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Peter F. Drucker
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Basic Course in Political Economy

Purpose of the course: to give the student an understanding of the economic culture in which we live, of the ideas on which our economic and social institutions are based, of the physical reality which these institutions attempt to organize.

Method of the course: the course will deal with a small number of topics--perhaps not more than three or four. It will lay great stress upon the acquisition of specific, factual knowledge. But it will always attempt to set this knowledge against the background of historical development and political ideas from which facts derive their meaning.

Introductory Part

War Economics Today

This is intended to serve as a rapid, over-all introduction to the basic problems of economic policy today. Its main purpose is to give the student an idea of the range within which our work lies--in a form which is immediately comprehensible, stimulates interest and deals with matters, problems and decisions of actual, political import.

Literature - The books by Mendershausen and current periodical and newspaper material.

After this introduction there are two alternatives: one which continues with a study of The Development of the Money Economy and winds up with a discussion of Government and Society; and one which continues with a study of Our Economic Machine and finishes with a discussion of Some of the Basic Social and Political Institutions of our Economic System. Which alternative is to be followed will be decided on the basis of our discussions during the first weeks of the year.

Alternative A

The Development of the Money System

Starting point for this discussion will be the dual character of our economic system: physical economy (goods, land, labor, machines) and symbol economy (money, negotiable securities, credit, patents and the corporate system). What is money and credit? What function do they fulfill? How do they influence the physical economy and are influenced by it? Those are some of the questions we are going to discuss.

Factual Material

- ✓ Atkins: Economic Behavior, Section V
- Steiner: Money and Banking
- Burgess: Reserve Banks and the Money Market
- Descriptive material on Money and the Banking System

Historical Material

- ✓ ^{Davis} Davies: Life in a Medieval Barony
- ✓ Pirenne: Social and Economic History of the Middle Ages — *of med. Europe?*
- ✓ Trevelyan: England in the Age of Queen Anne
- ✓ Tawney: Religion and the Rise of Capitalism
- ✓ Turner: The Frontier in American History
- ✓ Hay and Nicolai: Abraham Lincoln (childhood chapters)
- ✓ Dodd: The Cotton Kingdom
- ✓ Craven: The Coming of the Civil War
- Leighton: Five Cities
- ✓ Adams: Chapter of Erie
- Edwards: The Evolution of Finance Capitalism
- ✓ Feis: Europe, the World's Banker

Political Material

- Henry Adams, Albert Gallatin *(will try for)*
- Andrew Jackson: State Papers on the Second Bank of the U. S.
- ✓ The Education of Henry Adams
- ✓ Tawney: The Acquisitive Society
- ✓ Veblen: Theory of Business Enterprise
- ✓ Wallas: The Great Society
- ✓ Berle and Means: The Modern Corporation
- TNEC Monograph No. 11
- Haberler: Business Cycle Theories (Introduction) *(How Prosperity + depression)*
- Wycliffe: Sermons
- ✓ Piers Plowman
- Swift: The Poor of Ireland (this is a garbled title) *Are answers to a paper called a monograph to be passed into history?*
- ✓ Jane Austen: Emma
- ✓ Willa Cather: Oh Pioneers
- ✓ Roelvaag: Giants of the Earth
- ✓ Malinowski: Argonauts of the Western Pacific

Government and SocietyFactual Material

- ✓ Selected Chapters of Lyon^{and} and Abramson: Government ^{and} in Economic Life
- ✓ Clark: Social Control of Business
- Twentieth Century Fund: Stock Market Control
- Selected Chapters — especially on 14th Amendment in McLaughlin, Constitutional History of U. S.

Alternative BOur Economic MachineFactual Material

- American regionalism?*
- ✓ Odum and Moore: Regions of the U. S.
 - Vance: Human Geography of the South
 - ✓ Webb: The Great Plains
 - Neuberger: Our Promised Land
 - ✓ Daniels: A Southerner Visits New England
 - Federal Writers Project: New York City
 - ✓ Fortune Magazine: Special Issue on New York City (July 1939)
 - ✓ Schlesinger: The Rise of the City
 - Warsaw: Representative Industries in the U. S.
 - McCallum: Iron and Steel Industry of U. S.
 - Descriptive Material on Federal Reserve Banks and Banking System,
Stock Exchange, Government Activities
 - ✓ R. and H. Lynd: Middletown in Transition
 - Henry Ford: Autobiography

Historical Material

- F. L. Olmsted: Journeys and Exploration of the Cotton Kingdom
- ✓ U. B. Phillips: Life and Labour in the Old South
- ✓ Harriet Martineau: Society in America
- ✓ Marquis Childs: Andrew Jackson *Marquis James? 2 titles*
- J. R. Commons: Documentary History of American Industrial Society
- Caroline Ware: Early New England Cotton Manufacture
- ✓ Memoirs of Henry Villard
- ✓ Mark Twain: Opening Chapters of Tom Sawyer
- Albert Halper: The Foundry
- ✓ Mumford: Technics and Civilizations

Some Basic Political Institutions of Our Economic System(a) Land Tenure

- ✓ Harrington: Oceania
- ✓ Henry George: Progress and Poverty
- Raper: Preface to Poverty *peasantry*
- ✓ U. S. Dept. of Agriculture: Yearbook 1940, especially the historic parts on Public Land Policy
- ✓ Webb: The Great Plains - on water rights as opposed to land rights

(b) The Legal System of Property Rights

- ✓ Aristotle: Politics
- ✓ Locke: Second Treatise on Government

- ✓ Machiavelli: Discourses on Titus Livy
- ✓ Marx: Preface to Critique of Political Economy
- ✓ Selected Readings from the Federalist, Jefferson, and from the later writings of Hamilton
- ✓ - Selected Supreme Court Decisions (Cohen, ed. - on order)
- ✓ Sir Henry Maine: Ancient Law
- Some modern anthropological material

(c) The Market-Price-Profit System

- ✓ Adam Smith: Wealth of Nations
- ✓ Commons: Legal Foundations of Capitalism
- Carl Snyder: Capitalism the Creator
- ✓ Wootton: Lament for Economics
- ✓ Pirenne: Mohammed and Charlemagne
- ✓ Brooks Adams: The Law of Civilization and Decay

Note to literature: The foregoing is not intended as a list of required reading but only as an indication of the range of the course and of the approach. Actually only a part of the above material will be used.

Intermediate Course in American Economic and Social History

This is a course for a small group of advanced students (3rd or 4th year). A previous basic course in American History or in Political Economy is required. The course will be conducted in seminar-fashion with individual papers and larger individual projects.

The course will center on a few basic institutions of our society. Their history, development, functions will be used to show the history, the basic beliefs, the basic problems of American economic and social life.

I. The American Party

The Party in Action:

- Some reasonably good text book like those of Merriam or Hering
- The Party Platforms since 1892
- Memoirs of such political figures as La Follette, Farley, Ameringer, Josephus Daniels
- ✓ Bryce: The American Commonwealth: Chapters on Party System and on Tweed and Philadelphia Gas House Rings
- ✓ Agar: The People's Choice
- Studies of Party System in American Political Science Review

The History of the Party System:

- ✓ Claude Bowers: Jefferson and Hamilton
- Thomas Benton: Thirty Years View
- ✓ John Quincy Adams: Diary
- State papers of Jackson and of Van Buren
- ✓ Croly: Mark Hanna
- ✓ Josephson: Politicos
- Foraker: Notes of a Busy Life
- ✓ Steffens: Autobiography

See Commager
Documents of
American History

The Meaning of the Party System

- ✓ Tocqueville: Democracy in America
- ✓ Ostrogorski: Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties
- ✓ Turner: Rise of the New West

II. The Corporation

Here the material will be largely Supreme Court decisions, monographs on individual businesses, etc.; there is no study of the corporation as a basic socio-political institution - not even a bad one.

III. Banking and Money as Political Issues in American History

- ✓ Hamilton: Reports on Public Credit and on a National Bank
- Gallatin: State papers
- Jackson: State papers on the Second Bank of the U. S.
- ✓ John Quincy Adams: Diary

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- Capers: Life of Memminger
- ✓ A Life of Chase - if available (by a. B Hart)
- Mitchell: History of the Greenbacks
- ✓ Adams: Chapter on Erie (on Gold Corner) in High Finance
- ✓ Hicks: The Populist Revolt
- Bryan: Speeches (See Commager - Docs of Amer. Hist)
- ✓ Paxson: History of American Frontier
- U. S. Supreme Court: Decisions on Money and Banking
- Warburg: Federal Reserve System
- Weisman: The New Federal Reserve System
- TNEC Hearings on Insurance Company Investments

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