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# Patrick Deneen’s “Unsustainable Liberalism” is Unsustainable If What Actually Happened Matters

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Remarks prepared for the 2024 Ciceronian Society Conference, revised for publication summer 2024.

The purpose of this panel is to discuss Patrick Deneen’s recently published book, *Regime Change*. *Regime Change* is the follow-up book to Deneen’s 2018 book, *Why Liberalism Failed*. *Regime Change* contains the more elaborate treatment Dr. Deneen prescribes for the American body politic as diagnosed in *Why Liberalism Failed*. Of course, in order to assess how sound a course of treatment is, one must first know whether the ailment has been accurately diagnosed. As anyone who has ever received an erroneous medical judgment knows, treatment of a mis-diagnosed condition will not only fail to solve the real problem but can actually make it *worse*. So, I am going to focus my remarks on Deneen’s diagnosis of what ails our body politic and why that diagnosis is unsustainable.

## **DR. DENEEN’S DIAGNOSIS OF WHAT AILS U.S.**

Deneen’s 2018 book, *Why Liberalism Failed*, was the outgrowth of his widely read 2012 *First Things*’ article entitled “Unsustainable Liberalism: Liberalism’s Contradictions are Unsustainable and We Must See Man and Nature Anew.”<sup>1</sup> In Deneen’s view, America’s problems are rooted in the political theory (or theories really) that he conglomerates together under the name of “liberalism.”

In Deneen’s telling, liberalism, as a political project, has its origins in political theory. Specifically, it represented a “revolution” in political theory initiated by certain “proto-liberals,” like Thomas Hobbes, and “liberals,” especially John Locke. This revolution was based on two novel assumptions about human nature. Deneen describes the first assumption as “anthropological *individualism* and the voluntarist conception of choice.” By this he means that human beings are conceived as being “radically separate” or “non-relational

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<sup>1</sup> All quotes are from Patrick J. Deneen, “Unsustainable Liberalism: Liberalism’s Contradictions are Unsustainable and We Must See Man and Nature Anew,” *First Things* (August 2012).

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creatures.” By nature, man is neither social nor, as Aristotle would have it, political, but, rather, *independent*. The political community thus does not exist by nature, and its authority is not inherent in the community. Rather, it is derived from “the idea of voluntarism—from the free unfettered, and autonomous choice of individuals.” Or, as the Declaration of Independence puts it, “governments are instituted among men deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

Liberalism’s second novel assumption is that it conceives of human nature “in separation from and opposition to nature.” Here too, Deneen contends, we see how liberalism departs from “premodern political thought—ancient and medieval, particularly that informed by an Aristotelian understanding of natural science.” In the pre-liberal understanding:

Man was understood to have a telos, a fixed end, given by nature and unalterable. Human nature was continuous with the order of the natural world, and so humanity was required to conform both to its own nature as well as, in a broader sense, to the natural order of which human beings were a part.

Liberalism, however, abandoned this high view of human nature, albeit in two distinct steps or waves. The first wave, initiated by “proto-liberals” Francis Bacon and Hobbes, cut man off from his telos, thereby abandoning concern for human excellence or virtue, but retained the idea that human nature was not infinitely malleable. The first wave thus held that “human beings were, by nature, self-interested creatures whose base impulses could be harnessed but not fundamentally altered.” The second wave, in turn, was effected by thinkers ranging from “Rousseau to Marx, from Mill to Dewey, and from Richard Rorty to contemporary ‘transhumanists.’” This wave, Deneen claims, completed the departure from nature, and thus Aristotle, by denying that human nature *is in any way fixed*. In the hands of the second wave, then, nature ceases to impose any kind of limit or constraint on man’s freedom or ability to re-mold himself.

On the level of political theory, then, liberalism is not a static set of principles, exactly, but a movement among various theorists toward an increasingly unlimited conception of human freedom. Liberalism is thus a *liberatory* model of politics.

In Deneen’s diagnosis, moreover, this movement of liberalism on the level of high theory animated a political project in the United States that has developed over time *dialectically*. Curiously, his description of this movement mimics Karl Marx’s description of

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the development of capitalism. Capitalism, Marx and Engels famously contend, contains the seeds of its own destruction. In its insatiable lust for profits, the ruling capitalist class will "inevitably" squeeze the workers upon whom it depends so severely they will rise up and abolish the capitalist mode of production and exchange:

The development of Modern Industry cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces, above all, is its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.<sup>2</sup>

For Marx and Engels, because this "contradiction" inheres within the capitalist mode of production and exchange, the only way to rectify its problems is to rip it out by its structural roots. Revolution, not reform, is the only remedy.

Of course, the capitalist world's failure to self-immolate has long bedeviled Marxist theorists. Nevertheless, Deneen claims that liberalism likewise contains the seeds of its own destruction. The "very apparent strengths" of liberalism

rest upon a large number of pre-, non-, and even antiliberal institutions and resources that it has not replenished and in recent years has actively sought to undermine. This 'drawing down' on its preliberal inheritance is not contingent or accident but in fact an inherent feature of liberalism.

Thus, the liberal experiment contradicts itself, and a liberal society will inevitably become "postliberal."

Liberal man's lust for an increasingly unfettered freedom "effectively remakes the world in the image of [liberalism's] vision of the state of nature, shaping a world in which *the theory of natural human individualism becomes ever more a reality.*" In the process, however, liberal man subverts the very "constitutive communities"—the family, church, schools, etc.—which used to but no longer restrain his behavior in a sub-political or cultural way. This situation, in turn, necessitates the construction of an increasingly powerful and controlling state to do what these institutions used to do. "With the liberation of individuals from these associations and membership based upon individual choice," Deneen writes,

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<sup>2</sup> "The Manifesto of the Communist Party," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1978), 483.

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The need for impositions of positive law to regulate behavior grows. At the same time, as the authority of social norms dissipates, they are increasingly felt to be residual, arbitrary, and oppressive, motivating calls for the state to actively work toward their eradication through the rationalization of law and regulation.

Paradoxically, then, says Deneen, “liberalism ... culminates in two ontological points: the liberated individual and the controlling state.” Liberal man’s quest to throw off all restraints “inevitably,” if inadvertently, results in greater and greater legal and regulatory control.

Here, in a nutshell, we have Dr. Deneen’s diagnosis of the fundamental cause of the rise of the administrative state in the United States.

### **DR. DENEEN’S MISDIAGNOSIS: “MAKING AMERICA OVER” (AGAIN)?<sup>3</sup>**

Dr. Deneen’s diagnosis has resonated with many conservative Americans. And, admittedly, to some extent for very good reason. A growing swathe of Americans perceive that something has gone seriously awry in our nation, and they are seeking to understand what has happened. Deneen not only supplies an explanation, but his explanation maps onto the rhetoric (and consequences) of select aspects of the cultural transformation which has taken place over the past several decades, especially the sexual revolution and, more recently, the transgender and transhumanist movements.<sup>4</sup> So, it’s not surprising that many conservatives trust his diagnosis, and, increasingly, his fundamental corrective to wit: “we must see man and nature anew.” That is, we must scrap liberalism root and branch, including the principles of 1776, in favor of embracing an Aristotelian conception of human nature and the political community.

Ironically, Dr. Deneen’s prescription reads less like a bold, new corrective for America than an unwitting echo of the radical thinking that *really did* build the administrative state at the turn of the twentieth century.

Let us turn, at this juncture, to discuss the thinking of progressive economist, Richard T. Ely. Why Ely? Ely was one of the single most influential architects of the administrative state

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<sup>3</sup> Rexford G. Tugwell, Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s Brain-Truster, described just how radically the “social philosophy” he learned from another student of the German Historical School, Simon N. Patten and, in turn, his older student, Scott Nearing, would require changing the institutions of the United States: “It was out of this philosophy that I later wrote the verses that would be so often quoted, containing the line ‘I shall roll up my sleeves, make America over.’ Making America over is what I thought we were supposed to do.” As quoted in Tiffany Jones Miller, “Richard T. Ely, the German Historical School of Economics, and the ‘Socio-Teleological’ Aspirations of the New Deal Planners,” *Social Philosophy & Policy* 38, iss. 1 (Summer 2021): 73.

<sup>4</sup> Deneen’s diagnosis does not map onto the quasi-essentialist rhetoric of racial identity, however.

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in the United States. Born in New York in 1854, Ely received his undergraduate education at Columbia College and then went abroad, in the late 1870s, to Germany in pursuit of a higher education. Ely intended to study philosophy but ended up, thanks to another American student, Simon N. Patten, studying economics with some of the leading professors of the German Historical School of Economics.<sup>5</sup> In 1885, after having returned home with his newly minted Ph.D., Ely, along with Patten and other young German-trained economists, founded the American Economic Association (AEA) in express imitation of the *Verein für Socialpolitik* (or Union for Social Politics).<sup>6</sup> The Union for Social Politics—note the phrase “social politics”—was the reform-minded association organized in 1871–1872 by the leading members of the younger German Historical School of Economics: Adolf Wagner, Gustav Schmoller and Lujo Brentano. These professors came to be called the “socialists of the chair” because they advocated a frankly anti-liberal (or, as they would more typically say, anti-*individualistic*) conception of the State that was, nevertheless, *not as radical* as the “scientific socialism” espoused by Marx and Engels’s Social Democratic Party.<sup>7</sup> Ely, at any rate, was arguably the single most important architect of the administrative state by virtue of his role in the organization of the discipline of economics; his subsequent course of research; his close involvement in Governor Robert LaFollette’s fabled reforms in Wisconsin; the influential advocacy groups he helped found and staff (e.g. the American Association for Labor Legislation); and the great gallery of students who helped formulate and staff not only some of the earlier state-level administrative agencies (e.g., the Wisconsin Industrial Commission) but also Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s boldest New Deal initiatives, including the Social Security Act of 1935, the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933, and the entity that

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<sup>5</sup> On the beginning of Richard T. Ely and Simon N. Patten’s long and fruitful association, see Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998), 84. As Rodgers, 97, notes, Patten returned to the United States “eager to ‘help in the transformation of American civilization from an English to a German basis.’”

<sup>6</sup> Economists trained by the GHS also played a key role in the founding of the American Sociological Association. See Lawrence J. Rhoades, “A History of the American Sociological Association 1905–1980” (Washington, D.C.: American Sociological Association, 1981), 1–2.

<sup>7</sup> The founders of the Verein are frequently cited as an important precursor to the rise of National Socialism in Germany. See, e.g., Franz Neumann, *Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism, 1933–1944* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1942), 104–105.

became the National Resources Planning Board (NRPB)—the nation’s little known foray into top-down comprehensive social planning.<sup>8</sup>

Ely wrote quite a bit about the German Historical School of Economics. In his 1883 book *French and German Socialism in Modern Times*, Ely devoted an entire chapter, entitled the “Socialism of the Chair,” to this school and especially the Verein’s founders. “It is, indeed,” he writes, “necessary to obtain a clear understanding of their conception of the state before it is possible to comprehend their teachings.”<sup>9</sup> The socialism of the chair’s approach to reform, their very concept of a “social politics,” was, in other words, intimately connected with a distinctive conception of the state. And so what was this conception? And why does Ely refer to them as “socialists”?

In his 1894 book *Socialism: An Examination of its Nature, its Strengths and its Weaknesses*, Ely explains that “socialism and individualism are two different philosophical systems.” But socialism itself comes in two forms: “socialism in a more general sense,” he writes, must be “distinguished from socialism in a narrower sense.” By socialism in the narrower sense, Ely means Marx’s “scientific socialism.” By contrast, Ely traces the origin of “socialism in a more general sense,” which he characterizes as “a true sense,” to ... Aristotle. Why was Aristotle a socialist in the general sense? Because, unlike the individualists, Aristotle teaches that the State exists by nature, and so does not derive its authority from the consent of its individual members. Ely then expressly quotes book I, chapter 2 of Aristotle’s *Politics* in order to explain why men have a natural or organic dependence upon the State:

The state is, by nature ... clearly prior to the individual and to the family, since the whole is of necessity prior to the part... The proof that the state is a creation of nature, and prior to the individual, is that the individual, when isolated, is not self-sufficing; and therefore he is like a part in relation to the whole. But he who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god.

“The great thinkers in economics and politics in all ages,” Ely adds, “have been socialists in this general sense of the word, and opposed to them has been a small sect of individualists, who reject the conception of the state as an organism, and believe that the standpoint of the

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<sup>8</sup> For a fuller discussion of Ely’s contributions to the construction of the administrative state, see Tiffany Jones Miller, “Richard T. Ely, the German Historical School of Economics, and the ‘Socio-Teleological Aspirations of the New Deal Planners,’” *Social Philosophy & Policy* 38, no. 1(2021): 52-84.

<sup>9</sup> Ely, *French and German Socialism in Modern Times* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1883), 241.

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individual is sufficient, both in science and in practice."<sup>10</sup> Ely then offers two contemporary examples of this socialism in a broader sense, one of whom is Adolf Wagner.<sup>11</sup>

In his 1896 book *The Social Law of Service*, in a chapter entitled "The State," Ely likewise invokes Aristotle as a better guide for understanding the nature of the State. "The State," he writes,

has been described as a continuous, conscious organism, and a moral personality, which has its foundations laid in the nature of man. It is not the product of the will of man. Men have never come together in a state of nature, and then by the formation of a State passed out of a condition of nature into an organized political existence.

On the contrary, he continues:

The State grows up naturally, spontaneously, and men are born into the State, and the State is one of the forces making them what they are. The basis of the State is human nature, and the State is the natural condition of men. Some would have us go to savages to find out what is natural, but Aristotle has taught us that it is the perfect man, and not the imperfect man, who can reveal to us what is natural, just as we look at a perfect and not an imperfect specimen of fruit to understand the nature of the fruit.<sup>12</sup>

It hardly has the same ring to it, of course, but just as Aristotle famously contends that "man is by nature political," so Ely contends that man is by nature *Statival*. Ely, like Deneen, thus denies that the State derives its authority from the consent of its members—indeed, he extolls not the divine right of kings but "the divine right of the State."<sup>13</sup>

Moreover, Ely, like Deneen, also derives the inherent authority of the State from an expressly teleological conception of human nature. Only when man achieves "perfect[ion]," or fully actualizes the end inherent in his nature, can we judge what it means to be "natural." Ely refers to the human end as "the ethical ideal." "It is well," he writes,

to describe somewhat more in detail the ethical ideal which animates the new political economy. It is the most perfect development of all human faculties in each individual, which can be attained. There are powers in every human being capable of cultivation;

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<sup>10</sup> Ely, *Socialism: An Examination of its Nature, its Strengths and its Weaknesses with Suggestions for Social Reform* (Boston, MA: Thomas Y. Crowell and Co., 1894), 3-8.

<sup>11</sup> On Wagner, see Evalyn Clark, "From National Economist to National Socialist," *Political Science Quarterly* 55, no. 3 (September 1940), 378-411.

<sup>12</sup> Ely, *The Social Law of Service* (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1896), 167-68.

<sup>13</sup> Ely, *The Labor Movement in America* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1886), 326.



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and each person, it may be said, accomplishes his end when these powers have attained the largest growth which is possible to them.

These faculties consist not only of bodily or physical qualities but also “spiritual” or “higher faculties,” including “faculties of love, of knowledge, of aesthetic perception, and the like.” For Ely, then, the end of human nature and the end or purpose of the State will, in an advanced stage of development, be one and the same: “Doubtless there is a new conception of the state,” he writes, “for in this co-operative institution is discovered one of the means to be used to accomplish the end of human society, the ethical ideal.”<sup>14</sup>

In fairness, I think it’s important to note that Ely’s conception of a “social politics” invokes Aristotle’s conception of nature and the polis in order to justify what is really a Hegelian point. In his autobiography, Ely writes that he has always been “an idealist in the philosophical sense, firm in my belief that ideas govern the world.”<sup>15</sup> This is significant because History, for Hegel, is the developmental process that progressively actualizes the ideal man and society—a circumstance that Aristotle considers highly unlikely. Ely, however, regards the realization of the ideal as a matter of *when*, not *if*. In his hands the teleologically-ordered State becomes an engine for *abolishing* whatever gap remains between how men ought to live and how they actually do—a veritable expressway to the “New Jerusalem.”<sup>16</sup> This was, in fact, the very purpose of social reform.

Following his German teachers, accordingly, Ely did not advocate a liberatory model of politics but, rather, an expressly “ethical” or “social” or *integrative* model. The Historical School of Economics, Ely explains,

appl[ies] ethical principles to economic facts and economic institutions, and test[s] their value by that standard. Political economy is thus brought into harmony with the great religious, political and social movements which characterize this age; for the essence of them all is the belief that there ought to be no contradiction between our actual economic life and the postulates of ethics and a determination that *there shall be an abolition of such things as will not stand the tests of this rule.*<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ely, “Ethics and Economics,” in *Social Aspects of Christianity And Other Essays* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell and Co., 1889), 123–24, 128–29; *Foundations of National Prosperity* (New York: MacMillan Co., 1917), 48–49.

<sup>15</sup> Ely, *Ground Under Our Feet: An Autobiography* (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1938), 95–96.

<sup>16</sup> Ely, “Ethics and Economics,” 127–28; *The Social Law of Service*, 171–72. In this “New Jerusalem,” the State would not wither away, as Marx and Engels predict, but, once the State has embraced its proper end, Ely suggests the Church very well might.

<sup>17</sup> Ely, “Ethics and Economics,” 128 [emphasis added].

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Ely thus viewed Americans very differently than earlier generations. Far from being bearers of natural rights those in government are obliged to respect, Ely—who helped catalyze the “conservation” movement—characterizes them as “human resources.” “Human resources,” just like “natural resources,” must be subjected to expert management not only to avoid wasting their potential but also to optimize their development or improvement.<sup>18</sup> Just as different kinds of land must be classified and managed in a manner befitting its peculiar character, so different classes and races must be managed differently. Moreover, because the potential for development depends upon the quality of in-born capacities as well as the social environment which nurtures them, the State must do more to control the reproduction of its members:

We must do our best to lessen the number of submarginal men, and here reference is made merely to those measures which are agreed upon by substantially all eugenisists, to lessen the number of absolutely unfit, while at the same time we do our best to cultivate all human powers, ethical and spiritual, as well as economical.<sup>19</sup>

Just as “submarginal land,” meaning land so poor in quality it produces a meager crop, must be removed from agricultural production, so “submarginal men” must be removed from *reproduction*. Ely thus regarded America’s existing marriage laws as much too lax, and favored reforms that not only denied a growing list of defectives the legal right to marry, but that also compelled some to live in custodial institutions where they could more effectually be prevented from reproducing.<sup>20</sup>

Beyond weeding out “submarginal” people, the State must also seek to refashion existing social institutions, including our economic institutions, in order to facilitate greater cultivation of its other members’ in-born capacities. Like Marx, Ely was a severe critic of our private property-based economic system:

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<sup>18</sup> Ely, *Foundations of National Prosperity* (New York: MacMillan Co., 1917), 47–53. Ely’s concept of “conservation” which, by his own admission, is predicated upon “the German idea of the State,” is surprisingly ambitious. It not only encompasses both “natural” and “human resources” but also seeks not merely to prevent their “waste,” thereby ensuring the sustainability of what we have, but also to “improve the natural inheritance of the race” wherever possible (3–8, 13, 47–69).

<sup>19</sup> Ely, *Land Problems: Volume III of The Outlines of Land Economics* (Ann Arbor, MI: Edwards Brothers, 1922), 156–57, 165. On the need to adjust economic institutions, like property ownership, to varying classes and races, see Ely, “Industrial Evolution,” in *Congress of the Arts and Sciences, Universal Exposition, St. Louis, 1904*, vol. VII, Howard J. Rogers, ed. (New York: Houghton and Mifflin Co., 1906), 800–813.

<sup>20</sup> See, e.g., Ely, “Industrial Evolution.”

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The wastes of the competitive system are so enormous as to be awful, its operations are as cruel as laws of nature. In its onward march it crushes and grinds to powder human existences by the million.<sup>21</sup>

But, whereas Marx advocated the outright abolition of the right to private property, Ely, more conservatively, declares that “we cannot make much progress until we have adopted the social theory of property and the social theory of contract.”<sup>22</sup> In other words, the State must exercise greater control over the right to private property in order to “prevent waste and misuse.”<sup>23</sup>

Minimally, then, Ely advocated raising the “ethical plane of competition” by requiring employers to close on Sundays; to reduce the length of the working day (to create more leisure time outside of work “for the cultivation of [the workers’] faculties”); and to deny employers a right to hire women to do “work injurious to the female organism” and children younger than fourteen. Promoting such “factory legislation” was, in fact, the initial mission of the American Association of Labor Legislation (AALL). Ely, by the way, was the first president of the AALL whose motto, tellingly, was “The fundamental purpose of labor legislation is the conservation of the human resources of the nation.”<sup>24</sup> The AALL became a rather influential organization. As Daniel Rodgers notes, the AALL became “the most active and important social insurance lobby in the United States.”<sup>25</sup> Moreover, far from celebrating what would become known as the counterculture, Ely favored restricting the consumption of alcohol, opium and tobacco and otherwise advocated providing young people with a “moral education.” “Control must be strengthened and without discipline we cannot have the right kind of human resources.”<sup>26</sup>

More boldly, Ely advocated expanding public ownership of industries he deemed “natural monopolies.” As regards the land, he advocated expanding public ownership by ending the sale of land to private owners and increasing regulation of land already privately

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<sup>21</sup> Ely, *Socialism*, 253.

<sup>22</sup> Ely, *Foundations of National Prosperity*, 6.

<sup>23</sup> Ely, *Property and Contract in Their Relations to the Distribution of Wealth*, vol. I (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1914/1971), 144.

<sup>24</sup> See *American Labor Legislation Review* 1, no. 1.

<sup>25</sup> Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, 252. On Ely and especially Commons’s influence over the organization, direction and staffing of the AALL, see Miller, “Richard T. Ely, the German Historical School of Economics, and the ‘Socio-Teleological’ Aspiration of the New Deal Planners,” 57, esp. 57n16-17.

<sup>26</sup> See Ely, *Outlines of Economics*, chapter 4 (“Harmful Consumption”); *Foundations of National Prosperity*, 51-52.

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held. He also played a leading role in developing the very concept of land planning which entailed nothing less than classifying every kind of land resource in the United States (whether publicly or privately owned) in order to determine (and ultimately implement) the most advantageous kind of ownership and use:

A land policy includes regulation for the present and the future of all those natural resources which we include under the term ‘land’. This regulation means that we supplement individualism by social control; and social control by land policy embraces, then, those relations among men which arise out of land utilization. Social control, as the experience of the world demonstrates, becomes more intensive as time goes on, and that with an ever-increasing emphasis upon social welfare; but this control may proceed from private agencies as well as from public agencies.<sup>27</sup>

Finally, like Ely, many of Ely’s students were not content merely to write about how America should be reconstructed. In the 1930s, Ely’s student, M.L. Wilson, along with other leading students of the German Historical School of Economics in America, like Rexford G. Tugwell, would catalyze the New Deal initiative to establish land planning as part of a wider effort to establish top-down, comprehensive *social* planning in America.

### CONCLUSION

Confusingly, in the 1930s, the American progeny of the “socialism of the chair” re-appropriated the liberal label they had originally spurned.<sup>28</sup> Perhaps this fact helps explain why Deneen’s account of the development of “liberalism” in America reads as though Richard T. Ely, and the progressive movement he did so much to promote, never happened. Importantly, however, as radical as Ely’s critique of America was, it is *not* the “socialism of the chair” recast as “liberalism” which dominates American thinking today, but, rather, the neo-communist thinking of the New Left.<sup>29</sup> From the standpoint of the New Left, the “Establishment” the earlier progressives did so much to reconstruct was irredeemably conservative. Attacking the anemic residual of the Founders’ “individualism” at a time in which neo-communism has gained unprecedented influence over our culture—and, thus,

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<sup>27</sup> Ely, *Land Problems*, 139.

<sup>28</sup> See, e.g., Rexford G. Tugwell, *The Industrial Discipline and the Governmental Arts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1933), 229.

<sup>29</sup> See, e.g., Christopher Rufo, *America’s Cultural Revolution: How the Radical Left Conquered Everything* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2023).

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inspiring doubt about the wisdom of defending traditional American rights or liberties like those enshrined in the First Amendment—will only facilitate the even more radical transformation of America already well underway. Instead of accepting Dr. Deneen’s diagnosis, conservative Americans would do well to seek a second opinion.

Tiffany Miller

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