

said, of course, but it has always been so in Russia. That is something to remember. The essential liberty and sense of security we enjoy in this country has never existed in Russia. Our race only attained these blessings through a long struggle lasting many centuries.

Scientific men, as such, have no cause to favor the capitalistic system as against the socialistic. On the contrary, the brotherhood of science is a great universal democracy in which free cooperation is essential for progress. The logic of events is forcing us more and more in the direction of socialistic activities, making us more and more responsible to one another. The socialization of agriculture with large scale production and the use of modern machinery is undoubtedly the only adequate way to feed Russia's millions. For my own part I can certainly say that I have a high regard for the Russian people, and fervently hope that they may win through to a condition of prosperity and happiness.

It seems to me that the government is defeating its own ends. Even those in its inner councils are playing a dangerous game, and may be thrown out, like Trotsky. It is very difficult in the nature of the case for the small group of political dictators to understand what people think of their activities. They may be entirely well-intentioned, but they too easily conceive themselves to be endowed with all wisdom. They follow a dogma which was developed long ago, under different conditions. There is no dictatorship of the proletariat, but only of a few members of that type over the millions of their fellows. Fortunately, there is a limiting factor in the lack of ability of this small council to keep its fingers on all that is going on in such a vast area. In many directions, favorable influences, developing locally, may be observed. But as long as the whole country is in effect subject to army discipline, is visualized by the leaders as at war, the growth of normal and peaceful socialism is to that degree hindered. Science can only prosper where there is freedom to investigate and state the results. It appears to be the duty of scientific men throughout the world to oppose the policy of making the Russian Academy, or the schools of Tennessee, subservient to a dogma. In so doing we do not thereby express any hostility to the dogmatists, or necessarily disagreement with their opinions, but simply the view that it is contrary to the spirit of science to be governed by *a priori* decisions, imposed in the interests of non-scientific groups.

Can we ever convince those whose policy we thus necessarily oppose? It may seem a hopeless task, yet I do not believe that expressions of opinion, prompted by no ill-will toward the country, can be wholly without influence. Times will change, as they

have before, and what was hardly hoped for will perhaps be attained. In any case, we can not otherwise than do our best.

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A CONFERENCE ON HEREDITY AS APPLIED TO MAN

THE following memorandum presented to the White House Conference on Child Health and Welfare and referred by the chairman, Dr. Ray Lyman Wilbur, to the continuation committee of that body, is offered for publication in *SCIENCE* in the hope that biologists and others will use their influence in favor of a future conference on heredity in relation to man as suggested by the Minnesota group.

Representing a group of biologists of the University of Minnesota, I wish to record the conviction that too little attention has been paid to heredity in this conference. One has but to envisage a conference on farm stock, as contrasted with human stock, to see how great a part heredity would play in the discussions and recommendations of such a body. We believe that the knowledge of heredity already existing offers great possibilities for race improvement—quite as important, in the opinion of many authorities, as the environmental factors to which so much attention has been given. We are moved by the contrast between the very large expenditures of public funds, foundation endowments and private gifts, the enormous amount of social effort of all kinds, exerted on the environmental side, and the comparative neglect of the practical aspects of heredity as applied to man. We feel that heredity deserves far more consideration from philanthropic persons and societies, socially minded individuals, constructive statesmen, than it has ever received.

We are aware of the unsatisfactory present situation of ignorance, of prejudice, of unscientific propaganda. We attribute this situation largely to absence of an authoritative, united declaration on the part of experts in this field. We suggest that there be held, either under governmental or private auspices, a conference in which all phases of this fundamentally important subject may be investigated and discussed as fully and frankly as the environmental side has been at this conference. From such a conference we should hope for an authoritative program leading, as the generations progress, to the realization of what we believe should be the first cardinal declaration of a Magna Charta of Childhood: Every child is entitled to be well born.

In presenting this memorandum it is not our intention to criticize or detract from the work of this conference. We are concerned only with the effort to secure a future authoritative conference devoted to heredity as applied to man.

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Dean

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