing the individual. The first depends upon the second; the freeing of peoples would follow as a natural consequence of individual freedom. The individual man must be allowed to profess his adherence to a people, a religion, in fact, to any community which fosters human aspirations, without being hindered by his political or economic connections." . . . "It is most important to recognize how different the relationship is between States and peoples, and even individuals, when the three spheres of life (Spiritual-Cultural, Legal-Political, and Economic) are separated than when they are entangled in conflicts caused through binding together things which are incompatible . . . By separating them the impulse engendered within any one of these three

spheres works in a harmonizing way on the others. In particular, economic interests would reconcile differences arising from the clash of political views, and the spiritual-cultural interests appertaining to the whole of humanity could unfold such forces as tend to draw the peoples together, whereas, lacking this separation, these same forces are reduced to utter impotence when burdened from outside with economic and political conflicts. No greater deception has arisen within recent times than (3) over this fact. It was overlooked that human relations in general can only put forth their real strength when they are developed from within on a basis of free association. Then they co-operate with economic interests in such a way as to bring about a natural growth, which can, however, have only a doubtful future if left to the protection of Utopian international organizations, such as international courts of justice, etc. . . ."

". . . The political communities of Europe would thus be able to develop on the basis of a healthy conservatism.

"The economic domains would develop in a healthy manner in accordance with their opportunities (because nobody would seriously think of trying to fit a given territory into an economic domain in which economically it was bound to perish. Only there must be no hindrance from the side of economics to freedom of action in matters of creed, nationality, and so on).

"Cultural affairs will be freed from the pressure exercised upon them from the side of economics and politics, and at the same time cease to exert any pressure themselves. All cultural affairs will be kept in continuous and healthy movement. . .

"The possibility of carrying out this plan can not be doubted by anybody who bases his thinking on the actual conditions prevailing in Europe. For there is here no agitation that this or that *must be* done; on the contrary indications are being given of what *wills* to carry *itself* through of its own accord, and it will succeed the very moment it is given the right of way."

II

There follow a few of the most important extracts from Dr. Rudolf Steiner's works, *The Threefold Commonwealth* and *Studies in the Threefold Commonwealth* (Study Series III), as well as relevant observations from other works. *The Threefold Commonwealth* regards as fundamental the threefold aspect of social life, namely:

1. Economic Life;
2. Rights-Life (Law and Equity) ;
3. Spiritual-Cultural Life.

Each of these spheres has its own inherent law. Yet to-day they are all three administered according to one and the same pattern. (4)

(a) Economic Life.

Self-administration of the economic life is one of the most urgent necessities of our time. Its entanglement with questions of a purely political character has made it difficult, if not impossible, to deal with either sphere in a really objective manner. In practice it has become evident again and again that the most irreconcilable political antagonists were often able to come to an understanding on practical questions so long as they were not obliged to champion their party arguments in parliament, but could deal simply with the practical issues in the light of the relevant economic considerations. One of the most troublesome complications would be removed from the sphere of party machinery in this way. Rudolf Steiner says regarding this: ". . . Economic life can only flourish when it evolves as an independent member of the social organism in accordance with its own laws and forces and if it does not bring confusion into its structure by

allowing itself to be absorbed by another branch of the social organism, namely the Rights or Political. This political branch should rather exist in full independence alongside the economic one.

. . . Their healthy co-operation cannot be achieved when both members are cared for by one and the same legislature and administration, but only when each has its own legislative and administrative bodies, and these co-operate in an organic manner. For economic life is bound to suffer extinction when placed under political control, and the economic system loses its vitality as soon as it attempts to become political. . . ."

". . . In the economic life everything depends upon economic experience which a person can acquire only in his own particular sphere of activity." ". . . . Because everything has to develop from actual experience, administrative or otherwise, of any particular branch of economic life, the organization of economics can grow only on the soil of experience. This means that a practical administration of economics can rise only out of economic experience and knowledge of the basic facts of economic life. The parliamentary method of representation would be out of place. Rather there is needed a network of associations, coalitions, and guilds, in which producers and consumers come together, *etc.*, *etc.*, which can organize and administer itself and give rise to a central council. . . ."

" . . . Economic life strives for independence, not only from (5) state-organization, but also from the political kind of thinking. It will only succeed in this if, from strictly economic points of view, associations of consumers, distributors, and producers are formed.—The natural conditions of life will automatically limit the size of such associations. If too small, they would be uneconomic; if too large, unmanageable. The mutual relationship between the associations would be adjusted through actual experience in the course of daily life. . . ."

". . . It is a mistake to believe that one can found associations by bringing together only the producers of some particular branch of economic life. Association is a combining, a uniting, in order that this union can produce a common effort which will then come to expression in the price. That is a living unfolding of economic life, necessary for the full satisfaction of man's needs. That can only happen when men enter into the economic life wholeheartedly and do not merely ask: What are the interests, earnings and employing capacity of my particular branch? but rather concern themselves with the question: How ought my branch to be related to others in order that the value of our respective commodities may be mutually adjusted on a fair basis? *etc.*"

". . . It is quite possible for associations to be formed in which men from very different economic spheres are united. Human need is the starting point and what is required is for those who can speak with authority from their own life's experience about the needs of certain classes of people to unite with others who are engaged in the branches of production which supply those needs. . . . The associative principle in economic life reveals itself as something which, as it were, springs up to-day out of the subconscious depths of human society. We witness the formation of cartels and of trusts, always one-sidedly, amongst producers only, while the relationship between producers and consumers is also affected one-sidedly through agencies and the like. The abolition of such agencies and the establishment of associations which act as *living* mediators between producers and consumers would mean a fruitful future for the economic life. . . ."

Economic life cannot be "organized" from a central point; it can only be "associated." The associations described above would enter into mutual relations and thus, from really practical points of view, establish an autonomous Economic life of which the highest administration could be an "Economic Council."

"For an economic life of this form there can be no parliamentarizing; there is simply the practical knowledge and practical skill of each man in some special branch of industry, and the connection of (6) his own post with those of others to the best possible social advantage. What is done in an economic body of this kind is not decided by counting votes, but by the language of actual requirements,

which, from its nature, will be occupied with what can be performed by the people of the greatest expert knowledge and skill, and conveyed through federative co-operation to the place best suited for its consumption."

"Just, however, as in a natural organism one single system of organs would destroy itself through its own special action if there were not another system to keep it in balance, so too, one function of the social organism needs to be held in balance by another. What the people do as economic workers in the body economic would inevitably in course of time lead to damage, caused by its very nature, unless this possibility were counteracted by the political system of 'rights,' which must rest—and rests all the more surely—on a *democratic* basis, as the economic life does not and cannot do. In the democratic rights-state, the parliamentary method is in its rightful place. What is done there acts as a counter-force in men's life of economic activity, making good the harmful tendencies of the economic life. To insist on tying up economic life with the government of the State system, would be to deprive it of its efficiency and freedom of movement. The human beings engaged in economic work must receive their code of rights from somewhere *outside* the economic life, and simply *apply* it in the economic life itself. . . ."

(b) Rights-Life.

"Next comes the life of *public right*—political life in the proper sense. This must be recognized as forming a second branch of the body social. To this branch belongs what one might term the true life of the State (note: in the sense in which the term was formerly applied to a community possessing common rights). Whilst economic life is concerned with all that a man needs from Nature and what he himself produces from Nature—with commodities and the circulation and consumption of commodities—the second branch of the body social can have no other concern than what has to do, upon a purely human basis, with man's relation towards man. . . ." "In the life and conduct of the individual man the workings of the rights-organization flow together and blend with those of the purely (7) economic activities; in a healthy social organism the two must flow from different directions. In the organization of the economic life, that familiarity with business, which comes from practical experience and specialist training, will give the point of view needed by the person at the head of affairs. In the rights organization, the laws and administration will give effect to the general sense of right in the dealings of persons and groups with one another. The economic organization will assist the formation of Associations amongst people who from their calling, or as consumers, have the same interests or similar requirements. And this network of Associations, working together, will build up the whole fabric of the body economic. The economic organization will grow up on an associative basis, and out of the links between the associations. The work of the Associations will be purely economic in character but be carried on on a basis of rights provided by the rights-organization."

"The relationship of rights, that necessarily exists between a man and his fellows, is one that can only be rightly felt and lived *outside* the economic sphere, on a totally different soil, not inside it. In the healthy Social organism, therefore, there must be another system of life, alongside the economic life and independent of it, where human rights can grow up and find suitable administration. But the rights-life is, strictly, the political sphere—the true sphere of the State. If the interests that men have to serve in their economic life are carried over into the legislation and administration of the rights State, then these rights, as they come into existence, will merely be an expression of economic interests ; whilst, if the rights State takes on the management of economic affairs, it is no longer fitted to rule men's life of rights; since all its measures and institutions will be forced to serve man's need for commodities, and thereby be diverted from those impulses which make for the life of rights. . . ."

". . . The economic Associations, being able to make their economic interests recognized in the representative and administrative bodies of the economic organization, will not feel any need to force themselves into the legislative or executive government of the rights State in order to effect there what they have no power to achieve within the limits of economic life. If again the rights State takes no part whatever in any branch of economic life, then the institutions it establishes will be such only as spring from the sense of right of its members. Although the persons who sit on the representative body (8) of the rights State may, and perhaps will, be the same as those that are taking an active part in the economic life, yet, owing to the division of function, economic life will not be able to exert such an influence on the rights life that the health of the whole body social is undermined—as it can be when the State itself organizes branches of economic life, with representatives of the economic life as State-legislators making laws to suit economic interests."

(c) **Spiritual-Cultural Life.**

"As the third member, alongside the other two and equally independent, are to be understood all those things in the social organism which are connected with mental and spiritual life. The term 'spiritual culture,' or 'everything that is connected with mental and spiritual life,' is scarcely an accurate description. Perhaps one might more accurately express it as 'Everything that rests on the natural endowments of each single human being—everything that needs must enter into and play a part in the body social on the ground of the natural endowments, both spiritual and physical, of the individual.' "

"Thus the first system—the economic one—has to do with everything that must exist in order that man may keep straight in his material adjustments to the world around him. The second system has to do with whatever must exist in the body social because of men's personal relations to one another. The third system has to do with all that must spring from the personal individuality of each human being, and must thus be incorporated in the body social." . . . "Such, as here sketched, are the requisite conditions for a sound evolution of the spiritual life of the body social. What prevents them from being clearly perceived is that people's eyes are blurred through constantly seeing the spiritual life in great part fused and confounded with the political State system. The fusion has been taking place through several hundreds of years, and people have grown accustomed to it. They talk, it is true, about 'freedom of knowledge and education;' but all the same they consider it a matter of course that the political State should administer this 'free knowledge' and 'free education.' They do not see nor feel how in this way the State is bringing all spiritual life into dependence on State requirements. . . . This unfolding of the spiritual life can only be really free if it owes its place in the body social to no other impulses than those alone (9) which proceed from the spiritual life itself. Science, with all that part of the spiritual life which it affects, has received its whole cast from the fact that its administration in recent centuries has formed part of the State system. And not only so, but this fusion with the State has set its stamps also on the *content* of science."

"Education, from which all spiritual-cultural life proceeds, must be placed under the management of the educationists and teachers themselves. No interference in this management from State or economic life must be allowed. An educator should devote only such time to teaching as will permit him also to give the necessary time to management. He will thus be able to perform his administrative duties just as well as he does his teaching. No one would be allowed to direct education who was not at the same time actively engaged in teaching and education. No parliament, no person who perhaps at one time had been a teacher but was no longer personally active

in teaching, would have any authority. Direct experience gained through teaching would also benefit the administration. Within such an arrangement practicality and efficiency would be realized in the highest possible degree as a natural result. . . ."

". . . The thing that must be done for the schools at the present day is to anchor them entirely in a free spiritual life. What is to be taught and how the human being shall be educated in these schools must be drawn solely from a knowledge of the growing human being and of his individual capacities. . . . A healthy relation only exists between school and social system when the latter is kept constantly supplied with the new individual human capacities, developed without let or hindrance. This can only be realized if the schools and the whole educational system are placed on a footing of self-administration within the body social. State and economic life must receive into them the human beings educated by the independent spiritual life; they must not have the power to prescribe, according to their own wants, how these human beings are to be educated. . . ."

The self-administration of the spiritual life could be attained through the building up of corporations in which the fruitful energies of the spiritual-cultural, religious, pedagogical, artistic, and any individual creative life can find expression. Rudolf Steiner pointed out that modern needs demand "administration by corporations so far as all religious and spiritual-cultural matters are concerned, including those springing from national elements. The management of these corporations would receive the voluntary support of the individual (10) according to his free choice or confession. The supreme body (of the spiritual-cultural life) would have dealings only with the corporation concerned and not with the individual member. Such corporations could be admitted to representation upon the supreme body when they have the requisite number of members."

A new order such as this would lead also to a new, healthy and fruitful attitude of people towards the problems and tasks of the community. Instead of the present attitude which is increasingly dominated by class, party and group-egotism and which constantly confuses the Spiritual-cultural, Rights, and Economic aspects of society, The Threefold Social Order would provide opportunity for the free and fruitful unfolding of those thoughts and impulses which every man ought to develop in the service of the community without being constantly influenced by a one-sided political or economic point of view. Rudolf Steiner says: "It aims at establishing an independent, self-grounded life of the spirit, and therewith a free field, where a man may learn in life's fulness to understand what this human society is for which he is called upon to work—a free field where he shall learn to see what each single piece of work means for the combined fabric of the social order, and see it in such a light that he will learn to *love* the single piece of work because of its value for the whole. It aims at creating in this free life of spirit those deeper principles which can replace the motive forces arising from desire for personal gain. Only in a free life of spirit can some such love spring up for the human social order as an artist has for the work growing under his hands. . . ." ". . . Whilst the free life of the spirit will create the motives for developing individual ability, the democratically ordered life of the rights-state will give the needful impulses for the will to work. Real relations will grow up between the people united in a common social body, when every adult person has a voice, and 'rules his own rights' with every other—relations that can fire the will to 'work for the community.' "

It must be especially emphasized here that a one-sided achievement of a self-administered economic life which is demanded to-day from various points of view would be useless without at the same time a freeing and separating of the spiritual life from the political-parliamentary administration, because not only the economic life but much more so the spiritual-cultural life needs its own forms and administration just in order to work in a stimulating way upon the other spheres of the social life.

". . . Both the political State and the economic system will (11) obtain from the body spiritual, when under its own self-administration, that steady inflow from

the spiritual life of which they are in need. Practical training, too, for economic life will for the first time develop its full possibilities when the economic system and the body spiritual can co-operate in freedom."

III

As regards the method of elections and establishing of representation of the three spheres, Economic, Rights, and Spiritual-Cultural, it must be emphasized that it will be different in each case: "No form of suffrage can be devised to fit the body social as a uniform structure; for the economic interests and impulses of human rights will come into mutual conflict upon the representative body, however it may be elected and the conflict between them will affect social life in a way that must result in severe shocks to the whole organism of society. The first and indispensable object to be worked for in public life to-day must be the radical separation of economic life from the rights organization. And as the separation becomes gradually established, and people accustom themselves to it, the two organizations will each, in the process, discover its own most appropriate method of selecting its legislators and administrators." As a natural result would also follow the means of self-government for the Spiritual-cultural life. The representative bodies for the three members of the social organism would be built up as follows:

For Politics and questions of Rights: Voting by every eligible citizen.

For the Economic representation : Selection on the basis of technical experience.

For the Spiritual-Cultural sphere: Selection on the basis of individual ability.

As regards the necessity for enabling the three domains to develop and administer themselves out of their own inherent laws, just in order that they—without being continuously disturbed—should be mutually productive, the following holds good: "One objection will be raised to the conception of the body social as an organism consisting of three systems, each to be worked on its own distinct basis, *i.e.*, the Spiritual life, the State for the administration of Rights, and the Economic life. It will be protested that such a differentiation will (12) destroy the necessary unity of communal life. To this one must reply that this unity is destroying itself in the effort to maintain itself intact. . . ." ". . . Unity must be the *result*, the final outcome of all the streams of activity flowing together from various directions. This idea is the one in accordance with life; but it had the evolution of recent times against it; and so the tide of life in men bore down against the artificial 'order' in its path—and landed in the present social situation. A further prejudice arises from inability to distinguish the radical difference in the working of the three systems of social life. People do not see that man stands in a separate and peculiar relation to each of the three; that, for the full development of its special quality, each of these three relations requires a ground to itself in actual life, where it can evolve its own *form* apart from the other two, in order that all three may combine in their *working*." As certain of these proposals, made in the year 1917, have also been put forward in other quarters, often without mentioning the source and even in altered form, it is important to mention that the realm of the "Three Estates" and the "Corporative-State," often advocated at the present time, are not to be confused with the above-mentioned proposals. Rudolf Steiner pointed out the following: "Men will not be divided into functions of the body social, neither as Classes nor Estates. It is the body social itself which will be functionally divided. And thereby man for the first time will be able to be truly man; for the three members of the social order will be such that he himself has his own life's roots in each of them. His calling gives him a footing in one of the three, and to this he belongs through his professional interests. And his relation to the other two will be full of living interest; for his connection with their institutions is of a kind to call forth such a heartfelt relation. The body social will be threefold apart from man; it forms the very support of his life; every man as such will be a link between the three members."

"When we know how to establish each of the three members— spiritual life, legal-political life, and economic life—according to their own essential conditions, liberating their own inherent powers, then also will the unity of the social organism be achieved. One will then see that out of every single one of these spheres certain harmful forces will be produced which, however, will be healed again through co-operation with the other spheres."

"There will also possibly be a tendency to receive into the spiritual-cultural organization persons of practical experience who have (13) had opportunities of gathering first-hand knowledge in one branch or another of economic life or rights-life. In this spiritual organization they will find men with whom, in a living way, they can transform practical experience into something which is fruitful for education in the widest sense. On the other hand, in the spiritual-cultural administration there will be individuals who will feel the impulse to enter practical life for a given time in order to give practical effect to the experiences they have acquired. A membering of the social organism in such a way as to encourage the unfolding of a self-governing spiritual life will not destroy the living unity of this organism but will, on the contrary, give it firm support. It is only the administration which will be divided; in the actual life of mankind unity will be able to develop. The individual need no longer be caste-bound or enclosed within a rigid "Estate" and thus separated from the fulness of life. A coming and going between the spiritual and the other members of the social order will take place. For a life which has formed itself into a spiritual organism out of tradition and public opinion will prove much more fruitful than a rigid system arising from a division of men into 'Estates'."

The contradictory theories of the French Revolution, which also found their way to a large extent into other parts of Europe, in ignorance of the contrasting laws of the social organism, demanded a stereotyped indiscriminating application of the slogan "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," to all three branches. In the light of a true understanding of a threefold organization of the social life, the demand would be for Liberty in the life of the Spiritual-Cultural, Equality in the life of Rights, Fraternity in the Economic life.

As regards the details for carrying out the above-mentioned laws of development, there are in the writings from which quotations have been made many concrete indications and elaborations which, of course, cannot be reproduced in this brief synopsis. Special reference may be made to a collection of essays by Dr. Rudolf Steiner entitled, *Studies in the Threefold Commonwealth* (Study Series III), and also to his work *The Threefold Commonwealth*, and other relevant writings. It must be mentioned, however, that both the works named were written almost two decades ago, that is at a time when many problems and conditions in Europe contributed to a situation which to-day has developed and changed in important particulars. As a consequence the details require to be metamorphosed in order to adapt them to present-day conditions. Rudolf Steiner, in order to differentiate between mere details and essentials said: "Much in *The (14) Threefold Commonwealth* has been misunderstood, because at first it was classed with writings of a more or less Utopian character which put forward plans for institutions and schemes which their authors conceived to be a sort of remedy against a growing social chaos and against those conditions which have appeared in the course of the modern evolution of mankind. My contribution was intended, to a certain extent, as an appeal, not indeed for the mere consideration of all kinds of institutions, *etc.*, but rather as a direct appeal to the very nature of man." . . . "Details which I had mentioned merely as illustrations of the fundamental principle were taken as the principle itself. Inasmuch as I tried to show how mankind could develop a social Thinking, Feeling, and Willing, I was obliged to give as an illustration, for example, how it might be possible for the circulation of capital to be altered in such a way that it would not be felt to be so oppressive as it is to-day. I had to say various things about price-formation, the valuation of labor, *etc.*, but only by way of illustration."

It is not the subsidiary points which matter but the fundamental concepts; that is, the clear recognition of the fact that the Threefold Membering of the Social

Order corresponds to the healthy evolutionary trend of our time. In the Memorandum (of 1917) referred to above the following must be emphasized: "The idea demands recognition that it arises from the actual conditions of evolution, that it must therefore be carried out and should not be rejected merely because it is found difficult to put into operation. For if one is actually brought to a halt in the face of such difficulties, complications will arise which will lead to catastrophes. . . . It is self-evident to every one that numerous minor objections will come to mind when he tries to form conclusions as to how what is here suggested can actually be put into detailed practice. As a matter of fact such objections would only have weight if what is before us were thought of as a program which an individual or a society should carry out. But it is not meant in this way. It is intended as the expression of what the peoples would do if their own latent powers were recognized and liberated by their respective governments. How to work out the details always becomes clear in such matters, when the path towards realization is entered upon, for they are not instructions as to what is to be done, but forecasts of what will happen when things are allowed to take the path demanded by their essential nature." (15)

Such a healthy membering of the social organism is in no way politically revolutionary, but could be developed organically out of the present traditional form of political institutions: "It all depends on perceiving that all forms of political constitution which have evolved in the course of history are capable of accomplishing the freeing of mankind. ... This exposition is not meant to present a Utopian program to abolish traditional conceptions of rights and legal institutions. It represents for those who study it carefully something that can grow out of the present political structure without any disturbance of historical rights and at the same time give full recognition to actual conditions ..."

The fundamental idea and impulse of the "Threefold Membering of the Social Order" are more urgent than ever. All experiences of the past decades demand a development of this kind. After the failure of so much unreal idealism and after so many Utopian ideas have been tried out, like those of Wilson and others in Europe, courage is needed by statesmen and leaders to make a new beginning with the putting of this concrete solution into actual practice; a solution which insight shows to be called for by the tendencies inherent in the European situation.

* * *

Economic Council	Parliament	Cultural Administration
Selection on basis of technical knowledge.	Elected representatives of all eligible citizens for political-legal affairs.	Selection on the basis of individual capacities.
Highest representative body of the Economic Association of producers, distributors and consumers.	General Code of Rights Defence Services (military, police, etc.).	Spiritual Life, Education, Religion, Art, Science, etc. Highest representative body of the corporations of the free spiritual-cultural life.

**Literature on The Threefold Social Order and
kindred subjects**

RUDOLF STEINER

Sociology

Threefold Commonwealth

Social Future

World Economy, Formation of a Science of World Economics

Spiritual Life, Civil Rights, Industrial Economy

Philosophy

Philosophy of Spiritual Activity

Theory of Knowledge

Goethe's Conception of the Cultural Life

BERNARD BEHRENS

Conditions Vital to the Social Organism

Economic Basis of the Cultural Life

GUENTHER WACHSMUTH

Basic Ideas of Rudolf Steiner on the Threefold Social Order

RALPH COURNEY

World Economy without World Government

POWELL SPRING

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Books available [1930s] from the Bureau of Literature on The Threefold Social Order, 211 Madison Avenue, New York 16.